

Guest Opinion

# On The Environment

By Bill Voigt

**Editor's Note:** Bill Voigt is coordinator for the Symposium for Environmental Awareness, a student-faculty group planning to participate in the nationwide 'Environmental Teach-In' scheduled for April 22. Here, he states his case for the need for personal commitment to solve the problems of pollution:

In the sixties, the human race began a journey into outer space; that journey will continue, and as it does the human spirit will expand. But in the seventies, man must turn inward. He must learn to control himself. The problem of bringing population and environment into balance transcends and encompasses all other problems. Lately the newspapers and magazines have carried articles predicting that we have anywhere from 10 to 50 years left to live. That we will have to wear gas masks and live in doomed cities. Will we have to?

Let's look at the news: The Apollo 10 astronauts easily picked out Los Angeles from hundreds of miles out. They could see the blotch of ugly, cancer-colored smog of 4,000,000 cars vomiting cancer-causing gases, 16 million tires vaporizing deadly asbestos particles, and the new polychlorinated hydro-carbons onto the pavements, into the atmosphere and into the sea. In California they not only breathe the air, they can see it coming.

Sign on Los Angeles school-room, bulletin: Warning! Do not exercise strenuously or breathe too deeply during heavy smog conditions???

How does smog effect man?

Chronic bronchitis is seven times higher than it was ten years ago. Lung cancer is twice as prevalent in the cities as it is in the rural areas. Bronchial asthma and emphysema are up eight times in the last ten years. One day's breathing of New York's smog is equivalent to smoking five packages of cigarettes. It is anticipated that before many years have passed, ten thousand people will die daily of pollution.

Up in the Lake Arrowhead area (Los Angeles, California) about 10 percent of the Ponderosa pines, 1,300,000 trees, are dying as the result of smog.

What's Happening to Our Water?

Plankton are microscopic plants which serve two purposes. First, plankton, microscopic sea—animals, are the base of the whole fish food chain from anchovies to whales. What Whales? Without plankton there would be no fish. Secondly, plankton provide 70 percent of the earth's oxygen. It takes only 11 ppm of DDT in water to kill off the plankton. No oxygen, no fish. Already this is happening in the estuarial areas close to land.

The Potomac is a sewer for every town it passes. It is drying up and its ancient historic bones are now desecrating the scene. Its mudflats are now showing, covered with garbage, old tires, junk, and human sewage. During cherry blossom time, it is the best-dressed cesspool in America.

Lake Erie, 10,000 square miles, is biologically dead. Zero oxygen. Beaches are unsafe, algae coats the bodies of swimmers, and piles up in foul smelling reefs

at the shoreline. Fishing once a major industry is all but gone.

Congressman Blatnik of Minnesota, author of the Water Pollution Bill, points out that on the banks of the Mississippi, down below St. Louis, there are signs warning picnickers not to eat their lunch on or near the bank of the river. The spray from the river contains typhoid, colitic, hepatitis, and tuberculosis.

Here is another good example of ignorance and indifference in some public leaders. Instead of cleaning up the pollution, they shove it on down the river—chemicals, industrial crud, slaughterhouse waste, and human sewage on down the river. Thanks once again for a good job done, for poisoning the drinking water and destroying recreational areas along America's rivers.

In the past when man abused his environment he had a choice. He didn't have to die. He could migrate. Today there is no place to which we can migrate. We have only one choice left. Control our population, conserve our plant and animal life, or die.

Adlai Stevenson once said: "We travel together, passengers on a little spaceship—dependable on its vulnerable reserves of air and soil; all committed for our safety to its security and peace preserved from annihilation only by the care, the work, and the love we give our fragile craft."

It is time to create greater awareness of the problems of overpopulation and environmental deterioration, to identify realistic goals for action and to stimulate cooperative activities between various segments of society.

# Nixon Orders Pollution Halt

By Stan Benjamin Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Nixon said Wednesday he is giving federal agencies three years and \$359 million to stop polluting the air and water.

It already has been federal policy to conform with existing air and water quality standards, but Nixon said previous orders were "ambiguously worded, poorly enforced, and generally ineffective."

Nixon issued an executive order requiring all federal facilities—including "buildings, installations, structures, public works, equipment, aircraft, vessels, and other vehicles and property"—to complete or at least begin neces-

sary pollution abatement actions by Dec. 31, 1972, at the latest.

Agency heads were ordered to send their plans for meeting that deadline to the Budget Bureau by next June 30.

Funds appropriated to clean up federal pollution may not be used for any other purpose, Nixon ordered.

Undersecretary of the Interior Russell E. Train, chairman-designate of the President's Environmental Quality Council, told newsmen the federal budget proposed Monday for fiscal 1971 included \$92 million as the first segment of Nixon's \$359 million program against federal pollution—\$40 million from "reprogram-

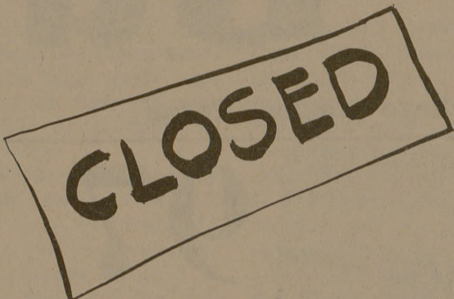
ing" of Defense Department money and \$52 million spread among the budgets of other agencies.

By comparison, Train said, the funds appropriated for federal pollution abatement in fiscal 1968, 1969 and 1970 together totaled \$129 million and not all of that reached its goal.

Nixon said in a statement, "Over the past several years, the federal government has become one of the nation's worst polluters."

Train declined to estimate just how bad. Nationwide, he said, the federal contribution to air and water pollution might be a small fraction, "but in specific local situations it could be quite serious."

## CADET SLOUCH by Jim Earle



Get well, President Rudder!

# Bulletin Board

**TONIGHT**  
A&M Polo Club will meet at 7:30 p.m. in Room 203 Animal Science Building.

San Angelo-West Texas Home-town Club will plan spring activities at 7:30 p.m. Room 2B MSC.

Environmental Teach-In planners will decide upon final objectives for a spring Symposium for Environmental Awareness at A&M at 7:30 p.m. in the Architecture Auditorium. Students and faculty are invited to attend and contribute.

**FRIDAY**  
MSC Chess Committee will meet at 7:30 p.m. in Room 3B MSC.

**MONDAY**  
Iota Lambda Sigma will hear

Dr. Irving Goldstein speak on forest products at 7 p.m. in Room 107, M.E. Shops.

Campus Committee of Concern will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Coffee Loft, UCCF.

Lubbock-South Plains Home-town Club will meet at Ralph's Pizza at East Gate at 6:30 p.m.

**TUESDAY**  
Student Psychological Association will view the film, "People Who Care," at 7 p.m. in Nagle Hall.

**WEDNESDAY**  
Army Cadet Wives' Club will plan semester activities at 7:30 p.m. in the Blue Flame Room, Lone Star Gas Co., Bryan.

Chemistry Wives Club will have a Stanley Party at 7:30 p.m. in the Party Room of the Casa Del Sol Apartments.

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Letters to the editor should be typed, double-spaced, and must be no more than 300 words in length. They must be signed, although the writer's name will be withheld by arrangement with the editor. Address correspondence to Listen Up, *The Battalion*, Room 217, Services Building, College Station, Texas 77843.

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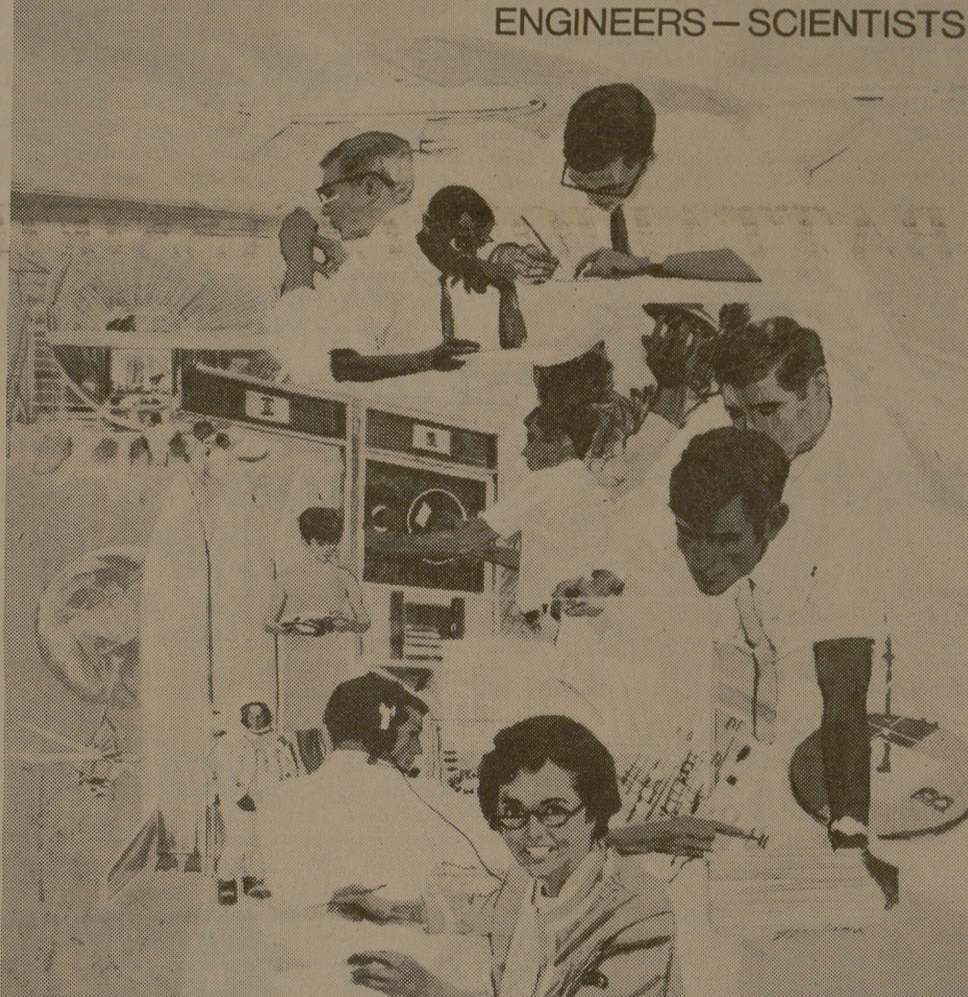
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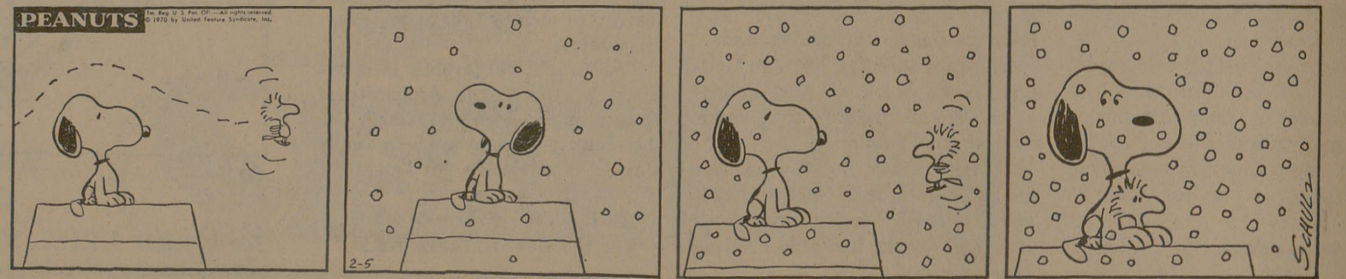
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