

# High Country

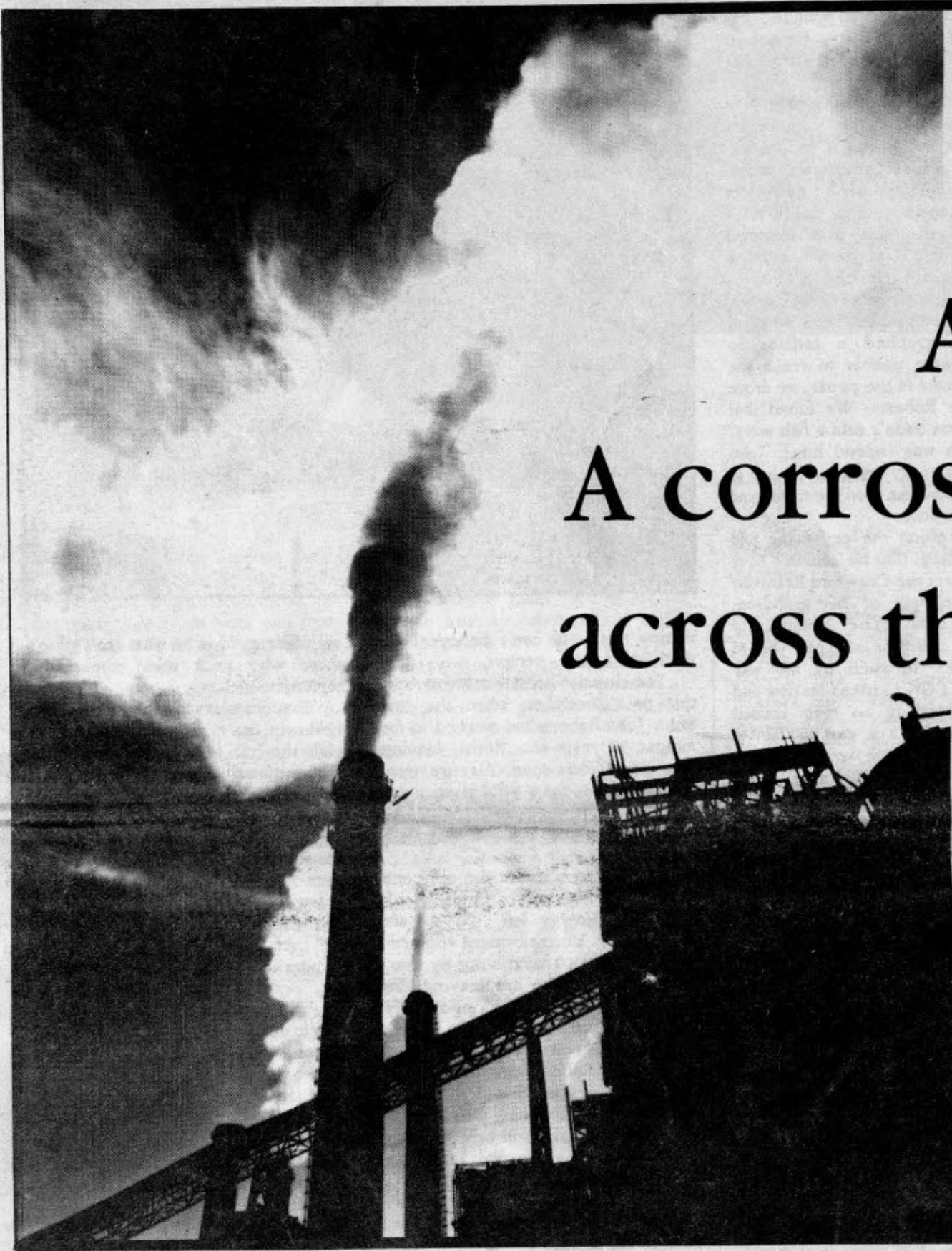
---

September 19, 1983

Vol. 15 No. 17

news

\$1.00



## Acid rain: A corrosive issue across the nation

by Ed Marston

**T**he acid rain issue is demonstrating anew the Pledge of Allegiance phrase: "one nation ... indivisible."

At times, those indivisible links are flukes. At the moment, a bitter battle over redistricting California's Congressional seats has distracted Representative Henry Waxman (Dem.-Ca) from the acid rain question to his own political survival. The diversion of this champion of clean air means the House may not act on acid rain this session despite present momentum.

So an internal California political battle which has nothing to do with acid rain is affecting the nation's efforts to deal with the problem. But most of the acid rain links are logical consequences of the system. The connections became clear this summer, when acid rain ceased to be a

scientific question and became a political question.

Until the summer, the utilities, the coal companies, the coal miners' union, and the Reagan administration maintained that more scientific study was needed. No one could prove power plants in the Midwest were causing acid rain in Canada and New England, they insisted.

The release during the summer of a National Academy of Science study and an Office of Technology Assessment study made that position less tenable. Groups such as the National Coal Association may still call for more science. But their position has been weakened by the defection of chunks of industry.

Despite a few rearguard skirmishes over the "scientific" question, the real issue has become: how much reduction in acidic emissions will there be, and how will those reductions be achieved?

The question of quantity is important. The National Academy of

Sciences has recommended 12 million tons per year less of sulfur dioxide. The Waxman bill proposed 7 to 10 million tons, and the final figure will be part of the ultimate compromise. The more difficult question now is how coal-fired power plants will be cleaned up.

The two major contenders are: installing billions of dollars worth of scrubbers on the polluting Midwest plants and switching plants from high-sulfur coal to low-sulfur coal.

Because of the enormity of the problem, the solution will affect hundreds of thousands of people directly, and the rest of the country indirectly. The struggle threatens to divide the nation, not only into warring economic interest groups, but also into warring regions.

The conflict is rooted in geology, weather patterns and the history of the Clean Air Act of 1970.

Geology has made much of Canada

[Continued on page 12]

2-High Country News--Sept. 19, 1983

## Dear friends,



## High Country News

HIGH COUNTRY NEWS (ISSN/0191/5657) is published biweekly, except for one issue during August and one issue during January, by the High Country Foundation, 224 Grand Avenue, Paonia, Colorado, 81428. Second-class postage paid at Paonia, Colorado.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to HIGH COUNTRY NEWS, Box V, Paonia, CO 81428.

Tom Bell  
Editor Emeritus

Ed Marston  
Publisher

Betsy Marston  
Editor

Judy Moffatt  
Promotion

Don Snow  
Montana Bureau  
Route 2, Box 170 B  
Stevensville, Montana 59870  
406/777-5169

Carol Jones  
Wyoming Bureau  
Box 975  
Dubois, Wyoming 82513  
307/455-2206

Marjane Ambler  
Glenn Oakley  
Geoffrey O'Gara  
C.L. Rawlins  
Peter Wild  
L. Whipple  
Contributing Editors

Nancy Barbee  
Circulation  
Laura Christopher Yarrington  
Darkroom

Judy Heideman  
Debbie Neill  
Typesetting  
Jody Gentzler  
Production

Booke & Cooper  
Steven Gerdes  
Mark and Sally Gordon  
Jake Kittle  
Anne Model

Louise Murie-MacLeod  
David Palmerlee  
Elise Untermeyer  
Anonymous donors  
Publishers Circle, Friends and Associates

Articles appearing in *High Country News* are indexed in *Environmental Periodicals Bibliography*, Environmental Studies Institute, 2074 Alameda Padre Serra, Santa Barbara, California, 93103.

All rights to publication of articles in this issue are reserved. Write for permission to print any articles or illustrations. Contributions (manuscripts, photos, artwork) will be welcomed with the understanding that the editors cannot be held responsible for loss or damage. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope with all unsolicited submissions to ensure return. Articles and letters will be published and edited at the discretion of the editors.

Advertising information is available upon request. To have a sample copy sent to a friend, send us his or her address. Write to Box V, Paonia, Colorado, 81428. Call *High Country News* in Colorado at: 303/527-4898.

Subscriptions are \$18 per year for individuals, \$25 per year for institutions. Single copies \$1.00 plus \$1.25 postage and handling.

Two weeks ago we discovered that journalists are much like fire dogs -- they continue to respond to the bell long after the need is gone.

We made the discovery one Friday evening thanks to a call from Lucille Roberts of Paonia. She told us her husband had caught a yard-long catfish that weighed 16 pounds. "But if you want to see it, hurry. He's about to butcher it. And I do mean butcher it."

From 1975 to 1980 such calls were the staple of the community newspaper we founded in Paonia. During those six years we photographed five-legged lambs, quintuplet lambs, pet racoons, a jar full of black widow spiders, flat and bleached asparagus that had grown under a rock, and prize zucchinis.

We thought we were tired, forever, of such photographs. But we had never photographed a catfish. So when we were unable to reach the present owners of the paper, we drove over to the Roberts. We found that Mrs. Roberts hadn't told a fish story. The catfish was indeed huge. John Roberts is a husky man, but he had to work to loft the fish into the traditional fisherman's pose.

While hefting the catfish he told us, by the way, that he couldn't have pulled it out of the Crawford Reservoir without the help of his grandson, David Kabela. The community newspaper business teaches you to pay attention to such by the way remarks. It's OK to mess up now and again in reporting on town council meetings. But it's a cardinal sin to spell someone's name wrong, or not to mention all the people who helped paint the high school bleachers.

It was, finally, this unending flow of trivia that drove us out of the community weekly business. The potluck announcements, 4-H scrapbook winners, prom queens, and visitors from afar made us want to do a different kind of journalism -- a journalism which covered the big stories that determine our lives.

The visit to the Roberts made us wonder about where the big stories really lie.

Until 1979, the Roberts lived on a spit of land that juts into the North Fork River near Somerset -- a tiny coal mining town about nine miles upstream of Paonia. They lived there until a stranger came through looking for just such a place to settle his family and his parents. Mrs. Roberts recalled that "he looked us right in the eye" while telling them what a wonderful homesite they owned.

Soon after the Roberts sold their home and land, they learned that the buyer had actually been a right-of-way agent for A.T. Massey Coal Company. He was simply practising a typical bit of coal industry deceit, buying land needed for a mine entry under the pretense that he wanted to settle his family on it.

In the short run, the sale of industrial property at residential prices didn't make much difference to the Roberts. John Roberts has always been an energetic man, building houses in his "spare time" -- the hours after or before he went to work in a Somerset coal mine.

So they simply bought some rough, wooded riverfront land outside Paonia for their new home. They lived in a trailer while they cleared and levelled the land, and then he single-handedly built a handsome log house. Mrs. Roberts blames his recent multiple-bypass surgery on the strain of building the home. But John Roberts



denies this -- he can't believe hard work could hurt a person.

The situation became more serious this past December, when the coal mine John Roberts had worked in for almost 30 years shut down, leaving him a few years short of retirement. Unfortunately, for a person with his heart and respiratory problems, it also left him in a poor position to go job hunting.

John Roberts wasn't the only one laid off. The mine closing by Northwest Energy left 300 miners without jobs. Unemployment compensation for the 300 has run out by now, and many of them are leaving the region. There's not much opportunity in a small rural community for people who have been earning \$30,000 a year.

But the Roberts are hanging in there, and they mentioned that their son -- who was a mining boss at the same mine -- is also still here, cutting and then hauling firewood 250 miles over the Divide to Denver, and helping to run a small Mom and Pop trash hauling business. Hustle, it seems, runs in the family.

The mine closing isn't unique to Paonia. Coal, molybdenum, copper, and trona mines have closed throughout the West in the last three years. Those are statistics everyone knows. But talking to the Roberts made us realize that the future of the West isn't being decided by the statistics. It's being decided by a multitude of individual struggles and decisions. The direction the West goes will be decided during these thin times by who sticks and by who gets blown

out of here, and by what resolutions those who stick make about the region.

The conversation with the Roberts, held over the catfish, also made more plain the role of *High Country News*. As a regional paper, it covers the big issues -- issues such as acid rain, and Colorado River flooding, and Wilderness. But the coverage of those 'big' issues must be rooted in the everyday lives of the people who mine the high or low sulfur coal, who breathe the air, and who profit from or are exploited by the government agencies and corporations that are here to 'serve' us.

HCN's job -- and it's a difficult job -- is to do that journalistic rooting. The entire world is geared up to flood newspapers with information and statistics. It was no trouble at all, for example, to get official-type information for this issue's story on acid rain, or on the still-breaking story of Colorado River flooding. But the human side of each story is much more elusive.

'Human side,' of course, doesn't mean interviews with people the day after they lose their jobs or get flooded out of their homes. TV does that wonderfully well. Far more important is the aftermath -- how people react to these phenomena over the long term, how they change their lives or manage to continue with their lives, and what changes in attitude occur as a result. The success or failure of *High Country News* will depend on how well it manages to anchor itself in this underlying reality.

-the staff

## P.S.

Quite by accident, *High Country News* has found itself in the computer service business. Each week we bang out thousands of mailing labels for two local newspapers. In return, we get free use of their typesetting and photographic equipment.

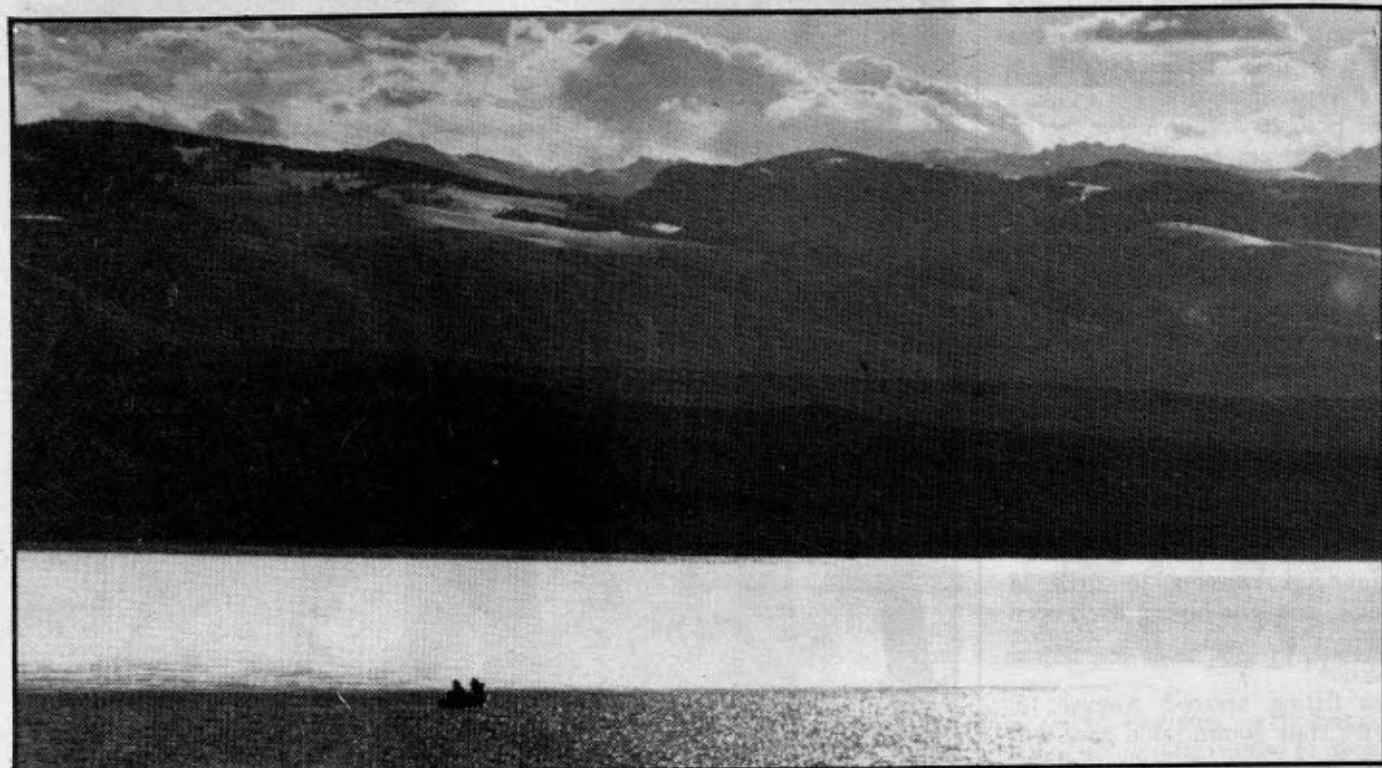
Our Model II Radio Shack computer is quite equal to the task. But our letter-quality printer is a laggard. It turns out beautiful

letter-quality labels, but it takes many hours to do so.

So, if you happen to have a dot matrix printer -- one which can bang out 80 or more characters per second -- that you have no further need of, we would appreciate it. In return, we can offer you our thanks and a tax deduction equal to the value of the gift. *High Country News* is owned by a non-profit foundation, and all contributions are tax free.

## WESTERN ROUNDUP

### Group is sour on proposed gas plants



Joan Nice

Lake in the Wind River Range

The Environmental Defense Fund has cited major faults in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for developing a sour gas field and four processing plants in Wyoming's Sublette and Lincoln Counties.

Bob Yuhnke, regional counsel for the EDF, said the draft lacks data on present air quality and its potential degradation, fails to analyze the effects of possible well blowouts, and uses unscientific methods, poorly-founded assumptions, and unrealistic models.

Besides the impacts associated

with wellsites, roads and plant construction, Yuhnke said the plants would release gases such as sulfur dioxide and hydrogen sulfide which have been linked to acid rain.

Downwind of the sour gas field is the Wind River Range, home of large wilderness and primitive areas, and more than a thousand lakes. Its watersheds feed the Colorado, Missouri and Columbia River systems. The mostly granitic rock of the mountains, however, mean that its lakes and streams are vulnerable to acid rain pollution because of a lack of

natural buffering minerals, such as limestone.

Local opposition to the wells and processing plants has been light compared to the protest two years ago that met Forest Service plants to cut timber in Jack Creek and Klondike Hill areas. Since that time, gas and oil exploration has decreased and the local economy is depressed.

For more information on the Riley Ridge draft EIS contact the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Jackson, Wyoming 83001.

- C.L. Rawlins

### City hopes to chop at wood-stove haze

This winter Missoula, Montana may attain attainment.

Every year since about 1970, Missoula has violated Environmental Protection Agency standards for total suspended particulates in the air. As a result, western Montana's largest city has worn the badge of a "non-attainment area" as designated under federal air quality laws.

The culprit is wood smoke exhausted from the city's thousands of stoves and fireplaces owned by residents who take advantage of the area's cheap and abundant firewood resources.

In late August, however, the Missoula Air Pollution Control Board adopted strict new regulations that may solve the city's wintertime pollution dilemma.

The new rules will force wood burners to idle their stoves for 36 days during average Missoula winters. These 36 days represent the Control Board's best estimate of how many severe thermal inversion days occur each winter when dangerous levels of particulates are trapped beneath masses of cold air above the valley. When particulate levels reach 150 micrograms per cubic meter -- the "air pollution alert" level -- residents will have to stop burning wood.

The new rules also require all new stoves and wood furnaces to meet an emission standard of 6 grams of particulates per kilogram of wood burned. Only four stoves now on the market regularly meet the new standard. Fireplaces will not be affected under the new rules, nor will



Missoula, Montana

residents who depend on wood as their only source of heat.

The Missoula County Commission is expected to ratify the new rules, but Commissioner Barbara Evans, the lone Republican on the three-member body, has called for a public referendum on the rules before the Commission acts. Evans said that the number of county residents affected by the regulations warrants a vote, since the rules constitute a major county action.

Commissioner Ann Mary Dussault disagreed, saying that the Commission carries the responsibility of protecting public health and should

not toss that responsibility back to the voters.

While environmentalists and many county residents hailed the strong new rules, representatives from low-income groups predicted the result would be mass civil disobedience. Low-income citizens charged that the regulations discriminate against everyone who relies heavily on wood as a heating fuel, but mostly against the poor who cannot afford cleaner stoves.

Missoula is the first town in Montana to adopt such regulations.

-Don Snow

## HOTLINE

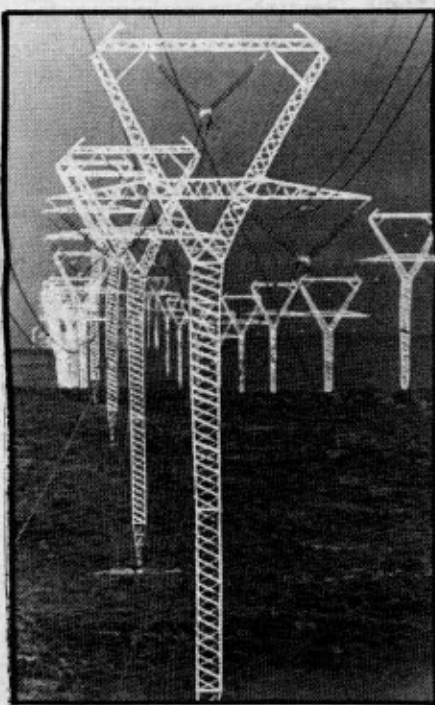
### Utilities binge: consumers diet

Electric utilities went in one direction in 1982 while consumers went in another. The utilities increased the nation's power plant capacity by 3.1 percent. At the same time, the National Coal Association says, consumers dropped their demand by 4.5 percent. Utilities hope to slow the trend by deferring or cancelling power plants.

### Idaho power prices are low voltage

Customers of Idaho Power will be hit by a 12.8 percent rate increase. But consumers in other states would gladly trade places with them. The increase will raise the cost of 1000 kilowatt-hours of electricity up to just shy of \$40, or four cents per kilowatt-hour. By comparison, consumers in Utah and Colorado, where power comes from coal-fired plants rather than from dams, pay about seven cents per kilowatt-hour.

Idaho is also blessed with a low unemployment rate to go with its low power rates -- 7.4 percent in August compared with 9.5 percent for the nation.



Gowen Green

## BARBS

### What's in a name?

If a rose still smells like a rose, no matter what you call it, then federal judge Richard Bilby of Seattle is wasting his time. The judge has banned the acronym WPPSS from his courtroom, in apparent response to widespread use of the term WHOOPS.

The judge, who is conducting one of the many WHOOPS court cases, has ordered that the 5 non-existent or unfinished power plants be referred to as the "Supply System." He has not attempted to extend his WPPSS/WHOOPS ban to the press.

### A radioactive silver lining.

When the last container of contaminated water from Three Mile Island was shipped August 30 to a Department of Energy laboratory in Richard, Washington, the DOE announced:

"We are pleased with the progress in the waste removal effort at TMI ... We are receiving valuable R&D information that will make a substantial contribution to treating and disposing of unique wastes resulting from commercial nuclear power plant operations."

4-High Country News--Sept. 19, 1983

## HOTLINE

**The Feds taketh,  
and giveth**

Opponents of a proposed ski area near Leadville, Colorado, next to Twin Lakes, say they have found another smoking pistol. It is a 1971 letter written by Robert M. Cermak, who was then Forest Supervisor of the Pike San Isabel National Forest.

In the letter, Cermak urges the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to condemn land owned by a Denver attorney named Bond who wanted to develop a ski area above Twin Lakes. Supervisor Cermak argues that condemnation was necessary to stop Bond's ski area and preserve the area's "great scenic beauty" -- beauty which Cermak wrote is seen by thousands of visitors driving over Independence Pass to Aspen.

The land in question was condemned and is now owned by the U.S. Forest Service. That agency is about to list it as Priority II land -- land which could be developed as a ski area. A potential developer, Dennis O'Neill of Twin Lakes, has asked the state of Colorado to set up a Joint Review Process study of the land for his proposed Quail Mountain Ski Area.

Hank Deutsch, a spokesman for Regional Forester Craig Rupp in Denver, says the Cermak letter is not binding on the Forest Service. He said it represented the views of the Forest Supervisor at that time. Deutsch also said that the Forest Service now knows how to design a ski area so it won't detract from the view. That new design ability, he said, would allow the agency to permit a ski area above Twin Lakes while preserving the view.

Deutsch said he had no idea whether the heirs of Bond, the original developer, would have a legal case against the federal government for condemning his land to prevent development of his ski area, and then -- a decade later -- considering leasing it to another developer for a ski area.



## Wyoming gets rid of natural gas with a flare

Wyoming is helping America rid itself of the natural gas bubble. For more than a month now, the state has let well owners flare \$40,000 to \$70,000 worth of natural gas a day.

The 13 to 20 million cubic feet of gas is produced by Powder River Basin wells whose main product is oil. Well owners asked the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission for permission to flare so that they could keep on pumping oil. In addition to their desire to keep selling oil, some well owners say capping wells could damage future production.

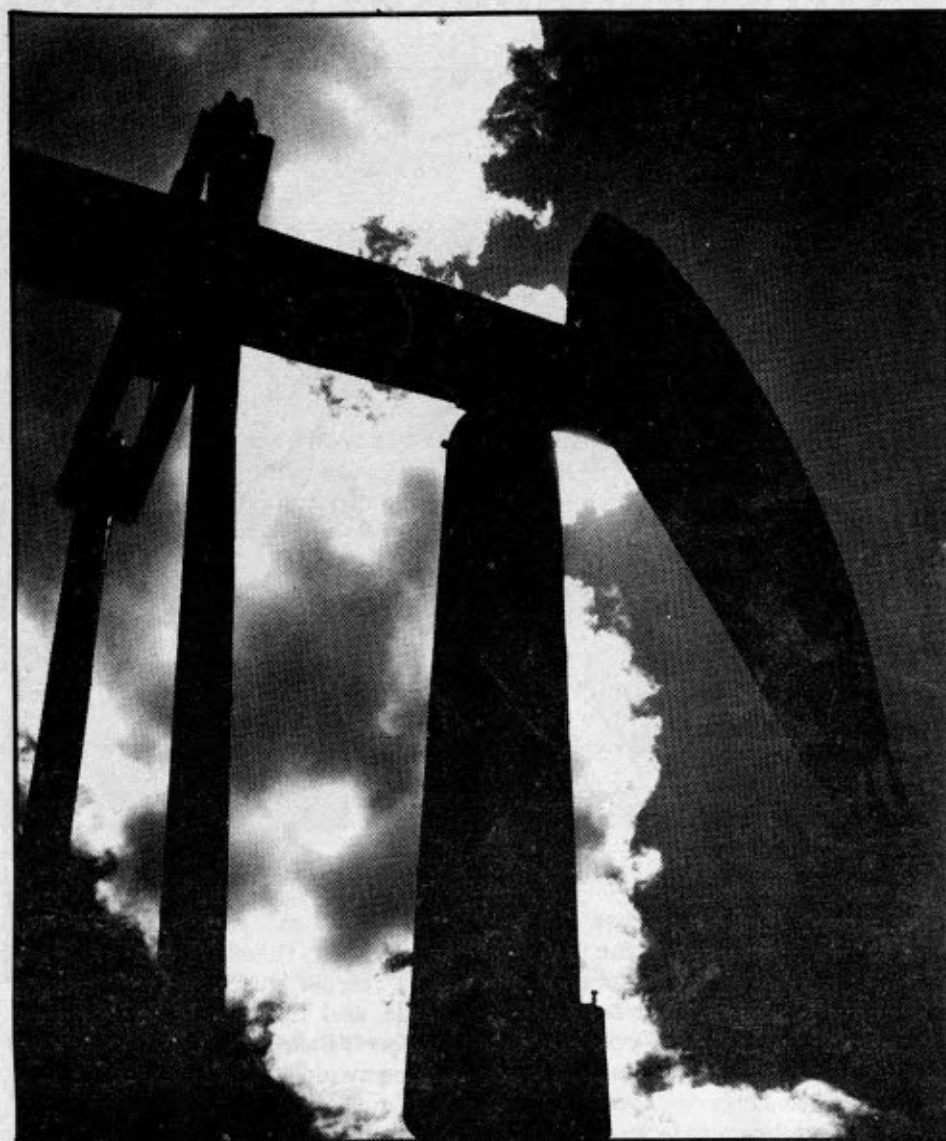
The flaring is a financial and political embarrassment to the state. It is losing up to \$8,000 daily in taxes and royalties, it is providing flaming notice to the gas industry that there's no financial reason to drill in Wyoming, and it is laying itself open to charges of waste and resource destruction.

The flaring started August 10, when the state commission gave well owners permission to burn the gas. Colorado Interstate Gas Company -- which had been buying the gas -- said sagging consumer demand had reduced their market. So they cut the wells off.

The 512 wells that were affected also produce 5,000 barrels of oil daily -- oil that's worth up to \$150,000. Rather than lose the oil revenue, the 40 to 50 producers asked for and got permission to flare.

They got that permission despite a state statute forbidding waste. Commission chairman Oscar Swan said flaring gas for which there is no market is not waste.

Despite the fact that flaring, technically at least, is not waste, the commission is trying to stop it. It hopes to divert the production cutback -- which represents 2 percent of Wyoming's daily output -- to gas-only wells. Wells that produce only gas could be capped without losing oil production or endangering future production. The commission also



wants to bar out-of-state gas from being sold in Wyoming while flaring is going on.

The pipeline-company buyers of natural gas will almost certainly fight such moves. They claim that only Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has the power to regulate production that way. Attempts by Texas to regulate production have been challenged in court. Stopping interstate gas could be challenged under laws governing interstate commerce.

Oscar Swan, who heads up the Wyoming commission, told the *Casper Star-Tribune*, "I'm not sure FERC has the power to do the things that are needed to solve" the gas bubble problem. "We really are the ones that have ... the waste prevention jurisdiction."

The state laws do not speak specifically to this problem. But Swan says, "If the law doesn't clearly say I can't do it, then I interpret the law to say I can do it if it makes sense."

—Anne MacKinnon, HCN staff

## The lights dim for Kootenai Falls dam

Both the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission staff have recommended against granting federal construction permits for the Kootenai Falls dam in northwest Montana.

Proposed by Northern Lights, Inc. and a consortium of Montana and Idaho rural power cooperatives, the 144-megawatt dam would span what geologists consider the last major waterfall in the Pacific Northwest (HCN, 6/11/82).

Ten parties, including three tribes of the Kootenai nation in Montana, Idaho, and British Columbia, intervened in the FERC licensing proceedings, the longest proceedings of their kind in FERC's history. While environmental groups charged that the dam would wreck the natural habitat for Montana's few remaining white sturgeon and the rare harlequin duck, the tribes alleged that Kootenai Falls is the residence of some of their deities. The tribes were willing to carry the case against the dam as far as they could, eventually invoking the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978, if need be.

"There is no question that the Indians' First Amendment rights

outweigh development," the FERC staff said in its 434-page brief against the dam.

In its brief, the Montana DNRC cited "severe and in most cases irreparable" damage to the blue-ribbon fishery on the Kootenai River, one of Montana's ten best trout streams.

DNRC officials also charged that power from the dam isn't needed in the near term in a region that just cancelled four large nuclear power plants -- four-fifths of the Washington Public Power Supply System's ill-starred nuclear project. DNRC suggested that the dam await the "acid test" of further experience under the Northwest's new 20-year energy plan adopted by the Northwest Regional Power Planning Council.

Critics of the Kootenai Falls proposal long ago said that the \$226 million project would add an unnecessary financial burden to ratepayers. Two of the cooperatives involved in the Falls project -- the Missoula and Ravalli Electric co-ops -- were also invested in the WPPSS boondoggle, now known as the largest loan default in American business history.

Steve Loken of Save the Kootenai,

one of the intervenors against the project, told *High Country News*, "The Kootenai River has already paid a heavy price for energy production at Libby Dam," an Army Corps project just upstream from Kootenai Falls. "Co-op members are paying a heavy price, too," said Loken, who suggested that the co-ops could deliver more cost-effective energy by investing in strong conservation measures.

Now the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission must rule on whether to grant the construction license for the dam. If the Commission accepts its staff's recommendation, the dam is doomed. If so, it would also be the first time that FERC ever denied a license for a major hydropower project.

Montanans have watched the Kootenai Falls issue closely, and not just because the falls are at stake. Another issue is whether the state can claim licensing jurisdiction under the Montana Major Facility Siting Act, or whether federal laws preempt state jurisdiction in hydropower projects. The state will be spared a test of its siting authority if the Commission adopts its staff's recommendation against the dam.

—Don Snow

## WESTERN ROUNDUP

### Water use, flood control clash at hearing

*Flagstaff, Arizona.* By now, nearly everyone in the southwest knows that this year is the wettest of the century for the Colorado River. The spring runoff, which averages about seven million acre-feet (maf) per year, was 210 percent of normal.

The summer floods killed six people, drowned hundreds of acres of crops, destroyed the summer tourist industry for hundreds of businesses in Arizona and California, and caused at least \$80 million in damages to private and federal property.

What is less apparent is how one of the most controlled rivers in the world was allowed to cause such damage, and what can be done to prevent repeat performances in the near future.

Last week in Yuma, Arizona and Needles, California, the House Interior Committee, chaired by Morris Udall (D-Ariz.), tried to begin answering these questions. The committee heard from residents of the flooded areas and many of them lashed out angrily at the Interior Department's Bureau of Reclamation.

"We are getting the same answers from our government as the American government is getting from the Russians," one resident charged.

Many of the local people said the Bureau should have foreseen the heavy runoff and released more water earlier in the year to prevent flood waters from spilling out of Glen Canyon, Hoover, Davis and Parker Dams later in the season.

But the Committee, other federal and state officials, and some local water users were much more sympathetic to the Bureau. "It is clear the Bureau passes the test," said Myron Holburt, chief engineer of California's Colorado River Board. "They operated responsibly and did a

fine job in coping with fast-moving and unprecedented weather events."

In repeated testimony, officials said freak weather -- late snows in April and May followed by very hot weather Memorial Day, and hard rains two weeks later -- made matters unpredictable for the Bureau of Reclamation.

The Congressional General Accounting Office, in preliminary findings, added more support. "Some flooding could not have been prevented on the Colorado given the levels of the reservoirs in January," the GAO found.

In fact, there was so much praise for the Bureau at last week's hearings that Bureau Commissioner Robert Broadbent near the end of his testimony felt compelled to say, "I'm amazed at our expertise and our knowledge of the Colorado River and the people we have in government. We've really got some good people."

Some people were not so full of praise. "I see people who come before you this morning," Quechan tribal president Vincent Harvier told the committee, "and I have to listen to all of the explanations, all of the expertise, with all the statistics and all of the planning and the recounting of the law that tells them that they were right. And I have to bite my lip and listen to all of this."

Harvier said 650 acres of cotton, plus hundreds of other acres of farmland on the Quechan Reservation are under water.

"I believe in another two years we could have been self-sufficient," Harvier said. Now he indicated, that dream has been put off by high water. Moreover, Harvier said, the tribe did not build into the flood plain as many of his neighbors along the Lower Colorado did.

"So you can't say that we're in the flood plain and that we suffered this damage due to our own negligence," he testified.

The demands for Colorado River water are so fierce that all seven Basin states want the big reservoirs on the river -- Lakes Powell and Mead -- to be as full as they can be to ensure the states' full allocations. Because of this, flooding becomes a strong possibility in any year of high runoff.

"Could you tell the Committee if there is any way you could prevent a recurrence of this situation?" Rep. John McCain (R-Ariz.) asked Broadbent.

"There is a real easy way," Broadbent responded. "And that's to hold the reservoirs down low enough so that you take care of this kind of event."

Larry Paulson, a research professor at the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, made a proposal to the committee to increase flood storage by more than 70 percent. This would protect people in low-lying areas, including those within the flood channel of 40,000 cubic feet per second below Hoover Dam. His suggestion was to lower the levels of Lakes Powell and Mead before the runoff, which would take a change in the operating criteria of the Bureau of Reclamation.

Udall told Paulson he thought the plan was good and worth pursuing, but other interests in the river, including farmers, utility companies that buy the river's cheap hydroelectric power, and especially the powerful state engineers who doggedly fight for every drop promised them, may make this politically impossible.

-Sandy Tolan

## HOTLINE

### Land of many uses



If you want to know what a marijuana plant looks like, ask the Forest Service in Montana's Northern Region for a poster. Foresters are giving out pot posters so folks will be able to turn in growers who use public land as private farms.

Estimates of the street value of the pot is over \$2 million, says Special Agent Tom King of the Forest Service. Northern Idaho, however, does even better. King says the value of pot grown on National Forest land there is \$45 million.

### Animas-LaPlata back in court

Colorado's Animas-LaPlata water project is not yet out of the legal thicket. Durango-area opponents of the project, having lost a legal round in Federal Court in Denver, have appealed the case to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. The group, called the Taxpayers for the Animas-LaPlata Referendum, are challenging the way in which the Animas-LaPlata Conservancy District was formed. They say the formation was unconstitutional.

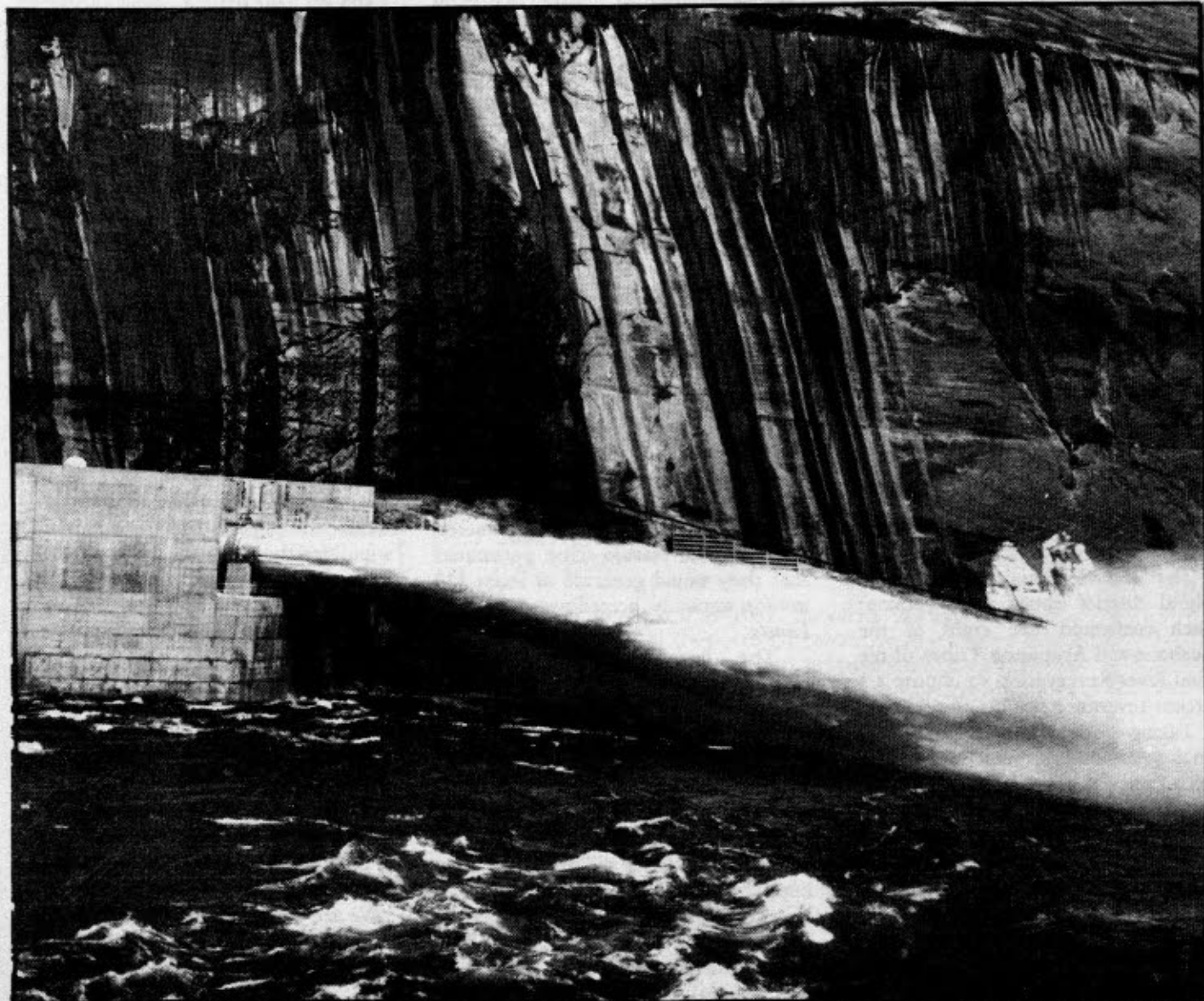
Meanwhile, the half-billion-dollar project is being considered by a House appropriations subcommittee as a new start. It is not known if the appeal will derail that consideration. Colorado's Narrows project, which is also tops on the state's wish list, is still in litigation over the sufficiency of its water rights. It is not being considered for a new start.

### Tailings to be encapsulated

To those who have followed the Department of Energy's cost-cutting approach to cleaning up radioactive waste sites at inactive uranium mills, the DOE's final EIS on Canonsburg, Pennsylvania is no surprise.

The DOE proposes to "stabilize" the tailings where they are; not remove them. The former Vitro Rare Metals Plant and a railroad landfill are less than 40 miles from Pittsburgh.

The remedial action plan calls for the 18.5 acre site to be expanded to 30 acres to allow for burial of about 90,000 cubic yards of tailings in an "encapsulation cell." Trucking the radioactive wastes to a new site would be more hazardous to residents than burial in place, the DOE concluded. Copies of the final Environmental Impact Statement are available from: Uranium Mill Tailings Remedial Action Project, DOE, 5301 Central Ave., NE, Suite 1700, Albuquerque, NM, 87108.



Overflow from Glen Canyon Dam

## LETTERS

## PONYING UP

Dear HCN,

I don't know how I got on your mailing list, but I've been enjoying the paper. So I guess it's time to pony up and pay the freight.

Welcome to Colorado.

Regarding the "potshots" at Snowmass in your article on Presidential politics of July 8 and the rebuttal of a "year 'round resident," I thought Whipple's observations were quite cogent. Peterson's rebuttal is only what would be expected from a denizen of Glitter Gulch.

Bill Hargelroad  
Eagle, Colorado

## EATEN ALIVE

Dear Ed and Betsy Marston:

As we read the September 5 issue of HCN, it became clear that our beloved *Western Colorado Report* had been eaten alive.

We mourn.

Betty Feazel  
Pagosa Springs, Colorado

## TRADITIONS OF EXCELLENCE

Dear HCN,

I would like to thank the current staff of HCN for the excellent paper they have produced over the years. I have enjoyed your work and always look forward to each issue.

I am sure the new staff will strive to keep up the tradition, but it will seem strange not to see all those familiar names I have got to know at HCN.

I wish each of you success in your future endeavors. Thanks again.

Sincerely,  
Kenneth J. Gamauf  
Boulder, Colorado

## CONGRATULATIONS

Dear HCN,

A note of congratulations on your recent merger with *High Country News*, another fine Rocky Mountain West publication. As we have been subscribers to both HCN and *Western Colorado Report*, we are well aware of the high quality of both papers, and look forward to a continuation of both tradition under your able leadership.

We are also, not incidentally, grateful to be relieved of the burden of excessive amounts of newsprint cluttering our office without any loss of the perspective and intelligence offered by both HCN and WCR.

Best wishes for your continued success!

Sincerely,

Michael D. Scott  
Regional Director  
The Wilderness Society



## Citizen protest saves Bear 60

Her name is Bear 60 and her crime is eating garbage. For that the Yellowstone National Park resident was condemned to death.

That is, before Gail Richardson, a 36-year-old travel bureau employee in tiny West Yellowstone, organized a protest. Three weeks ago Ms. Richardson drew up petitions on Bear 60's behalf, circulated them to year-round residents of West Yellowstone (pop. 800) and visitors inside the Park, and in four and a half days she gathered 1500 signatures. The petitions called for a reprieve of Bear 60's fate and an end to what Ms. Richardson calls "irrational" grizzly management procedures.

The petitions expressed outrage at killing one of the 30 or so breeding females left in a bear population that is at most 200 in three different Yellowstone ecosystems, says Ms. Richardson.

Somewhat to her surprise, she won a stay of execution and a second goal as well: a public dialog with Jim Flynn, director of Montana's Fish, Wildlife, and Game Department. Flynn called a public meeting last week and 600 people filled the West Yellowstone Convention Center to hear how the state - federal Grizzly Recovery Project works.

As Flynn explained before the meeting, Bear 60's behavior had become incorrigible. The daughter of a "garbage bear," she had been trapped twice before eating garbage in Cooke City, Montana. Then she was moved 40 miles deep into Yellowstone Park.

"Before long she was back again," he said. Too, she was teaching her cubs to prowl around garbage dumps, thereby starting a third generation down a dangerous path. "They're family critters. They pass on bad habits," Flynn said.

Last month the cubs were taken from Bear 60. One six-month-old 55-pound cub is doing well and is being monitored. The other cub died when the release mechanism failed on a helicopter hoist (HCN, 9/5/83).

Given Bear 60's record, destruction seemed the best choice, Flynn said, for once bears learn to plunder



garbage, humans are endangered. This past summer a bear killed and partially ate a tourist at the Park. The bear was trapped and killed.

Despite the best efforts of public officials, Flynn said, understanding of the Grizzly Recovery Project is needed. "This is an emotional subject. You get people saying 'The only good bear is a dead bear,' and others saying 'Save the bears.' Sometimes you have to kill a bear to protect the rest."

At the meeting in West Yellowstone Sept. 9, Flynn told the group that Bear 60's fate was now undecided, as alternatives to death were being studied. One approach might be "aversive conditioning" as proposed by Charles Jonkel of the University of Montana's Border Grizzly Project. Once Bear 60 was taught eating garbage was painful, she could be released into Yellowstone Park again. Another solution is to send the grizzly to a zoo.

Gail Richardson, who says she is an unaffiliated environmentalist, isn't happy with the zoo proposal. She wants Bear 60 back in the Park

because she is a prime breeding female.

The public meeting she provoked was both productive and non-confrontational, she adds. She and David Richey, a West Yellowstone attorney, handled questions from the floor, and two days before the meeting, she had put questions boxes around town to elicit concerns of townspeople. Residents could help solve the bears' problems by securing garbage, she points out.

"In some ways this is not a bear problem at all. It's a human problem. People like to see the bears, and some leave dumpsters open to attract them."

Ms. Richardson says she expects to be informed about the final disposition of Bear 60. For now, she is resting up after a hectic three weeks which, she concludes, were worth the effort. "I was amazed to get the 1500 signatures on petitions, and surprised at the turnout at the meeting. People want to understand how to help the grizzly."

-Betsy Marston

## Tribes can levy taxes on non-Indians

Two recent federal court decisions have affirmed the right of Indian tribes to levy taxes on non-Indian businesses operating within a reservation.

One decision came from the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals, which denied an attempt by four petroleum companies to overturn two Navajo taxes levied five years ago.

The second decision was by a federal district court in Wyoming, which confirmed the right of the Shoshone and Arapahoe Tribes of the Wind River Reservation to impose a 4 percent severance tax on oil and gas.

Taxing powers are important to tribal governments, which otherwise lack a financial base. With unemployment levels of 40-75 percent on many reservations, income taxes are not politically acceptable. And property taxes, which support most other local governments, are not possible on communally-owned tribal lands.

Now that the two Navajo taxes have been confirmed, other tribes are

expected to enact similar ordinances. One of the Navajo's taxes is on business activity by any oil, gas, coal or uranium company with gross revenues over \$500,000 annually. The other, a 3 percent possessory interest tax, is levied against the value of minerals under leased land.

When the two taxes were enacted in 1978, the Navajo tribe estimated that they would generate at least \$28 million annually, according to *Federal Lands*.

The new tribal administration headed by Chairman Peterson Zah is also concentrating on raising more money from existing development by renegotiating existing leases.

For the Wind River Reservation, the court decision releases \$7.2 million which was held in escrow. That and future tax revenues will probably go to supplement programs suffering from Reaganomics, says Wes Martel, Shoshone business councilman. That means job training, health, education and general assistance.

In addition, the severance tax

money will help support the Shoshone Oil and Gas Commission, which is responsible for preventing oil thefts such as those that put the Wind River Reservation in national headlines several years ago.

Unlike other tribes, Shoshone and Arapahoe royalty revenues are controlled by federal law, which stipulates that 85 percent of the money must be distributed in per capita payments to individual tribal members and cannot be used for government services. Tax monies are apparently not limited by that law, according to tribal attorneys. The Wind River tribes are concerned about providing for future generations now that oil reserves are dwindling.

Tribes on both reservations see the decisions as important confirmations of their governmental jurisdiction over non-Indians within their boundaries. "We are very happy with the decision. It upgrades our sovereignty," said Martel of the Shoshone council.

-Marjane Ambler

# BULLETIN BOARD

## BROWN CLOUD SPREADS

Air-borne lead is down, while nitrogen dioxide and sulfur dioxide are holding steady in the Denver metro area.

The 1982 Colorado air quality report also says that it's not only Denver -- with its famous Brown Cloud -- that has air quality problems. Resorts such as Telluride, Steamboat Springs, Vail and Glenwood Springs also violated dust-in-the-air levels in 1982.

A copy of the 77-page report is available by calling Jay Lowry at 303/320-4180, or by writing: Colorado Health Dept. 4210 E. 11th Ave., Denver, Co. 80220.

## FATE OF THE EARTH

David Brower, founder of Friends of the Earth, will be keynote speaker at the first Rocky Mountain regional conference on The Fate of the Earth, held at the University of Colorado at Boulder Oct. 20-23.

Sponsors include the CU Environmental Center, National Wildlife Federation, Colorado League of Women Voters, Greenpeace, Physicians for Social Responsibility and FOE, among others. Speakers include Wes Jackson of the Land Institute, Hunter and Amory Lovins, energy consultants, and Cecil Garland of Ranchers for Peace.

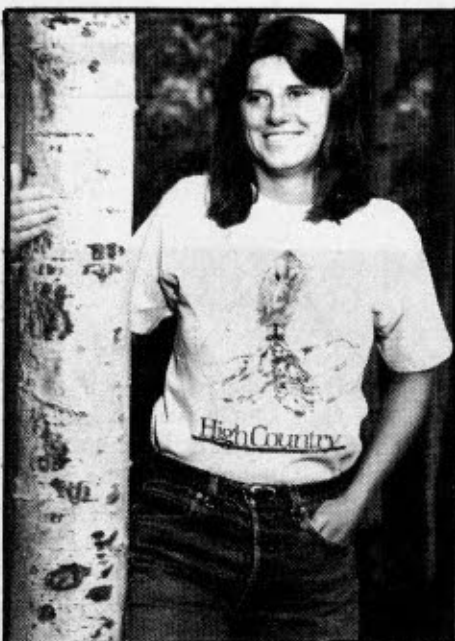
Registration is just \$20. For more information give Steve Smith at the Environmental Center a call at 303/492-8308.

## STATE OF WYOMING'S WATER

A comprehensive and free 24-page summary of Wyoming's state and federal water development projects is now available from the Powder River Basin Resource Council.

The Status Report details funding committed for all impoundments, pipelines, diversions, rehabilitation and groundwater proposals throughout the state. Also included are the 34 projects included in the Omnibus Water Bill passed in 1982 and amended a year later by the Wyoming legislature.

Call Grant Parker at 307/672-5809 or write for the report to: Powder River Basin Resource Council, 48 North Main, Sheridan, WY 82801.



Mike McClure

## NEW HCN T-SHIRTS

100% COTTON  
LIGHT BLUE OR BEIGE  
W/ BLUE DESIGN  
BY SYLVIA LONG  
S, M, L, XL  
\$8.50 POSTPAID  
HCN, BOX V, PAONIA,  
COLORADO 81428

## RUGGED CANYONS

Close to Grand Junction, Colorado but in deep and remote canyons, are the Little Bookcliffs, a BLM Wilderness Study Area next to one of the three wildhorse areas in the nation.

Sherry Hamann, 303/241-4710, will lead a group into the Little Bookcliffs this Sept. 24-25 as another Fall '83 Wilderness Trip organized by four conservation groups. The groups want to acquaint people with the distinctive character of the 22 wildlands under review by the BLM for Wilderness designation.

On Oct. 8-9, Mark Pearson plans to take a group to Cross Mountain, a 1,000 foot-deep gorge of the Yampa River northwest of Cortez. Pearson promises views of eight geologic formations and extensive artifacts. Call him at 303/245-1191 to be included.

## DIMINISHING RETURNS

A just-released federal study says that the only difference between a consumer product and a power plant is size.

The National Energy Information Center says that power plant reliability has been dropping one percent a year since the late 1960s. Large coal-fired power plants are now available for use only 71 percent of the time. Using the straight-line trend extrapolation favored by the utility industry reveals that plants coming on line in the year 2154 A.D. will not operate at all.

The report, titled "Delays and Cancellations of Coal-Fired Generating Capacity," can be had by calling 202/252-8800, or by writing: National Energy Information Center, Forrestal Bldg., Rm. 1F-048, Washington, D.C., 20585.

## THE FUTURE OF SYNFUELS

The Montana-based Northern Plains Resource Council will hold its third annual conference on synthetic fuels next month. One featured speaker is Bob Roach, a lobbyist with the Environmental Policy Center in Washington, D.C., who urges dismantling the Synthetic Fuels Corporation. Another is Ron Erickson, director of the environmental studies department at the University of Montana and a student of synthetic fuel processes around the world.

The conference is set for October 22 at 1 p.m. at Dawson Community College in Glendive. When the conference is over, folks can stick around for the Resource Council's Eastern Montana benefit at the Moose Club, which promises dinner, dancing and an auction with a tall tales contest.

## DESIGNER WANTED

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is conducting a contest for professional artists who would like to have their work reproduced on the 1985 Wyoming Conservation Stamp.

Artists must submit their artwork to the Game and Fish headquarters in Cheyenne by June 1, 1984.

All artwork must be original and may be in color or black and white. Artists should choose subjects that fit the historic nature of wildlife conservation in Wyoming.

The conservation stamp contest came about after the 1982 Legislature passed a law requiring hunters and fishermen to purchase a \$5 conservation stamp beginning January 1.

Contest rules and entry forms can be obtained from Game and Fish headquarters in Cheyenne. Call 307/777-7736 for more information.

## INNOVATIVE ENERGY FINANCING

Finding the money for both energy conservation measures and installing renewable energy systems is the topic of a three-day workshop at Livingston, Montana this October.

Sponsors are the Montana department of natural resources and conservation, the Department of Energy, Western Interstate Energy Board, and Bonneville Power Administration. Speakers include Pat Collins from DOE and Leo Berry, director of Montana's natural resources department. The conference on Oct. 5-7 is called Innovative Energy Financing in the Eighties, costs \$40 to register, and includes a western barbecue. Call Jeff Birkby at 406/449-3940 for more information.

## FUTURES CONFERENCE

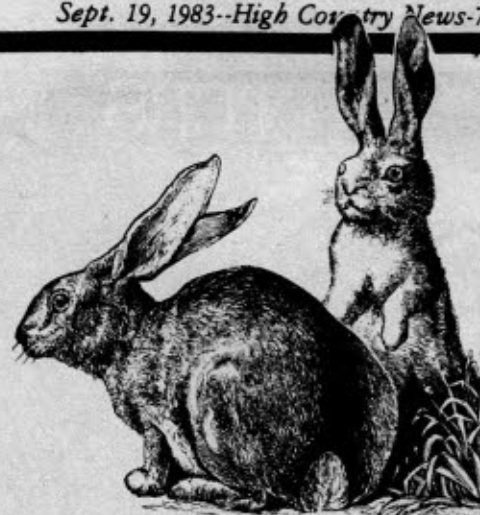
The Colorado Democratic Party will hold a Futures Conference Oct. 7-9 at the YMCA Camp of the Rockies in Estes Park. Most of the sessions will be held Saturday, October 8, including ones on national security, the nuclear freeze, Central America, the consumer and farmer, the transition from smokestacks to high tech, and public utilities.

Speakers include Congresswoman Pat Schroeder, Senator Gary Hart, Denver Mayor Federico Pena, and others. Call Doug Schroeder in Denver at 303/320-1000 for more information.

## GUNS FOR BUTTER

A women's regional conference set in Laramie on Sept. 24-25 includes a nuclear concerns panel featuring Sheila Tobias, co-author of the book: *What kinds of guns are they buying for your butter?*

There will also be a business fair and a variety of seminars including one on career options. It's all taking place at the Student Union at the University of Wyoming. Call the Resource Center at 308/766-6285 for more information.



## URANIUM DRILLING DIPS

Surface drilling for uranium in the United States was nearly 62 percent lower in 1982 than in 1981, says the Energy Information Administration in a report called: *1982 Survey of U.S. Uranium Exploration Activity*.

The report, which sells for \$3.75, says the drilling high was reached in 1978 and has been dipping ever since. Information was provided by 92 companies which operate uranium exploration ventures. Copies of the report are available through the EIA's National Energy Information Center, Room IF-148, Forrestal Building, Washington, D.C. 20585, or by calling 202/252-8800.

## NOTECARDS



## Petroglyphs

by Kathy Bogan

10 card set / \$4.75 ppd.

High Country News Notecards

Box V

Paonia, Colorado 81428

## How to Achieve a Nuclear Freeze and Disarmament

If extinction is to be avoided as the fate of the earth and all of us who inhabit it, a multilateral nuclear freeze will be an excellent beginning—and disarmament will be a worthy future goal.

But how to reach that goal? Sovereign nations won't disarm—nor should they—until protective machinery exists to give them security against predatory neighbors. So we should now be starting to build, for the world community, the same kind of machinery that brings security to every peaceful community on earth: law and government.

The American Movement for World Government, Inc., is a tax-deductible nonprofit organization seeking to educate the public in the rudiments of democratic federal government, so citizens will be supportive when some future George Washington proposes it for the world. Help us.

## AMERICAN MOVEMENT FOR WORLD GOVERNMENT, Inc.

Wendell Willkie Memorial Building, 20 W. 40th St., New York, N.Y. 10018

## CLIP AND MAIL TODAY!

American Movement for World Government, Inc.  
Wendell Willkie Memorial Building Rm. 406  
20 West 40th Street, New York, N.Y. 10018

- ☐ I would like to help spread word about world government. Please enter my membership:
- |                                                    |                                             |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular (\$20)            | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting (\$100) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student or Retired (\$10) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining (\$250) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributing (\$50)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Life (\$500)       |
- (\$6.67 of membership is for subscription to "World Peace News")  
I enclose \$ \_\_\_\_\_

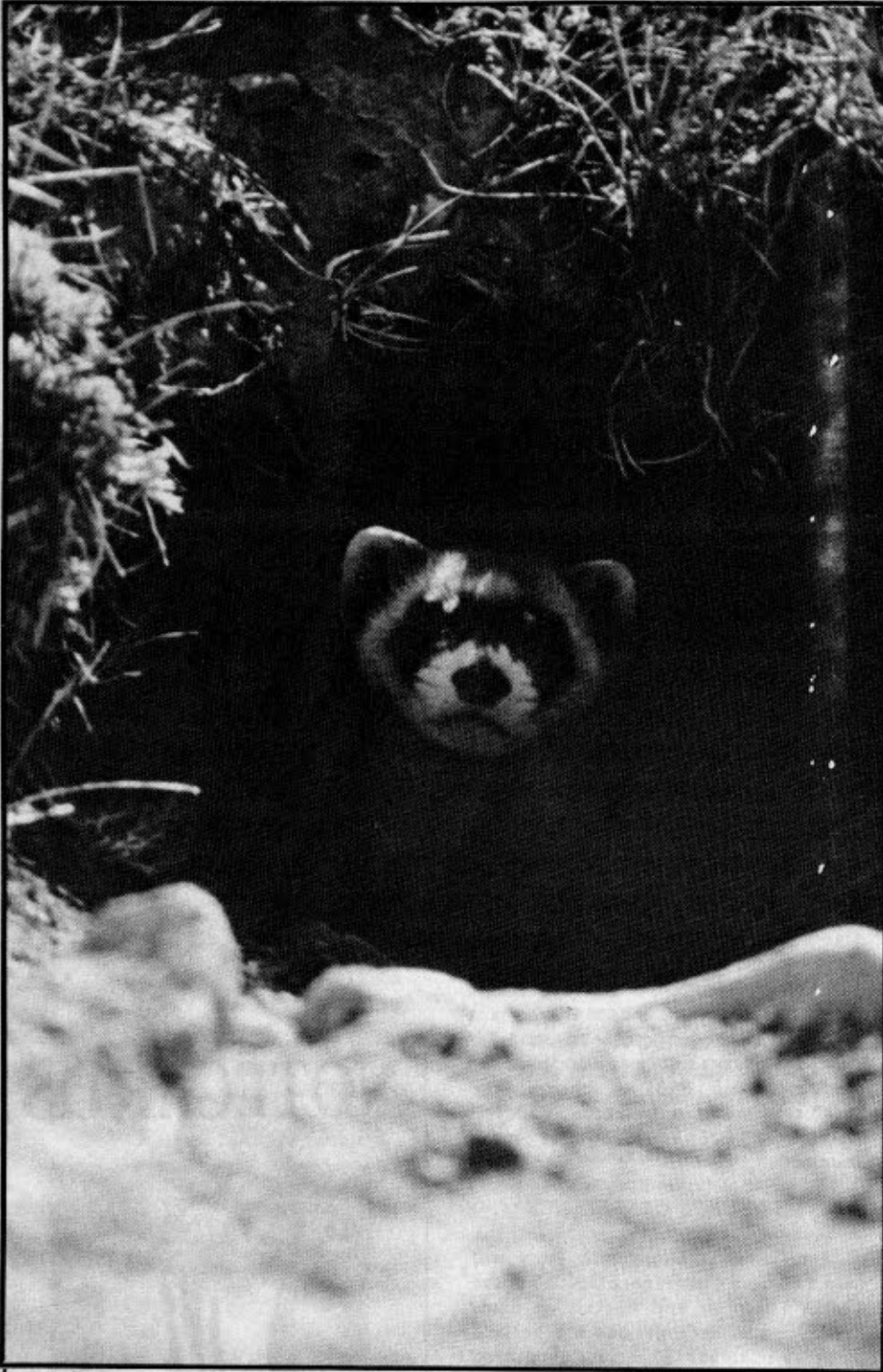
- ☐ I want to know more. Send FREE brochure. Dues and contributions to AMWG are tax deductible.

PLEASE PRINT

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

8-High Country News-Sept. 19, 1983



## Rare G of Prairie

—by Joan Nice

Photographs of black-footed ferrets are almost as rare as live specimens.

It's not just that there is now only one known population of *Mustela nigripes* in the world. Even back in this small predator's heyday, before the massive poisoning of western prairies, humans seldom noticed these nocturnal, masked mammals that spend nine-tenths of their lives underground. Ferrets are almost always well-hidden from man and other predators, even if only a few yards beneath human feet.

Ten years ago the only ferret most Wyomingites had ever seen was on the "Wanted" posters tacked up by biologist Tim Clark. He promised a \$250 reward for information that would lead to a live specimen. Clark happily paid up in 1981 to a woman who indirectly led researchers to, not one, but a thriving population of ferrets near Meeteetse, Wyoming (See HCN, 7/23/82). Now, two years into the research effort, facts and photos about ferrets are finally beginning to surface.

Black-footed ferrets are small. Full-grown males usually weigh just over two pounds -- about



# Glimpses of a Predator

as much as their prairie dog prey. The average female is only a little over a pound and a half. From nose to tail-tip they rarely measure more than about two feet.

They almost always live in prairie dog towns, where they thrive by eating their hosts. Researchers with spotlights often see a ferret poking out of a prairie dog hole, its long tubular body in what Clark calls a "periscoping" pose. On other occasions, one is spotted bounding across the prairie or cavorting around a hole. Usually they are solitary.

By mid-summer, however, ferret families emerge with the mother leading a line of three or four young as an engine leads a train.

According to researcher Steve Forrest, 88 different ferrets were observed near Meeteetse this summer, with an estimated wintering population of around 30.

That's hardly enough to take the animal off the nation's list of endangered species. But it's the best news about ferrets in a long time.

*Photos by Tim W. Clark*



Sept. 19, 1983--High Country News--10

# Albert Fall pirated the Navy's oil

by Peter Wild

**T**he judge hustled down from the bench to join the posse galloping off over New Mexico's cactus-studded hills. Handy with a six-gun, he was rumored to have sent a man or two over the Great Divide.

For these and other qualities, he eventually became Secretary of the Interior, the nation's largest land steward.

In contrast is the lackluster image of most bureaucrats. Those paper shufflers have to "go along in order to get along" and can't afford the dash attributed to, say, cowboys, taxi drivers, or opera singers. That's how common wisdom would have it.

Granting some accuracy to the picture, one public office has broken the rule consistently. Secretaries of the Interior through the decades have been colorful, if not always admirable. As a young student-revolutionary in Germany, Carl Schurz eluded Prussian soldiers by scurrying through sewers -- a pistol clutched in one hand and a bottle of wine in the other. Later, as Interior Secretary under Rutherford B. Hayes, Schurz caused timber thieves to gnash their teeth at his sense of justice and "damn the torpedoes" bluster.

A different sort was the curmudgeon Harold Ickes. During his tenure with President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Ickes called Gifford Pinchot, first head of the Forest Service, "the Lot's-wife of the conservation movement." Whereupon Pinchot clubbed back by labeling Ickes "the American Hitler."

In general, Secretaries of the Interior have added zest to Washington, whether they are struggling with corporate Titans over coal leases in Alaska or churning up a little tempest in a teapot over the Beach Boys.

There are two reasons for this. First, a Secretary makes a large target. His responsibilities are far-flung -- ranging from national parks, minerals, oil and forests to water on about one-fourth of the nation's land. Add to that the welfare of one-half million American Indians. A Secretary can hardly make a move without drawing fire from some quarter.

Second is the fantastic size of the fortunes under his control: billions of dollars of oil leases and contracts for board-feet of timber, the honey that draws the proverbial flies of corruption. It takes a big person to steer a virtuous course through such tempting waters, and when men have succumbed, they have tended to do it in a big way.

An example of one who succumbed to greed is the boisterous judge, Albert B. Fall. The "B" stood for "Bacon," which together with his surname turned out to be prophetic. For sixty years ago, Fall caused the greatest public scandal in the history of the Interior Department.

The door opened on it slowly in 1923, but when it at last stood wide, millions of dollars in bribes and one of the sleaziest land grabs ever to rile the public came tumbling out.

**N**ot that Fall, for all his stentorian qualities, could have brought it off alone. Skull-duggery of such scope required the right blend of noxious conditions in high places.

Highest, of course, was the Presidency. According to the suspicions of historians, oil money put Warren G. Harding into the White House in 1921. The former senator had been a tuba player in the hometown band and a familiar face in the town's brothels. He would have been happy to ignore his ambitious wife and remain in Marion, Ohio, glad-handing the locals while cutting legal corners now and then for his political bosses. But eager to please backers, he was just what the wheeler-dealers wanted.

As President, Harding held court in what became known cynically as the "Little Green House on K Street." It was a speakeasy, where hustlers big and small buzzed about the Presidential poker table paying protection money, buying pardons for criminals, dipping into money intended for disabled veterans, and arranging to make off with tons of supplies donated to the Red Cross.

As for conservation, Harding hardly acknowledged the word. To him, the country's natural resources were so many prizes in the friendly lottery he was running. In some ways, the spineless man could be pitied - if

one can overlook the damage he did. One of Theodore Roosevelt's daughters summed up our twenty-ninth chief executive this way: He was "not a bad man, only a slob."

Albert B. Fall was Harding's opposite in several ways. No easy-going shilly-shallier, Fall worked gold mines in bandit-infested Mexico, owned a ranch in New Mexico, and parlayed his jerkwater judgeship into a U.S. Senatorship. A super patriot, Fall believed that the United States should grab politically troubled Mexico, by force of the U.S. Cavalry if necessary.

There was, in fact, a good deal of the frontier about this man who had wrested a living from the frontier. If he hadn't been such a crook, he might have been a hero.

Upon his appointment as the steward of America's public lands, a journalist lightheartedly described him as a character fit for a dime-store Western. The reporter then turned serious at Fall's penetrating blue eyes, which measured the world from beneath the brim of a cowboy hat -- "the sort of eyes that one learned to beware of..."

Like Harding, Fall cared not one whit for conservation. He believed the country's resources should be used now, not husbanded for future generations. And if Albert B. Fall or his sticky-fingered friends ended up among the users, so much the better. After all, they were the experts at turning forests and natural lands into money that kept the economy humming.

Even as a small-time rancher in hardscrabble New Mexico, Fall put his theories into practice. Rangers counted 6,000 of his sheep running within a nearby national forest. Fall was authorized 2,000. The rest were eating government grass under the blessing of phony permits drawn up by himself. Caught red-handed, Fall raged to the Forest Service that it would "rue the day" it interfered with private enterprise. It was a promise Fall would keep.

One of Fall's first acts at the Department of Interior was to pack up elegant furniture worth thousands of dollars left him by vacating Secretary Lane and ship it off to grace his own ranch. That was just the start.

An opponent of anything pro-

gressive in general, and of the conservation accomplishments of the last three Presidents in particular, Fall looked on Alaska as a territory "bright" for looting, as he put it. The cabinet member then kept his word to the Forest Service by attempting to get the national forests transferred from the Department of Agriculture to his own agency. There they could be properly and promptly exploited.

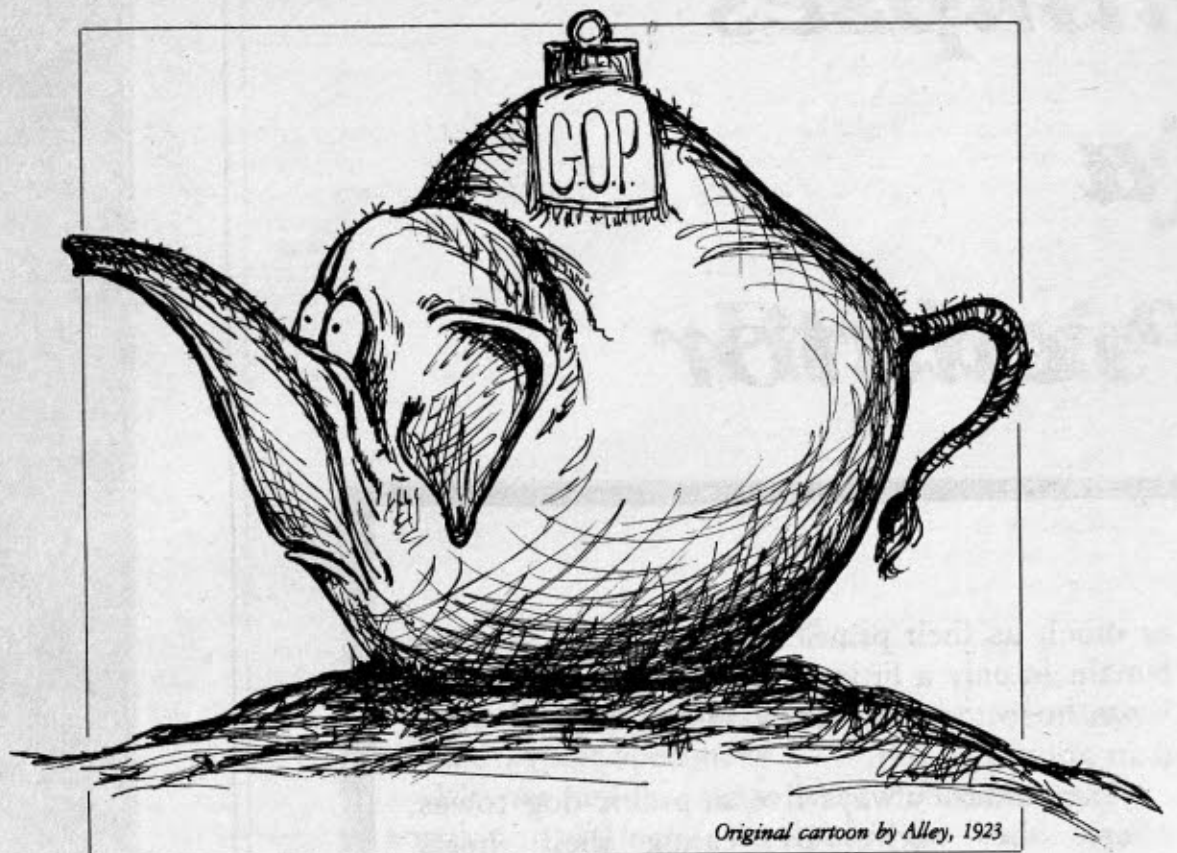
**W**ithin three months of taking office, Fall was able to maneuver naval oil reserves from the Navy Department to Interior. The better to "manage" them, Fall said.

Where were the conservationists? Though their friends in Congress stalled much of Fall's mischief, they had almost no direct influence within the Harding administration. In the heady days of the flapper and the soaring stock market, the public let its guard down. The cry was to get back to "normalcy" after the hardships of World War I. To the Harding gang, that meant "anything goes." Fall proved it by proposing a national park for New Mexico, with his ranch house in the middle of it.

Though Secretary Fall didn't get his private national park, folks did begin to notice some strange doings out at the Fall ranch. The private railroad car of oil magnate Harry Sinclair started showing up at the nearby Three Rivers station. Fall bought the ranch next to his and began putting in roads and an expensive irrigation system. His stock increased, including among its numbers a blooded race horse. Fall's government salary was modest, and because of drought and market conditions, these were hard times for most ranchers. Reporters started snooping around.

Meanwhile, back in Washington, Congressmen were opening letters from the oil industry. Quick on the trigger about favoritism in their competitive business, the oil men wanted to know if there were any substance to the tales about leases granted -- without public bidding -- to Sinclair's Mammoth Oil Company.

Progressive politicians who had sat helpless on the sidelines watching the corruption of the Harding gang began to listen. Still, the public was not eager to rock the boat of post-war



Original cartoon by Alley, 1923

optimism. For many, the President remained a "good fellow."

In this lackadaisical climate the former Secretary might have escaped retribution through a less than aggressive investigation of his leasing policies.

Senators nodded through the testimony of witnesses and when asked if he had ever accepted illegal payments while at Interior, an indignant Fall huffed: "I have never even suggested any compensation and have received none." There the matter might have ended.

Except for Senator Thomas J. Walsh of Montana. Like Fall, he was a self-made man, but unlike Fall he was one who had spent his life fighting, rather than encouraging, shady deals. As a lawyer in Helena, he had struggled against the copper interests' stranglehold on the state's politics.

Schooled by the battles within Montana, in 1923 Walsh began doing his homework on Fall, poring over records and piecing together bits of information. The Senate Committee on Public Lands became the first of several civil and criminal investigations which lasted a decade.

The trail led Walsh's committee to \$100,000 delivered to Fall in a "little black bag," as the courier described it. That wasn't all. When finally added up, the total that Fall had received for favors amounted to more than \$400,000 -- an enormous sum for the day.

Chief among his favors was a go-ahead permitting Edward Doheny to pump oil of astronomical value from government fields in Elk Hills, California, and Harry Sinclair to sack Teapot Dome, near Casper, Wyoming. These were oil reserves specifically set aside to fuel the Navy's fleet in case of wartime emergency.

The nation gasped. And then it gasped again as subsequent trials revealed the array of corruption infecting the Harding administration. Just like Watergate fifty years later, evidence emerged accompanied by breakins, attempted coverups, and

threats to witnesses. Things began falling apart as the investigators churned on.

It took a decade, but not only did Sinclair and Fall go to jail, bodies also began to appear -- not the least of which was that of the President. Some people speculated that the cerebral hemorrhage he died from in the summer of 1923 was caused by shame and the betrayal of his cronies.

The national circus was not without its comic relief as the accused squirmed. Historian Frank Graham, Jr. notes that:

*Archie Roosevelt, one of Theodore Roosevelt's sons, brought fresh grist for Walsh's mill. Until recently young Roosevelt had worked for the Consolidated Oil Company, another part of Harry Sinclair's empire. Quite by accident he had learned that Sinclair's private secretary had sent \$68,000 to Fall at his ranch. Upon being questioned by Walsh, the private secretary contended it was all a misunderstanding, that he had said "six or eight cows" had been sent to Fall and that Roosevelt had mistakenly thought he had said "sixty-eight thou."*

There was rhyme amid the carnage. This tidbit was penned by Senator J. Thomas Heflin of Alabama about oil lease conspirator Edward Doheny:

*About Dough Heenie [may his tribe increase!]*

*Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace*

*And saw within the moonlight in his room*

*Making it rich and like a lily in bloom*

*A Senator writing in a book of gold. Enormous wealth had made Dough Heenie bold;*

*And to the Senator in his room he said:*

*"What writest thou?" The statesman raised his head,*

*And with a look which made About boil*

*Answered, "The names of those who seek for oil!"*



ALBERT B. FALL

## A look at one of the West's historic plunderers - a thoroughly rotten man

... And showed the names of those whom Fall liked best And lo! Dough Heenie's name led all the rest.

A healthy nation can laugh its way through dark times.

But what about the moral to be drawn from the sordid story? We won't repeat the old saw about "eternal vigilance ..." But we will say that in the 1920s the public took a "That's so horrible he wouldn't

possibly do that" attitude. Twice juries failed to convict Fall of conspiracy, finding him guilty only of taking bribes.

A cynical plunderer of public lands and raker-in of bribes, Fall was truly far worse than the public believed. The effort to be intellectually generous, showing the good and bad sides of a situation, doesn't work well in his case.

As Secretary of the Interior, Albert B. Fall was thoroughly rotten.



THOMAS J. WALSH

## Walsh was tougher than Fall

One man was primarily responsible for lifting the lid on the scandal of Teapot Dome oil leases, and his name was Thomas J. Walsh, Democratic Senator from Montana.

He was, recall reporters of the time, austere, soft-voiced, and polite, but a bulldog when it came to amassing the details of the Ohio Gang's scams. As a member of the Senate's Public Lands Committee, Walsh functioned as a detective-prosecutor to bring evidence forth that finally revealed how Fall granted oil leases to his rich friends.

The effort took a decade and was not without risk. A chief opponent was the former FBI, then called the Bureau of Investigation. In 1923, it was headed by William Burns of the Burns Detective Agency, whose men were routinely used by industrialists to break strikes and halt unionizing efforts by force.

To intimidate Walsh, government investigators tapped his phones, opened his mail, and sent anonymous letters threatening his life, recalls Bruce Bliven, a writer who covered the Senate hearings. Walsh's grown

daughter was also threatened on the street if she did not convince her father to back off from the investigation.

Bliven says Walsh's opponents in the Harding administration spread the word he was a scandal-monger and character-assassin. His past life in Montana was dug up for flaws.

Most of us have flaws in our background, but investigators were hard put to find any in Walsh's.

A self-taught attorney and the son of an Irish immigrant, he had been a fighter in Montana against entrenched industries such as Anaconda Copper. He was so successful that Anaconda offered him a job on its legal staff. Walsh refused.

When, in 1933, President-elect Roosevelt chose Walsh as Attorney General, the New York Sun paid the aging activist a compliment which might serve as the epitaph of Thomas J. Walsh:

"No politician is likely to go to him for special favors. It would be like asking the statue of Civic Virtue for a chew of tobacco."

-B.M., P.W.

12-High Country News--Sept. 19, 1983

## Acid rain...

[Continued from page 1]

and new England vulnerable to acid rain. Scientists have decided that prevailing weather patterns move sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides from the Midwest to Canada and New England. The resulting acidic deposition kills the unbuffered New England lakes and threatens the productivity of Canadian forests. Even a small reduction in forest productivity caused by acid rain could badly hurt the Canadian timber industry, incidentally leaving the market open to U.S. producers in the South.

In a related trick, nature has distributed coal in an unfortunate pattern. The industrial Midwest has lots of coal, but it is almost all high in sulfur. When burned, it gives off both BTUs and large amounts of sulfur dioxide. It is this cheap and convenient local coal that most Midwest power plants burn.

The U.S. has enormous quantities of low-sulfur coal. Large amounts of that coal is in Kentucky and West Virginia. Those regions also have lots of closed mines and unemployed miners. In addition, most of the coal in the Rockies and Great Plains is low in sulfur.

But the low-sulfur coal is not near the power plants. And there is a related human problem. Peabody Coal, a high-sulfur coal producer, estimates that switching Midwest power plants from high-sulfur to low-sulfur coal could affect 240 million tons of coal production.

Peabody says that would put 75,000 Midwest miners out of work, even as the change creates a comparable number of jobs elsewhere. Peabody further claims that fuel switching would affect another 225,000 jobs that depend on the mining jobs. All of this would take place in the already depressed Midwest.

Those jobs, concentrated in Illinois, Ohio, Indiana and other heartland states, swing a lot of votes in the U.S. Congress. Bob Yuhnke, an attorney with the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) in Boulder, Colorado, says:

"That kind of economic disruption has sent waves of economic terror through the Congress. In the West, we're not used to thinking of three states as important." But, he says, the high-sulfur coal states field a team of about 70 Congressmen.

**G**iven the Midwest's strength in the House, Rep. Waxman, a subcommittee chairman and long-time clean air advocate, sought a compromise which would keep jobs in place while cleaning the air.

The solution, embodied in HR 3400, would put scrubbers on the 50 dirtiest Midwest power plants by 1990, removing 6 million tons of sulfur dioxide while allowing the plants to continue to burn local dirty coal. Under HR 3400, some fuel switching would also occur since the states are free to choose other ways of removing the remaining 4 million tons of sulfur dioxide.

So the scrubber solution solved some of the jobs problem. But it raised a new difficulty. Scrubbers are expensive. One expert says, "The numbers are all over the place." But some estimates are that scrubbers will cost the Midwest utilities 50% to 100% more than the fuel-switching option, which is estimated at several billion dollars a year.

The Midwest doesn't want to lose several hundred thousand jobs. But neither do its Congressmen want sharply higher electric rates. So Waxman's HR 3400 elected to spread the pain across the nation.

If passed, it will impose a one mill per kilowatt-hour tax on most of the lower forty eight's electric users. The one mill tax would add about \$7 per year to the bill of a home using 600 kilowatt-hours a month. The \$7 per year will be used to clean up Midwest power plants.

Hearings have not yet been held on HR 3400 because of Waxman's redistricting fight. But the bill has served a function -- it has uncovered the conflicts that will make the acid rain question very difficult to solve.

The most straightforward conflicts are within the rail-coal-utility industry. Until recently, that industry, along with the Reagan administration and the UMWA, maintained the traditional "more scientific study is needed" position.

That position became less tenable this summer, when the National Academy of Science and the Office of Technology Assessment released studies finding that acid rain is caused by Midwest power plant emissions. The National Academy of Science recommended that sulfur dioxide emissions from the 31 states be cut from today's 22 million tons per year to 10 million tons.

The Reagan administration is currently formulating a new acid rain policy. The National Coal Association and companies like Peabody, which mines high-sulfur coal in the Midwest, and the Midwest utilities are staying with their "more study" position.

But a chunk of the industry has come unstuck. Owners of low-sulfur coal in the East and West, railroads which serve low-sulfur coal fields, and some Western utilities formed the Alliance for Clean Energy (ACE). Its goal is to keep mandatory scrubbing out of an acid rain bill. Or, more positively, to fight for freedom of choice for the 31 states and their utilities.

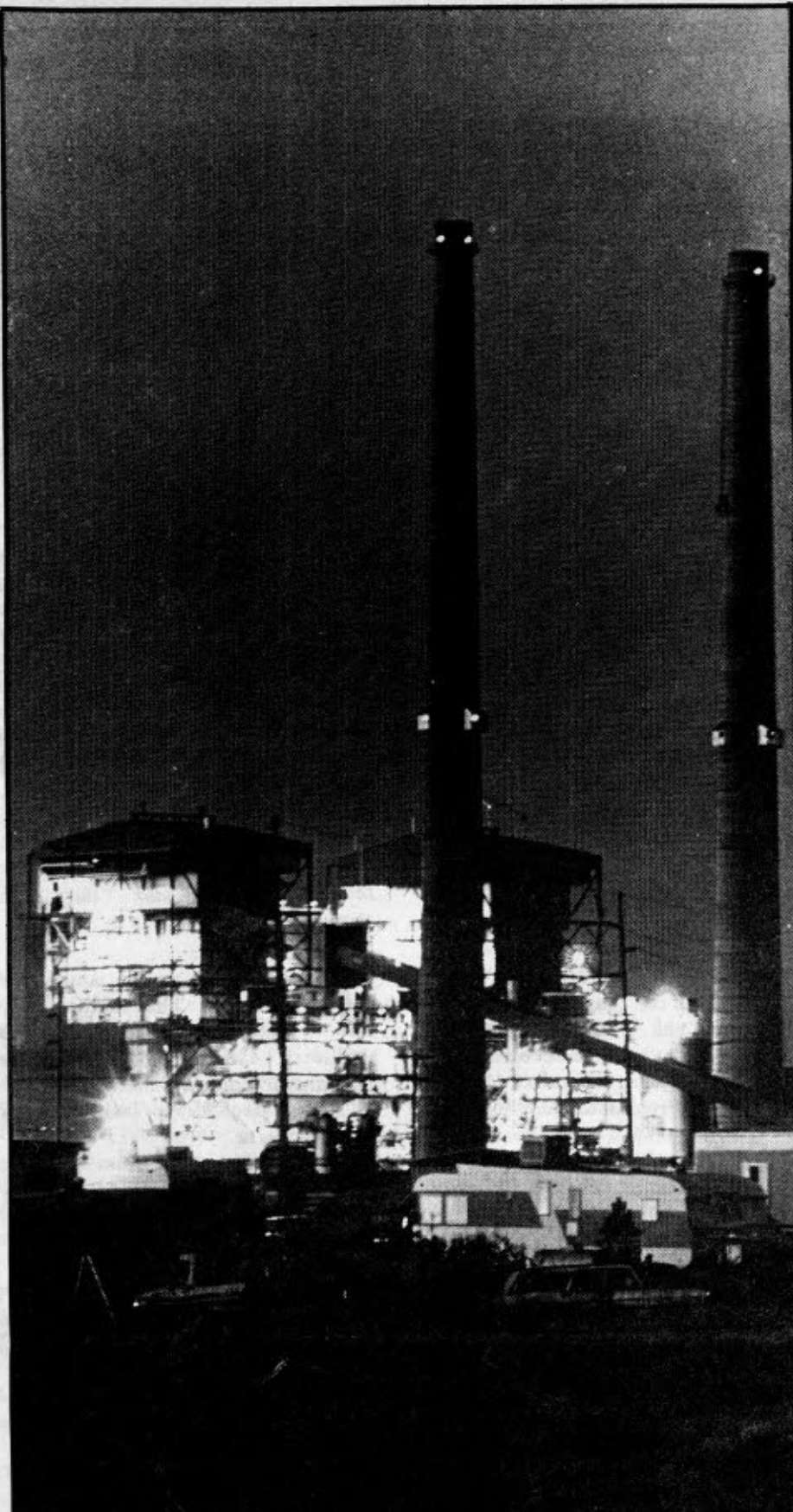
Dan Snyder, a vice chairman of ACE and a vice president of Westmoreland Coal, which owns low-sulfur coal in the East and the West, says ACE was formed by "Union-Pacific, Burlington Northern, Sunedco Coal, Westmoreland, Pittston, and people in technology development who feared mandatory scrubbing would foreclose other options.

"We feel the scientific evidence supports acid rain controls. But we want the utilities to be given maximum freedom to choose a route to sulfur dioxide reduction."

**T**he ACE argument has not swayed the private utilities and the coal companies which own high-sulfur coal. The schism has caused bitter fights within industry groups such as the National Coal Association. And ACE members have had trouble explaining their new position to the utilities they depend on to buy their coal.

The best ACE can do is argue; We understand your position. We're not stabbing you in the back. But we think an acid rain control bill is going to pass. And we want to be able to influence it.

From another direction, the United Mine Workers Union, with tens of thousands of jobs at stake, opposes



acid rain legislation. But the union appears to have given way lately to the scientific evidence. It has shifted from total opposition to acid rain legislation. It now says that if there has to be legislation, that legislation should require scrubbers, and thereby keep existing jobs nailed in place.

Although the UMWA is being moved along by the same current as ACE, the two are not friends. The union has bitterly attacked the Alliance, charging that the low-sulfur coal companies and railroads are acting out of greedy self interest.

The railroads do have an enormous amount to gain in the scrubbers versus fuel switching struggle. Many of the largest and dirtiest Midwest power plants are mine-mouth operations. If these power plants shift to low-sulfur coal, they will have to go out of the region to get that coal, creating new business for the railroads.

The Waxman's bill intent to tax much of the nation to clean up Midwest plants has caused a sharp reaction in the West. Western newspaper editorials have blasted the idea. The 13 Western Governors issued a statement last month essentially lining up with the ACE position on freedom of choice. The governors also said that if there is to be a national utility tax, there should be national benefits.

The West has been uniformly tough in controlling its power plant

emissions, and western power plants produce only a small percent of the nation's sulfur dioxide. So it sees the utility tax as double taxation.

The EDF's Yuhnke estimates that western power plants average about 0.2 pounds of sulfur dioxide emissions per million BTUs of coal burned. By comparison, he says, Midwestern utilities produce 5 to 7 pounds of sulfur dioxide per million BTUs burned. The federal standard for new facilities is 1.2 pounds.

Snyder of Westmoreland Coal, a former EPA regional administrator, says the Midwestern states have allowed their utilities to avoid reducing emissions. "The utilities fought controls. And they got away with such things as installing stacks 1000 feet high. They took the dilution approach to pollution.

"Ohio challenged the Clean Air Act and got a five-year delay for its plants. There's a lot of non-compliance in the Midwest. They have electric systems in Ohio where every plant is emitting more than 5 pounds per million BTUs. They have an uneven pattern of compliance. But the West in 1970 adopted strict state standards." That decision, of course, was made easier because the West's local coal was low in sulfur.

But New England, despite its lack of clean coal, has also drastically reduced its sulfur emissions by going to low-sulfur coal, or oil, to nuclear energy, or to gas in the early 1970s. The pattern of regional compliance

## Acid rain legislation won't boom the West's coal

**T**his time, clean air legislation won't set off a Western coal boom.

In 1970, the passage of the Clean Air Act helped create a boom. Through the decade, new towns and railroads were built, existing towns were ringed by development, and tens of thousands of new residents moved into the region. That boom was caused in part by Midwestern utilities importing western low-sulfur coal to solve their air quality problems.

But the acid rain legislation of the 1980s -- whatever form it takes -- doesn't have the potential to again change the West. The near quadrupling of western coal production -- from 76 million tons in 1973 to 260 million tons in 1981 -- won't recur.

If you just look at the numbers, the potential is there. Peabody Coal estimates that the annual production of 240 million tons of high-sulfur Midwest coal is up for grabs. That coal is produced by 75,000 miners. Peabody says a total of 300,000 jobs in the Midwest are dependent on high sulfur coal mining.

Even if the utilities chose en masse to reduce emissions by switching to low-sulfur coal, it's unlikely a significant number of those jobs would flow West. Bob Yuhnke, an attorney with the Environmental Defense Fund

in Boulder, Colorado, says western mines are not an option.

Because of the deregulation of the railroads three years ago by the Staggers bill, "Shipping rates are up 80 to 90%. Earlier, it made sense to ship coal from Wyoming as far east as Michigan. Now the line is somewhere west of the Mississippi River. The market for Western coal has shrunk."

Moreover, the West is already geared up to supply much more coal than it is producing. John Smillie, a staff member with the Northern Plains Resource Council in Billings, Montana, estimates that the Powder River Basin alone has 100 million tons of excess annual production capacity sitting idle in operating mines. Those mines could increase production with relative ease, and without setting off the construction and public works boom seen in the 1970s.

It is far more likely that utilities switching to low-sulfur coal will look to Appalachia -- eastern Kentucky and West Virginia -- for the coal. The Alliance for Clean Energy, made up of owners of low-sulfur coal in the East and West and the railroads which move that coal, is working hard against the mandatory scrubbing requirement Congress is leaning toward.

There are other competitors for the business acid rain legislation will create. A consulting firm called Energy Conversion Devices in Washington, D.C. is trying to form a Clean Coal Coalition. Dr. Leon Green says, "We're broader than the Alliance for Clean Energy. We don't want to mandate or prohibit anything."

"We say -- do the easiest, cheapest thing first." If that doesn't get the entire job done, he continues, do something slightly more expensive. But all the while, stay flexible to take advantage of technological advances.

Green estimates utilities could "knock out 2 to 5 million tons of sulfur dioxide by simply washing their coal. But then you reach a point of diminishing returns. So you do something else. You burn a little natural gas."

If substituting natural gas for some of the dirty coal doesn't get you the rest of the way to your sulfur dioxide reduction goal, "You burn the waste material you've washed out of the coal." That waste material is heavy with sulfur. But he says it can be burned in a fluidized bed reactor, cleanly. That would both dispose of the waste and generate power as a side product.

Finally, Green predicts, "within a couple of years we'll have coal-water

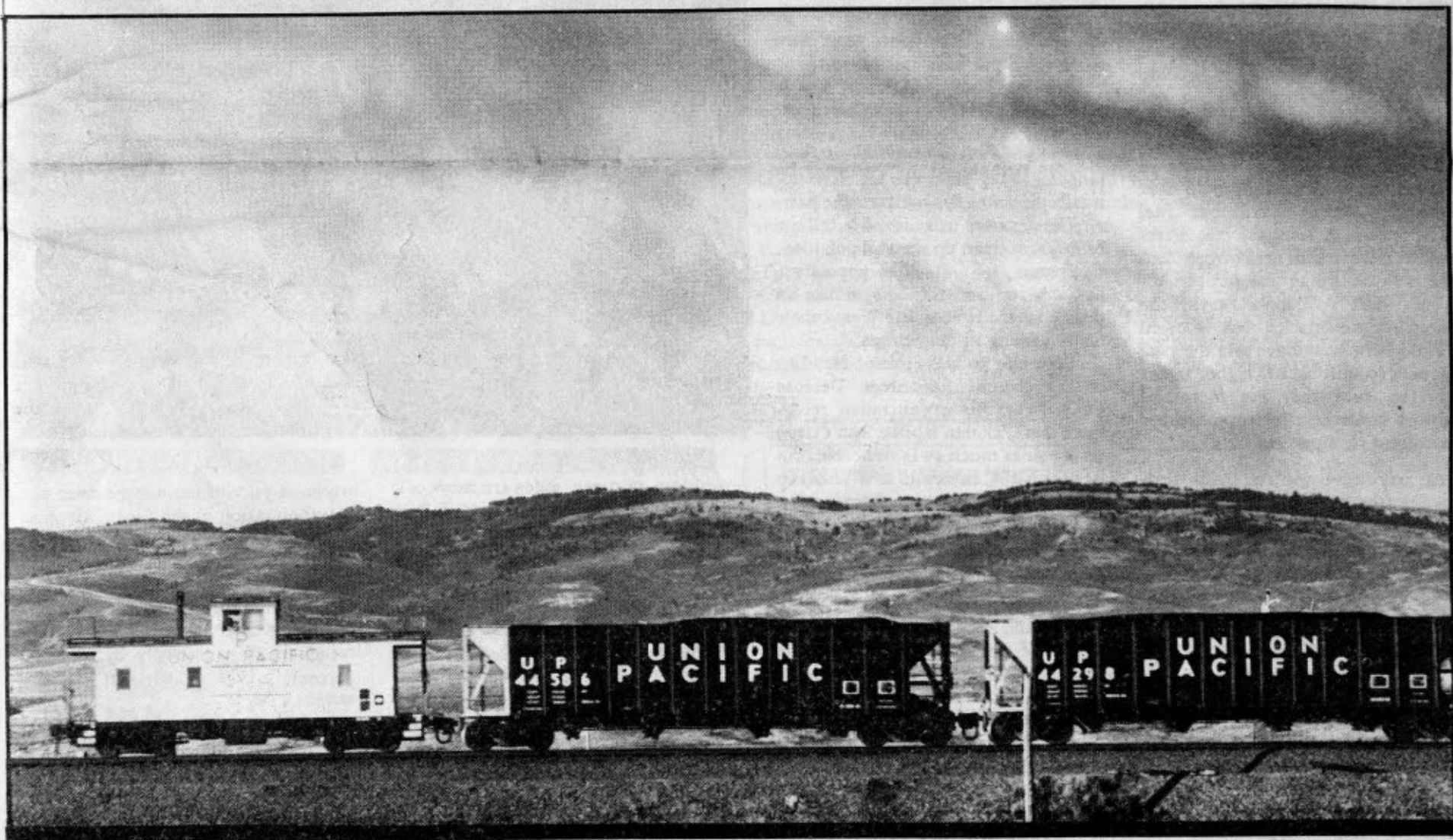
fuels." That clean process, he says, is being tested by DuPont now.

Green says he hopes to attract "everyone from coal producers to coal cleaners to people who manufacture equipment" to his new coalition. His approach would be socially conservative, since coal washing and burning coal-water mixtures would use the high-sulfur Midwest coals the utilities are now using. But instead of scrubbing out the sulfur after burning, he would remove it first.

Although the Waxman-Sikorski bill is thought of in terms of mandatory scrubbing, it is more flexible than that. It requires that 6 million tons of sulfur dioxide be scrubbed out, but it leaves open how the next 4 million tons of sulfur would be removed.

The 6 million tons of sulfur dioxide that must be scrubbed is produced in the Dirty Fifty -- the Midwest's 50 dirtiest plants. They produce that 6 million tons by burning 140 million tons of high sulfur coal per year. And that coal is mined by some 45,000 miners.

So the Waxman bill's mandatory scrubbing provisions preserves that many jobs. But it leaves at risk the other 30,000 jobs, should the utilities decide to reduce their emissions by fuel switching.



(Continued from page 12)

with the Clean Air Act shows up in the electric bills of consumers in different parts of the country.

The EDF's Yuhnke says that, not counting the Pacific Northwest, the Midwest has the cheapest rates -- 3 to 6 cents per kilowatt-hour. The West is in the mid-range -- about 6 to 8 cents. Top rates are paid in New England, where oil that is often both imported and low in sulfur pushes rates up to 9 to 12 cents per kilowatt-hour.

Yuhnke adds, "For people in Ohio to complain about utility bills going from 3 up to 4 cents takes nerve." It's a 33 percent increase, he says, but it's still not much compared to what most Americans pay.

**I**n the West's view, then, the Midwest is being rewarded with a subsidy for its decade-long avoidance of the Clean Air Act. But politically, the West has been unable to forge an alliance with New England to get its way. New England is desperate to solve the acid rain problem, and the Waxman bill seems the best chance.

A small detail in the Waxman bill shows how the political winds are blowing. The bill exempts nuclear power from the one mill tax. This provision favors New England, which has lots of nuclear power plants. But the West and Northwest, with large amounts of hydroelectric power, is not

similarly favored. Hydropower is subject to the one mill tax.

The one major player in the acid rain debate without a vested economic interest is the environmental movement. In general, that movement lines up behind the Waxman bill.

Betsy Agle of the Clean Air Coalition in Washington, D.C., said: "Our general position is that we want a 50 percent reduction in sulfur dioxide -- that's 12 million tons -- and we want it in one bill."

She said the Coalition supports the Waxman bill in general. "We're for the jobs protection, but we're not

necessarily for" cost sharing or a national utility tax.

She said jobs preservation was especially important because no clean air bill had ever destroyed or displaced jobs, and the Coalition wanted to maintain that pro-jobs record.

She said the Coalition also objected to coal-cleaning as a strategy because the large investment in coal-cleaning plants would later lead to resistance to installing more sophisticated systems.

The Natural Resource Defense Council in Washington, D.C. is a leading member of the Clean Air Coalition. Staff member Dave

(Continued on page 14)

## Acid rain...

[Continued from page 13]

Hawkins says:

"We favor provisions which will keep the acid rain program from having an adverse impact on people's jobs. We don't want to see shifts in coal production cutting into 1980 employment levels" in the Midwest coal fields.

Hawkins also questions the large cost advantages claimed for fuel switching over scrubbing. "In some plants, scrubbing is more expensive. But in some plants, scrubbing costs less than fuel switching. It depends almost entirely on rail rates, mining cost escalation, etc."

Overall, he says, an Office of Technology Assessment study shows scrubbers cost 25% more than fuel switching. Hawkins adds that the Waxman bill requires scrubbing of the 50 plants, but allows fuel switching for the remaining 4 million tons.

Hawkins rejects arguments that scrubbing wastes power plant energy and produces a toxic waste as a by-product. "Scrubbers consume power. But so does hauling coal hundreds of miles." He also says there is no health difference between fly ash produced at power plants by electrostatic precipitators and the waste produced by scrubbing.

Finally, he says, any extra cost due to scrubbing is made up for by the human factor. "You are avoiding the need to increase welfare, to provide community assistance, and so on. Money won't flow out of the Treasury" because you haven't destroyed jobs.

Clean air proponents have another reason for being against the fuel switch option. A company that shifts to clean coal can shift back to dirty coal if the political winds change.

The EDF's Yuhnke says the Reagan administration has allowed several Midwest utilities over the past two years to shift back to higher sulfur coal. He says that has increased Midwest emissions by an estimated two million tons per year.

An executive with an ACE firm criticizes the environmental position for going against the proposition that "the polluter pays." Dave Yaedon, who represents Nerco Coal, a subsidiary of Pacific Power and Light, in Washington, D.C. says that the mandatory scrubbing provision is also inflexible.

Yaedon says that spending billions to add scrubbers to old plants makes sense only "if you assume the total answer is in." But if you expect further technological advances in sulfur dioxide control, or more information about the causes of acid rain, "It makes no sense to go ahead and invest in these dinosaurs called scrubbers."

"We see the decision to lock everyone into scrubbers as sheer folly." ACE's approach, he said, is to go for flexibility. He says that switching to a clean fuel is flexible, and cheap. According to Yaedon, the Office of Technology Assessment says switching is 30 to 90% cheaper than scrubbing.

Yaedon says the fear that switching to low-sulfur coal will be sabotaged should be met directly rather than by insisting on expensive hardware. If that's the issue, industry and the environmental community "should put our heads together to ensure an unwavering enforcement program."

High sulfur coal producers argue that the problem will soon solve itself. They say the old power plants will be gone by 2010 or so. The plants built to replace them will have to install scrubbers or some other cleaning mechanism.

Yaedon says the geriatric solution may be further away than 2010. The reason, he says, is conservation. Because of unexpectedly low demand, power plants may last much longer than the normal 30 to 40 years. Today's power plants may still be around 50 years from now.

**A**lthough the Waxman-Sikorski bill is getting the most attention, it is not the only kid on the block. In the Senate, Gary Hart (D-Co), Robert Stafford (R-Vt), and David Durenberger (R-Mn) have introduced S. 769.

It would cut sulfur emissions coming out of the Midwest by 12 million tons per year. That's two million more than the Waxman bill. Moreover, the Hart bill doesn't allow new power plants or refineries to add more sulfur to the air unless someone else reduces their sulfur emissions.

By comparison, the Waxman bill has no cap on new emissions. Even as the Waxman bill is cleaning up old facilities, new industry can be coming on line with additional sulfur dioxide emissions. The Sierra Club says in its *National News Report* that the 10 million tons per year the Waxman bill removes will be undercut by two to three million tons per year new sources will put back into the air.

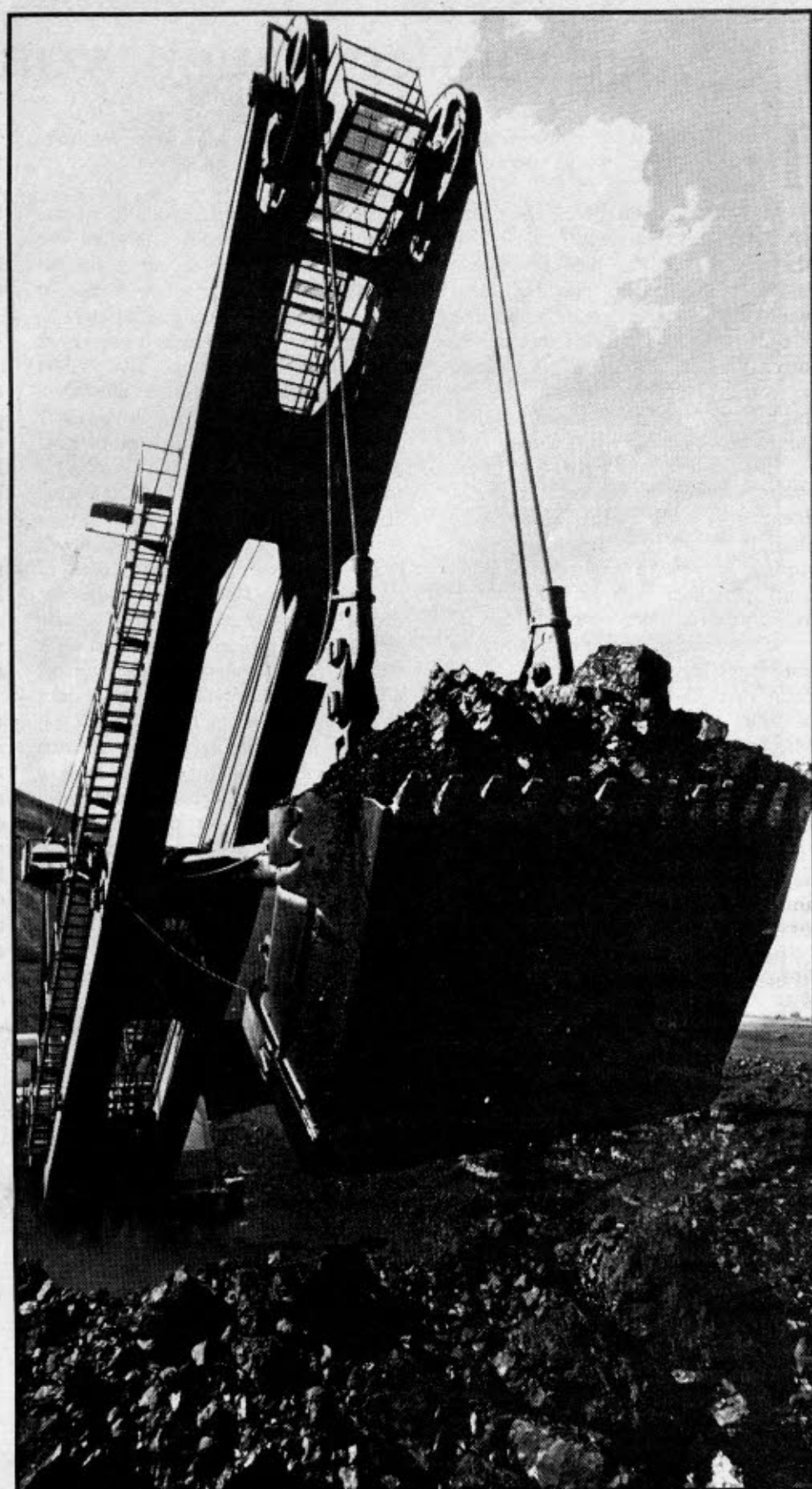
But the Hart legislation hasn't confronted the tough political question. It doesn't discuss who is going to pay for the cleanup. And it doesn't pinpoint 50 big polluters for clean up. It tells the states to distribute the pain.

The Senators can afford to tell the Midwest to clean up its own pollution. Each state, regardless of population, has only two Senators. So, unlike its position in the House, the West counts for something in the Senate.

Returning to the House, Hawkins of the Natural Resources Defense Council says his organization recognizes that Waxman's bill doesn't clean up the air as much as is desirable. But he says NRDC favors it as a "markup vehicle" -- as a bill to be amended as it moves through the Congress.

Sulfur dioxide is not the only cause of acid rain. Power plants, diesel trucks, and other vehicles also emit oxides of nitrogen, or NOx. In the East, NOx is a relatively small problem because there is so much sulfur dioxide.

But the EDF's Yuhnke says that because the West has done a better job of controlling its sulfur dioxide



problem, nitrogen oxides are more of a problem. "And the Waxman bill is more stringent on nitrogen oxide controls. It tightens up on mobile emissions."

It is possible that nitrogen oxides are the next frontier in the acid rain struggle. Nitrogen oxides cannot be controlled by using a "cleaner" fuel. The NOx results from the combining of atmospheric oxygen and nitrogen when coal, diesel fuel or gasoline are burned at high temperatures.

Control of NOx emitted by cars and

trucks is part of the dispute over the reauthorization of the Clean Air Act. But Yuhnke says that control of power plant NOx emissions is straightforward. He says the Japanese now routinely install an ammonia reduction process in their power plants. He says it reduces NOx emissions by 80 to 90 percent, producing nitrogen gas and water.

"It's efficient and economical. Now we've got to get American industry to install them."

**'Scrubbers consume power.  
But so does hauling coal  
hundreds of miles.'**

# OPINION

## Acid rain considered

At long last the nation has decided that acid rain falling on Canada and New England must be reduced. Unfortunately, this long-sought consensus may be negated by an attempt at a quick fix.

The quick fix is the Waxman-Sikorsky-Gregg bill, which would tax the nation's electric power users so that the Midwest's foulest power plants could have wet scrubbers tacked onto them.

The bill's worst feature is that it rewards the Midwest for its largely successful 13-year effort to avoid obeying the Clean Air Act. By means of air pollution variances, high smokestacks, political pressure, and delaying law suits, the Midwest has kept its power plants emitting 22 million tons a year of sulfur dioxide.

The Waxman bill would tax the nation to clean up the fifty dirtiest of those power plants. The bill's political underpinnings are the preservation of the jobs of approximately 75,000 miners who produce high-sulfur coal in the Midwest. Those miners are a potent force, especially when joined by the owners of the high-sulfur coal. So the Waxman bill stands the world on its head to preserve those jobs. The political logic behind the bill is that a more flexible law couldn't pass this Congress.

If the Waxman bill is judged on any basis but short-term political expediency, it is found wanting. The bill would not even create or preserve jobs. It would only keep jobs from migrating from high-sulfur coal fields in the depressed Midwest to low-sulfur coal fields in depressed Appalachia.

To prevent this migration, the bill would use a national tax to build the very expensive scrubbers. That way, the plants could keep on burning high-sulfur local coal. The Waxman bill is regional legislation of the worst sort. It would take money from the entire nation -- including mining communities in Appalachia that have low-sulfur coal -- to keep mining jobs in the Midwest.

It can be argued that acid rain is such a crisis that immediate action is needed, whatever the political means by which action is achieved. Unfortunately, the Waxman bill fails even as a quick fix. The scrubbers it mandates wouldn't have to start operating until 1990. Until then, the Midwest would continue to send large amounts of sulfur dioxide on to New England and Canada.



But if Waxman passes, it will have an effect long before the scrubbers go into operation. The mandating of scrubbers would discourage alternative approaches to the problem. There is no sense in developing flexible, cheaper ways of dealing with sulfur dioxide emissions if the U.S. Congress mandates scrubbing.

The bill should be allowed to die a natural death. It shouldn't even become the basis of a compromise between the House and Senate. It makes much more sense to fight for a good law -- one which uses American greed and ingenuity to cut emissions in a fair and flexible way.

The basis for that law must be that polluters pay to clean up their pollution. The Midwest, with

the lowest power rates in the nation, shouldn't be subsidized by people using higher priced, cleaner electricity. On a family basis, the money involved is trivial -- a few dollars a year. But the principle behind the Waxman tax is astoundingly bad.

If dropping Waxman and working for a fair and logical bill means there will be no acid rain legislation this session, so be it. It took America a decade to decide that acid rain had to be controlled. It makes sense to wait a year or two now, rather than go with a bad bill. It is clear that the public's commitment to a clean environment is long term. The concern we feel today about acid rain will be even stronger a year from now. There is nothing to be gained from haste.

### ACCESS

#### CONSERVATION

##### SOLAR COMPONENTS

SunLite® glazing  
ARCO photovoltaic systems  
Solar hot water

##### Tinkers & Traders

Box 91, Victor, Idaho 83455  
208-787-2495

#### LEARNING



Challenging career-oriented B.S., M.S., or high-school, or summer expedition degree programs. Practical, 1- to 4-year small group camping. Encounters with ecological problems, society, and self. Financial aid available. Directors: Dr. Mike & Diana Cohen, Frank & Trudy Trocco, Dan Tishman.

National Audubon Society Expedition Institute  
950 Third Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10022  
(212) 546-9126

#### PERSONALS

CONDOMS, Foams, Creams, Jellies. Large variety at discount prices (5)50% from alternative non-profit organization. Books on sexuality, contraception, population issues and more. For a FREE descriptive mail order brochure write us: Zero Population Growth - Seattle, Dept. HC, 4426 Burke N., Seattle, WA 98103.

#### NEAT STUFF

##### VICTORY OVER IRS! JURY RECOGNIZES TRUTH — RULES INCOME TAX VOLUNTARY!

Unanimous verdict shows info on 1040 is sworn testimony that can only be voluntary. Compulsory would violate right not to be witness against yourself. Signing 1040 dishonest unless you fully understand 2,000 page IRS Code. (Masterpiece of deception.) Code regulation, not law - no tax law, no tax crimes! Complete transcript, U.S. vs Garland tells all. \$10 (M.O., FRN's — No Checks!) N.C.E., Dept. HC, P.O. Box 16168, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416.

##### INVENTOR REFUSES BILLION DOLLAR OFFER, AUTO RUNS ON AIR!

Technical details, drawings, cover conversion, internal combustion engines, to run on continuous self-recompressing air supply. Eliminates fuel, runs cool. Book also covers high efficiency no-torque generator. (Photos, drawings, experiment yourself!) Much more! \$10 (M.O. FRN's — No Checks!) N.C.E., Dept. HC, P.O. Box 16168, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416.

##### "HOW ANYONE CAN STOP PAYING INCOME TAXES"

by Irwin Schiff. \$13. (M.O., FRN's No Checks!) Guaranteed, you must be convinced you needn't file and income tax is a fraud, or return within 30 days for complete refund! (Schiff is offering \$100,000 for copy of law requiring filing of income tax.) N.C.E., Dept. HC, P.O. Box 16168, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416.

CLASSIFIED ADS cost 20¢ per word, prepaid, \$5 minimum. Rates vary for display advertising; write HCN, Box V, Paonia, Colorado 81428 or call 303/527-4898 for further information.

#### WHY WORRY ABOUT WATER?

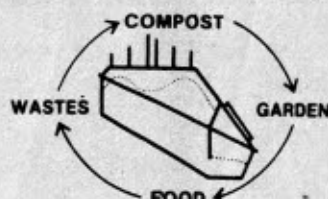
Have a safe, convenient supply with a "PURE WATER" distiller.

Irvin and Hazel Chapman, distributors, will demonstrate by appointment.

Write: Box 309, Almont, Colorado 81210  
Call: 303/641-1150

#### Clivus Multrum

An environmentally sound, waterless waste treatment system for homes, cabins and campgrounds. Composts toilet wastes and organic garbage into a rich fertilizer, conserving nutrients, water and energy.



FOR INFORMATION AND NAME OF NEAREST DISTRIBUTOR CONTACT:

Clivus Multrum Northern Rockies  
205 Meadows Rd.  
Whitefish, MT 59937  
(406) 862-3854

#### Wogglebug Books

Natural Science Books  
for Children

Selected from all publishers  
by an Author/Biologist/Parent

Send \$1 for annotated catalog to:  
Wogglebug Books  
P.O. Box 414, Fort Collins, CO 80522

#### SPORTSTUFF

##### LARSEN'S BICYCLES

255 E. Second  
Powell, Wyoming 82435

SCHWINN ..... TREK  
STUMPJUMPER MOUNTAIN BIKES

FOR SALE: REAL LLEWELLYN SETTERS of the old type. From original kennel in England. Make the very best gun dogs. Beautiful, intelligent, elately bred. Priced reasonably. Old Line Kennels, PO Box 86, Camden, Tennessee 38320. Or call 901/584-7179.

#### WORK

GROWING CANDY COMPANY needs distributors, full or part time. Be your own boss with a small investment of \$250 for beginning inventory. For more information, send name, address & telephone number to: Sunshine Candy & Nut Co., 420 Riddle Dr., Ft. Collins, Co. 80521.

16-High Country News--Sept. 19, 1983

## OFF THE WALL

### Remember Dustin?

Old timers will remember *The Graduate*, especially the terror the hero feels when he is advised to "go into plastics" -- the high-tech field of the 60s. The stultifying future that advice conjured up scared him into becoming a libertine.

His terror is interesting because it tells us how far we have come since the 1960s. Today you can tell young people, even hip young people, to go into computers and they think you're giving them exciting advice.

For their own sake, they'd be better off reacting with terror, because "go into computers" is awful advice -- about on a par with advising unemployed Detroit residents to "Go West." In ten years, computers will be a crowded, low-tech field. Those who advise the young should be touting them into fields which will be the computers of tomorrow.

That's tough for parents and high school counselors, burdened as they are with day to day trivia. To ease that burden, we've consulted with the authors of such books as *Mega-Waves* and *Future-Hype*. Here's what's going to be hot tomorrow:

### Dig in

**SHOVELS:** Shovels will be very very big in the 1990s. More important, few people will know how to shovel. Whether you're talking about the big coal-scoop type, or the digging-in-the-ground sharp-ended spade, the sky will be the limit for people who know shovels.

It's not only shovels that will boom -- but also related fields such as shovel marketing, growing knot-free hardwood trees for use as shovel handles (take notice, Vermont woodlot owners), and -- of course -- Summer Camps for kids and adults who want to get into the new field.

Why will shovels get hot? Megatrend-type research tells us that certain small town newspapers -- papers whose expertise is attested

to by their high ratio of dog-bite and cars-on-fire stories -- are running a lot of features about shovels. There's a yearning out here in the hinterlands for the good old days, when a craft meant something. That, combined with the back-to-the-earth movement, makes shovels a sure thing.

**LANDLORDS:** Knowing how to be a landlord may be even hotter than shoveling. For the moment, the rise of condos has eclipsed America's landlord class. Almost everyone today owns and manages their own space. Plus, this new generation of people doesn't want to be landlords, slumlords, or even run a Mother-Daughter duplex. The Pepsi Generation sees landlording as a janitorial-type career.

But the condo bubble will burst, our sources say, and there will be a desperate need for landlords starting in 1992 and continuing well into the 21st century. Those of you with kids in high school, or even grade school, can forget this field. Your kids' psyches have been shaped. But if you have a pre-schooler, get to work.

### Don't paint

First, yank the kid out of his Montessori school. Communal sharing won't help in this field. Then, get the little guy or gal a bunch of toys -- more toys than they could use in three childhoods. Next, encourage the tot to rent them out to the other neighborhood kids -- the one's still in the progressive, sharing pre-schools.

Finally, watch your kid to make sure he or she yanks the toys back the second rent is overdue. If it's the middle of the night, march over to the other kid's house, wake the family, and get the toy back. (We didn't say this would be easy.) Other things to watch: don't fix the toys if they break, and never, never paint anything.

If you yourself are a product of a Montessori-type education, this is going to be tough. But with Social Security going down for the

count, you have no choice -- the kid has got to be up and running by the time you start tottering around.

**ARITHMETIC:** It's clear, the future-gazers tell us, that the New Wave will eventually wash away computers. The reasons are obscure, but 3000 small-town editors can't be wrong, and those editors are no longer writing about computers.

The disappearance of computers and hand-held calculators will hit the nation hard. But far-sighted parents who train their kids to add, multiply, and do a little short division will guarantee their youngsters a boundless future.

So, if you still remember how to do it, drill your kids in these rapidly disappearing arts. When you've done that, go to an antique store and get the kid something called a sliderule. The kids who know how to use sliderules will run things when the computers crash. But don't tell the antique shop owner why you want it -- no use crowding the field.

### Keep walking

**WALKING:** This could be the biggest of them all. Even kids being prepped in shovelling or simple arithmetic should practice walking.

For this bit of future insight we turn away from today's futurists and go to literature -- E.M. Forster's "The Machine Stops." Forster shows clearly that mankind has become dangerously dependent on machines.

Of course, that's not your lookout. If people want to use their cars like wheelchairs and stuff themselves with football seven days a week, it's still a free country.

But when this electronic-mechanical-videozed world finally goes kaput -- probably due to a mutated bug that feeds off silicon wafers -- people will be helpless. Except, of course, for those who have kept up on their walking. They will be in great demand for fetching the mail, going for coffee, and the other things that make society function.

So train your kid to walk. Make him or her walk at least a block a day, four days a week. Neither of you will be sorry.

- Ed Marston

Won't you hop  
in the sack  
with 4200 other  
*High Country News*  
subscribers?

Subscribe today. 24 issues per year. Box V, Paonia, Colorado 81428

- ☐ \$18 for individuals  
☐ \$25 for institutions

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**High Country News**

*The paper for people who care about the West.*



*High Country News* now goes to 49 states, to Guam, and to a United Nations of foreign countries.

But, as the drawing shows, we do not yet go to Mississippi. Does anyone have a friend in the Old South who would like a gift of the West?