

The Collegiate

A NEWSPAPER OF IDEAS

FEBRUARY 10, 1977

Allied Ducks Heavy Penalty

It's not hard to see why environmentalists lose so many court fights these days. Monied influence is constantly working against them. An example can be made of the following case.

Two months ago a federal judge in Richmond, Virginia fined the Allied Chemical Corporation a record \$13.5 million. Allied had pleaded nolo-contendere (no contest) on October 5 to 940 counts of violating federal water pollution laws. The giant multi-national corporation had been responsible for discharging the toxic chemical Kepone into Virginia's rivers and estuaries. The waterways were closed to commercial fishing. Last week, the same federal judge, Robert R. Merhige Jr., reduced the fine to \$5 million. Allied had asked that the fine be reduced to \$1.4 million, citing the fact that they had already contributed \$8 million to an independent environmental foundation. Judge Merhige did reduce the fine and remarked that Allied had shown itself to be "contrite and sincere." They were sorry.

We wonder if Allied has really seen the error of its ways. The \$8 million contribution to the independent foundation is tax deductible; a fine is not. Alexander Trowbridge, vice-chairman of Allied's board of directors, said the contribution will save Allied nearly \$4 million in taxes. So much for "sincerity and contrition."

The Allied experience is all too familiar a scenario for environmentalists. They realize, after many long court battles, that money can buy influence in a court of law. We're not talking about bribery, just influence. By reducing Allied's fine, the judge, as a representative of the larger judicial system, said in effect that you can break pollution laws provided you have the money to bail yourself out. The basic problem with that set-up is that once ecological damage has been done, it is often impossible to repair. It is insignificant whether the guilty party pays \$5 or \$5 million.

Stirrings in Little Rock

Arkansas' state legislature passed a law last week making it illegal to have intercourse with domesticated animals. It sounds like they're doing some important things in Little Rock. Although we realize the problem of people becoming overly attached to their pets is a growing one, we wonder if the legislature's time could not have been spent more wisely. The educational system in Arkansas could stand some attention, it's one of the lowest rated school systems in the country.

The Problem of Oil Spills

By MICHAEL WALKER

Recently, we witnessed the largest oil spill in American history. An old Liberian tanker spilled millions of gallons of oil into the waters off the New England coast. The oil killed much wildlife. Dead seagulls washed up on shore, their bodies covered with oil. Eyewitnesses said the gulls who were still alive would land on solid surfaces and skid for yards. When they finally stopped, the seagulls would eat the oil from their bodies in an attempt to clean themselves. The huge oil slick was headed for some of the most fertile fishing grounds on the east coast, foreshadowing large-scale ecological disaster. The few clean beaches of industrial New England were threatened by this huge mass of black filth.

Had the slick washed ashore, the tourists would no longer have visited those beaches. Local citizens who relied on the tourist industry would have suffered. Many area fishermen would have suffered. All those who appreciate the natural beauty of the shore would have suffered. So these people who must rely on Mother Nature, and who know her true value, turned to her that night.

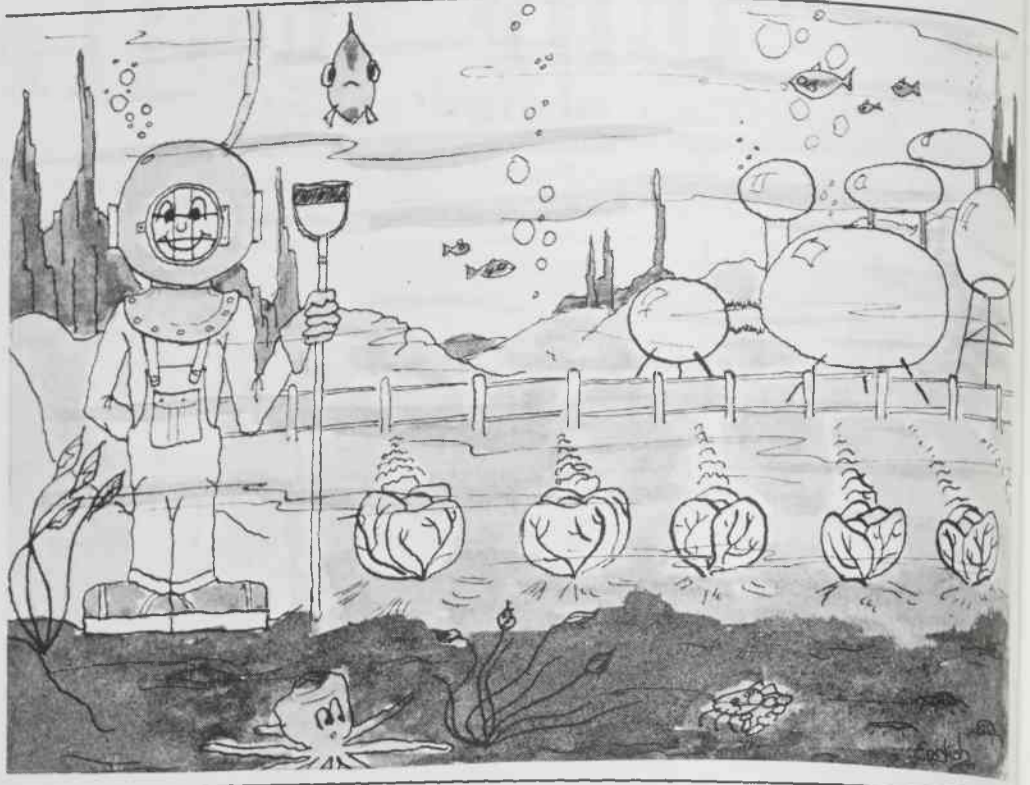
They prayed for her to continue her northwest winds in

order to blow the oil slick away from their land. Meanwhile, Americans stood helplessly by, praying along with these people that nature would once more bail man out of the dangerous situation he had gotten himself into. If nature would not help, the economy and the ecology would suffer.

But where were those enlightened souls who have cried out for so long, "Nature needs man to keep her in check, to maintain her balance." Where were they during this man-made crisis? Were they too sitting in front of their television sets, anxiously waiting for nature to bail us out once more. Did they feel for those people in New England who have had to rely on nature for their food and livelihood all their lives? Are they still convinced that nature really needs man?

It seems to me that nature does not need man. It is foolish and egotistical on our part to think so. She survived billions of years before man ever made his appearance; long after man is gone, she will continue to evolve and flourish. It is not nature who needs us, but we who need nature. We must realize that it is imperative to our survival as a species to preserve nature, not destroy it.

Viewpoint



Aquaculture: Farming the World's Oceans

A Possible Solution to World Food Shortages

By DANIEL W. LINDLEY (CPS) — Oceanographic researchers at American universities are cautiously optimistic that a more direct manipulation of the sea by mankind will help alleviate the suffering that may result from a combination of dwindling terrestrial food, fuel, and mineral resources and a rising population. At present, however, wide-scale fish-farming and deep sea mining have been unattractive to most U.S. corporations due to the generally low profits they provide and the high risks they entail.

Still, university marine studies programs, which do not have to be profitable, are registering quiet advances, especially in the area of aquaculture, and are getting financial shots in the arm from federal agencies such as SEAGRANT, a division of the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration. The Scripps Institution of Oceanography in San Diego, for instance, last year had a budget of around \$36 million, roughly 80 per cent of which was provided by U.S. government agencies.

The school, one of the most prestigious of its kind in the U.S., operates a fleet of six large oceanographic research vessels, which in 1973 cruised nearly 148,000 nautical miles to locations as diverse as the Amazon River Basin in Peru and the Gulf of Alaska. Domestically, a spokeswoman says that "some aquaculture is going on here, especially with shrimp and lobsters. We're not doing anything with deep-sea mining technology, but we are studying the formation of manganese nodules."

Several multi-national corporations, including Kennecott Copper, Inc., are exploring the possibility of large-scale mining of the nodules, which are found deep on the ocean floor and are rich in manganese, nickel, copper, and cobalt. Some experts estimate that the ocean floor may hold as much as 50 per cent of the world's remaining minerals. A team led by an assistant professor at Oregon State University plans to use a submersible starting this Feb. 8 near the Galapagos Islands to study the hot ocean springs there which have temperatures exceeding the boiling point of water and which may be instrumental in forming metallic deep-sea sediments.

Two OSU research vessels currently are operating off the

coast of Peru to study the effects of coastal upwelling, a process that occurs in some areas where water from the sea bed, rich in phytoplankton, is brought to the ocean surface by a combination of winds and currents. The process is such a boon to fishing that artificial creation of upwelling has been attempted on a small scale in some spots. Researchers at the University of Texas Marine Science Institute Marine Laboratory at Port Aransas, for example, have been shelling out \$300,000 annually over the past eight years in an artificial upwelling project in the U.S. Virgin Islands. They have been pumping nutrient-rich deep-sea water to artificial pools which they have constructed on shore. The phytoplankton they keep in the pools have required only the seawater to survive, and are used subsequently to feed infant shellfish nurtured in holding tanks.

American lobsters, once plentiful in the waters off the Northeastern United States and in high demand on the retail market, have been raised successfully at the Bodega Bay Marine Laboratory, which is sponsored and utilized by the nine University of California campuses. Still, Business Director Cadet Hand says that commercial culture of lobsters is not yet feasible, due to their expensive diets, preference for warm waters, and propensity for devouring one another in captivity. Hand sees the day, however, when the crustaceans will be fed from relatively cheap grain and meat offal derivatives; he thinks that by genetic breeding, a non-cannibalistic, faster-growing lobster will be developed.

"The genetic method takes time, though," he patiently observes.

Undaunted, however, are the intrepid University of Maine at Orono marine researchers, who have had some success in raising oysters in some pockets of the Maine Coast. Waters there are so cold that gonad production is inhibited, and the oysters do not spawn naturally; however, they grow faster. With significant state pride, the Maine researchers have constructed a warm-water oyster hatchery within state lines where they can set breeder oysters to produce a generous supply of oyster seed by regulating water temperature.

"Out-of-state seed can always carry disease and pollutants," a wary University of Maine

spokesman intones.

Some commercial oyster hatcheries are already operating profitably in Maine and in California. And despite the occasional professional jealousies and lack of trust that have become evident as the secrets of the deep gradually have unfolded, Dr. Hand and his colleagues, are sure the aquaculture will find its place in the stomachs and minds of the American culture.

Students Activity Fee Debated

They're trying to make federal case out of the collection and distribution of college student activity fees.

A proposed amendment to U.S. Senate Education bill sponsored by Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.) would establish federal standards to insure a fair process for allocating activity fees among student organizations on a campus. The bill would also set up a mechanism by which a majority of students could, by petition vote, collect an additional fee which would be refundable to those not wishing to pay.

This second point of amendment is supported by Ralph Nader who testified that students should have the opportunity to "tax themselves" and use the university as a collecting system.

The Collegiate

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The Collegiate is published nearly every week each regular semester by the students of Atlantic Christian College, Wilson, N.C. 27893. The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of the faculty or administration.

"Nothing human is alien to me." — Karl Marx