

# EDITORIAL

*UNESCO is in the midst of a crisis, which reached its climax at the end of 1984 with the USA's withdrawal from the organization. The UK has also announced its decision to resign, and other states could follow these examples. The strong criticism relates to budgetary and personnel policy. This is a very sad development for those people who have always appreciated UNESCO's importance, especially in the light of its many praiseworthy achievements in the past. It was one of the first organizations to concern itself with environmental activities, long before UNEP's establishment and the "Man and the Biosphere" (MAB) Conference in Paris was virtually the first environmental conference.*

*It is particularly unfortunate that UNESCO's problems should arise at a time when Michel Batisse, who was responsible for the environmental programme, has just retired.*

\* \* \*

*Readers will notice that IUCN Members were very ambitious at this year's General Assembly (see page 127), in adopting resolutions and recommendations covering many fields and some difficult subject areas. As we would like to report later concerning the action taken on these we hope that they were not only an impulsive expression but that practical results will follow.*

\* \* \*

*We are sorry to learn that William Ruckelshaus, like many other important personalities in the Reagan administration, has finally resigned as Administrator of the US Environmental Protection Agency. We were not surprised. Rumours had already been circulating, and we know the difficult situations he has found himself in from time to time. His success in bringing the agency back on course following Mrs. Burford's resignation, will certainly be an inspiration from which his successor, Lee Thomas Neuer, will benefit.*

\* \* \*

*The UK government has rejected the latest plan for the reduction of pollution from industrial plants (see report on page 107), as being too expensive. The decision has been bitterly criticized, for while acknowledging that in the past efforts had been made to reduce the level of such pollution, it was noted that the country is still "the worst environmental polluter in Western Europe".*

31st December 1984

*- Wolfgang B. Treue -*