

We open our first anniversary number with the familiar *Wheel of Law* cover. While the logo-cover design, handsome as it is, has served well in establishing EPL's identity, we do wish to guard against uniformity. With this thought in mind, we have discussed with our publishers a freshly conceived cover design, effective with the second anniversary number, whereby we retain our colors but replace the large wheel with a cover illustration keyed to events of current impact. Further in this regard, our release dates for this year shall be staggered, as newsworthy events dictate. Our readership may expect five numbers this calendar year.

Shortly forthcoming will be comprehensive coverage of the important deliberations to take place at UNEP's Fourth Governing Council meetings, especially worthy of attention, we think, due to the financial strains UNEP has recently experienced. With certain countries not current on their pledges, rumors abound that the agency will be strapped for funds. Also, we may expect reasonable hints on the identity of the most likely choice for this fall's General Assembly appointment of UNEP's next Executive Governor.

Coming up also will be wrap-around coverage of the Fourth International Parliamentary Conference on the Environment (IPCE) at Kingston, Jamaica.

EPL's next release date will follow these developments as immediately as practicable.

Environmental Policy and Law, 2 (1976)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

UNEP On Course

(Excerpt from letter to the Editor-in-Chief, re: Changes at UNEP, EPL 1:3 at 126)

I don't think that uncertainty ... (as to the future structure of the United Nations as a whole) is an issue. The Programme is well established and the people who work at UNEP perform their duties as a team, and therefore seem more concerned with programme development and implementation rather than changes.

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Polyglot Flannel

Excerpt, *Built Environment Quarterly*, December 1975
(Review of EPL by John Parris)

This new quarterly is ... published by Swiss publishers, edited in Germany, printed in Holland, and written in French and what purports to be English. The only contribution which has an English flavour is a letter from one JF who writes: "I hope that emphasis will be put on the provision of factual information and analysis and that there will not be too many 'think-pieces' with which contemporary journals are overloaded". Mr. JF's hope has not been realised.

We regret Mr. Parris' findings. We assure our readers that we continue to keep scholarly material to a minimum. With respect to foreign sounding English, it must be noted that legal and political systems are sometimes so distinct from the Anglo-Saxon model that it becomes problematic to sort out perfectly translatable legal and political terms meaningful in the English language. On the other hand, whatever the loss in translation, we are sure Mr. Parris would not wish to unduly constrain non-English authors from expressing their views, as well as they are able. *Oxford English or not.*

As for English "flavour", we have ordered bottles of Worcestershire sauce for our American staff members. [Ed.]

Human Rights and Environment

[Re: M. Mattes, "The Right to a Humane Environment: A Seminar", EPL 1:2, at 86]

Dear Sir,

Your summary report indicated that the majority of participants showed "relatively little interest" for the recognition of the emerging human right to a decent environment at the international level. Your piece reflects that "There was widespread opposition to the establishment of an individual right to a humane environment..." One of the principal reasons was that "... such a right would be too general and indefinite, making effective enforcement very difficult..."

Such arguments constitute a smoke-screen. In reality, they are often designed to maintain absolute state sovereignty or to camouflage resistance to the establishment of an individual right to a good environment and as such are far from convincing. This is particularly true in view of the success achieved in the implementation of human rights by the Council of Europe. The European Convention on Human Rights guarantees the protection of selected basic rights, e.g. right to life, freedom from torture, inhuman, or degrading treatment, freedom from slavery, servitude, or unlawful detention. Other illustrations can be cited of treaties guaranteeing political, civil, social, economic, cultural, and labour rights. Examples would be the United Nations Human Rights Covenants, the European Social Charter, International Labour Organization conventions, and United Nations conventions. All of these multilateral treaties are capable of implementation, notwithstanding the fact that the rights codified must necessarily be drafted in specialized treaty language. But these rights and guarantees are subsequently given specificity by the appropriate administrative, political, and judicial tribunals, at such time as alleged violations are examined.

It has never been contended that the implementation of human rights (including economic guarantees) is anything but difficult. Problems abound,

[continued on p. 47]