

## Campus-Burners' Irresponsibility Showing Up in Environment Policy

**M**ANY people breathed a sigh of relief in the 1960s when hippies and radical reformers cut back on college campus demonstrations and began turning their attention to the environment.

At least, they would devote their energies toward progress and a better world, it was said, hopefully. Now the same sort of irresponsibility that burned down university buildings is showing up in our environmental programs and regulations.

Once the movement obtained enactment by Congress of broad laws creating powerful bureaus with almost unlimited authority, whatever constructiveness it may have had was redirected to obstruct progress or to reduce existing standards of living.

Obstructionism raises many questions but provides few answers. An environmental phobia has developed, resulting in costly factory renovations, product changes and banning of useful materials, often only on the basis of nebulous suspicion of harm.

In a recent letter, Edwin L. Johnson, deputy administrator in the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), responded to an inquiry by Rep. Ted Risenhoover, D-Okla., about the banning of certain agricultural chemicals used to control crop insects.

"Mr. (Russell) Train (EPA administrator) pointed out that a careful reading of the FIFRA and relevant court cases makes clear that it is necessary to find only substantial likelihood of serious harm to man and the environment resulting from continued use of chlordane and heptachlor," Johnson wrote. "It is not necessary to find conclusively that harm will result."

Under broad rule-making power given to EPA by Congress, courts have held that EPA's regulations are almost invincible!

Although we are importing a major part of the petroleum we use, federal obstructionism is making it increasingly difficult and expensive to develop either additional supplies or to utilize alternate energy sources that are available.

Obstructionists held up building of the Alaska pipeline for years on various environmental pretexts. Now they are preventing increased utilization of our abundant coal reserves.

Many noted scientists and engineers say that industrial uses of nuclear energy could be instituted without undue hazards, if proper precautions were taken. But obstructionists continue to spread alarms based upon wartime uses and unfounded fears.

Their campaigns do not deter other nations from building nuclear power plants. Indeed, many are operating elsewhere without evidence of dangers obstructionists claim. If their fears are correct, the entire world might be involved should such an accident occur. Our failure to build is no protection.

Likewise, our reluctance to strengthen our military power with atomic weapons will not prevent nuclear war, because other nations are building ahead. It only makes us defenseless.

Unnecessary and unwise bans of useful materials or procedures without due regard for benefits and risks is not conservation and it is not constructive. Many such actions are plain obstructionism or misuse of bureaucratic authority. They are costly and may prove ruinous to our country in the long run.