

1979's Wisdom Tells Us Something

NOW that the tidal wave of predictions for the 1980s is subsiding, it may be worthwhile to review wisdom of the past year. It might tell us more about where we are headed than all the forecasts put together.

It is obvious that we have adequate food, not enough oil, too much government, and runaway inflation.

International politics could change our food situation, as the double-talking State Department tries to impose sanctions on Russia and Iran by withholding grain but not other products, as seems logical.

"If the federal government owned and managed the Sahara desert, there would be a shortage of sand within a year," said Glenn Hackney, state senator in Alaska. He was talking about oil, but it could also apply to food, railroads, timber or other resources.

Anti-capitalists have blocked use of nuclear energy and environmentalists object to coal smoke, but President Carter offered a bright note: "No one can ever embargo the

sun or interrupt its delivery to us!"

A practical energy suggestion came from Rep. Wes Watkins, D-OK, who proposed: "Relax environmental restrictions on coal and let coal be used in the region where produced."

Sen. Henry Bellmon, R-OK, observed: "I think we have to face the fact that there are some things government simply cannot afford to do in times like these."

Nevertheless, new and old bureaus continue to grind out costly rules and regulations by the bookful, covering almost everything.

There were exceptions. When asked why officials did not ban collard greens because they put nitrates into the human body, Carol Tucker Foreman, assistant secretary of agriculture, explained:

"They're not a food additive. God may have put them there, but He's not covered by the Delaney clause." Nearly everything else is.

The Health, Education and Welfare Department banned statements, memoranda and documents that suggest there is a difference

between the sexes. Words denoting sex, such as he, she, manpower, mother, father, sir, manning, womankind, housewife and policeman now are taboo in HEW.

An irreverent book quoted the chief justice as saying: "We are the Supreme Court, and we can do anything we want."

Texas John Connally, candidate for president, claimed: "I'm the only certified not guilty candidate running in either party."

Washington humorist Bob Orben said too many public figures are being brought down by ridicule and asked: "Where are our heroes coming from — the sort of people that we're going to follow into battle?"

News services reported the chaplain of the Kansas State Senate prayed:

"Omniscient Father: Help us to know who is telling the truth . . . If neither side is telling the truth, we would like to know that, too. And if each side is telling half the truth, give us the wisdom to put the right halves together. In Jesus' name, Amen!"