Human Rights and Environment: The Need for International Co-operation. By W. Paul Gormley, Sjithoff: Leyden. 1976. Pp. xvii, 274. Dfl. 58. Starting with the axiom that individuals and non-governmental entities have the right to be guaranteed a pure, healthful, and decent environment, the author attempts to thread together an analysis tending to prove or at least demonstrate how the stated proposition is, in fact, evolving.

The study's approach is first to focus on some of the principal factual and legal problems facing the international community in the environmental field and second to examine the emerging legal philosophy and accompanying jurisprudence pointing to the future course of environmental law. Receiving intensive examination is the Council of Europe, insofar as it has perfected multinational machinery to protect human rights. Also reviewed are the contributions of the EEC, NATO/CCMS, OECD, ILO, WHO and the UN.

As far as the compilation of factual data is concerned, the book is certainly competent. On the other hand, its rather bemused interpretations of the data, leading to an evolving individual right to a good environment, are off the mark. The author simply sees too much in the way of an evolving individual right, and too soon.

As for style, the book leaves much to be desired. The writing is cumbersome. The footnote/text ratio is probably unnecessarily high and the footnotes themselves are somewhat rambling. The text sports a dizzying array of proofreading errors and punctuation tends to be slipshod.

Nevertheless, the book is worth reading as it does a reasonable job in outlining important developments in implementing efforts by international institutions in the environmental field.

Liroff goes on to address the following questions: What were Congress's expectations at the time NEPA was passed? How was the law implemented (or evaded) by administrative units and interpreted in the courts, and how did the initial conflict patterns square with Congressional expectations? Finally, what was the legislative response to the unforeseen consequences of NEPA?

The author first weaves through NEPA's legislative history, and puts into perspective the activities of the Council on Environmental Quality, set up by the statute. Following segments focus on judicial interpretation of NEPA, administrative responses to the Act, and the Congressional counter-response.

The book is designed to appeal more to students of public law, policy and administration than to those in such vocations. It is, in other words, academic stuff, interspersed with the usual spate of diagrammatic sketches, flow charts and tables, sometimes as beguiling as informative. One such "modest graphic model", in the author's words, is reproduced below.

Graphic playthings aside, this is a fine work and a solid contribution to the understanding of the workings of American environmental legislation and administration.