

# EDITORIAL

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Wildlife Preservation

Dear Sir,

In a recent issue of the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, I noticed the following advertisement:

#### "Polar Bear Fur

"Splendid, enormous popular bear fur for sale. Length 280 cm, width 240 cm. The polar bear is now universally protected and the fur of this largest predator of the polar region has become a great rarity. The fur offered here is in good condition and is of the largest size today available. Minimum offer DM 10,000.-

Write to Attorney Georg Lous, Haakon, VII's gt. 2, Oslo 1, Norway."

This advertisement prompts me to ask whether you would advise me to buy the offered fur as an investment safe from economic crisis and likely to appreciate in value. I would also like to know to which other fur-bearing animals protection is to be extended in the near future. In view of the insecure stock market one cannot afford to do without the lucrative resource represented by those furs which protection can be expected to make rare, even if one cannot always reckon with a minimal profit of 10,000 DM. Or could it be that I, as well as the above-mentioned attorney, have misunderstood the intended effect of the Washington Convention of 1973 for the Protection of Endangered Species?

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The major theme of this issue is the Third United Nations Law of the Sea Conference and the results of its recent session in Geneva. Of course, the Conference has dealt with many topics not strictly within the scope of "environmental" concerns — an example being the rights of passage by ships which is the subject of Professor Fleischer's contribution to this issue. However, as both Fleischer's and David Anderson's articles make clear, there are environmental considerations relevant to virtually every item on the Conference's agenda. Perhaps even more critical is the fact that acceptance of the environmental safeguards under debate in the Conference's Third Committee will depend upon nations reaching agreement on the predominantly economic and political issues being considered by the First and Second Committees. Our next issue will continue the discussion with a report on October's Pacem in Maribus Conference in Okinawa, preparatory to the next Law of the Sea session to convene in New York next March.

The news of Maurice Strong's resignation as Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (see page 126) came to us as a surprise, but not a completely unexpected one. As Mr. Strong's accomplishments have demonstrated, he is a superb organizer, but is not one to be satisfied with day-to-day administration. UNEP's loss will be Canada's gain. We have been trying to arrange for an interview with the fast-moving Mr. Strong, and hope to include it in our next issue. Perhaps UNEP's Executive Director will now be able to speak his mind freely on the problems of protecting the world's environment.

We have considered whether it was wise to direct criticism in two successive issues, toward a particular country's environmental policies, as we have chosen to do with respect to the United Kingdom (see U.K. Stalls on Endangered Species Convention, issue no. 2, page 75, as well as the article at page 144 of this issue). The reason for doing so is that we recognize that the United Kingdom has been a pathfinder in the environmental field and that its role continues to be an important and influential one. This is why we felt it useful to report on several disappointing positions taken recently by the British government in international matters. This confluence of events is surely just a coincidence, but it points out the continuing need for cooperation and criticism among those states which have worked for progress in the environmental field.

As mentioned in our last issue, having made that one longer than normal, requires that this issue must be a bit shorter than the previous ones. We hope, though, that our material will prove no less timely and interesting.

### Information for Contributors

The Editors welcome responses to articles published in Environmental Policy and Law, whether in the form of letters to the editor, brief critical comments, or full-fledged articles presenting contrasting points of view. Likewise, comments or analyses on other subjects within the range of environmental law, policy and administration are most welcome. Particularly of interest are comments or analyses of recent environmental developments, whether at international, national or local levels and whether concerning governmental or nongovernmental organizations. Articles are selected for publication on the basis of the importance of their subject matter and the competence of its presentation.

Lengthy manuscripts may be split for publication in two or more successive issues. Footnotes should be kept to a minimum and placed at the end of the text. Articles are published in English or French. Publication of manuscripts in other languages depends upon availability of translation services.