

EDITORIAL

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

One short comment about this issue: Some of our readers have been waiting longer than usual for this issue - one should almost say this book. Finally we are glad to offer more - not only in the number of pages, than the Editor and Publisher promised for 1977. The delay was due to the difficulty entailed in choosing what articles should be published in an earlier and a later issue. We therefore finally decided to combine the two.

* * *

What are today's topics?

Much has changed as a result of the present economic recession. Also in the developed countries, one is becoming more and more "environmentally apprehensive". The cry is for "Economy before Ecology". But is this a sound attitude to take? Prof. G. Schaefer, Director of an Institute for Education in the Natural Sciences states that "when one acts correctly in the ecological sense, one cannot at the same time act incorrectly in the economic sense, as some economists contend, for one is, in the long run, following an economic course on a sounder level". However, the argument is being continually used that all investments imposed for environmental safeguards would be better applied in "productive investments". But the practice shows that in a period of economic recession, there is a holding back on all non-compulsory investments - and most politicians - when unemployment increases - are only too willing to make concessions. For it is not understood or appreciated that in this very area of environmental conservation many possibilities exist for establishing new and satisfying jobs. National and international surveys have shown this. Among others, the Commission of the European Communities has undertaken a study on the relationship between employment and environment; already, following the first interim results, relevant projects have been planned with a view to reducing unemployment. For a certain period of time, employment programmes will be established to be applied by the public and private sector, especially in areas with structural problems, where they may have a permanent impact.

* * *

"Information is Power" - Six years after the UN Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, UNEP wishes 1978 to be the "Year of the Users" of the International Referral System (IRS), which is designed to facilitate the flow and exchange of information on environmental issues. We hope that this means that IRS is finally off the ground!

Environmental Policy and Law, 3 (1977)

(Re: Dead Not Alive for the Prince
EPL 3:2 p. 65)

I have too much respect for your publication to let pass without a rebuttal the note published in your last issue about Prince Abdorreza Pahlavi; you have been purposely misled: you are aware, of course, that the IUCN Red Data Book does not contain only "endangered" species, but several other categories deserving attention and up to and including species which are completely out of danger.

The two species - Spectacled bear (*Tremarctos ornatus*) and the Tarouca (*Hippocamelus antisensis*) which HH Prince Abdorreza was authorized to collect by the Peruvian authorities - by the way, you may not be aware that Prince Abdorreza has founded a zoology museum in Tehran - are not, as you published, "top-listed in the Red Data Book", i.e. "endangered", but rather in the low priority category of "vulnerable" and are quite abundant.

There is therefore no specific justification for the hue and cry generated by the Peruvian Section of WWF; there was no ground to criticize the Peruvian authorities who issued the permits in question and certainly none could be retained towards the beneficiary of such a legal permission, especially when one knows the achievements of the person in question in the domain of wildlife conservation.

It is, of course, due to the will of His Majesty the Emperor that conservation measures have been backed by the necessary political and financial means to reestablish wildlife over millions of acres of once depleted habitat, thus making Iran an example for the world to follow; disappearing species such as Persian leopard are now locally abundant; the Mesopotamian deer thought extinct in the wild, has been saved in the nick of time and can now be considered out of danger; Iran, showing the way in the field of international responsibility towards wildlife, has given to the nations of the world the first wetland of international importance.

These achievements, of which Iran can justly be proud, are due in no small
[Continued on page 200]