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Not too long ago, I noticed an editorial cartoon which appeared in a number of the nation's leading newspapers. The Herblock cartoon showed two fat figures labeled "The Pollution Lobbies" flying a kite. The kite carried the message, "Boo! Environmental standards cause inflation!" A second kite lay badly damaged and abandoned in a tree labeled, "Boo! Environmental standards cause unemployment!" One of the figures is saying to the other, "Well, maybe this one will fly."

The cartoon celebrates a noteworthy gain by people like you, by the environmental movement -- the destruction of the myth that efforts to clean up our precious environment puts people out of work. We have argued for years and demonstrated just the opposite -- new jobs are created.

But, the cartoon also warns us about another familiar flight of fancy -- the lightweight argument that environmental standards are inflationary. We will answer that charge. But if these two assaults can be symbolized by kites, there is a potentially much more serious vehicle fueled and ready to fly. This third threat could be characterized as a strategic bomber. The environmental threat about to take off is the accelerating energy crisis.

The consequences for our environment of this threat will be harder to forestall. I expect mounting pressure. As environmentalists, you and I have a job to do. We have to educate ourselves to the real impact of this crisis. The biggest threat to what you are trying to accomplish isn't the inflation fighters. It is energy.

The environmental movement is strong across the country. But who ever heard of an energy conservation movement? When Detroit lobbies against stiff gas guzzler taxes and a ban on fuel inefficient cars, there is no organized power countering them.

Support for alternative, renewable energy sources has been a little stronger, but when forced to stand up to the oil, coal, nuclear and gas lobbies -- and others -- it, too, has proved to be weak, disorganized, inefficient and all too often, silent.

You have the awareness to lead. Together we can begin educating the American public to the urgency of conservation, and the development of energy alternatives. The Federal government has been way too lax on this area. I think people are ready to back away from our oil addiction -- or would be if they fully realized the magnitude of the problem and the realistic alternatives available.

You are much more aware than most citizens of what we can do as individuals to save energy and seek protection from the effects of energy shortages. You know about turning thermostats down and buying fuel efficient cars. You know about turning off lights when they aren't needed.

Perhaps you are aware of government incentives such as tax credits that motivate conservation. Insulation, weatherstripping, caulking, modified flue openings, automatic fuel ignition systems, clock thermostats -- all of these qualify for a 15 percent tax credit. Solar heating and hot water systems qualify for a 30 percent tax credit. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has grants available in Massachusetts of \$400 for solar hot water heaters.

You need to lead your communities into conservation awareness and education. Air and water pollution will seem unimportant to a nation up to its nose in gas rationing. A breeder reactor -- even given Three Mile Island -- will seem less threatening to a Nation held ransom by the OPEC cartel.

The Iranian oil cutoffs have moved the energy crisis into our daily lives. Heating oil prices here in New England are soaring. Gasoline shortages are just beginning to show up. Momentum is shifting toward development and away from environmental standards. Unlike the past crises of the Seventies, however, we will not go back to normal. Iran is a warning signal. If we fail to heed that signal now, the gas lines of 1979 will seem like good times when we look back in the 1980's.

I think the next 6 months will show that our last 6 years were a disaster of delay and indifference in terms of Government response to the energy crisis. Even now, where is our sense of urgency?

I worry about the impacts in the years ahead if the nation sticks to its stubborn failure to respond to the energy crisis. The implications could be far-reaching. For example, if a plutonium based energy system were established -- requiring constant transport of plutonium, which can be made into nuclear weapons -- what would the consequences be in terms of civil liberties? How far might the Nation -- still vulnerable through its dependence on oil from the Persian Gulf -- be willing to go in the future? In an oil-starved America, would military action seem out of the question?

The tremendous gains that you and I in the environmental movement have made in the last decade are in danger. The Seventies have seen real progress in many areas:

- \* protection of endangered species
- \* control of strip-mining
- \* the handling of toxic substances
- \* protection of wild and scenic lands
- \* improvement of air and water quality.

I will stand with you in setting an aggressive agenda and seeking more progress on these and other environmental issues. But I think it's clear that we are threatened.

If environmentalists in particular fail to put the energy crisis at the very top of that agenda, we will spend much of our efforts and resources fighting a rearguard operation. We will waste all our energy trying just to hold our hard-won progress.

The first signs of that assault are clear. The air pollution clean-up program is threatened by "fuel switching" -- putting leaded gas into cars designed for unleaded gasoline. This problem could flare dramatically this summer due to shortages of unleaded gasolines.

Shortages and pricing considerations are building pressure for relaxing requirements for the use of low sulphur fuels. These pressures will grow.

The oil and gas lobbies have infiltrated the Alaska Lands issue with new strength, vigor. They have won surprise first-round victories in the House Interior Committee and Merchant Marine Committee. Environmentalists in the Congress are feeling the intensified pressures. We want this issue to be fought on the floor before the summer's gas lines strengthen the hand of the development lobby.

Full recognition of these danger signs must not mean a defensive posture for environmentalists. I will be a leader of efforts to pass a strong bill to protect the Alaskan wilderness. Failing the passage of such a bill, I will support no bill, leaving the crucial areas protected by the praiseworthy actions of Secretary Andrus and President Carter in establishing the National Monuments in Alaska.

I will continue to fight for strong preservation policies, land-use guidelines, control of toxic substances, recycling of materials. We need a national bottle bill, stronger air pollution standards and continued efforts to clean up our rivers and lakes, and to share in the protection of the world's oceans.

Traditionally, we have taken our rivers for granted. But the national effort to clean up the result of historic neglect and abuse is starting to pay off. We have invested \$35 billion in the clean-up nationally. About \$1 billion was spent in Massachusetts. But now that rivers are becoming cleaner, the areas around waterways are attracting development. We must protect our right to enjoy the product of our investment in clean waterways.

This is why I have formed a Task Force of Federal, State, local and private agencies responsible for water resources, recreation and economic development. The Task Force will develop options for river protection in Massachusetts and report its findings by the end of May. Ultimately, we hope to create a model program for the nation. A grassroots movement is needed to energize the protection of these water resources throughout the United States. We must increase the public's awareness of the contending possible uses of our river. Ideally, proper planning will let us coordinated and maximize multiple uses of these assets -- for energy, water supplies, recreation and pure beauty.

Today I am announcing a statewide Rivers' Celebration during the weekend of June 23rd and 24th. I am sponsoring this festival to focus attention on our recuperating waterways, and to foster debate on important decisions we must make. Groups across the state will celebrate our 3300 miles of rivers and streams in a variety of ways. For example, the Westfield River Watershed Association will have a canoe race, a raft contest, and a trash and treasure hunt in canoes. Details of activities across the State will be announced soon.

It's a pleasure to announce initiatives for rivers at this particular Conference. Local conservation commissions, watershed associations and citizen-activists must work together to develop constituencies for the waterways. The experience, dedication and commitment of all of you are essential in ensuring sound management of our beautiful, essential rivers.

These initiatives and others must contend with a crescendo of demand for a strong national energy conservation policy and for the most aggressive renewable energy development path. Unless we can provide the leadership for such a grassroots demand for action, it won't happen. We have seen for 6 years now that it won't happen. Without these alternatives, there will be a growing demand in the wrong direction:

- \* off-shore drilling
- \* increased strip-mining
- \* burning more coal
- \* relaxation of environmental standards
- \* increased reliance on nuclear power
- \* the "unlocking" of Alaska's lands
- \* more pipelines for gas
- \* oil and coal slurry
- \* the breeder reactor

In short, an environmental nightmare.

Choice is clear. I think you think the choice is clear. If we can present that choice clearly to the American public, I believe people are prepared to make the sacrifices necessary to ensure their future and their children's.

We cannot afford to turn our backs on that effort. If we do, we will share the responsibility for the consequences with the Government, the oil companies, OPEC, and the developers. If we do lead our country in the right direction, we can finally tell Herblock's "Pollution Lobbies" to go fly a kite -- and know that theirs won't fly.