

dren were watched to gauge their emotional reactions. One of the most useful studies, says Comstock, was a longitudinal one, in which a population of 19-year old boys, whose viewing habits had been studied a decade before, was subjected to a "cross-lag" analysis. This analysis allegedly confirms that there is a significant correlation between viewing violence on television and subsequent aggressive behavior.

Pool says that despite these positive findings the national press botched its coverage by following the lead of the *New York Times*, which was the first to break the story under the head "TV Violence Held Unharmful to Youth."

But such a generalization is not incomprehensible in view of the stream of ambiguities and qualified statements contained in the report.

For example, the nature of violence itself is by no means clear. In three different studies of programming, football was ignored by one research team, classified as "highly violent" by another, and "nonviolent" by still another.

Dead ends abound: the report says, "in two studies, for example, the relationship between violence viewing and aggression was found to be as strong or stronger for girls than it was for boys, while in another study virtually no relationship was found for girls."

Again, in another study, three groups of children were subjected, respectively, to a "prosocial" program (Misterogers Neighborhood), a violent program, and a "neutral" program. It was found that children of low socioeconomic status (SES) became more cooperative and sharing with each other after watching the prosocial program, but high SES children didn't. "Rather, the high-status children showed an increase in prosocial interpersonal behavior after viewing aggressive programming." Findings such as these have convinced researchers that there is no point in testing further the hypothesis that most children react to violence in a uniform way.

Conclusiveness having proved elusive, the question arises as to what should be done next. "The real question," says Percy Tannenbaum of Berkeley, who contributed to the studies (but was blackballed from the committee), "is when do we as a society take action on a subject, even when all the evidence is not in." Or, "When do we take action if even a small percentage of the population is affected in an un-

## A Modest Environmental Message

President Nixon sent his election year message on the environment to Congress this week. By all appearances it was one carefully tailored to gratify the widest possible spectrum of public and private interests at the least possible expense. There were no major new requests for money and no marked departures from policies laid down in his two previous environmental messages. With 20 of his environmental bills still languishing in Congress, the President chose instead mainly to issue executive orders and to suggest a few amendments to pending legislation.

One exception to the no-money rule was a request for an \$6 million or 20 percent increase in federal funds for R & D on integrated pest control. Russell Train, Nixon's chief environmental adviser, explained to conservation leaders who were invited to a briefing on the message that this was "one of the President's new technological initiatives."

The other main features of the message were these:

- An executive order banning the use of poisons for predator control on federal lands or by federal agencies under any circumstances.

- A long-awaited proposal for an effluent tax on sulfur oxide emissions. A 15-cent-per-pound tax would be levied against industries in any area which failed to comply with all federal sulfur standards. Areas meeting "secondary" standards to protect the "public welfare" but not the "primary" health standards would be subject to a 10-cent-per-pound tax. Neither levy would take effect until 1976.

- Proposals for legislation requiring states to adopt controls over land erosion and stream sedimentation caused by construction and to establish site selection procedures for new highways and airports by 1975.

- Changes in federal tax regulations to encourage the development of recycling facilities and to discourage the development of wetlands.

- A request to Congress to empower the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a permit system for the regulation of toxic waste disposal on land and in deep waste wells.

- A plea for Congress to put what Train called "some real teeth" into the Endangered Species Act by extending its coverage from species already endangered to those "likely to be endangered." The President also announced an agreement with Mexico to add 33 species to the list of protected migratory birds, including a number of raptors.

- Eighteen individual requests for congressional establishment of new wilderness areas within national parks, forests, and wildlife refuges. At the same time, the President ordered the Interior and Agriculture Departments to speed up their reviews of park and forest lands eligible for inclusion in the system, particularly in the eastern United States where mining, logging, and recreational development are fast encroaching on the few remaining remnants of wilderness.

- A promise to ante up a substantial but unspecified fraction of \$100 million to create a new environmental planning unit within the United Nations. The balance would presumably come from other nations to carry out programs agreed upon in the U.N. Human Environment Conference scheduled at Stockholm this June.

Conservationists generally professed themselves pleased at what seemed to be good intentions on the President's part, but most were also quick to point to several omissions in the list of items touched upon. Among these was the frequently destructive practice of clear-cutting in the national forests by timber companies. During a briefing, one White House adviser conceded that the Administration had tabled at least until July an executive order that would have imposed new restrictions on this practice.

A lumber industry spokesman who was present said that Nixon's avoidance of this issue in his message showed "wise restraint." But to some conservation leaders, it typified the fate of many of the President's good intentions.—R.G.