

The impact of human rights issues on the agreements is not evaluated in either report, although the CRS study does cite the congressional testimony of the Federation of American Scientists and includes comments drawn from questionnaires circulated by the Committee of Concerned Scientists in 1974 and 1975. The CRS report notes a level of dis-

satisfaction in the questionnaires that is higher than had been registered in other responses. It suggests that "One reason is that much of the bitterness that pervades the responses of these questionnaires relates to the Soviet emigration policy with respect to Jewish scientists, and its use of psychiatric institutions for detention and punishment."

Soviet reactions to the operation of the agreement are not conveyed in the reports in any detail, but the Russians do have some complaints of their own. Soviet participants, for example, are known to be disappointed to find themselves sometimes dealing with U.S. government scientists and science administrators or American academic research-

Carter Places Environment High on Agenda

The most remarkable thing about the environmental message that President Jimmy Carter sent to Congress on 23 May lies in his apparently strong commitment to the protection and enhancement of the environment in the face of all of the other demands for his attention. The environmental movement came on strong in the late 1960's and crested in the early 1970's, resulting in the enactment of such major legislation as the National Environmental Policy Act and the clean air and clean water acts. In more recent years, however, the environment quite clearly lost its place at the top of the governmental agenda to competing and sometimes conflicting concerns, such as those over jobs, inflation, and national energy needs. But, now, from his message outlining the environmental measures he seeks of Congress or intends to bring about through use of his presidential powers, it is clear that President Carter has rearranged the agenda so as to make environmental quality again a matter of top priority.

Some politically potent demands have been made for the President to call for an easing of a number of the requirements set forth in existing environmental laws. For instance, the National Commission on Water Quality, which was headed by former Vice President Nelson Rockefeller, last year recommended that the requirement that all industries install the "best available [abatement] technology" by 1983 be dropped as not cost-effective. But, in his message to Congress, the President not only expresses strong support for this requirement but announces that he seeks authority to impose an economic penalty on industries that fail to meet abatement schedules. Also, he would have Congress provide \$45 billion over the next 10 years to enable municipalities to complete the job of building sewage treatment works.

In his energy message of 20 April, the President declared that, although a two-thirds expansion in the mining and burning of coal by 1985 was one of his major objectives, the utilities must nevertheless live up to the Clean Air Act's requirement that scrubbers or other "best available technology" be installed in all new coal-fired plants. This policy, along with the President's commitment to strong strip-mining legislation, is restated in the environmental message. It is of course bitterly resisted by many people in industry and in Congress.

Also, in keeping with new laws governing the leasing of federal coal and management of public domain lands, the President is insisting that no more federal coal be leased in the absence of land use plans and environmental assessments showing that the impact of the mining will be acceptable. In addition, he is calling on the Department of the Interior to review ways to prevent severe environmental damage resulting from development of the 16 billion tons of federal coal already leased. Interior is to consider measures

such as possibly canceling or condemning some leases on environmental grounds and exchanging certain coal lands where mining would be environmentally unacceptable for other lands where it would be less of a problem.

Furthermore, Interior is directed to prepare a comprehensive report on the water demands associated with the production, transportation, and use of coal and other fuels, and on the environmental effects of the projected water use. Similarly, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Energy Research and Development Administration, and the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare are directed to undertake a joint study of potential health problems that could arise from coal conversion technologies.

In the case of outer continental shelf (OCS) oil and gas development, the President has, without waiting for Congress to finish amending the OCS Lands Act, asked Interior to take various steps—such as sketching out lease sale schedules and cooperating more fully with state and local governments—to ensure that environmental values are taken into account in the frontier areas of the OCS.

The environmental message, a 36-page document concerned with a wide array of problems and objectives, is not easily summarized. The President clearly regards environmental protection as consistent with a sound economy, for he says as much. Also, he looks more to the effective implementation and enforcement of existing laws than to the enactment of new ones. With respect to the control of toxic substances, for example, he calls for the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) to lead an interagency effort to design a coordinated strategy.

The message does not ask Congress to plunge into any old or new areas of great controversy, such as comprehensive national land use legislation. But the President does call for ambitious additions to the national systems of parks, wilderness areas, wild rivers, and trails. Moreover, he announces that four important new Executive orders are to be issued. Two of these orders will discourage federal or federally assisted projects from encroaching upon floodplains or wetlands. Another order will direct Interior to keep off-road vehicles off of public lands where "considerable damage" will result. The fourth order enhances the role of the CEQ by giving it authority to issue mandatory regulations—not merely the advisory guidelines it has issued in the past—which other agencies must follow in preparing environmental impact statements and carrying out other requirements of NEPA.

Some of these measures met with opposition within the Administration, but, in general, opposition was light. It seems that, by and large, the various agencies—and even the Office of Management and Budget—have got the word that the man in the White House is an environmentalist.

—LUTHER J. CARTER