

ing-country debt and the devastation being wreaked on habitat. And much to Lovejoy's frustration, Brazil, an ecological jewel that has \$110 billion in foreign debt, has not yet swapped any of it for nature.

One obstacle has been Jose Sarney, past president of Brazil, who regarded pressure by industrialized nations to alter his country's development plans as an infringement on sovereignty. "You are not going to make us a green Persian Gulf," Sarney defiantly told a visiting American delegation last year. But with a new Brazilian president (conservative Fernando Collor de Mello) in office, Lovejoy and others hope that the climate for conservation may improve in Brazil.

Whether or not that comes to pass, Lovejoy's vision has already gone far beyond the debt-for-nature swaps. At the Smithsonian he has taken on his most ambitious project: firing up the world to save itself from environmental catastrophe. Lovejoy was lured to the Smithsonian in part because the institution is not regarded as an advocacy group—which was perhaps a limitation of the World Wildlife Fund. "I can say the same thing at the Smithsonian as at WWF and it has more credibility," he says.

Exploiting the Smithsonian platform for

all it's worth, he's redoubled his efforts to save the rain forest and broadened his outreach, propelled by the rapid acceleration of tropical deforestation, the loss of biodiversity, and the increase in carbon dioxide emissions into the atmosphere.

According to Senator H. John Heinz III (R-PA), who is one of Lovejoy's powerful connections, "To Tom, losing the Amazon is a metaphor for losing the planet."

And to avoid losing the Amazon Lovejoy has been taking bands of bigwigs such as Heinz to the Amazon—and bringing them back as converts. About a year ago Lovejoy took a band of "campers," including Ben Bradlee, executive editor of the *Washington Post*, on one of his guided tours to witness the splendor and destruction of the rain forest. Bradlee returned a true believer.

Last September, Bradlee told an audience of scientists and fellow journalists that the *Post* was "late in covering environmental issues. Our editors didn't know about environmental issues. We didn't understand how a guy in a New York apartment spraying underarm deodorant could create a hole in the ozone—never mind the flatulent cow." Many readers think the *Post* has stepped up its coverage of global warming

and biodiversity in recent months.

Heinz, another convert, says: "The Good Lord hasn't made someone like him in a long time. He took an obdurate skeptic and made a believer out of me."

The clout of people like Ben Bradlee and John Heinz is obvious and directly political. But Lovejoy also appears on television talk shows with media figures like pop singer Sting, a vocal champion of protecting the rain forest. Lovejoy provides scientific legitimacy to the powerful and glamorous who otherwise might be viewed as environmental novitiates, if not dilettantes.

It is clear that Lovejoy's charm and style, his capacity to make others feel at ease and to feel at ease himself in many circumstances, is a big part of his success. A trim man with rumpled brown hair, a long nose, and a ready smile, he bounces from one appointment to another, looking comfortable and confident.

Although Lovejoy has hosts of celebrants, he also has his critics. Indeed, there are those who feel his approach is more style than substance. Last fall Lovejoy organized a conference on global warming for scientists and the media that was hosted by the Smithsonian. Subsequently, *Wall Street Journal* editorialist David Brooks panned the meeting in the newspaper's 5 October 1989 edition, contending that the conference presented a lop-sided alarmist view that the world is headed for environmental disaster.

Brooks said of the conference that "enlightenment was beside the point. The scientists were limited to 10 minutes, enough time to cite a few familiar facts and sum up with a grandiloquent plea of action (if you can't stand purple prose, don't go to an environmental conference)."

While Lovejoy "eloquently encouraged the idea that we are in a planetary crisis," Brooks said, "the conference offered no constructive prescriptions. Not too many politicians are going to go before their constituents and renounce economic growth."

Clearly, reaction to Thomas Lovejoy depends on what one thinks about the state of the global environment. If one believes the environment is on the verge of crisis, he is a crucial figure. If, like David Brooks, one believes the threat is overstated, Lovejoy might conceivably appear somewhat self-indulgent.

Whatever one feels about him, Lovejoy is certainly an intriguing figure, partly because he is one of the few people capable of making the leap from science to impassioned advocacy. "I wish there were ten more of him," says Wilson. "We desperately need more people who can bridge the gap between science and the public."

■ MARJORIE SUN

NIH Seeks a Chief, Desperately

An active search for a director for the National Institutes of Health is being renewed after several months during which a special advisory panel has been trying to define ways to make the position more attractive. The problem: those who are most qualified to do the job are accustomed to more lavish perks than the NIH directorship offers and may be put off by its relatively low pay and bureaucratic limits.

At an advisory panel meeting last week, Assistant Secretary for Health James O. Mason, who chairs the search committee, called for nominations by the end of March, even though the advisory panel will not have fully completed its work by then.

Search committee members include Upjohn chairman Theodore Cooper, James F. Dickson of Boston University, and James R. Gavin of the University of Oklahoma. All three also serve on the advisory panel.

The panel was convened by Health and Human Services Secretary Louis W. Sullivan last summer after it became apparent that because of limits on the NIH director's authority, and the now infamous (and no longer applicable) litmus test on abortion, many qualified candidates would not take the job.

The advisory panel so far has offered a variety of recommendations that, taken together, would add luster and power to the directorship. At its most recent meeting, for instance, the panel formally called for a special pay schedule for top NIH scientists that would make their salaries competitive with those in medical schools.

The panel also urged the secretary to delegate to the director substantial authority for hiring NIH scientists and appointing advisory committees. It also suggested that the NIH head be designated the secretary's chief adviser on science and research, and given a seat on important federal science policy groups. This suggestion is an effort to make the NIH chief equivalent to the National Science Foundation director, who currently enjoys greater independence and a higher federal rank.

Regardless of which recommendations are enacted, it already seems clear that the crisis in finding an NIH head and the very existence of the new advisory panel has raised the NIH's profile within HHS and has given acting NIH director William Raub more direct, "one-on-one" access to the secretary than NIH heads have had in recent years.

■ BARBARA J. CULLITON