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OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT

WASHINGTON

June 16, 1993

The Honorable Scott Klug
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Klug:

Scott

Thank you for your letter and the information you enclosed regarding Dr. John Scott's work as a delegate to the International Society of Physicians for the Environment (ISPE). It was good to hear from you, and I apologize for the delay in responding.

I share President Clinton's commitment to the preservation of our global environment in a way that leads to strong and sustainable economic growth.' As you know, in his Earth Day Address in April, the President announced his intention to sign the Biodiversity Treaty, as well as initiatives to promote recycling, the use of energy efficient computers, and an environmental audit of the White House. Be assured that this Administration will continue in its efforts to protect our natural heritage and the delicate balance of the diversity of the ecosystems of our planet. Similarly, I appreciate hearing of Dr. Scott's efforts to increase public awareness of health problems. The problems of health and the environment are closely linked.

Again, thank you for sharing this information with me.

Sincerely,

Al

Al Gore

AGJ/avl

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4902

March 31, 1993

The Honorable Al Gore
Vice President
The White House
1400 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

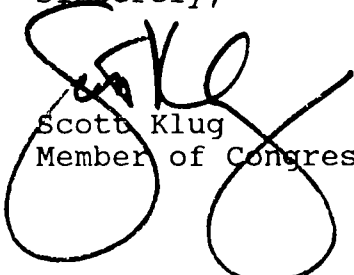
Dear The Honorable Gore:

My constituent, Dr. John K. Scott asked me to forward the enclosed packet of information on to you. I would appreciate any attention you can give to it.

Dr. Scott is a delegate to the International Society of Physicians for the Environment (ISPE) and wanted you to be aware of ISPE's work. He would be grateful if you could respond to his concerns about preserving our global environment as well as address his upcoming meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev in Lucerne, Switzerland.

Again, thanks for you help in this matter. If your have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

Sincerely,


Scott Klug
Member of Congress

SK/jc

PLEASE RESPOND TO:

☐ 1224 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-4902
(202) 225-2906

☐ 18 NORTH CARROLL STREET
ROOM 800
MADISON, WI 53703
(608) 257-9200

Madison physician joins global fight against pollution

DEPLETION OF THE stratospheric ozone, widespread water pollution, air pollution, and groundwater contamination are some of the pressing global pollution problems that prompted the United States' recent participation in the assembly of the International Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE), according to a Madison physician who served as the sole US delegate.

John K. Scott, MD, a Wisconsin otolaryngologist and past SMS president, traveled to Stockholm, Sweden, in late September to discuss the role physicians can play in addressing pollution problems posing a threat to the inhabitants of the Earth, current and future. ISDE is working to bring worldwide environmental health issues to the forefront of public concern.

Although the recent forum was the third assembly of ISDE, the United States had never before participated in the global environmental health discussion. But in 1992, Dr Scott said, the United States has declared an end to isolationism. The past chair of the AMA's Long Range Planning Council, which has been working with the Council of Scientific Affairs in matters of the environment, Dr Scott was asked to represent the newly organized National Association of Physicians for the Environment (NAPE) as its first delegate.

Still in fledgling stages, NAPE was founded earlier this year by John T. Grupenhoff, PhD, of Potomac, MD, with physicians Jerome C. Goldstein, MD, executive vice president of the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, Inc., and Peyton E. Weary, MD, chair of the department of dermatology at the University of Virginia in Arlington. Grupenhoff has worked as a consultant and representative of physicians groups for the last 20 years. He served, under the Johnson administration, as deputy assistant secretary for health and environmental legislation of the (then) Department of Health, Education and Welfare and worked on the nation's first major air quality legislation in 1967.

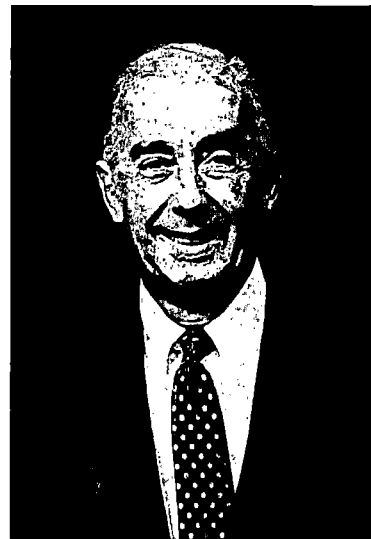
Since the organization was founded in January 1989, ISDE has grown to 7,000 physician members. The roster also includes dentists, veterinary surgeons, pharmacists and other health workers. Approximately 35 physicians attended the Stockholm meeting, representing 30 countries.

The aim of the international society is to inform and make the worldwide public aware of the problems linked with pollution produced by human activity to protect health and the continuity of life on the planet Earth. ISDE's mission also calls for members to fight against every type of environmental degradation of air, weather and the soil, both in the world and locally.

ISDE concerns are diverse. Members decry the lack of insight which has resulted in dying forests; poisoning of air, water and soil; destruction of the stratospheric ozone layer; development of the potentially negative greenhouse effect caused by industrial and automotive emissions; and extinction of thousands of species of animals and plants. Mankind must be considered, members urge, as only part of nature; the environment must be considered the basis of health and welfare. In an ongoing appeal to all doctors of the world, ISDE urges physicians to make the public aware of dangers and their causes exert influence within medical and sanitary associations; to gain the attention of administrators and politicians; and to search for new problem-solving procedures with the industrial and labor worlds and environmental organizations.

"There are no winners. We're all losers when it comes to pollution," Dr Scott said, stressing that problems with the ozone aren't limited to geographical borders. Production in the US corn belt is down 30% because of the ozone problem, and the destruction of the ozone layer will continue until chlorofloural carbons are eliminated, he said.

The contamination of the Great Lakes, which account for one fifth of the world's



John K. Scott, MD

fresh water supply, is a special concern for ISDE, according to Dr Scott. Many of the countries in the world are experiencing severe water pollution problems. For example, Dr Scott said, one third of the groundwater in Poland is unusable. "Germans have been working to clean up the Rhine River, but at great financial cost," he said.

Another notable concern is the continued use of cadmium in gold mining which results in kidney problems among residents living near the mines. Everyone must work together to eliminate this health hazard, Dr Scott said.

ISDE members are also troubled by predictions stemming from the sheer numbers of people; the Earth's population is expected to double in the next century. Dr Scott said scientists have reason to believe the second generation after the year 2001 will experience widespread environmental deterioration, causing—among other problems—starvation, and many people will die.

In developing solutions to problems with agricultural chemicals and contami-

Continued on next page

Continued from preceding page

nants, Dr Scott said physicians all over the world should take note of what is happening in Sweden. There, doctors and farmers are working closely to come up with solutions to environmental problems.

The next meeting of ISDE is scheduled to be held in Antwerp, Belgium, in October 1993. Meanwhile, Dr Scott and other ISDE leaders are preparing to launch a full-scale fight against pollution closer to home.

The US National Association of Physicians for the Environment (NAPE) will hold its first national conference February 23 and 24, in Washington, using a grant from the Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, a branch of the National Institute of Health. The program is slated to include discussion of environmental concerns by representatives of many medical specialty organizations, including: otolaryngology; allergy and immu-

nology; family physicians; neurology; radiology; pediatrics; internal medicine; physical medicine; emergency physicians; ob-gyns; preventive medicine; surgeons; anesthesiologists and others. Vice President-Elect Albert Gore and US Sen Tom Harkin have also been invited to speak. For more information about the agenda, contact Dr John T. Grupenhoff, Suite 203, 6410 Rockledge Dr, Bethesda, MD, 20817; or telephone (310) 571-9790.^{150th}

DRAFTDRAFT FOR STATE MEDICAL SOCIETIES

November , 1992

Mr. William E. Madigan
Executive Director
Michigan State Medical Society
120 W. Saginaw
East Lansing, MI 48823

Dear Mr. Madigan,

Subject: REQUEST FOR YOU TO SEND TO YOUR ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON INFORMATION ABOUT THE
NATIONAL CONFERENCE: PHYSICIANS AND THE
ENVIRONMENT, WASHINGTON, D.C., FEBRUARY 23-24,
1993

Our Academy is hosting a National Conference on Physicians
and the Environment, February 23-24, 1993, supported by a
grant from the National Institute of Environmental Health
Sciences (NIEHS).

Dr. John Kimball Scott, Chairman of the Long-Range Planning
Council of the AMA and a member of the governing board of the
National Association of Physicians for the Environment, has
urged us to make sure the appropriate state society officials
are invited to the conference.

Please forward the information contained in this letter to
the chairperson of your Society's Environment Committee, or
if you do not have such a committee, to the appropriate
person. There is no registration fee for the conference.

The purpose of the conference is to bring together medical
specialty and state and local society leaders and other
leaders in the medicine and environment fields to discuss
medical society activities currently underway, and planned,
that relate to the environment, and to determine how best
these activities can be organized and coordinated to improve
the health of our patients, and the public health generally.

We are hopeful that this first-ever national meeting of
physician organizations on the environment will serve to
organize and energize those organizations to become active,
if they are not already.

Along with the chairpersons of the Environment Committees of the state societies, we are also inviting the president and chief executive of the 24 American Board of Medical Specialty (ABMS) recognized specialty societies to attend (there is no registration fee) and to discuss current society activities relative to the worldwide deterioration of the environment, and especially how they relate to the patient population served by the specialty; environmental research activities currently promoted by the specialty, including those related to governmental or foundation granting agencies; and professional and public education programs regarding environmental health presently underway or planned.

We are also inviting the leaders of other selected organizations, as well as leaders of various health professions, Federal agencies (including NIH institutes), and interested Foundation officials.

The following issues will be discussed at the conference:

- . How to organize and educate physicians about environmental pollution and how it impacts their patients and the public;
- . How to determine the current state of research and scientific understanding in these matters and to develop research agendas;
- . How physicians can use their expertise to take a leadership role in environmental protection and pollution prevention;
- . How to create environmental health education programs for the public;
- . How the various physician specialties, national organizations, and federal agencies can work together;
- . How to support health officials, environmental officials, legislatures, and nonprofit organizations in their national, state, and local environmental health efforts; and
- . How to develop public health recommendations to national, state, and local policymakers in regard to environmental matters.

Included with this letter is an editorial, by John Grupenhoff, that appeared some months ago in the Journal of Environmental Research which called for the development of a National Association of Physicians for the Environment, to be organized by medical specialty societies, which your chairperson may find useful as background.

Also enclosed, for your information, is a copy of our Academy's pamphlet, "The Environment: Our Mutual Concern," which describes our program. Also included are copies of the brochure announcing the NIH conference held on December 16, 1991, and the satellite teleconference held on May 8, 1992.

3

We are currently developing our meeting schedule, and a draft copy is enclosed, but wanted to get this invitation in your hands early, for your chairperson's consideration and planning purposes. We hope your chairperson can accept our invitation to be a participant for the full conference.

As this is an invitation only conference, for 100 individuals maximum, we look forward to hearing from you by December 15, 1992, so that we can reserve a place for the person you indicate. Also, if no one will be coming from your Society, we would like to know that also. Please phone or fax response to Julie Jacobs of our office.

Sincerely,

Jerome C. Goldstein, MD, FACS
Executive Vice President

JCG/

DRAFT - 11/20/92

Preliminary Program

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE: PHYSICIANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT
WASHINGTON COURT HOTEL
WASHINGTON, D.C.
FEBRUARY 23 - 24, 1993
(Speakers noted are to be Invited; * = accepted)**

Tuesday, February 23, 1993

Morning Moderator: Charles Cummings, MD

8:00 am - 8:30 am Muffins and Coffee Outside Meeting Hall

8:35 am - 8:45 am Introduction to Purpose of Conference
 ***Buddy Hicks, MD**
 Chairman, American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck
 Surgery
 ***Charles Cummings, MD**
 President, American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck
 Surgery
 and/or
 ***G. Richard Holt, MD**
 Immediate Past-President, American Academy of Otolaryngology-
 Head and Neck Surgery

8:45 am - 9:05 am Physicians and the Environment--An Important Alliance
 Jay Halr
 President, National Wildlife Federation

9:05 am - 9:15 am Otolaryngology - The Environment: Our Mutual Concern
 ***Byron J. Balley, MD**
 Past President, American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and
 Neck Surgery

9:15 am - 9:25 am The Environment and the Skin-Our National Conference and Program
 ***Peyton Weary, MD**
 President-Elect, American Academy of Dermatology

9:25 am - 9:40 am Proposal: A National Association of Physicians for the Environment
 ***John Grupenhoff, Ph.D.**
 Executive Vice President, National Association of Physicians for
 the Environment

9:40 am - 9:50 am The International Society of Doctors for the Environment
 ***John Kimball Scott, MD**

9:50 am - 10:15 am BREAK

- 10:15 am - 10:35 am **How Physicians Can Work on Environment Matters**
 *Robert Soderstrom, MD
 Chairman, Medical Society of Genesee County, Michigan
- 10:35 am - 12:00 n **What Medical Specialties are Doing on Environmental Matters: Society Presentations and Discussion**
- 12:00 n - 12:25 pm **Questions and Answers**
- 12:25 pm - 1:30 pm **Luncheon Moderator - Jerome C. Goldstein, MD**
 The Importance of Physician Organizations to the Environment and Environmental Health
 Senator Tom Harkin
 US Senate
 *Kenneth Olden, Ph.D.
 Director, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences
- Afternoon Moderator: G. Richard Holt, MD**
- 1:30 pm - 1:45 pm **Our Experience in Environmental Health Education, Physicians, Patients, Public**
 *Alfred Munzer, MD
 President - Elect, American Lung Association
 *Fran Du Melle
 Director, American Lung Association, Washington D.C. Office
- 1:45 pm - 3:10 pm **What Medical Specialties are Doing on Environmental Matters: Society Presentations and Discussion**
- 3:10 pm - 3:30 pm **BREAK**
- 3:30 pm - 3:45 pm **What Physicians Can Do About Threats to Our Environment**
 *Eric Chivian, MD or *Julia Moore, Executive Director, Physicians for Social Responsibility
- 3:45 pm - 4:05 pm **General Discussion of Day's Topics**
- 4:05 pm - 5:30 pm **Breakout Sessions**
 Group discussions on potential physician organization environmental activities
- 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm **Cash Bar Reception**
 (Dinner on your own)

Wednesday, February 24, 1993

Morning Moderator: Nancy Snyderman, MD

- 8:00 am - 8:30 am Rolls and Coffee Outside Meeting Hall
- 8:30 am - 9:00 am Keynote Address: Physicians and the Health of Our Environment
 Senator Albert Gore
- 9:00 am - 9:30 am NASA Environmental Mission to Planet Earth
- 9:30 am - 10:20 am Outreach Panel

Moderator: *John Grupenhoff, Ph.D., Executive Vice President,
National Association of Physicians for the Environment

Panelists:

Horace Deets

Executive Director, American Association of Retired Persons

William R. Hendee, PhD

Senior Associate Dean

Medical College of Wisconsin

Don Lesh

Executive Director, Global Tomorrow Coalition

Physicians and the Environment: Views from Concerned
Foundations

J. P. Myers

Director, W. Alton Jones Foundation, Inc.

Virginia Trotter-Betts, RN

American Nurses Association

- 10:20 am - 10:40 am Biological Diversity: A Concern of Physicians
 Thomas E. Lovejoy, PhD
 Assistant Secretary, External Affairs, The Smithsonian

10:40 am - 11:00 am BREAK

11:00 am - 11:40 am Medical Organizations Panel

*Moderator: Jerome C. Goldstein, MD
Executive Vice President, American Academy of Otolaryngology -
Head and Neck Surgery

Panelists:

*James B. Snow, MD

Director, National Institute on Deafness and Other
Communication Disorders

*Alan Nelson, MD

American Society of Internal Medicine

*Mitchell Rhodes, MD

Council of Medical Specialty Societies

*Jerod Loeb, MD
Vice President, Science and Technology
American Medical Association

*William H. McBeath, MD
Executive Director, American Public Health Association

11:40 am - 11:55 am Questions and Answers

11:55 am - 12:40 am Reports from Breakout Sessions followed by discussion

12:40 am - 12:55 n Summary of Conference
*Byron Bailey, MD

ACCREDITATION STATEMENT

The American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Foundation is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to sponsor continuing medical education for physicians.

The American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Foundation designates this educational activity for _____ hours in category 1 of the Physician's Recognition Award of the American Medical Association.

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL ON LONG RANGE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Report: D
(I-92)

Subject: AMA Initiatives Regarding the Environment

Presented by: C. Burns Roehrig, MD, Chair

Referred to: Reference Committee D
(B. J. Kennedy, MD, Chair)

1 BACKGROUND

2
3 The Council on Long Range Planning and Development believes that
4 environmental health is an important issue which deserves considerable
5 attention by the Association. This report was prepared to review
6 existing AMA policy on environmental issues, discuss continuing
7 environmental problems faced by the world population, provide
8 information on an important federal agency involved in environmental
9 issues, and provide specific recommendations in this area. This
10 report is not a scientific treatise on the subject, because the
11 Council on Scientific Affairs has undertaken significant activity on
12 this issue in the past.

13
14 American Medical Association (AMA) environmental analyses and policy
15 planning activities have resulted in the establishment of numerous
16 policies on a wide range of issues. The AMA Council on Scientific
17 Affairs has prepared two major overview reports on the issue of
18 environmental health in the recent past. The first, "Global Climate
19 Change: The Greenhouse Effect," Policy 135.977, AMA Policy
20 Compendium, detailed possible reasons for global warming and gave
21 suggestions for possible remediation. Following is Policy 135.977 as
22 adopted in 1989: The AMA: (1) endorses the need for additional
23 research on atmospheric monitoring and climate simulation models as a
24 means of reducing some of the present uncertainties in climate
25 forecasting; (2) urges Congress to adopt a comprehensive, integrated
26 natural resource and energy utilization policy that will promote more
27 efficient fuel use and energy production; (3) endorses increased
28 recognition of the importance of nuclear energy's role in the
29 production of electricity; (4) encourages research and development
30 programs for improving the utilization efficiency and reducing the
31 pollution of fossil fuels; and (5) encourages humanitarian measures to
32 limit the burgeoning increase in world population.

33
34 The second Policy, 135.973, was presented in a Council on Scientific
35 Affairs report entitled "Stewardship of the Environment" and was
36 adopted at the 1989 Interim Meeting. It provided a broad overview of
37 the environmental health challenges facing the profession and society,

1 and it was intended to serve as a framework for a cohesive,
2 proactive plan that would guide future AMA initiatives. The
3 recommendations in this report were that the AMA: (1) encourage
4 physicians to be spokespersons for environmental stewardship; (2)
5 encourage the medical community to cooperate in reducing or
6 recycling waste; (3) encourage physicians and the rest of the
7 medical community to dispose of its medical waste in a safe and
8 properly prescribed manner; (4) support enhancing the role of
9 physicians and other scientists in environmental education; (5)
10 endorse legislation such as the National Environmental Education Act
11 to increase public understanding of environmental degradation and
12 its prevention; (6) encourage research efforts at ascertaining the
13 physiological and psychological effects of abrupt as well as chronic
14 environmental changes; (7) encourage international exchange of
15 information relating to environmental degradation; (8) encourage and
16 help support physicians who participate actively in international
17 planning and development conventions associated with improving the
18 environment; (9) encourage educational programs for worldwide family
19 planning and control of population growth; (10) encourage research
20 and development programs for safer, more effective, and less
21 expensive means of preventing unwanted pregnancy; (11) encourage
22 programs that may facilitate human and environmental adaptation to
23 global climate changes or other elements of environmental
24 degradation; and (12) encourage economic development programs for
25 all nations that will be sustainable and yet nondestructive to the
26 environment.

27
28 This is an opportune time for the AMA to bring increased attention
29 to the issue of environmental health. This issue is a subject of
30 immense breadth and one that greatly affects the public's
31 well-being. This issue is particularly compelling to those
32 physicians who want their professional medical associations to be
33 both medically and socially relevant. In fact, surveys of
34 physicians have shown that a substantial proportion of respondents
35 identify improving the health status of the public as a major
36 concern. Reducing environmental risk factors are an important
37 component of achieving such a goal.

38
39 Further, environmental health issues have assumed increasing
40 importance to patients. For example, as indicated in the filed
41 portion of the Council report containing Policy 135.973,
42 approximately 80% of Americans responding to public opinion surveys
43 indicated that they are very concerned about the environment,
44 especially the quality of air and water.

45 46 CONTINUING PROBLEMS

47
48 Potential changes in the earth's climate is perhaps one of the more
49 important issues facing society today. Although controversy exists,

1 many believe three strategic air pollution threats may exist. Ozone
2 depletion is the first; the other two are diminished oxygen content
3 of the atmosphere and global warming. All three have the potential
4 to change the makeup of the entire global atmosphere and, in the
5 process, disrupt the atmosphere's crucial balancing role in
6 maintaining the global ecological system. Global environmental
7 change could result in deleterious health effects. Several of these
8 include:

9
10 (1) **respiratory and pulmonary disease** aggravated by air pollution
11 and exacerbated by elevated summertime temperatures. Air pollution
12 from industrial activities irritates the respiratory system and
13 contributes to problems such as bronchitis, bronchiectasis, asthma,
14 and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.¹⁻³

15
16 (2) **greater incidence of all skin cancers and immunosuppression**
17 caused by destruction of stratospheric ozone and the resulting
18 increased exposure to ultraviolet-B radiation. Over the past seven
19 years in the U.S., the incidence of melanoma, the most deadly form
20 of skin cancer, has increased by 83%.⁴ The Environmental
21 Protection Agency (EPA) estimates that further ozone depletion could
22 lead to an additional 31,000 to 126,000 cases of melanoma among U.S.
23 whites born before 2075 and an additional 7,000 to 30,000
24 fatalities.⁵⁻⁸ In addition to causing skin cancer, excessive
25 exposure to summer sunlight can reduce the body's immune response,
26 leaving individuals more vulnerable to infectious diseases,
27 especially those in areas with poor sanitation.

28
29 (3) **increased incidence of cataracts** also caused by exposure to
30 ultraviolet-B radiation. The EPA's ozone depletion scenario
31 estimates an additional 550,000 to 2.8 million persons among
32 individuals born before 2075 will have cataracts, the third-largest
33 cause of preventable blindness in the U.S.^{5,9-10}

34
35 (4) **increased environmental stress on poor populations** caused by
36 the long-term physical effects of ozone depletion and excessive
37 pollution; drought, increased numbers of pests, desertification, and
38 soil erosion, that disrupt food production and make certain areas
39 uninhabitable. For example, temperature increases are expected to
40 speed the evaporation of surface water in the western United States,
41 severely reducing the supply and quality of water. In addition,
42 declining summer precipitation, drought, and desertification of the
43 temperate United States midcontinental farm belt are predicted to
44 leave arable land only in the higher latitudes. Further, the sea
45 level could rise an estimated 0.2 to 1.5 meters due to thermal
46 expansion of the oceans and melting of glaciers and polar ice caps.
47 The rising oceans would threaten coastal cities, destroy sensitive
48 and food-critical tidal eco-systems, and contaminate ground water
49 supplies with salt.¹¹

1 Deforestation and desertification, secondary to global warming, could
2 turn huge areas of arable land to dust with no assurance that it could
3 be recovered in other areas.¹² Without planned resettlements and
4 new agricultural and water systems, it seems likely that millions
5 could starve.^{13,14}

6
7 Such dislocations will be additional causes of conflict, particularly
8 between "have" and "have-not" nations, thus making the breakdown of
9 the environment one of the most important international issues faced
10 by society and the public health community in the 21st century.

11
12 (5) continued environmental degradation caused by unabated
13 population growth rates. The population continues to grow at rates
14 that outstrip resources in many parts of the world. In many areas of
15 the world, regionally grown food is already insufficient to sustain
16 growing populations. In 1980, 340 million persons in 87 developing
17 countries were not consuming enough calories to prevent stunted growth
18 and serious health risks.¹² For the third year in a row, 1988 world
19 grain consumption exceeded production.³

20
21 The effects of an increasing population raise an important and
22 difficult question for physicians. Environmental degradation can be
23 viewed as an ecologic problem, the result of an imbalance between the
24 earth's resources and the rapidly growing human population. In this
25 analysis, the planet can be viewed as overpopulated and, therefore,
26 reducing the rate of population growth could be an important and
27 practical way to reduce pollution.¹⁵

28
29 To prevent further degradation of the environment, the AMA Council on
30 Long Range Planning and Development has concluded that a change in the
31 public's attitudes and behavior is required. The Council is convinced
32 that one of the best ways to bring about behavioral and policy changes
33 in this arena is to help the public fully comprehend the potential
34 risks to their health posed by environmental deterioration, and most
35 importantly, the threat to future generations.

36
37 As environmental issues become increasingly visible and important both
38 nationally and internationally, a clear need exists for physicians to
39 become leaders in the growing movement of scientists, policymakers,
40 and citizen activists working to avert a global environmental crisis.
41 The prevention of further environmental degradation will require an
42 enormous level of public education and advocacy activity.

43 44 NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES

45
46 In April 1992, the AMA Council on Long Range Planning and Development
47 met with Kenneth Olden, PhD, Director of the National Institute of
48 Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS). Dr. Olden shared with the
49 Council the activities of the Institute and future research projects
50 and goals regarding the health of the public and environmental health.

1 The NIEHS has a very important role to play both in the improvement
2 of public health and in the containment of national health costs.
3 NIEHS supports research on the etiology of most human diseases based
4 on their environmental association. The potential contribution of
5 NIEHS to the broad mission of the National Institutes of Health
6 (NIH) is significant. Environmental health science research
7 includes studies on the causes, prevention, and treatments of human
8 disease and dysfunction. For a variety of practical and historical
9 reasons, however, environmental health science research has been
10 primarily directed toward the identification and characterization of
11 physical and chemical factors that cause cancer. Approximately
12 one-third of current government appropriations to NIH supports
13 cancer-related research. This research has been critical to the
14 national cancer program and must be continued. However, NIEHS
15 research programs on other human diseases should be expanded in
16 order to foster the overall health of the American public. For
17 example, greater emphasis could be placed on studies to examine the
18 effect of the environment on reproductive health, neurological
19 disorders, immune disorders, respiratory problems, and aging.
20

21 The AMA would further the accomplishment of its mission by
22 strengthening its liaison efforts with the NIEHS. By enhancing this
23 liaison, the AMA could become involved in educating the public
24 through joint efforts with the NIEHS. This liaison could also
25 provide valuable physician insight into environmental research and
26 could be used as an avenue for the AMA to affect environmental
27 policy.
28

29 RECOMMENDATIONS

30
31 The Council on Long Range Planning and Development recommends that
32 Policy 135.973 (see page two) be amended as follows and that the
33 remainder of this report be filed:
34

- 35 1. That part (1) of the policy be amended by addition to
36 read: "encourage physicians to be spokespersons for
37 environmental stewardship, including the discussion of
38 these issues when appropriate with patients; and
39
- 40 2. That the following policy statements be added to Policy
41 135.973:
42
- 43 13. encourage physicians and environmental scientists in
44 the United States to continue to incorporate concerns
45 for human health into current environmental research
46 and public policy initiatives;
47
- 48 14. encourage physician educators in medical schools,
49 residency programs, and continuing medical education
50 sessions to devote more attention to environmental
51 health issues;

- 1 15. strengthen the AMA's liaison with appropriate
2 environmental health agencies, including the National
3 Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS); and
4
5 16. encourage expanded funding for environmental research by
6 the federal government.

Fiscal note: No significant impact

Resort to be environmental mecca

PLYMOUTH (AP) — The new owners of an eastern Wisconsin resort plan to transform the vacation site into a mecca of environmental thinking, helping create a plausible scenario for a "sustainable future."

The Silver Springs Inn & Resort, a 144-acre site about 5 miles southwest of Plymouth, was purchased Wednesday by two founders of the nearby High Wind ecological village and six outside partners.

The group intends to expand the resort into the home of The Plymouth Institute, an educational center for promoting sustainable development. Several scientific and business ventures are also planned.

"The idea is to create a center to demonstrate sustainable development," High Wind spokeswoman Lisa Paulson said. "Living in such a way that (society) is able to grow, but in a way that isn't destroying the future for the next civilization."

"We want to bring together and integrate viable businesses with the kind of cutting-edge research that would attract scientists doing all

kinds of experiments... renewable energy, urban renewal," she said. "We have a fairly detailed vision statement."

The group bought the property from Larry Gentine of Plymouth, who agreed to provide a challenge grant of \$100,000 if the purchase amount could be raised within a year. The price was not disclosed.

"We feel a little numb," Paulson said. "We've been meeting since last spring... but it all sort of came to a head very suddenly" on Wednesday.

The group, which made a \$100,000 downpayment, plans to build an energy-efficient conference center to demonstrate the latest environmental technologies. The center would house classes, lectures and conferences about sustainability and other ideas.

The institute would also sponsor youth programs; technical experiments to demonstrate sustainable uses of natural resources; and courses for teachers, scientists, politicians and business leaders.

The site's existing facilities suit the institute's mission perfectly, Paulson said.

The 34 trout ponds can be used to demonstrate bio-digestion, which uses fish waste for fish and plant food. The 19 artesian wells can be harnessed to provide enough hydroelectricity to power the entire complex.

The resort's restaurant, trout ponds and four chalets will retain their staffs and remain open to the public to help pay for the institute, Paulson said.

"A lot of non-profit groups have to keep going to foundations for money... and eventually the supply runs dry. To be really sustainable you have to be part of the real world and maintain businesses."

She said the purchase came at a beneficial time politically.

"There's a great deal of interest in this... with the new administration. All Al Gore talks about is sustainable development," she said, referring to the vice president-elect.

THE JOURNAL

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Doctors in the dark

Pollution ailments stump many physicians, survey says

By DON BEHM

Journal environment reporter

More than half of Wisconsin's primary care physicians likely do not know the health effects caused by exposure to mercury and chemicals known as PCBs, although both are widespread environmental contaminants, a recent survey indicates.

Also, few patients inquire about the pollutants. Only one-fifth of pediatricians, family practice physicians, internal medicine specialists, obstetricians and gynecologists participating in the survey said that patients had asked about possible illnesses caused by exposure to either of the contaminants.

The first-ever survey of physician perceptions of environmental health risks was sponsored by Physicians for Social Responsibility and the International Joint Commission.

The physicians group was established in 1961 to promote environmental protection, arms control and

international cooperation. The International Joint Commission, established in 1909, is a US and Canadian panel responsible for resolving water quality and quantity disputes along the shared border.

"It's disturbing to see that neither physicians nor their patients fully appreciate the health risks of environmental pollutants," said Julia Moore, executive director of the physicians group.

Such lack of awareness also is alarming, the group said, because state warnings to restrict consumption of large sport fish in hundreds of inland lakes and streams, as well as the Great Lakes, are prompted by tests showing high levels of mercury and PCBs in the fish.

"Our group sees the human health threats of these substances as a serious challenge facing the medical profession," Moore said. "It is essential for primary care physicians to have more training in toxicology,

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epidemiology and environmental risk assessment."

The survey was conducted by the Center for Survey Research at the University of Massachusetts at Boston. The center selected a sample of 174 practicing physicians and completed interviews with 94 of them. The survey results could be related to all state primary care physicians with a margin of error of 10%, the center said.

EDUCATION EFFORTS LAUNCHED

More than 25% of primary care physicians in the survey did not know where they could obtain scientific information on mercury, PCBs and their health effects. But fully 90% say they should be a source of reliable information for their patients.

In the next year, Physicians for Social Responsibility and the International Joint Commission intend to schedule continuing medical education courses throughout the US to provide information on the known health effects caused by a variety of Great Lakes pollutants. The Medical College of Wisconsin already held a two-day course in October sponsored by the two groups.

Researchers at that meeting warned that dozens of industrial chemicals and pesticides that already have spread throughout the Great Lakes environment may be damaging both the intellectual and reproductive health of the region's

population.

The most severe behavioral, learning and reproductive problems show up in the second generation, the children born to adults exposed to toxins in their diet, researchers said. One large source of the contaminants is fish.

Scientists now know that PCBs, mercury, DDT and other chemicals and metals disrupt release of estrogen and other hormones by several glands. Consequently, they can disrupt the thyroid, adrenal and other glands that regulate body functions from brain growth to sexual development.

Other synthetic hormone disruptors include: metals, such as cadmium and lead; alkyl phenols, which are non-biodegradable detergents found in some plastics; triazine weed killers; and some other industrial chemicals and pesticides such as dioxins, hexachlorobenzene, kelthane, kepone, lindane, EBDC fungicides, methoxychlor and pyrethroids.

SURVEY SUPPORTS LOCAL CONCERNS

Survey findings also support the concern expressed by Medical College of Wisconsin officials at the October course. At that time, William Hendee, senior associate dean for research at the college, said family doctors were not likely to consider whether a person's exposure to environmental pollutants might be the possible cause of an illness.

The reason is that doctors are not adequately educated to help

families sort through studies on the possible health effects caused by exposure to contaminants in food, water and air, Hendee said.

GUIDE AVAILABLE FROM DNR

A state Department of Natural Resources publication, "Health Guide for People Who Eat Sport Fish from Wisconsin Waters," lists rivers and lakes containing fish known to be contaminated with mercury, PCBs and pesticides. Copies of the guide, which is revised each spring and fall, are available at any DNR office or by writ-

ing to: DNR Bureau of Water Resources Management, PO Box 7921, Madison, Wis. 53707.

Mercury also is known to damage the human nervous system, state environmental and health officials say. It can harm primary senses and skills, such as our ability to feel, see, taste and move.

PCBs, or polychlorinated biphenyls, also are suspected of causing cancer. A small number of studies have found lower than average birth weights in children born to fish-eating women.