

'lion' of all is human population swarming and the concomitant pandominance of Man. What chance has Nature as a whole to survive, and, consequently, what chance has the world? Little if any solace can be derived from the ironical circumstance that the remaining real free lions in our constricting world are being 'eaten' by the inexorable increases in human population pressures or else caged in the interest of Man's insatiable curiosity *cum* bravado.

N. P.

To Help the Multinationals?

Whether or not the multinational corporations—good or not-so-good, and now widely under fire in the United Nations and elsewhere for 'milking' undeveloped countries—be also considered as voracious 'lions' along the lines expounded above, it is high time we started some concerted reverse action in their direction on behalf of the environmental movement which is suffering widely and often excruciatingly from the chronic lack of funds. For the multinationals possess the funds, having often far larger budgets than many states or even federal governments, and wield extraordinary if often insidious power.

Based on over-developed countries, the powerful multinational firms are apt to 'invade' peacefully (or sometimes not so peacefully) the poorer countries for mainly selfish purposes ranging from obtaining essential raw materials to mere commercial exploitation. This last may in turn range from the crudest levels, involving virtual slavery or the proverbial 'string of beads' for untold riches, right up to being of fully mutual benefit and hence desirability, as seems increasingly to be the case nowadays but should be far more often and widely. Yet only occasionally do multinational or other moneyed commercial enterprises seem to have a widely constructive 'missionary' function, however keen individual participants may be on, for example, the local avifauna or flora or other aspects of Nature.

Especially when exploitation is the objective of a multinational's invasion, huge sums of money are apt to be spent on advertising and even worse 'pushing' of products to persuade indigenous peoples to buy them—and all too often to get seriously 'hooked' on them. If only a small or even tiny proportion of these advertising and 'development' costs, and ultimately of the profits of such injections, could be set aside for contributing to the support of environmental institutions, research projects, higher (and lower) education and training, nature reserves, and other good works on behalf of the environment and particularly Nature in the under-developed countries concerned, with perhaps a little to spare for those of us who are struggling to survive and function in other parts of this lion-ridden world, it could help materially to solve many problems—especially in these times of appalling inflation, exorbitant taxation, shortage of cash, and concomitant financial stringency.

We are confident and virtually convinced that, reciprocally, the industrial corporations involved could benefit very considerably—indeed, if things were managed aright, probably out of all proportion to the magnitude of their support for our cause. Particularly could the multinationals involved then counter many of the criticisms that are being levelled increasingly at them, by pointing out the good work they were doing in financing *environmental* enterprises. At least it could then no longer be said with any truth that they spend more on advertising what they claim to do for environmental and other conservation than they actually put into such efforts! (Increasingly much of such money and effort is now being spent 'at home' to conform to environmental laws and regulations in industrial countries with enlightened legislatures.) Moreover a healthy environment in a developing country should surely sweeten and probably prolong the life of a worthy multinational in it. So the advantages could, and properly should, be widely mutual and cumulatively reciprocal.

We therefore urge that, both individually and collectively, all concerned advocate such proper 'milking in reverse' of commercial concerns in the great cause of maintaining environmental quality and, ultimately, positive environmental amelioration—such as we know full-well to be feasible though often costly. This should be in addition to propounding and applying the rather negative 'polluter pays principle' or PPP. Indeed it seems that an active campaign along these lines is needed—actually quite desperately—and such a campaign may be deemed to have been launched already last November in Kyoto, Japan. For there, with the approval of our Japanese hosts who have suffered so grievously from the effects of human population pressures, at the final plenary session of the International Congress of Scientists on the Human Environment, our intervention proposing such a campaign was greeted with such universal applause and favourable comments as to confirm our confidence in its timeliness and propriety.*

N. P.

* Since the above was written, discussions have advanced promisingly towards holding our next-but-one International Conference on Environmental Future in a suitable country on this general topic, bringing together environmentalists and industrialists (such as leaders of major commercial corporations) in a suitable atmosphere for free exchange of views towards collaboration that should be mutually beneficial at least in the long run.