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from our READERS

Lynn responds to Fredrickson

Sir: Dr. A. G. Fredrickson's essay "The Dilemma of Innovating Societies" (CEE, Summer 1969) points out a number of the problems facing our society today. The effects of increasing pollution, exploiting wilderness areas, and a rapidly expanding population are steadily making the world a less pleasant place to live. It was therefore a disappointment to see Dr. Fredrickson weaken the strength of his message substantially by overstating it in an emotional tirade against straw villains of his own construction.

It is, for instance, unconvincing to denounce the effects of man's activities on our environment by proclaiming a higher-than-human set of values. There is no reason to think that nature prefers alligators to algae, condors to crickets, or any of these to mankind. Such preferences are human value judgments and should be defended as such. The holier-than-thou stance only beclouds the issue.

If Dr. Fredrickson really questions the relative happiness of today's farmer astride his air-polluting tractor I would suggest that he try spending a summer of 12-hour days plowing behind a mule. A good look at Van Gogh's "The Potato Eaters" might also be instructive. The issue clearly is not one of slowing down technological innovation but rather of directing innovative efforts to the solution of the problems that are now becoming pressing.

It may be that society should have foreseen the urgency of these problems one or two generations ago. However, one should remember that 20-20 hindsight is a common virtue and also that no amount of castigation will change the events of the past. Emotional polemics directed against over-simplified whipping boys are highly favored today by political extremists of the left and the right,

super-conservationists, gung-ho developers, and many others with a Cause. The trouble with such tactics is that they alienate those whose support might be won by a rational approach.

If the need to solve the problems arising from the growth of population and technology is real, and I believe that it is, then well reasoned arguments to this effect can surely be found. It is clear that we have or can develop the technology to solve these problems if we can get general agreement within our society that they need to be solved. Attaining such agreement will require persuasive leadership, factual knowledge, and considerable persistence. I submit that very few will be persuaded by being told that they are simpleminded votaries of the Cult of the Product, believers of the Creed of Technology, and preachers of the Gospel of Growth.

Scott Lynn

University of California, Berkeley

Corrections from Lee

Sir: Enclosed please find a corrected copy of the short article entitled *Transport Phenomena: Equations of Change*, which was printed in the summer, 1969 issue of CEE. Please note that equations 7, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 are corrected, where originally either a small p (for pressure) is missing or is mixed up with ρ (for density).

V. J. Lee

University of Missouri

Editors Note: CEE regrets that Professor Lee did not correct this error on the galleys he received.

Praise from the Veep

Sir: I certainly appreciate receiving the copy of *Chemical Engineering Education* and was particularly interested in seeing the articles involving Stu Churchill.

A. L. Conn

Vice-President, AIChE

(Letters Continued on page 207)