

How go the grizzlies? An emotional debate

In his Oct. 31 syndicated column, Jack Anderson reported that "a secret Interior Department study" warns that grizzly bears in Yellowstone National Park are in danger of extinction because their food supply—garbage dumps—has been suddenly closed down. Shutting the dumps abruptly has driven "the panicky bears into campsites and off-park lands, where they have been shot."

How much truth there is in these comments depends on whom you ask. Grizzlies seem to arouse as much emotionalism as motherhood and apple pie.

The study Anderson apparently refers to was conducted over the past eight years by grizzly authorities John and Frank Craighead. John, in Missoula, Mont., is an Interior employee. His brother, in Moose, Wyo., is not, and therefore is in a better position to speak freely about the controversial grizzlies.

The rapid phaseout of dumps is over now, Frank Craighead told SCIENCE NEWS, but "the situation is really critical for the grizzlies. We feel that there are not more than a hundred left now." And because of the rapid shutting of the dumps, he says, "We know of 118 grizzlies killed in 1970, 1971 and 1972. . . . They [the Yellowstone staff] have the attitude, particularly in recent years, that they can do anything. It is a real dictatorship."

"No way!" counters Glen Cole, supervisory research biologist at Yellowstone. "We haven't shot a bear this year, and we haven't had an injury, and everything is working out beautifully on the program." The grizzlies have reverted back to feeding in the wild, Cole claims. "We have good data this year," he says. "There are 250 to 290 grizzlies in Yellowstone."

Deaths among the Yellowstone grizzlies were "drastically reduced" this year, and "as far as we can tell, their reproductive rate is increasing," asserts Charles Lovless, acting assistant director of the Bureau of Sports, Fisheries and Wildlife in Washington, D.C. The Bureau, part of Interior, is processing the Craigheads' study. Although the study is still preliminary, a copy of it is available to anyone who is interested. "The report is not published as a scientific publication," says Lovless. "It is a preliminary report that has been prepared, and we are not prone to muzzle our research people. If they have data that show certain kinds of conclusions in their view, then they have every opportunity and right to publish it. The thing they have to answer to is the opinion of their peers." □

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OTA finally funded; Daddario gets the call

The long-awaited Congressional Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) has finally been granted \$2 million to get started, and ex-congressman Emilio Q. Daddario (D-Conn.), who introduced the original bill to establish the office, back in 1967, was last week appointed director.

OTA has been praised as a legislative alternative for the now defunct White House Office of Science and Technology (OST) and condemned as a "shadow cabinet" to further the political ambitions of Sen. Edward Kennedy. As the organization finally shapes up, it will be neither so powerful nor so partisan.

The permanent staff of OTA, headed by Daddario, will act as intermediaries between a board of Congressmen, headed by Kennedy, and an advisory council of "distinguished citizens," which in turn will appoint panels of experts to be responsible for investigations into specific technical areas. Actual assessment studies will be conducted by various contractors, including universities, think-tanks and private laboratories.

The Congressional Technology Assessment Board hardly looks like a "shadow cabinet." Members are evenly divided by party and political persuasion. They are Senate Democrats Kennedy, Hollings and Humphrey; Senate Republicans Case, Dominick and Schweiker; House Democrats Davis (Ga.), Teague and Udall; and House Republicans Mosher, Gubser and Harvey.

Congress originally conceived OTA as a kind of "watchdog" organization over technology, comparable to the legislative branch's Government Accounting Office that keeps track of Administration spending. But eradication of OST may give OTA new duties as an originator of science and technology policy. "Our activities will be the principal focus for science policy in the country," an aide to Kennedy told SCIENCE NEWS, "by stepping into the vacuum left by the demise of OST."

That's a tall order for an organization with the tiny funding rate of \$3 million a year, and ambitions of studying the energy crisis, environmental problems and biomedical issues. One recent study of the nation's energy crisis, conducted by the National Petroleum Council, for example, cost some \$10 million by itself. Specific OTA projects will not be announced until after an expected two-month start-up period.

Soviet psychiatry: A peek inside

Soviet psychiatrists have failed to convince their Western counterparts that psychiatry in the U.S.S.R. is not being used as a political tool. Returning from Moscow, American Psychiatric Association President Alfred M. Freedman said last week: "My experience certainly has not quieted at all my concern. If anything, I would say it makes me feel it is even more important that we have a thorough-going follow-up discussion."

The meeting with the Soviets was the result of a cablegram from Freedman to officials of Soviet psychiatry, asking for a discussion of "charges that involuntary psychiatric confinement has been used unjustly and without regard to human rights, including suppression of political dissent" (SN: 10/13/73, p. 230). At the meeting Freedman got the impression that "dissent, criticism or opposition are considered to be bizarre behaviors and important manifestations of disease . . . deviance appears tolerable," he went on, "until it is involved with political dissent."

Although no patients were interviewed

and only summaries of six cases were presented, Freedman sees the meeting as a good beginning. He has asked the Soviets to allow a more complete investigation that would include private examination of patients with neutral interpreters. The Soviets, however, took a dim view of this request. □

Science and technology 'being wrongly blamed'

Science and technology are being wrongly blamed for the troubles of contemporary society, contend Massachusetts Institute of Technology President Jerome B. Wiesner and Chancellor Paul E. Gray in their annual report.

"General disenchantment with science and technology would be more appropriately directed toward our society's decision-making processes for their slowness in recognizing the need for appropriate new technologies, than to science and technology itself.

"If, as we maintain, many of our current difficulties are the result of not responding to error signals that were present . . . then the remedy is to come to grips with that problem rather than resenting our achievements in science and technology." □