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Reid faces uphill battle

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Environmental problems seem to have snowballed in recent weeks. PCB pollution, nuclear reactor safety and supersonic transport approvals have become a national concern.

Ogden Reid, Dept. of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner, has shown the ability to recognize a major environmental problem of the state and tackle it head on," says Bob Boyle of Croton-On-Hudson.

Boyle, an editor for Sports Illustrated, and director of the Hudson River Fisherman's Assn. authored a hard-hitting article in SI in December. He claimed his group brought out the PCB contamination to the DEC about four years ago. "But it got buried and put aside," said Boyle. "Today's a different story. New York has a commissioner who is not afraid of getting his feet wet and likes a tough battle."

Reid faces an uphill battle, especially when the polluting plant of General Electric makes threats to close down or move out of state.

In the United States man has reached such a sensitive balance with nature that tough decisions must be made. Ten years ago it was DDT, then phosphates, followed by mercury and lead-contaminated resources.

The cry has always been, "A lot of people will be forced out of jobs. What's more important, wildlife or people?"

People today have found out that industries don't have to close up. Perhaps profits are not as great as prior to adjusting to new laws, but at least the profits should last a lot longer. And people are realizing that the indicator to a healthy human population is also one of a healthy wildlife resource.

Perhaps one of the saddest realizations is that man will put the profit factor ahead of his own safety. Environmental impact statements and biological studies financed by the potential polluter have been shown to be greatly "manipulated" by the twisting of biological data to such an extent that little trust can be placed in final recommendations.

Some of the data on PCB concentrations in fish of the Hudson were so grossly twisted that one wonders who can be trusted.

Even the "pure" bureaucratic agencies such as Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the DEC have been backed into political corners in the past. Certainly there has been gross negligence in the DEC

in the past regarding pollution of the Hudson and blindness to the Delaware watershed problems.

Reid has shaken up a lot of people in his department and shipped a number of top people off to New York State "Siberian" jobs. These people were in leadership positions and chose not to buck the political machinery at the time.

I'd like to see Reid complete his housecleaning by doing away with the so-called "Siberian" jobs and completely can those who did not put the environment first when making decisions. It wouldn't take long before our professional conservationists would put politics second.

Hat's off to Robert Pollard who chose to resign as project manager for the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (now called Nuclear Regulatory Commission).

Pollard echoed sentiments of many environmentalists when he claimed Indian Point reactors were unsafe.

The brain washing that has been done on the general population by utility companies through the media has been superb. Although you and I have no say about the advertising, we pay for it. And the growth needed for electricity is the phoniest of all. Two-hundred reactors to be constructed by year 2000, averaging 1 million kilowatts each, can handle the demands of 200 million people. Where are these people now?