There is increasing awareness among responsible scientists and
the public that we face a crisis in relations between man and environment.
It is a crisis of food, water, air, space and other factors, all of which
define human welfare, comfort, and dignity.

Famine is a very real prospect within the next decade for a sub-
stantial fraction of the world's population. Although food supply is not
an immediate problem in the United States, it is clearly a growing problem
elsewhere and one that must have fundamental influence on both domestic
and international politics.

Similarly, contamination of water and air is no longer merely a
domestic problem, but a problem affecting the world. Air and water are
the world's circulatory systems, determining the level of life.

We see in our rich country the reduction of open space, increasing
urban concentration and congestion with deterioration of life. These and
other problems are not merely developing but developing at accelerating
rates, and every projection into the future predicts ever increasing degra-
dation of environment and aggravation of the human consequences.

Highly responsible scientists believe that continuation of these
developments with their acceleration and convergence will be disastrous in
our own time.

In an effort to deal with these developments we propose the
following:

(1) A Council of Ecological Advisors - to evaluate the signifi-
cance of these problems, to provide an overview of federal environmental
activities, and to offer policy recommendations to the Congress and the
President. The Council would be complemented by a Joint Congressional
Committee on the Quality of the Environment. These institutions would
correspond to the Council of Economic Advisors and to the Joint Economic
Committee of the Congress.

(2) A National Institute of Ecology - to support research and
analysis of environmental conditions and modifications. A proposal for
such an institute has been prepared by the Ecological Society of America.
It would have as one important function, a careful and continuing assessment
of trends in environmental alterations. It would, further, provide syntheses
and interpretation of these trends and would contribute to the training
of ecologists.
(3) Population Control - Underlying all these problems of environmental quality is the problem of population growth. A major concern of the Joint Committee on the Quality of the Environment must be a national policy on population size.

We are a group of ecologists who believe that the Environmental Crisis deserves the Nation's special attention during this presidential campaign. We are disturbed that the Crisis touches the lives of all and is one of the greatest issues in our time. We consider this matter of such importance that we are writing you, and the other Presidential candidates, for an expression of views and proposed action. Concurrently we are sending copies of this letter to forty newspapers throughout the country. However, in order to give you time to consider this request, we have asked the newspapers to withhold public release for one week.

We are interested in the possibility of organizing national support for a candidate who offers the best possibility for action toward solution of these environmental problems. Therefore, we respectfully ask for a statement of your position on the matters outlined above. Inquiries and responses may be sent to any of the undersigned in care of P. O. Box 12061, Washington, D. C. 20005.

Very truly yours,

F. Herbert Bormann
Ecologist, Yale University

Gene E. Likens
Ecologist, Dartmouth College

Robert H. Whittaker
Ecologist, Univ. of California

George M. Woodwell
Ecologist*

John E. Cantlon
Ecologist, Michigan State Univ.

W. Frank Blair
Ecologist, University of Texas

Eugene P. Odum
Ecologist, University of Georgia

LaMont C. Cole
Ecologist, Cornell University

* Brookhaven National Laboratory
Dear Mr. Bormann:

I share the concern you and your colleagues have expressed about the crisis in the relations between man and his environment.

For many years we have grudgingly tolerated the results of random and uninformed tinkering with the environment. More recently, we have passed some significant pollution control legislation, and initiated efforts to compensate for past neglect.

But we must now move beyond the crisis-by-crisis approach to build a broad-gauged environmental concern into the decision-making points throughout our governmental structure -- at the federal, state and local levels. We must declare the protection and improvement of our environment to be as much in our national interest as civil rights, full and equal education, minimum wage and full employment.

Let me make it clear that I agree with the major principles of your proposal.

We need ecological advice in the Executive Office of the President. Rather than a separate Council of Ecological Advisors, however, I would prefer to consider a special advisory board on ecology to be established in conjunction with the National Domestic Policy Council which I have recommended. This Council, analogous to the National Security Council will be charged with overseeing the close coordination of all federal policies relating to our domestic development.
We need not only more ecologists, but a new breed of professional ecologists who are prepared to act as broad-ranging "environmental specialists" in ecology, planning, political science, sociology, engineering, and other disciplines which relate to the totality of our environment.

To achieve that kind of breadth of field, I believe we should rely on a considerable expansion of the ecological programs now under way in many of our major universities. The National Science Foundation, which now funds work in ecology, should increase its support for such programs. The Interior Department, as you know, created an Office of Ecology to provide a focus for the Department's many activities affecting the environment. Unfortunately, the Congress has not yet seen fit to support adequately this office and other federal environmental programs. I believe we must work vigorously to convince the Congress and the public that these problems urgently require national attention.

I would give most serious consideration to recommending the establishment of a National Institute of Ecology once this expanded effort by existing institutions has been evaluated.

Finally, you raise the question of population growth. I agree with President Johnson's statement that "second only to the search for peace, it is humanity's greatest challenge." The President has recently appointed a Committee on Population which is to determine just what steps we should and can take to limit population growth. I support the work of that Committee and I look forward to its recommendations for a government action as well as private measures which may be taken. Meanwhile, we must significantly strengthen the OEO and HEW programs to encourage family planning.
I believe that our most urgent domestic need in the United States today is to ensure what I call a living environment for ourselves and our children. The enclosed speech sets forth my thinking in some detail in this regard.

Our efforts to create this living environment will surely require the full participation of the community of ecologists. I welcome your interest and support.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Hubert H. Humphrey
August 6, 1968

Mr. Herbert Bormann  
P. O. Box 12061  
Washington, D.C.  

Dear Mr. Bormann & Gentlemen:

This will acknowledge and thank you for your recent correspondence.

I appreciate your interest in writing and want you to know that I shall certainly give your comments and suggestions every consideration.

Again, let me thank you for your interest and with best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

George C. Wallace

GCW/mt

This one just came.