

ANALYSE ET COMMENTAIRE DE TEXTES OU DOCUMENTS EN ANGLAIS

Durée : 6 heures

Analysez et commentez, **en anglais**, les cinq documents suivants :

Document 1: Samuel P. Hays, “From Conservation to Environment: Environmental Politics in the United States Since World War Two”, *Environmental Review*, 1982

Prior to World War II, before the term “environment” was hardly used, the dominant theme in conservation emphasized physical resources, their more efficient use and development. The range of emphasis evolved from water and forests in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, to grass and soils and game in the 1930s. In all these fields of endeavor there was a common concern for the loss of physical productivity represented by waste. The threat to the future which that “misuse” implied could be corrected through “sound” or efficient management. Hence in each field there arose a management system which emphasized a balancing of immediate in favor of more long-run production, the coordination of factors of production under central management schemes for the greatest efficiency. All this is a chapter in the history of production rather than of consumption, and of the way in which managers organized production rather than the way in which consumers evolved ideas and action amid the general public. [...]

After the War a massive turnabout of historical forces took place. The complex of specialized fields of efficient management of physical resources increasingly came under attack amid a new “environmental” thrust. It contained varied components. One was the further elaboration of the outdoor recreation and natural environment movements of pre-War [...]. But there were other strands even less rooted in the past. The most extensive was the concern for environmental pollution, or “environmental protection” as it came to be called in technical and managerial circles. While smoldering in varied and diverse ways in this or that setting from many years before, this concern burst forth to national prominence in the mid-1960s and especially in air and water pollution. And there was the decentralist thrust, the search for technologies of smaller and more human scale which complement rather than dwarf the more immediate human setting. [...]

One of the most striking differences between these post-War environmental activities, in contrast with the earlier conservation affairs, was their social roots. Earlier one can find little in the way of broad popular support for the substantive objectives of conservation, little "movement" organization, and scanty evidence of broadly shared conservation values. The drive came from the top down, from technical and managerial leaders. In the 1930s one can detect a more extensive social base for soil conservation, and especially for new game management programs. But, in sharp contrast, the Environmental Era displayed demands from the grass-roots, demands that are well charted by the innumerable citizen organizations

and studies of public attitudes. One of the major themes of these later years, in fact, was the tension that evolved between the environmental public and the environmental managers, as impulses arising from the public clashed with impulses arising from management. This was not a new stage of public activity per se, but of new values as well. The widespread expression of social values in environmental action marks off the environmental era from the conservation years.

Document 2: Neil Evernden, *The Social Creation of Nature*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993

In his survey of the opinions of different sectors of British society, sociologist Stephen Cotgrove detected some interesting differences in the apprehension of environmental risk. Two of his categories showed wide divergence: the ‘environmentalists’ (composed of a sample drawn from membership lists of the Conservative Society and the Friends of the Earth), and the ‘industrialists’ (selected from *Business Who’s Who* and *Who’s Who of British Engineers*). As one would expect, the environmentalists perceived considerably more environmental danger than did the industrialists. But what is interesting is that the latter group does not seem to be deliberately acting in an irresponsible way, but rather seems not to perceive significant risk at all.

If pollution is regarded as a matter of empirical fact, it may seem odd that such disagreements can persist. But since pollution involves questions not only of concentrations but also of consequences, even ‘hard’ evidence is inevitably open to interpretation – hence the frequent spectacle of contradicting experts. Equally significant, however, is our tendency to treat pollution as a purely material phenomenon, a bias that tends to establish arbitrary boundaries to environmental debate.

We must bear in mind that the current understanding of pollution is just that: the current understanding. Yet there is no reason to limit the definition to physical abuse alone. The dictionary definition is much broader and entails ‘uncleanness or impurity caused by contamination (physical or moral)’. Our attention to physical pollution may distract us from the fact that much of the debate is over the perception of moral pollution. For example, while voicing their opinions about how many parts per billion of a toxin are ‘acceptable’, both environmentalists and industrialists may be responding to a perceived instance of moral contamination. This emerges occasionally when one or other makes predictions about future consequences, or about what ‘standard of living’ ought to be protected. Environmentalists will assert that if the current action continues, our future well-being will be imperilled and our children will inherit a blighted planet. Cease, they say, and learn to live in a small-scale, cooperative society without the constant pressure for growth and transformation. Industrialists may reply that it is all very well for the impractical environmentalist to advocate such irresponsible action, but if their policies were ever to be put in place, our life-style would be in jeopardy, jobs would be lost, and food shortages would loom. To the environmentalists,

what is at risk is the very possibility of leading a good life. To the industrialists, what is at risk is the very possibility of leading a good life. The debate, it appears, is actually about *what constitutes a good life*. The instance of physical pollution serves only as the means of persuasion, a staging ground for the underlying debate.

35 [The] system in question here is, of course, the environment. In order for there to be perceptible pollution, there must first be an understanding of systematic order, an environmental norm. Only then is it possible to detect something that is 'out of place'. But when we see differing ideals in confrontation, we observe different perceptions of pollution and risk. [...]

40 Ecology – the contemporary authority on nature's laws – is said to have revealed that such-and-such an action is dangerous to the environment, and that if it is continued both we and the environment will be imperilled. Hence the polluter must be ordered to cease, lest he or she destroy us all. But notice that it is not just the environment that is at risk, but the very *idea* of environment, the social ideal of proper order.

Document 3: Edwin Chadwick, *Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population, London, 1842*

After as careful an examination of the evidence collected as I have been enabled to make, I beg leave to recapitulate the chief conclusions which that evidence appears to me to establish. *First, as to the extent and operation of the evils which are the subject of this inquiry:*

5 That the various forms of epidemic, endemic, and other disease caused, or aggravated, or propagated chiefly amongst the labouring classes by atmospheric impurities produced by decomposing animal and vegetable substances, by damp and filth, and close and overcrowded dwellings prevail amongst the population in every part of the kingdom [...].

10 That such disease, wherever its attacks are frequent, is always found in connection with the physical circumstances above specified, and that where those circumstances are removed by drainage, proper cleansing, better ventilation, and other means of diminishing atmospheric impurity, the frequency and intensity of such disease is abated; and where the removal of the noxious agencies appears to be complete, such disease almost entirely disappears. [...]

15 That the annual loss of life from filth and bad ventilation are greater than the loss from death or wounds in any wars in which the country has been engaged in modern times. [...]

20 That, measuring the loss of working ability amongst large classes by the instances of gain, even from incomplete arrangements for the removal of noxious influences from places of work or from abodes, that this loss cannot be less than eight or ten years.

That the ravages of epidemics and other diseases do not diminish but tend to increase the pressure of population.

25 That the younger population, bred up under noxious physical agencies, is inferior in physical organization and general health to a population preserved from the presence of such agencies. [...]

That defective town cleansing fosters habits of the most abject degradation and tends to the demoralization of large numbers of human beings, who subsist by means of what they find amidst the noxious filth accumulated in neglected streets and bye-places. [...]

Secondly - As to the means by which the present sanitary condition of the labouring classes may be improved:

The primary and most important measures, and at the same time the most practicable, and within the recognized province of public administration, are drainage, the removal of all refuse of habitations, streets, and roads, and the improvement of the supplies of water. [...]

That refuse when thus held in suspension in water may be most cheaply and innocuously conveyed to any distance out of towns, and also in the best form for productive use, and that the loss and injury by the pollution of natural streams may be avoided. [...]

That for the protection of the labouring classes and of the ratepayers against inefficiency and waste in all new structural arrangements for the protection of the public health, and to ensure public confidence that the expenditure will be beneficial, securities should be taken that all new local public works are devised and conducted by responsible officers qualified by the possession of the science and skill of civil engineers. [...]

That for the prevention of the disease occasioned by defective ventilation and other causes of impurity in places of work and other places where large numbers are assembled, and for the general promotion of the means necessary to prevent disease, that it would be good economy to appoint a district medical officer independent of private practice, and with the securities of special qualifications and responsibilities to initiate sanitary measures and reclaim the execution of the law.

Document 4: Theodore Roosevelt, “Conservation as a national duty”, Speech at the White House Conference of Governors, May 13, 1908

[...] In [George] Washington’s time anthracite coal was known only as a useless black stone; and the great fields of bituminous coal were undiscovered. As steam was unknown, the use of coal for power production was undreamed of. Water was practically the only source of power, saved the labor of men and animals; and this power was used only in the most primitive fashion. But a few small iron deposits had been found in this country, and the use of iron by our countrymen was very small. Wood was practically the only fuel, and what lumber was sawed was consumed locally, while the forests were regarded chiefly as obstructions to settlement and cultivation. The man who cut down a tree was held to have conferred a service upon his fellows. [...]

Since then our knowledge and use of the resources of the present territory of the United States have increased a hundred-fold. Indeed, the growth of this Nation by leaps and bounds makes one of the most striking and important chapters in the history of the world. Its growth has been due to the rapid development, and alas that it should be said!, to the rapid destruction, of our natural resources. [...] The wise use of all of our natural resources, which are our national

15 resources as well, is the great material question of today. I have asked you to come together
now because the enormous consumption of these resources, and the threat of imminent
exhaustion of some of them, due to reckless and wasteful use, once more calls for common
effort, common action.

20 We want to take action that will prevent the advent of a woodless age, and defer as long as
possible the advent of an ironless age. [Applause...] The time has come for a change. As a
people we have the right and the duty, second to none other but the right and duty of obeying
the moral law, of requiring and doing justice, to protect ourselves and our children against the
wasteful development of our natural resources, whether that waste is caused by the actual
destruction of such resources or by making them impossible of development hereafter.

25 [...] Finally, let us remember that the conservation of our natural resources, though the
gravest problem of today, is yet but part of another and greater problem to which this Nation
is not yet awake, but to which it will awake in time, and with which it must hereafter grapple
if it is to live – the problem of national efficiency, the patriotic duty of insuring the safety and
continuance of the Nation. [Applause.] When the People of the United States consciously
30 undertake to raise themselves as citizens, and the Nation and the States in their several
spheres, to the highest pitch of excellence in private, State, and national life, and to do this
because it is the first of all the duties of true patriotism, then and not till then the future of this
Nation, in quality and in time, will be assured. [Great applause]

**Document 5: Senator James M. Inhofe (Republican - Oklahoma; Chairman of the
Committee on Environment and Public Works), Floor statement “The Science of
climate change”, July 28, 2003**

Much of the debate over global warming is predicated on fear, rather than science. Global
warming alarmists see a future plagued by catastrophic flooding, war, terrorism, economic
dislocations, droughts, crop failures, mosquito-borne diseases, and harsh weather-all caused
by man-made greenhouse gas emissions.

5 [...] Fear of the coming ice age is old hat, but fear that man-made greenhouse gases are
causing temperatures to rise to harmful levels is in vogue. Alarmists brazenly assert that this
phenomenon is fact, and that the science of climate change is "settled."

10 [...] Today, even saying there is scientific disagreement over global warming is itself
controversial. But anyone who pays even cursory attention to the issue understands that
scientists vigorously disagree over whether human activities are responsible for global
warming, or whether those activities will precipitate natural disasters.

I would submit, furthermore, that not only is there a debate, but the debate is shifting away
from those who subscribe to global warming alarmism. After studying the issue over the last

15 several years, I believe that the balance of the evidence offers strong proof that natural variability is the overwhelming factor influencing climate.

It's also important to question whether global warming is even a problem for human existence. Thus far no one has seriously demonstrated any scientific proof that increased global temperatures would lead to the catastrophes predicted by alarmists. In fact, it appears that just the opposite is true: that increases in global temperatures may have a beneficial effect on how we live our lives.

For these reasons I would like to discuss an important body of scientific research that refutes the anthropogenic theory of catastrophic global warming. I believe this research offers compelling proof that human activities have little impact on climate.

25 This research, well documented in the scientific literature, directly challenges the environmental worldview of the media, so they typically don't receive proper attention and discussion. Certain members of the media would rather level personal attacks on scientists who question "accepted" global warming theories than engage on the science.

This is an unfortunate artifact of the debate - the relentless increase in personal attacks on certain members of the scientific community who question so-called conventional wisdom.

30 I believe it is extremely important for the future of this country that the facts and the science get a fair hearing. Without proper knowledge and understanding, alarmists will scare the country into enacting its ultimate goal: making energy suppression, in the form of harmful mandatory restrictions on carbon dioxide and other greenhouse emissions, the official policy of the United States.

35 Such a policy would induce serious economic harm, especially for low-income and minority populations. Energy suppression, as official government and non-partisan private analyses have amply confirmed, means higher prices for food, medical care, and electricity, as well as massive job losses and drastic reductions in gross domestic product, all the while providing virtually no environmental benefit. In other words: a raw deal for the American people and a
40 crisis for the poor.