

**Sen. Hart Given Most Applause**

# Colorful Show Caps Earth Day Activities

By FLOYD ALLBAUGH

Earth night in Grand Rapids was a kaleidoscopic orgy of sight and sound—a \$2,200 extravaganza that attracted an estimated 1,500 to Civic Auditorium but left its promoters and some spectators with a sense of dissatisfaction.

Intended to unfold in a solemn cathedral-like atmosphere the flashing images of five screens in the darkened auditorium, plus dual, spotlighted speakers' platforms and assorted sound effects, seemed to encourage a circus mood among the predominantly young spectators.

Old-fashioned paper planes, familiar in classrooms for generations, soared out from balconies along with more worrisome objects, including a live cigarette butt. Distractions included horseplay, noise and traffic in and out of entrances and corridors.

Biggest applause was accorded to Sen. Philip A. Hart, D-Mich., as the 14 speakers and the entertainers introduced themselves early in the program.

Loudest "boos" were vented on the image of Vice President Spiro T. Agnew which was among a continuing series of

images flashed on the biggest screen.

Hart was given rapt attention and unblemished applause for his speech near the end of the program.

"Are we meeting tonight to pay homage just to the latest 'in' thing?" he asked. "Many think we are," he said. But he expressed hope that the drive to save the environment will outlast the "life span" of some recent crusades such as those of civil rights and the war on poverty.

Hart's picture was on the big screen during his brief talk.

"For the first time in the history of this country," he said, "it is beginning to dawn on people that man is not separate from nature—he's an integral part of it."

He pointed out, however, that schools, houses and hospitals also are a part of the environment and influence the kind of person an individual will be.

"Let's not use nature indiscriminately," he said, "but let's not use people indiscriminately, either."

He termed conservation of water, air and other resources vital, although only a way station en route to the ultimate

goal of "conservation of the human spirit."

Rep. Gerald R. Ford had rougher going, with frequent shouted comments about the Vietnam war and, on one occasion, loud stamping of feet.

"America, whether we like it or not, must change its ways or smother in its own waste," he declared. He conceded the nation should have moved with zeal in behalf of the environment at least a decade earlier, adding, however, that "no purpose is served by postmortems." He said the Earth Day observances around the nation can lay the groundwork for expanded efforts, but "we must ask ourselves whether we are willing to pay the horrendous cost in personal energy, individual dedication, scientific know-how and tax and consumer dollars—we must."

The battle to save the environment is national, and the commitment and enforcement must be nationwide, he said.

"The first step is to lay down national water and air quality standards," Ford said. "Then we must enforce those standards fairly and vigorously." He called for precise effluent standards of

water pollution, and swift court action when the standards are violated. He urged similar action on air pollution, saying violators of air standards should be given fines up to \$10,000 a day.

He also called for fast action to reduce pollution from the internal combustion engine. "I remind you that the President is marshaling both government and private research to produce an un conventionally-powered, virtually pollution-free automobile within five years," he said. "This should serve as a powerful stimulant to Detroit to eliminate pollution from the internal combustion engine in less than five years."

He cited recent actions of Congress and federal bureaus in cracking down on air and water pollution, but listed other problems such as solid waste disposal and the need to curb population growth.

"Through all these problems runs a common thread: The need for more knowledge, research, experimentation. We are grappling with a mission far more difficult than reaching the moon."

Mrs. Joan Wolfe, head of the West Michigan Environmental Action Council, urged citizens to put their time and

money "where your concern is" and get into the battle against pollution.

Richard Schwaiger, 1st Ward commissioner-elect and a longstanding conservationist, insisted the world is made up of "builders and wreckers," and said there have long been too many "arm-chair conservationists."

"They stand for nothing and they do what they stand for," he said.

Other speakers included Dr. W. W. Plummer of the Kent County Planned Parenthood organization, Dr. Carl Bajema of Grand Valley State College, Peter Wege, president of the Center for Environmental Study, William Johnson who heads the GVSC security forces, and Rev. Roy Ostenson, Jasju Milanowski, Hilary Snell, Jean Paul Tillman, William Thrall, Richard Gilmore, Fred Meijer, Gary Robertson and Bruce Gauthier.

Earlier in a wind-chilled program on the City-County plaza, several hundred spectators listened to the Creston High School A Cappella Choir and Boys and Girls Glee Clubs, and assorted other entertainers, and heard a talk by Rep. Guy VanderJagt, R-Cadillac.

Meanwhile, messages such as, "Stamp

out the Uglies" and "There is No Pill for Earth Control" were displayed by poster carriers.

VanderJagt said the plight of astronauts John Swigert Jr., James A. Lovell Jr. and Fred W. Haise Jr., who made it back to earth from an abortive moon landing attempt with nearly exhausted air and water supplies, "dramatizes the plight of us all."

"Time is running out for man on this planet unless we do something to halt this galloping degradation of the environment," he said.

VanderJagt described the nationwide Earth Day observances as the largest gathering of citizens "anytime, anywhere."

He asserted that "everyone wants a good environment" but the question is whether citizens want it badly enough to pay the price in taxes. He called for national commitment to a goal of fresh air and pure water by 1980.

A variety of lectures and panel discussions was held during the day at local schools and colleges, and it appeared most schools had students involved in cleanup activities.

# Students Protest Meat Plant Smoke

Eighteen Junior College students picketed the VandenBrink Meat Co. plant, 535 Richmond St. NW, Wednesday afternoon because, they said, the company's meat smoking process fouls the air.

The students were led by a JC English teacher, Phillip Junge, who said the demonstration was undertaken mainly because the plant had been the focus of citizens' complaints for years.

"We aren't just picking on this place," said student Gary Vandenburg. "There have been lots of complaints

about it, but we're really protesting air pollution in general."

The students carried signs and wore green hospital masks. Junge said the masks were donated by a medical supply salesman.

Owner Don VandenBrink told The Press the city has asked him to do something about the smoke: "We're working on it, and we do have a plan of smoke abatement. I'd rather not comment on a timetable, though."

The plant burns sawdust to smoke meat.



—Grand Rapids Press Photograph

**Meat Processing Emissions Come Under Fire**