Editorial

Where are they now?

Where are the leaders whose energetic efforts resulted in the energy crisis. They are the environmentalists who clearly campaigned against the use of lead in gasoline because it produced harmful emissions. Their efforts brought about industry upheaval and knocking engines. They are the ones who monitored discharges from factory stacks and brought suit after suit against industry. They are the ones who forced these factories to convert from coal to less polluting fuel sources such as oil and gas.

Where are the leaders who so violently upheld the cause to clean up our rivers and lakes. They are the alarmists who reported increasing levels of mercury in our waters and brought on the mercury scare.

Where are the leaders who led the fight to ban all pesticides and their uses. They are the instant ecologists who entered the learning institutions and convinced unknowing students that all environmental protection chemicals were unsafe. They are the ones who put the doubt in teachers' minds about the quality of our American food supply. It was they who banned all uses of DDT because it allegedly multiplied in the food chain. The net result has been devastation of forests by gypsy and tussock moth and the loss of thousands of acres of timber for lumber. They are the ones who magically transformed a gullible public into believing that organically grown crops (free of pesticides) were better for your health. They are the ones who failed to tell the consumer that a great many crop protection chemicals are organic based compounds. Their diligent efforts brought sweeping government controls on the registration, sale, application, use and disposal of crop and turf protection chemicals. These absentees cleverly instilled in the consumer that the farmer, applicator, weed control professional, arborist — yes, even our universities — deceived the public for wanton gain.

Where are they now? We followed their findings. Many of their points were good and we supported them. Government agencies, pollution boards and more to record, monitor, meter and regulate were created. The task of environment preservation was challenging and to be against it was like being against motherhood. Who could argue with it? Yet this implosion of environmental awareness, once it began, has been conducted from the rear. Our current situation forces us to seek for leadership to drive this gigantic machine out of the present energy rut. Leaders are needed to chart the course of the future. The job is only partially completed. Where are they now?