

Conspiracy of Ignorance

This country faces perhaps the most dangerous threat in history to its existence and future. That threat is a conspiracy of ignorance.

Yes, we've coexisted with ignorance since the beginning of man. Yes, you're smiling and saying: "A little learning is a dangerous thing."

Stop smiling. The truth of that adage is affecting our lives to a shocking and unparalleled degree.

Review the disturbing events of the past decade—drug use, hippy-ism, student rioting, social unrest, political assassinations, wars, and, currently, pollution. Analyze the role of ignorance.

What has made ignorance such a dangerous thing today is a not-so-new ingredient that we've failed to recognize, much less come to deal with. It's the systemic ingredient of instant and mass communication.

Literally, ignorance can be spread in an electronic flash across the world, cloaked in the authority of our mass communication devices.

Ignorance breeds emotion, Sen. Ellender of Louisiana has said. And emotion gets things done—or undone—when all else has failed.

Weed scientists can no longer remain "detached" when untruths and exaggerations—even from colleagues—about pesticides are publicized, said

Homer LeBaron, outgoing president of the North-eastern Weed Science Society.

Indeed, the "Great Silent Majority" cannot afford to remain silent on any matter that is being distorted, either accidentally or for a purpose.

Emotion unlocked the barn door and our fine thoroughbred, DDT, is gone. Stop screaming about the lost. The door is still open. Be concerned about saving the whole herd.

We shall see a great many pesticide laws go on the books this coming year. Do you plan to "go on about your business" and leave the legislating to others?

Who is the gentleman in your State House who will initiate and mold pesticide legislation?

We suggest you find out who he is now—not after pesticide legislation is processing. In addition to writing him, or calling him on the phone, we'd even suggest your inviting him to spend a day at your business to see first-hand what chemicals you use, why you use them, and how you handle them.

Public relations and public education must be assigned as top priorities for 1970. You can no longer expect government by reason based on fact. Ignorance has become too rampant and agile.

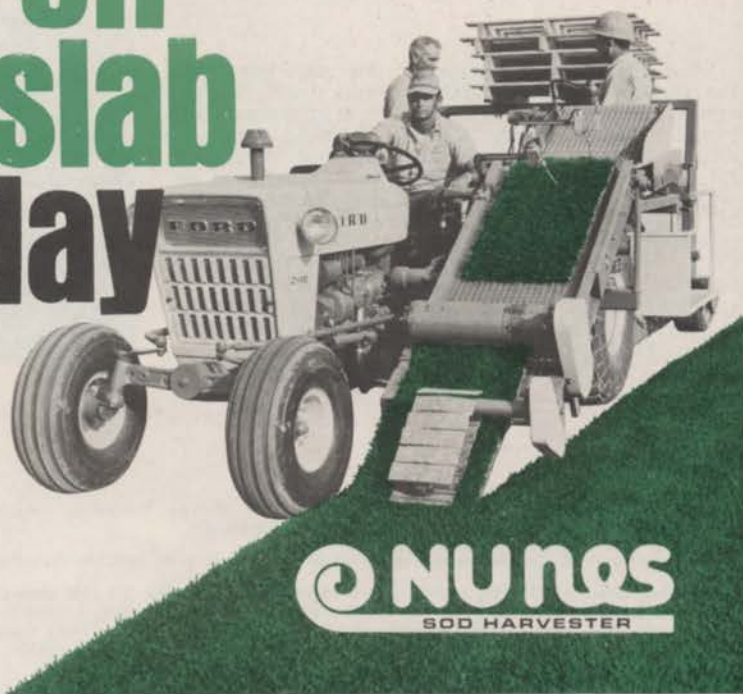
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