

Much of biological science has grown away from the attempt to merely tabulate and delineate organisms. The Smithsonian is one of the leaders in the continuing attempt to do this, and to relate this information to ecology and geography. Therefore, to us, it quite readily seems to be a matter of great importance. Just as in the 19th century there was general understanding in the United States that we should undertake to measure and understand the dimensions of our own Nation, our own territory, our own land, so today we feel this is now an international cause: the world has shrunk in size and we must concern ourselves with this.

But how to marshal other biologists, how to get them in general to be aware of the urgency of this?

As I say, the average biologist today is working in a laboratory, in a controlled situation on materials which are essentially repetitive, the systematics or known taxonomic dimensions of which are understood, and almost classically understood. He works on a pigeon or a cat or a bit of a rat, or a bit of a dog or a bit of an insect, and these are all common, garden things that are essentially around him and simply provided as laboratory material. He is not any more interested in knowing about soil bacteria in the emerging nations of Africa than any of you are, but in fact it is, of course, vitally important that someone should know about these things. And this is what in a broad sense this International Biological Program is about.

And until there is some understanding of the urgency of this, I do not see that we have a hope of attempting to assess the problem correctly or to approach it with the proper responsibility from a fiscal point of view.

So that I approach you gentlemen this morning with the plea that you would take time seriously to concern yourselves with the approach which this Nation should take to an area which is rather vast, rather formless, still rather little understood even by the men whose counsel you seek, and which represents a frontier in biology itself, just as much as it represents a frontier in general knowledge, and which we should be prepared to support in the small way that the figures indicate as part of our responsibility to ourselves and to our own population.

Mr. DADDARIO. Dr. Ripley, that is a very stirring message you give. It is one which touches really to the heart of what this committee's concern has been over a course of time, and to which we have directed a great deal of our effort seeking the advice which could bring us to some more definite pattern as to how to make an impact in these areas.

I cannot recall it having been spelled out in such good language ever before, even though we have had a great deal of discussion. You have referred to this resolution as being bland, which causes you concern. Because it is before us to be examined and because we have no commitment to keeping the language of this resolution in its present form, how do we put some salt and pepper to it to make it a little bit more tasty for the whole biological community, and how could we stir up some better appetites for these people who you say are not as involved in these vital areas as they should be?

Dr. RIPLEY. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.