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Earth Day—Commitment To Make Life Better

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Campus, school and community organizers today polished preparations for Earth Day—an unprecedented attempt to muster massive citizen awareness and action to deal with the deterioration of man's environment.

Observances planned Wednesday include everything from marches and demonstrations to mock funerals for the automobile. Clean-ups, teach-ins, nature walks, workshops and lectures are scheduled.

"Earth Day is a commitment to make life better, not just bigger and faster, to provide real rather than rhetorical solutions," says the organizers' main manifesto.

Earth Day grew out of a suggestion made by Sen. Gaylord Nelson, D-Wis., in the wake

of last November's antiwar demonstrations.

It was reasoned that if public sentiment could be mobilized over the anti issue, then the positive issue of protecting the environment ought to generate even greater support.

Organizers say the key is local participation. To that end a largely volunteer force has been working in a Washington office since January conducting a campaign to stimulate local observances.

Last week a spokesman for Environmental Action—the Washington group—said groups representing some 2,000 communities, 2,000 colleges and 10,000 high schools were set to participate.

The organizing effort was budgeted at \$125,000. Spokes-

man Stephen Cotton said several offers of funds from large corporations had been turned down and the group hoped to raise the money from foundations and individual gifts.

At the same time the organizers are looking beyond Earth Day, emphasizing the importance of continuing programs on the local level and warning that pollution problems must not be forgotten after Wednesday's events.

"We hope that each participant, supplied with some of the facts about environmental problems in his own back yard, will commit himself to a program of action," said Frank Renshaw, chairman of a teach-in sponsored by five Cincinnati colleges.

Dr. Kenneth E. F. Watt, pro-

fessor of zoology at the University of California, told students at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania:

"The history of movements like this is not very promising. We had great movements on civil rights and the Vietnamese war. The problems are still with us but the movements have died away."

"About five years from now," he added, "it will have become increasingly clear . . . that what we (ecologists) are saying now is true, and then the political pressure for change will become inexorable."

Although a number of politicians have endorsed Earth Day, organizers have been wary of political alliances. Cotton said some politicians seem to think environment is an easy issue on

which they can look good just by expressing an interest.

He said the group had declined to meet with John Ehrlichman, President Nixon's aide on environment: "We thought we didn't have the time or the inclination to go over there and sit down for a chat."

The Earth Day campaign has been derided by young radicals as a "white middle-class diversion" of the public spotlight from the issues of racial equality and Vietnam.

The organizers have responded by noting that those causes are ultimately encompassed in a satisfactory environment but that they will be meaningless if the physical deterioration of the earth is not arrested.