

George - it feels a little rushed, but it's a  
start  
We're back  
Nov 10

BEGINNING THOUGHTS ON A DRAFT FOR STRUCTURE OF CEM  
October 17, 1995  
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What follows is a "draft" to start the discussion on structure of the Cultural Environmental Movement. It is my/our understanding that the current CEM Board and numerous other individuals will look at it to add and subtract before it becomes a draft for presentation and discussion at the Founding CEM Convention in March 1996. If it needs to be put into some formal or legal language, that too will happen later than this draft.

#### CURRENT STRUCTURE

The evolution of CEM is outlined in CEM UNTIL NOW (June 1995). Presently there is a board of about 16 members, most living in or near Philadelphia and Washington D.C. This is largely out of commitment and interest, and for ease of meeting near Philadelphia, where CEM grew out of the work and vision of George Gerbner, Dean Emeritus of the Annenberg School of Communications. George Gerbner is elected chair of the board (the stated title is President, but he prefers "chair"). There are also 2 vice chairs, a secretary and a treasurer. The board has all power on budget and policy decisions, and has done most of the work moving the organization toward the March 1996 Founding Convention. There is also a collection of affiliated organizations and individuals who have expressed interest or actually paid a membership. A first CEM Monitor (newsletter) is about to come out from the small office in Philadelphia, and all is moving toward the March 15-17, 1996 Founding Convention in St. Louis where everyone working together will decide what this COALITION will be and how it will move forward.

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## PROPOSED STRUCTURE -- for discussion and amplification

Board of Directors

The board should be expanded to \_\_\_\_\_ (discussion about # -- what's good and what's unwieldy) and must become more diverse relative to geographical U.S., International, and ethnicity. Major decisions would be made at a once a year in person board meeting. A smaller executive committee would be empowered to make other necessary decisions during the year. Should this be the officers, as on some boards? Or a larger (but still much smaller than the full board) group that would be able to meet more often than once a year, in person, or via phone meeting? (I'm find this a little hard to think more about without having the current bylaws or board rules in front of me -- perhaps the next discussion of this could be sure to start from that point).

Council of Affiliated Organizations

This is all organizations who pay the required annual affiliation dues -- or is there a way for an organization to become paid up by recruiting as there seems to be for individuals? It seems this body should have a slate of officers who have the responsibility of seeing that an annual gathering happens where new officers are elected, issues are raised, an an action plan for the next year is created. Obviously the Founding Convention is the first one.

If this movement is about organizations working together toward an end(s), there has to be a regular time of coming together; yet I believe this should not be mandated or concretized. I believe the board and council chairs need to communicate and decide whether their annual gatherings meet physically together or how they communicate if they don't. One or both could meet in conjunction with the annual conference or convention of an affiliated organization -- e.g. one year with the Foundation for Deep Ecology and the next with the National Media Literacy Conference. This would have

to be decided at least a year in advance, and there would have to be a responsible rep with committee to make it happen. At very least we need to come out of the founding convention with the melded action plans, a system for making them work, and a place and time to come together to evaluate what happened and plan where to go next.

It seems important to say here that no decision of the CEM Board is or can be binding on affiliated organizations. This movement requires some organization, but it is not another organization. It is a coalition of organizations and individuals binding together to pool power (but not to give up power) for the betterment of the cultural environment. (Some discussion here on how this is good and doesn't result in nothing being done, like the complaint about the NAB code -- good ideas but nobody has to follow them. I assume this is still true. I'm a little out of touch with the specifics).

The Council should be able to elect or provide \_\_\_\_\_ members to the Board. This is totally up for discussion about how or what, but it seems this is the most vital, integrated way to move toward the diversity suggested above. Also a separate, but still close working relationship between the board and the Council.

### Individuals

I think individuals should have their own "body" at the annual gathering and perhaps between, and I think they should be able to elect one member to the board. Theoretically, an "individual" is vitally committed to the ideals of CEM, but finds him or herself not connected to an organization that is. Through involvement that individual could become connected to an already affiliated organization, or that individual could grow CEM support in an organization he or she is already in, sort of as in the scriptural "a little leaven leavens the whole lump".

Regional

I don't exactly know what to do about regions. It seems they present a U.S. movement, but we're already part of a global environment. Regional structures, typical of many U.S. National organizations (e.g. Eastern, Central, and Western regions) seem wrong for CEM. It seems more important to create regional representation from the world in this movement. There may be leadership coming from the U.S., but we need the coalition and cooperation of committed organizations and individuals around the world.

## \*\*\*A WORD ABOUT COALITION

George cautioned us when we started putting this draft together, that it was about structure, not about program. I hear that, but what was most exciting to me/us when it started was the coalition and pooling of power to do things that might otherwise never happen. If CEM became one more good cause sending me fund-raising letters to maintain its little or big office and program, I'd be disappointed. I have a friend, Gary Melom (storyteller, writer, policy analyst) who said when we talked about this, "What if all the concerned organizations pooled their newsletter, PR, and other money, and put a quality newspaper on everyone's doorstep once a week that told the truth". He also commented that the working groups seem built around what people are doing now. Will what happens at the convention and through this organization go way beyond that and look at what will be important 20 years from now? Will Rogers said "Nobody's dumber than an educated person when you get them off the subject they're educated in". Somehow the structure of this coalition must get us all out of our specialty areas and stretching and working together to cause an explosion of good power that could never otherwise have happened.

Larry Johnson and Elaine Wynne  
Key of See Storytellers

*stop - never follow  
from me? my info*