

## Ch 32 Section 4 Environmental Activism

### The Roots of Environmentalism

#### Rachel Carson and *Silent Spring*

- **Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*** warns against use of pesticides
  - argues poisons kill food, harmless animals as well as pests
- Becomes best seller; leads JFK to establish advisory committee
  - chemical companies claim book inaccurate, threaten suits
- Carson starts national focus on environmental issues

### Environmental Concerns in the 1970s

#### The First Earth Day

- **Earth Day**—celebration highlighting environmental awareness
- First observed 1970 by communities, thousands of schools, colleges

#### The Government Takes Action

- Nixon not an **environmentalist**—active protector of environment
- Signs Clean Air Act, creates **Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**
  - main government arm on environmental issues
- 1970s, Congress passes 35 laws on conservation, clean up

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### Balancing Progress and Conservation in Alaska

- Pipeline creates jobs, revenue, worries over wildlife, native people
- Nixon gives millions of acres to native tribes for conservation, use
- Carter sets aside 56 million acres as national monuments
- 1980, Congress adds 104 million acres as protected areas

### The Debate over Nuclear Energy

- Many think nuclear power good alternative to foreign oil
- Opponents contend nuclear plants, waste potentially harmful

### Three Mile Island

- March 1979, reactor at **Three Mile Island** nuclear plant malfunctions
- Low-level radiation escapes; 100,000 people evacuated from area
- Incident rekindles debate over safety of nuclear power
- Nuclear Regulatory Commission strengthens safety standards

- also improves inspection procedures

### **A Continuing Movement**

#### **Environment or Employment?**

- 1970s, environment movement gains popular support
- Opponents protest loss of jobs, revenues
- 1980s, 1990s, attempt to balance environment with jobs, progress