

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

## Our shared home

Fifty years ago on Christmas Eve, thanks to astronauts orbiting the moon 240,000 miles away, humans were able to see our Earth as it truly exists, floating in space.

The “Earthrise” photograph, and a later “Blue Marble” photograph showing the Earth in its entirety, soon became among the most reproduced images in human history. Millions of posters were distributed to schools. My wife displayed one in her Pottstown classroom for years.



Commentary by  
Thomas Hylton

As Notre Dame president Theodore Hesburgh wrote:

“There we are, on a perfect jewel of a globe, blue, brown and flecked with white clouds. No artificial boundaries, no political or ideological differences, no hatreds, no power struggles, no military strategies visible.

“Just one earth, the human habitat, home.” ...

“It is time, I think, for all of us to think of dual citizenship. We are all proud citizens of the nation in which we were born. But, I think, we must increasingly consider ourselves as being citizens of the world. I do.”

Things have changed since Christmas Eve, 1968. As two scholars recently wrote in The New York Times:

“In 2018, it is virtually impossible

to see “Earthrise” without thinking of the ways the planet’s biosphere — proportionally as thin as a coat of paint on a classroom globe — is not only fragile but also under sustained attack by human actions. ...

“Our precious raft is losing members — species are dying — as our climate changes and our planet warms. The very technologies that flung us around the moon and back, the dazzling industrial genius that gave us fossil-fuel-fed transport and electricity, animal agriculture and all the rest, have fundamentally changed our Earth, and now they threaten to cook us into catastrophe.

“It’s all there in ‘Earthrise,’ if we look closely enough. Those spiraling ribbons of clouds foreshadow the extreme weather to come. In the foreground, the gray moon testifies to how unforgiving the laws of nature can be. And behind the camera, so to speak, is the sprawling apparatus of the modern industrial age, spewing an insulating layer of haze around that little blue marble, the only home we’ve ever known.”

The year 2018 has seen our president unleash a trade war with the rest of the world, spurn our traditional democratic allies, and double down on the generation of greenhouse gases.

Let’s hope 2019 brings sanity back to our nation and its relationship with our fellow riders on Earth.



**“EARTHRISE” — 50 years ago, astronaut William Anders took the first photograph of the earth from space as the Apollo 8 orbited the moon on Christmas Eve.**