

Summery and response

Literature, Russian Literature



Insert Introduction Christopher Stone, the of the piece ‘ Should Trees Have Standing’, is a of law at the University of Southern California. In this piece, Stone vehemently argues for the ‘ unthinkable idea’ of according legal rights to natural objects such as trees, lakes, oceans, forests, and so on. Stone builds his argument from past events and cites how certain persons and inanimate objects such as trusts, corporations, states and municipalities have been extended legal recognition – feats that were previously unthought of in the older societies (Stone, 299).

From the Darwin’s theory of evolution, Professor Stone reveals how man initially thought only of his/ her individual well-being but with time started minding the affairs, happiness and well-being of others. With time, things that were previously considered to have no rights (such as children, females, aliens, the insane, Blacks, Indians, Chinese, the Church, state and other corporate/ inanimate bodies) have now been given rights. He firmly asserts that throughout legal history, each successive extension of rights to some new entity has been a bit unthinkable. And he qualifies this viewpoint using a plethora of solid and proven examples such as the initial consideration of some races as inferior (slaves and intelligent-wise), the rights of women to pursue certain careers such as law or service in the military, amongst others. He therefore sees his proposal to have rights assigned to the environment being at first thought unthinkable and laughable but strongly argues his case and reminds the reader of the history involved in such matters of rights. Professor Stone highlights, in this text, three main ways in which natural objects are denied rights under the common law and proposes ways to legally address these perceived injustices. Stone admits however that it

would be silly to say that no one should, for example, cut down a tree if the natural environment is to be accorded its rights. According to him, to say that the environment should have rights does not mean it should have every right imaginable or even the same body of rights as human beings. It does not also mean that everything in the environment has the same rights. The professor then delves into what granting the environment would actually mean and goes ahead and talks about the two main aspects of it – the legal operation aspects and the socio-psychic aspects (Stone, 300-308).

From mainly an environmental and human welfare point of view, I would say I agree with the Professor that indeed the environment should be accorded some due rights. The effects of the move would be tremendous, and remarkable, to say the least. According the environment some rights would mean we as the human race have taken environmental protection and conservation to a whole new level and made it harder for those who destroy the environment without checks, regulations and repercussions. In addition, this move will not mean that we ca not use the environment’s resources to advance ourselves in industries, manufacturing sector and son, but rather that it would be done in a systematic and organized way that ensures replacement of used environmental resources such as trees and the conservation of the same.

There will be immense benefits from this move. A healthy environment is able to meet the growing demands of the ever-rising human population in terms of sufficient food generation, clean air and water. The step would also go an extra mile in helping mankind reduce pollution and creation of landfills that have been over time responsible for numerous diseases such as cancer,

respiratory ailments, and sanitary diseases and so on. Last but not least, this process would result into a very beautiful world, as a healthy environment means world aesthesia.

Works Cited

Stone, Christopher D., and Garrett James Hardin. Should trees have standing?: toward legal rights for natural objects. Los Altos, Calif.: W. Kaufmann, 1974. Print, 298- 308.