



*The Walter F. Snyder
Award for 1975
Presented to
CHARLES L. SENN*

Charles Senn and Walter Snyder were close colleagues in the early years of NSF and both devoted their lives intensively to advancing the science of environmental health. Through his leadership as a public health official and environmental educator Professor Senn has contributed greatly to public health technology and administration.

Charles Lester Senn, registered sanitarian, professional engineer, master of science and professor of environmental health, was born in Milwaukee and earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Wisconsin.

He belonged to a select group of graduates who had attained their baccalaureates under the new (1932) sanitary engineering option.

He began his career as the head of a work party for the Wisconsin State Highway Commission. This was followed by employment with the state health department as district sanitary engineer. From 1939 to 1943 he was sanitary engineer and chief of sanitary inspection for the Milwaukee Health Department.

Up to this point Charles Senn had spent his entire life in Wisconsin. Suddenly he was uprooted by a career opportunity that moved him 2145 miles to the west where he became Environmental Health Director for the City of Los Angeles. He had proved to be the top candidate in a national civil service exam for the Los Angeles post.

Charlie, as he is known to his family and hundreds of friends, had taken on

the environmental health problems of one of the largest and fastest-growing cities in the world. He qualified for the job, tackled it, and stayed with it for 24 years. During that time he molded into a unified program some eight specialty divisions which had worked semi-independently. He overcame the problems which resulted from staff leaders having been political appointees. He obtained support for new codes and won acceptance of the "fee-for-service" plan whereby each industry paid—and willingly—the major share of the cost of the inspection service. This aided in obtaining salary increases and higher civil service specifications for employees.

Senn established a special "Training and Program Planning" unit which devoted full time to staff and industry training, applied research and cooperation with advisory committees.

Paralleling his career as an administrator, Senn has been an outstanding educator in the field of environmental quality. In 1952, twenty years after earning his bachelor's degree, he completed his work for a master's degree in public administration at the University of Southern California. He has been a lecturer in the School of Medicine at USC for 29 years and a professor of environmental health at San Fernando Valley State College. Today he is carrying a full professorial load at UCLA.

It would seem that a man who has assumed responsibility for the environmental health of more than three million people and served as a university-level health educator would have enough to do. The life history of Charlie Senn, however, reveals that he

is the author of more than 100 published papers. He is a diplomate of two professional societies, a member of Chi Epsilon, an elected member of Delta Omega and Sigma Xi. He is serving with the expert panel on environmental health for the World Health Organization. He is a fellow of the American Public Health Association and a member of the governing council. In addition, he belongs to many other professional associations in which he has actively participated.

Senn knew Walter Snyder at a time when the future executive director of NSF was superintendent of sanitation for the City of Toledo. Senn worked with Snyder and Dr. Henry F. Vaughan in the original planning for the National Sanitation Foundation. Senn was a member of the NSF executive committee which developed the articles of incorporation for the Foundation and he served for many years on the NSF council of public health consultants. He co-chaired the sessions which led to a landmark development in the field of public health—*NSF Standard 1: Soda Fountain & Luncheonette Equipment*.

Later he was instrumental in the establishment of NSF swimming pool standards.

For years Professor Senn has been an active and highly effective member of the National Environmental Health Association. He is a career sanitarian who devoted years of effort to securing national professional recognition for sanitarians. He is, of course, an outstanding and respected colleague in the California Environmental Health Association which nominated him for the 1975 Walter F. Snyder Award.



THE HOPE OF MANKIND rests in the ability of man to define and seek out the environment which will permit him to live with fellow creatures of the earth, in health, in peace and in mutual respect.