



**A CALL TO ACTION:
WALTER CRONKITE'S
CHALLENGE TO THE MEDIA**

Widely recognized as “the most trusted man in America,” Walter Cronkite believed that journalism was a higher calling. He felt a deep sense of personal responsibility to use his platform as the anchor of CBS Evening News to inform and educate the public so they could exercise their rights to preserve and protect our democracy.

Mr. Cronkite was an ardent environmentalist and avid sailor. Back in 1970, he strode into the CBS broadcast center and announced his goal to feature environmental news stories. He and his investigative team produced a 13-part Emmy award-winning series called *Can the World Be Saved?* By spotlighting these issues on the CBS Evening News, Mr. Cronkite introduced them into the national conversation with the urgency they called for. And with the same passion he had for covering the moon landing, his reporting of the inaugural Earth Day celebration rallied over 20 million Americans to launch the green movement.

It’s been over fifty years since that first Earth Day – and the climate crisis is ravaging our planet every day. As severe weather increases in frequency and magnitude, so does global food insecurity, mass migrations and conflicts. The lack of consistent substantive media coverage is disconcerting. It’s been estimated that merely .01% of the news is reporting on climate change.

Today as journalism is being challenged on all fronts, as is our planet. It is up to all of us to embrace the challenge Walter Cronkite gave us in 1970. He would be very proud of the young people featured in *Stone Soup for a Sustainable World*, who are on the frontlines of climate change and are courageously working to build a more sustainable world. We hope that their stories will inspire journalists worldwide to follow them and feature them in their news reports. Today’s journalists have a grave responsibility: to educate all of us about the climate crisis and to inspire us with the innovative solutions – so that we can work together to take action NOW!

As the only superpower, we need to be the best global citizens we can be. We’ve shown the world how we can attack and solve perplexing problems with technology. Imagine if we were to apply that same intellectual power to solving the greatest problems the world faces – especially our

dependence on nonrenewable energy resources. It is up to us to assume leadership of this revolution, to channel it in a direction that will ensure freedom's future.

Walter Cronkite

Excerpted from
*Stone Soup for a Sustainable World:
Life-Changing Stories of Young Heroes*