

## casserole

a supplement section of the gateway produced by the gateway staff

"When you go to American cities, you will find them very pretty  
Just two things of which you must beware  
Don't drink the water and don't breathe the air.  
Pollution, Pollution, we got smog and sewage and mud  
Turn on your taps and get hot and cold running crud.

Just go out for a breath of air and you'll be ready for medicare  
The city streets are really quite a thrill  
If the hoods don't get you, then the monoxide will  
Pollution, pollution . . ."

Well, singer-satirist(?) Tom Lehr could go on and on and does but we will leave the above as a sample of the more critical atmosphere as opposed to the polluted one now leaving America gasping for air.

Today, Casserole goes on and on about the catchword of the seventies.

You can sing our lyrics to a Latin American beat too, if they fit.

No beat is needed, however, to get the point of the cover photo by Terry Malanchuk and Forrest Bard across. Even that seemingly innocuous steam from Edmonton's main power plant contributes to the catchword by trapping other more toxic pollutants over the city.

Opposite, Joe Hill, Derek Fox and Irene Harvie present viewpoints on the general state of the problem and its causes while a reprint from Science magazine lists what American students are doing about it. And finally, STOP suggests what you can do here.

Gateway news editor Sid Stephen brings the problem home to roost on C-4 and C-5. Once upon a time, says Mr. Stephen, we actually had the gall to brag about the cleanest air in the world.

On C-6, 7 and 8, the fine arts task force searches out books, records, opera and "Mame!" Editor Harvie also plunges into the world of "What's New" and that tingling dance experience called Orchestras.

Gasp, hack, wheeze — don't drink the water and don't breathe the air, just read. Pollute your mind.

## Corporations? Governments?

Today we are in the midst of much talk and speculation about the pollution of our air, water and soil and the ecological destruction of our country. The mass media devotes much time and space to this subject. Public awareness of the problems is turning into pressure on government to act. It is here that the normal processes of change break down. It is no accident that the rising tide of concern with pollution does not come from the corporations, nor is it surprising that "our" governments have been slow to take action against them.

Corporations are not interested in pollution control because it is expensive. The logic of capital is its accumulation. This is reflected in its drive for profit maximization. Since pollution control cuts into profit it is antipathetic to the aims of capital. The need of the population do not enter into these balance sheet considerations unless the people force them.

But how do corporations respond to public pressure? A brief look at the car manufacturer's solution to auto safety may suggest answers. The cost of safety devices and modifications to automobiles, made necessary by fundamentally dangerous designs callously purveyed for years by the giant corporations was, of course, passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices. The victim of what amounts to a criminal assault handsomely rewards his assailant for making the attack,

and subsequently underwrites the profits made in this rape by paying the criminal to ease the pressure. Undoubtedly there will be irresistible pressures to repeat this performance when, and if, effective pollution controls become a reality. Once again the people will pay for both the rape and the repairs.

All of us, having taken high school social studies, are told that the government is the arbitrator of the various interest groups in the society, protecting the rights of all. All of us having lived in the world know that this is bullshit. Government has been consistently unwilling or unable to police the corporations, especially with regards to pollution control. The federal, and to a greater extent the provincial, governments have been notoriously susceptible to corporate pressure. Sweetheart deals such as Ottawa's recent \$75 million present to Ford for failing to live up to the 1965 auto pact, and the Alberta government's generosity in her dealings with the poverty stricken oil companies can only strike confidence in our hearts and minds that they will deal firmly with the anguished wails of corporations faced with proposed anti-pollution legislation.

So far the most effective anti-pollution measures have been forced by unions in working condition clauses in contracts. Direct public pressure on the offenders through unions, conservation groups, public boycotts, demonstrations and lawsuits will be more effective than wading through the mystifications of government bureaucracy. But as long as the corporations are allowed to direct the economy all public measures will re-

# Pollution: Whose



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main as basically ineffectual protests after the damage has been done.

Joe Hill  
Derek Fox

## Individuals? Governments?

On a country road one car does not visibly pollute. Even driving in Los Angeles an individual can quite easily ignore his contribution to the "deplorable pollution".

At the National Conference on pollution at Banff in 1968 statistics were released that attributed 60% of air pollution in Canada to transportation. Manufacturing was named as contributing only 18%. But how much easier it is to condemn manufacturing companies and gas plants than to accept pollution control as an

individual responsibility.

In any consideration of pollution, the entire issue hinges on a cultural definition. The pollution standards people set depends directly on how much they are willing to spend. Rapid transit run electrically could be installed in any city willing to put up the capital.

"Aye, there's the rub." It all comes back to money. Farmers complain that a gas plant "stinks up the whole damn countryside, kills our pigs and rains lead on our families," but were the government to institute their emotional demands, they would commit effective political suicide. As an example, for an oil company to stop the smell associated with a natural gas processing plant, which is due to the release of non-toxic sulphur compounds, would require an additional ten million dollars.

The government cannot require this investment and expect the company to maintain prices, which are set by government price controls. The only possible effect that this can have is to the abandoning of the plant, the con-

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