

believe that we can go on polluting for years. They talk about the "assimilative capacity" of the oceans and the air. But they are wrong in this. They are wrong because the assimilative capacity of our natural systems is limited. They are wrong because of this synergistic effect of heaping one pollutant on top of another. And they are wrong because it is easier - and far cheaper - to deal with pollution at its source.

WORLD MONITORING

Pollutants, unfortunately, are no respecters of man-made boundaries. They travel with the winds across whole continents. They are flushed out to sea and find their way to the ends of the earth. Fumes from the smoke stacks of Northern England have found their way into Swedish lakes. Soot from the Ruhr Valley has fallen on the Ukraine. DDT used by farmers in Oklahoma has been turning up in the flesh of birds in the Antarctic. And mercury discharged by chlor-alkali plants on the Canadian Prairies has been found in whales in Hudson Bay.

Distance is no longer a barrier, so we are interdependent whether we like it or not. We have common problems which call for common solutions. We have a common interest in combating pollution. Common markets are now commonplace on the economic front. But their size will be dwarfed by the common environmental front on which man will have to battle in the Seventies.

We already need a worldwide network of monitoring stations. They are needed to monitor our water, our air and our soil. A global monitoring system in turn will lead to common standards. Common standards will call for common measures to deal with pollution. Local pollution havens will disappear and neighbourliness among nations will take its place. By keeping our pollutants to ourselves we shall not only be acting as a good example to others but also serving the best interests of mankind.

POISONS MUST BE RECYCLED

I have already talked about strange new substances. Man is introducing more than 500 a year into his earthly environment. Many of them are poisonous. They are anti-life. They may kill or maim or modify the living things around us. They can do this in mysterious ways. They can do it for a long time before we really know what is going on. Then it may be too late.

We must, therefore, be careful. We must be very careful indeed. We must take steps to have them checked out before they are put on the market. Either that or recycle them and re-use them. This is the only answer from a biological point of view.

Of course recycling will call for more plant and equipment. It will mean more plumbing and more employees. The end products of industry will cost us more as consumers. But most people are prepared to pay this price. They are prepared to pay for an in-

surance policy which will keep industrial pollutants where they belong - that is inside the plants themselves.

Nor is the cost likely to be all that great. More plumbing and more employees may add 5 per cent to the cost of a new product. But wage settlements can eat up that much cash at a single sitting. Productivity gains can offset the expense of recycling in two or three years. Some industrial waste can be converted into useful by-products and better house-keeping often brings its own rewards.

CLEAN-UP JOB BY INDUSTRY

To the industrialists among you, let me say this. I have great faith in our private enterprise system. I have great faith in the ability of industry to tackle any job that it faces. It is efficient. It is effective. These are reasons why I would rather have industry clean up its own mess than see the job done at public expense.

But there is a physical argument also. We should deal with waste products when they are in their most concentrated form. We must not wait until they are broadcast to the four winds or flushed away in the local sewage system to concentrate them again. We can avoid this difficulty by recycling poisons inside the factory fence.

Nor am I picking on North American industry as if it were alone in this respect. Industry in the U.S.S.R. is faced with the same problem. Pollution in the Soviet Union is now the number one topic. It has become a "political" question which the Soviet leaders must deal with as best they can.

Evidence of pollution is widespread in the U.S.S.R. Pulp mills are fouling Lake Baikal. Chemical plants have damaged the sturgeon stocks in the Volga River. Oil spills are common in the Caspian Sea. Whole communities have had their drinking water contaminated by heavy industry. Costs, in other words, are being visited on the unsuspecting public in the U.S.S.R. They have not been "internalized" in the socialistic scheme of things and they have not been "internalized" here either....

CANADA AND THE U.S.

Canadian-American relations have been strained at times. They have been strained because industries on one side of the international boundary were careless and their wastes caused considerable damage on the other side of the line. Recycling within the factory fence would have prevented this from happening. And surely we can learn from experience. We don't have to make the same mistakes again and again.

The Trail smelter case was a classic example in the 1920s. Poisonous gases from our big lead-zinc smelter in southeastern British Columbia floated down over the forests of Washington and Idaho. Trees died in the millions, washouts occurred, important