

POLLUTION.. HOT AIR AND

Government and industry are leading the fight against pollution, President Nixon told the country in his 1970 State of the Union message. The press agreed: the energy and initiative of American private enterprise, directed and funded in the public interest by the watchdog government, is the only solution.

Mr. Nixon's own program is a shining example of how the government tackles this problem. On nationwide TV and radio, with perhaps half the American people tuned in, he proclaimed a \$10 billion program just for water pollution—a headline story.

He failed to point out that the federal government's share would be only \$4 billion, to be spent over a nine year period. This would make the average yearly expenditure only \$455 million, little more than half of what Congress had already appropriated for 1970, and only about a third of what had already been voted for 1971

"war on water pollution"

Nor did Nixon care to confess that he was refusing to spend over half the money already set aside for 1970 to start fighting water pollution now. His "war on water pollution" is nothing more than a stealthy retreat!

Of course, Nixon didn't compare his proposed spending on water pollution with the \$80 billion for the military or the \$5 billion for space now featured in his budget.

But this little bit of deception—in front of 100 million people—only hints at the government's real role in the pollution problem.

The same President Nixon who told 100 million Americans about his concern for our environment is pushing the controversial "super-transport" SST, a commercial airliner that will fly faster than the speed of sound. He wants to spend \$700 million giving airplane companies like Boeing the money to develop it.

Have you ever lived by an airport? With all the noise, it's a lousy place to live. The SST, trailing thunderous sonic booms, will bring the sounds of airport violence to over 60 million Americans.

Even worse, many scientists fear that the high-flying SST will leave smoke and dirt in the upper atmosphere, where it will remain indefinitely and change the chemistry of the air. Such pollution, they believe, could have tremendously harmful effects, ranging from blotting out sunlight to letting through deadly ultra-violet rays that would bombard the earth.

Very few of us will ever be able to afford a ride on the SST. Fares will be several times higher than on regular jets. Who finds it so important that such a destructive and limited aircraft be built? Business executives, for one. They want to be able to cut a few hours flying time off their intercontinental flights. TWA and Pan Am and United like it: it means more business. Boeing and General Dynamics like it: it means a nice, safe government contract on which they can't possibly lose money.

And, evidently, President Nixon likes it.

There are also less obvious ways in which the federal government aids the forces that are ruining America. In southern Florida, for example, the Army Corps of Engineers drained vast areas of swamp and diverted natural waterflow with an elaborate and costly "flood control/irrigation" complex.

Real estate speculators and businessman-farmers who controlled the land made tremendous profits. But the ecology of the entire region has been disturbed; drinking water is being poisoned with pesticides, and now the Everglades are dying from lack of water.

We subsidize the pollution of our own country.

It's not hard to understand why the federal government does these things. Look at the kind of men who hold the major "environment-management" positions. Look at the policies they set.

The Secretary of the Interior is Walter Hickel, a millionaire businessman from Alaska. He's the guy who made a big deal about stopping oil drilling in the Santa Barbara channel after a Union Oil off-shore well blew out and covered



panel working for Union Oil

hundreds of miles of California coastline with oil—and then he quietly reversed himself and let the drilling continue. Together with President Nixon, he's been trying to force the "Timber Supply Bill" through Congress, which would let lumber companies come in and chop up millions of acres in our National Forests.

Is Hickel more concerned about the environment, or about the profits of the oil and lumber companies?

Can a *businessman* work for the best interests of all of us?

The federal government thinks so, but then most of the top positions in government are held by business executives and corporation lawyers—like Nixon himself.

The January 18, 1970, edition of the Los Angeles Times carried a short article which demonstrates rather clearly how a businessman's government responds to pollution problems. It

pointed out that after the Santa Barbara oil-drilling disaster, Nixon and Hickel appointed a special panel to decide whether or not drilling should be continued in the area. After "long and careful study," this panel decided that Union Oil and the other companies in the channel should resume drilling.

At least five of the eleven members of that panel, observed the *Times*, were working for Union Oil or its partners in the channel! In addition, the paper observed that most of the others also had dealings with the oil industry, such as contracts, or running universities that received large donations from oil companies.

If the federal government allows the wolves to be the shepherds, what do state and local governments do?

INDUSTRY DOMINATION

The state of California has been facing pollution problems as bad as any in the nation. Now state officials are talking big about their counter-attack, which is supposed to be a model for the nation.

Among California's worst problems is massive pollution of seashores and coastal waters from off-shore oil drilling. If big oil companies had to pay for the messes they make, they might be a little more careful about mucking over our land and water. So that is what the state attorney general, Charles O'Brien, set out to do after the big Union Oil blow-out. But when he tried to help citizens sue the oil companies, he found that the very state agencies set up to protect the people against industries were the strongest supporters of the oil companies!

The state conservation boards, charged Mr. O'Brien, suffer from "industry domination." How often does a public official come out and admit something like that?

But then, it was becoming difficult to cover up. Especially when one of the directors of the state agency most responsible for controlling pollution in the Santa Barbara channel happened to be a Union Oil executive.

So O'Brien turned to the experts in the state's universities. Men who, for the most part, drew their salaries from the taxpayers. The response of these professors was rather interesting.

"The university experts," said Mr. O'Brien, "all seem to be working on grants from the oil industry. There is an atmosphere of fear. The experts are afraid that if they assist in our case on behalf of the people of California, they will lose their oil industry grants."

Does that sound far-fetched? Wilbur H. Somerton, a professor of oil engineering, admitted that he wouldn't testify "because my work depends on good relations with the oil industry. My interest is serving the petroleum industry."

autos cause only 25% of local air pollution

California cities are notorious for their air pollution. What have urban officials done?

In the Bay Area, officials got together and set up a regional authority: the Bay Area Air Pollution Control District (BAAPCD). Read the hand-outs this agency distributes and you'll see how they've cut down on air pollution by vigorous enforcement. Go to San Francisco or Oak-

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