

**caveat emptor**  
THE CONSUMER PROTECTION MONTHLY

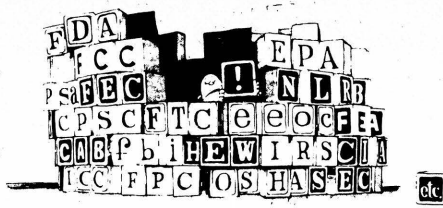
December 1977  
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# Rape of the Soil



**More Food,  
Less Nutrition** *Page 195*

# WASHINGTON REPORT



## Coupons For Gas?

Jack Anderson

**COUPONS, COUPONS, COUPONS** — In case the United States is hit by another fuel crisis, President Carter would rather impose gas rationing upon the public, say insiders, than let motorists fight for gas in chaotic pump lines.

He has even inherited 4.2 billion rationing coupons, which the Federal Energy Office printed three years ago. But this enormous stack of coupons, which are stored at a secret military installation out West, may not be usable.

Distraught officials have discovered that the coupons, with only slight modification, will give change for a dollar in money vending machines. Hundreds of thousands of these money changing contraptions are located across the country in laundromats, airports, amusement arcades and other establishments.

Thus the embarrassed officials apparently have a lot of colorful but worthless coupons on their hands. This is, it turns out, a multi-billion-dollar embarrassment. It cost the taxpayers about \$11 million to print all those coupons. Nor is it cheap to store 4.2 billion ration tickets, although the precise figures are unavailable for storing and guarding them. They were rushed off the printing

### CALIFANO PROPOSES REVAMP OF LAWS ON DRUG APPROVALS

Trade secrets can be hazardous to health, Joseph A. Califano Jr. said last week, calling for a "top-to-bottom" overhaul of the Federal law governing prescription and over-the-counter drugs. The main objective of the proposals made by the Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare is to insure that new safe drugs reach the market sooner and dangerous ones are withdrawn sooner.

Perhaps the most important change he advocated was to publicize what the law now protects as trade secrets, manufacturers' tests of the safety and effectiveness of drugs. Consumer advocates favor public scrutiny of this material because they believe it would lead to an

press during the worst days of the Arab oil embargo, as the government prepared to resort to emergency rationing. But the crisis ended before the coupons were ready.

Ex-President Gerald Ford's energy advisers studied rationing last year but weren't satisfied with the findings. Congress had ordered his Administration to submit a report on rationing. The report, however, was never presented.

The White House blamed bureaucratic delays. But our own sources insist that the Ford Administration simply couldn't decide what to do about rationing.

The Carter crowd, meanwhile, favors rationing but doesn't know what to do with the questionable coupons. No final decision has been reached, an energy official told us, whether to keep them or dispose of them.

He suggested hopefully that the coupons would be more valuable for purchasing gas than changing into money. But theoretically at least, \$11 million worth of coupons could be transformed in money-vending machines into \$4.2 billion.

Confessed one insider: "I don't see how we can use those coupons."

improvement in test methods and would eliminate the possibility of fraud.

Mr. Califano also proposed a new system of monitoring adverse drug reactions and a simplified procedure for banning the sale of drugs that cause too many such reactions. The Food and Drug Administration now depends on doctors to volunteer reports of bad effects. However, that system uncovers only about 10,000 cases a year, although the actual total is believed closer to six million.

Some of Mr. Califano's recommendations are included in legislation already introduced in Congress by Senator Edward M. Kennedy, chairman of the health subcommittee. Mr. Kennedy said Mr. Califano's support means there will be "a major rewrite" of the basic food and drug law, first passed in 1938 and not revised since 1962.

## caveat emptor

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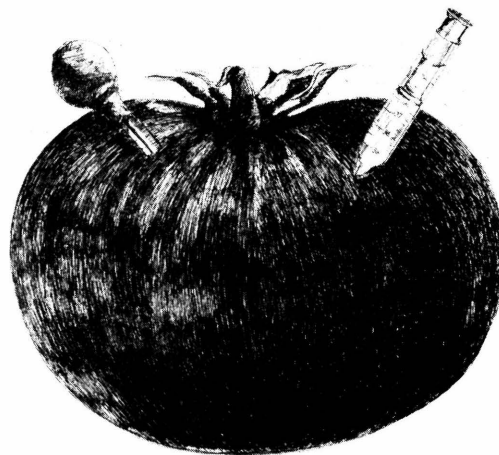
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# Rape of the Soil

## More Food, Less Nutrition



All earthly life depends ultimately on plants — for plants are the only living organisms able to create life from inorganic matter. This is accomplished through the fascinating process of photosynthesis, by which plants utilize the sun's power in order to convert water, minerals from the earth, and carbon dioxide from the air into carbohydrates, proteins, and oils — the basic sources of energy of all living things. Science has not been able to reproduce this deceptively simple chemical conversion in the laboratory. It has only gone so far as to develop various means of providing the plants with nourishment, so that they may draw an even greater supply of food from the soil.

Soil is where nutrition begins. Soil contains the raw materials that yield shimmering fields of wheat, firm, golden stalks of corn, and juicy, plump strawberries. Decaying rock particles and rock dust form the bulk of topsoil, the surface strata that is the growing medium of most food plants. The remainder of soil is mostly a mixture of decaying vegetable and animal wastes known as humus.

Inside this rich topsoil is a complicated balance of living organisms that help the plant assimilate minerals and chemical compounds from rock particles. Funguses, bacteria, earthworms, and insects are among the many forms of life that feed on humus. These minute animals slowly decompose plants left from the previous growing season, as well as animal carcasses and manure; they also serve to aerate the soil so that gases can be exchanged and water absorbed. As a result, sulfuric and carbonic acid are generated, which furthers the decay of rocks and releases their mineral contents, thus enriching the soil.<sup>1</sup>

In the wild, nature maintains a constant ecological balance. Plants that have created life from the soil return to it in death, as do animals that feed on plants. Absorbed and processed by the soil, the dead are recycled into the living. In nature there is no waste, no pollution.

Unfortunately, this perfect state no longer exists in the human food chain. For most of the 12,000 years since plants were first domesticated, farmers simply supplemented nature with organic fertilizers, and rotated crops or let fields lie fallow so that the soil's nutrients would not be depleted. The earth was not made to produce more than it was constitutionally able to bear.

Then, early in the nineteenth century, a renowned German chemist named Justus von Liebig discovered that plants could be artificially

fertilized with chemicals. To determine the chemical elements needed by vegetation, von Liebig conducted a series of brilliant experiments through which he discovered the chemical substances used by plants. He burned numerous species of plants, analyzed the substances found in the ashes, and determined that soil was merely a mixture of these substances. If humans were to provide these chemical substances, he believed, plants would obtain all the nutrients they needed. As scientifically sound as this conclusion may appear, it failed to take into account that soil is more than its mineral content.

Von Liebig all but ignored the organic, living components of soil that are contained in humus. Being a laboratory chemist, he failed to understand that the myriad network of underground life — from moles, mice, and shrews to earthworms and microorganisms — is an indispensable, life-generating part of soil. To von Liebig's way of thinking, all that were needed were artificially produced nitrogen, phosphorus, and potash, three basic requirements of plants in natural form.

### *Death of the Living Soil*

By the time von Liebig's artificial fertilizers became generally available, farmers in the United States had already robbed the land of one-fourth of its topsoil as a result of poor soil management.<sup>2</sup> The seriousness of this loss becomes readily apparent when we consider that it takes nature 500 to 1,000 years to replace a single inch of topsoil. Most of the early settlers and pioneers did not know how to conserve soil, and they did not bother to learn. After all, the land was free or very cheap, and there seemed to be a never-ending abundance of it. "Get what crops you can out of the land, and when it's burned out and can produce no more, move on," was their credo.

The wages of this random rape of the land were paid with a vengeance during the mid-nineteen thirties. Great dust storms boiled up over much of America's farmlands, blowing away clouds of black topsoil from recently plowed fields. The prairies had been overgrazed, trees which had once broken fierce winds and held moisture in the land had been cut down years before, and the earth was dried out from overcultivation. Thousands of "Okies" — impoverished farmers — were forced to leave their wasted farms and migrate to the still fertile earth of California and the Pacific Northwest.





Today, most farmers, aware of the damage done by their ancestors, successfully combat destruction of the soil by wind and water erosion. At the same time, they have found a new way to destroy the land — by forcing it to produce more than it should with chemical fertilizers. Huge industrial farms, aptly dubbed “agribusinesses,” have largely taken over the land of the small, conventional farmer who lived close to nature and consumed the crops produced. Today, the quantity of production is more important than quality, and most of America’s farmlands have been polluted with artificial chemicals for the sake of profits.

Ecological balance no longer exists on most farms. Today’s farmer tends to overplant a few limited crops, thereby depleting the soil of certain essential trace elements. In the past, a farm was a self-contained environment. Today, the produce farmer buys meat from the butcher shop and milk from a store or dairy farm, instead of keeping cattle, chickens, and pigs. Because agriculture has become so compartmentalized, the farmer has sacrificed a readily available source of natural fertilizer — animal wastes. This is an unfortunate loss, for soil dressed with manure produces crops that are more nourishing and tastier than those grown in chemically fertilized soil.

Chemical manufacturers insist on perpetuating the myth that there is not enough organic fertilizer to go around. The facts do not bear this out. In fact, animal waste in the United States amounts to 2 billion tons annually, which is equivalent to the waste produced by half the world’s population.<sup>3</sup> In other countries, manure is distributed to farms, an all-but-impossible task in the United States. Cows and pigs are concentrated in single feedlots that contain from 10,000 to 50,000 animals, and up to 250,000 chickens, and therein lies the problem. It would be prohibitively expensive to collect and transport all this natural fertilizer to fields where it is needed, thousands of miles away.

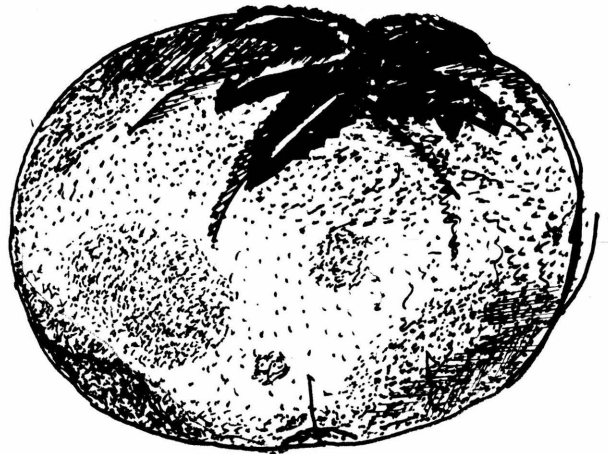
Bags of chemicals, therefore, become cheaper, cleaner and easier to transport. So, instead of contributing to the food chain by a natural recycling process, animal waste is disposed of as sewage to pollute the nation’s water systems. In less than a century, humans have upset the balance of nature by robbing the soil of nutrients that are never returned to it. Even our waste is wasted.

The widespread application of artificial nitrogen, phosphorus, and potash (known to farmers as NPK) brings about changes in the composition of soil which destroy or seriously disturb organisms that benefit it. The presence of these organisms serves as a barometer of soil fertility. If they cannot survive, it is a sign that the soil will not bear crops worth eating. The work of earthworms and microorganisms is essential, but these animals are destroyed by these chemicals. Super-phosphate fertilizers tend to create acid conditions in which they cannot survive. In Australia, nine-foot-long earthworms originally present in vast numbers were completely exterminated by this type of fertilizer.

The destruction of living things in soil occurs because the ingredients in artificial fertilizers are so readily water-soluble. In nature, easily soluble fertilizing elements rarely occur. For example, humus harbors plant nutrients that dissolve in water very slowly, feeding plants at a rate that precludes the possibility of poisoning them and their living benefactors in the soil.

Proper fertilization also involves more than the application of three concentrated chemicals to the roots of plants. More than a dozen minerals and trace elements are needed as well. Although these account for only one percent of a plant’s needs, minerals and trace elements are extremely important nutritional factors. Many human diseases result from diets deficient in these factors, which are often not obtained from foods grown in chemically treated ground.

Chemical fertilizer manufacturers were quick to jump on the bandwagon when it was discovered that these elements were lacking in synthetic plant foods. They quickly mixed in a few, calling them such things as “power boosters”. All of these concoctions were totally imbalanced, for they did not stimulate a balance in the proportions that exist in nature. Consequently, the carbohydrate-protein ratio of many crops began to change for the worse, and vitamin content declined.



### *The Rotten Red Tomato*

The sad state of the American tomato is a case in point. Once fragrant, flame-red orbs bursting with juice, tomatoes in recent years have become woolly, tasteless globules that can practically be bounced off the wall without being bruised. Fertilizers and hybrid strains combine to produce tomatoes that have superior handling and keeping qualities. But what about the loss of vitamin C and flavor?

No longer thinking in terms of patches and pounds, farmers were faced with new problems when production covered acres and amounted to tons. Harvesting machines would damage normal, tasty tomatoes, so a pulpy, thick-skinned hybrid that could withstand rough handling was created. Since agribusinesses have created a demand for fresh tomatoes the year around, the growing season has been unnaturally extended. Grown during the winter in southern and western states, tomatoes can no longer be left to ripen on the vine if they are to survive being shipped thousands of miles to the north. As soon as NPK forces them into existence, tomatoes are picked green and ripened artificially. During the long voyage in refrigerated trucks and trains, tomatoes are kept in temperature and humidity-controlled environments that effectively stop their growth. Just before they are sent to your local market, tomatoes are sprayed with ethylene gas, which turns them red. The consumer is forced to purchase a nutritionally worthless, unripe, cosmetically treated product — or to do without tomatoes.

Excessive use of artificial fertilizers lessens the keeping qualities of many other food plants, making it necessary to pick them before they have absorbed whatever nutrients are left in the soil, thus allowing them to ripen naturally. Industrial farmers fondly point to the beautiful, uniform appearance of their produce as proof of the benefits of NPK. But consumers are forced to eat celery that is as pithy as it is pretty, melon-sized and mealy cucumbers, and strawberries big as apples but with less flavor than the cardboard containers which contain them.



The health of a plant is a complex matter that is not always reflected in the plant's appearance. Crops regularly doped with chemicals never attain the optimum food value of their organic counterparts. The trace minerals mentioned earlier cannot be effectively absorbed, even when present in the soil. In artificially fertilized plants, the beneficial effects of humus are thwarted, if not destroyed. It is the finely dissolved particles of humus that transfer most of the minerals from the soil to root hairs. Being negatively charged, humus particles attract positively charged minerals, such as potassium, sodium, calcium, manganese, magnesium, boron, aluminum, iron, copper, and other metals. When nitrogen is poured into the soil year after year, both humus and root hairs become coated with it, and the transfer of minerals can no longer take place.<sup>4</sup>

Too much potash decreases synthesis of ascorbic acid (vitamin C), carotene (vitamin A), chlorophyll, and amino acids. Too much phosphorus produces a zinc deficiency. Livestock and poultry are fattened on chemically produced grain and pass these deficiencies on to us when we eat their meat. Humans, the last link in the food chain, inevitably suffer the consequences of this tampering with nature. Many medical researchers believe that the comparatively recent upsurge in degenerative diseases is directly related to the inferior quality foods produced by modern farming methods.

## The Green Revolution

In the 1940's, the widespread use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides prompted the agricultural establishment to herald the arrival of a "green revolution." Super-hardy crops impervious to insect pests could now be grown in unending abundance, it was said, and the world's food shortages would soon be met. In the 27 years between 1946 and 1973, the use of nitrogen alone increased by over 550 percent. The total American use of NPK was nearly 45 million tons by 1973<sup>5</sup>

Meanwhile, the protein content of farm crops began a steady downward slide that continues to this day. The promise of abundance was fulfilled, it is true, but at a heavy cost. In Kansas, for example, wheat yields per acre shot up dramatically when artificial fertilizers were introduced, but the protein yield declined in an equally dramatic curve. In 1940, Kansas wheat contained as much as 17 percent protein. In 1951, only eleven years later the amount fell to 14 percent, the average yield being about 12 percent.<sup>6</sup> Starchy, cheap carbohydrates took the place of this life-giving foodstuff.

At a time when the world's hunger problems are particularly pressing, the "green revolution" has tried to meet the challenge with quantity, not quality. Chemical fertilizers weaken the proteins that remain by upsetting the delicate balance of amino acids within protein molecules. Their body-building, tissue-renewing qualities are seriously jeopardized. When a single amino acid is missing, as is often the case, the other nine refuse to do their job. If non-essential amino acids are not present, even though the others are, the essential ones may do only half their work. The body tries to compensate for these faulty foods by craving and eating more of them in order to meet its physical requirements. The eating of greater and greater quantities of protein foods which can be only partially utilized at best serves only to waste protein, which is not only in short supply in terms of the world's needs, but is the most costly item in the diet, as well.

Dr. William Albrecht, an internationally renowned agronomist, effectively sums up what is wrong with American agriculture when he states: "Man has become aware of increased need for health preservation, interpreted as a technical need for more hospitals, drugs, and doctors, when it may simply be a matter of failing to recognize the basic truth in the old adage which reminded us that to be well fed is to be healthy. Unfortunately, we have not seen the changes man has wrought in his soil community in terms of food quality for health, as economics and technologies have emphasized its quantity. Man is exploiting the earth that feeds him much as a parasite multiplies until it kills its host. Slowly the reserves of the soil are being exhausted."<sup>7</sup>

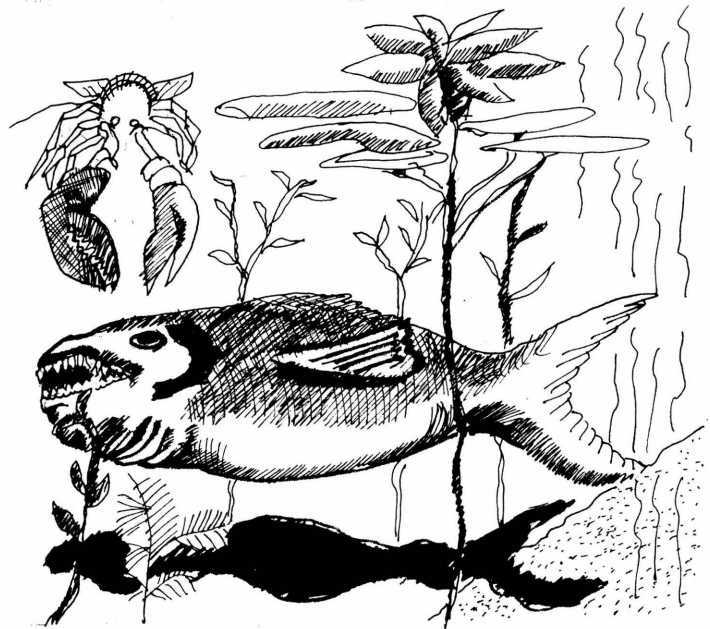
Deaf to such warnings, the chemical industry continues to reiterate its blind faith in the ability of human technology to fabricate the solutions to our needs. It points to the fact that nylon and other

synthetic fibers have largely replaced cotton and wool, that cars roll better on imitation rubber, that detergents wash better than soap, and that plastic dishes don't break the way china and earthenware do. One gets the impression that natural products will soon go the way of the horse and buggy.

What is seldom considered is the real cost of the manufacture of chemical substitutes for what the earth can produce more efficiently. For instance, both cotton and nylon consist of long chains of small units of molecules linked together (monomers). The cotton plant takes the energy it needs to produce fiber from the sun and draws raw material from the soil. It costs nothing and creates no pollution. Nylon, on the other hand, is made from petroleum — a fossil fuel that is stored plant energy of a millenia ago. To bind the molecules into the required monomers, petroleum or coal must be burned to supply energy to operate factory machinery. Thus, great amounts of non-renewable energy sources are lost forever. The factory produces air pollution as a byproduct of manufacture, and nylon and plastic gadgets, utensils, plates, and cups litter the landscape forever. They are new to the life cycle and no microorganisms exist that can degrade and recycle them back to the soil.

Mention should be made here of the recent appearance of biodegradable products on the supermarket shelves - most notably, various laundry and cleaning products. Such products are able to be broken down into substances that can be recycled by the soil. This is one of the few ways in which today's consumer is at least given a choice between helping to preserve or destroy the earth's ecology.

Although the raw materials of chemical fertilizers are as abundant as the world's stones and mountains, the manufacturing process consumes an immense amount of fossil fuel energy. Add to that the cost of transportation to farms and mechanical dispersal, and you have a truer picture of the tremendous waste that results from substituting the artificial for the real. In other words, the so-called "green revolution" consumes as much or more energy than it produces.



*Streams of Disaster*

Instead of returning our waste products to the land, where nature uses them as food, we simply get rid of it all as garbage. Untreated sewage eventually finds its way into American streams, rivers and lakes, along with disastrous amounts of NPK leached from the earth by irrigation and rain. Both provide nourishment for water plants and cause them to grow in abnormal numbers and sizes. This uses up the oxygen dissolved in the water, which in turn does two harmful things: it kills fish and other water animals that depend upon oxygen for life, and it takes away the selfpurifying ability of the water. Dissolved oxygen acts on small amounts of pollutants such as sewage and changes them to pure, harmless substances. Even industrial wastes

can be rendered harmless in small amounts by oxygen dissolved in ecologically balanced waterways. But massive doses of fertilizers have overwhelmed nature's defenses, and many bodies of water have suffered the fate of Lake Erie, which was, until recently, foul and practically lifeless.

According to the august Institute of Ecology, "It is a gigantic one-way flow of elements from the earth and the air into the sea. The scale of the operation is far greater than anything previously known on the face of the earth. And this human phenomenon is in stark contrast with the natural communities of plants and animals which have been living in balance with their surroundings for thousands of years."<sup>8</sup>

This one-way flow of essential elements from the earth to city to water can be stopped if a concentrated effort is made. Strong measures will have to be taken if we are to feed back the nutrients we now rob from nature. Organic fertilizers will have to be substituted for artificial ones; waste products will have to be processed and recycled if the closed system we live in is to survive.

The city of Chicago is a pioneer in reclamation of land and water — hopefully a harbinger of future progress in the United States. Working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Chicago's town planners recently set in operation a massive plan to clean up the badly polluted lower end of Lake Michigan. Tons of sludge obtained from sewage effluent and processed industrial wastes have already been spread over land ruined by strip mining and, within a few years, the land has nearly restored itself. By means of an innovative technique humans were able to speed up nature's slow process of regeneration.

So far the major portion of the plan remains to be implemented. Estimated at a cost in excess of \$7 billion, the plan requires the building of huge rural lagoons into which sewage and waste would be pumped. Aerated, the lagoons would contain bacteria that break down wastes into organic fertilizer. Several times a year the fertilizer would be collected from the bottom of the lagoons (where it settles) and sold to farmers at a low price. The fresh, cleaned water would be pumped to farms for irrigation, where it would be cleaned again by the living soil before flowing back into waterways. Organic nutrients would remain in the earth, and no pollution would result. If numerous communities were willing to adopt such a plan it could be an important first step in restoring the earth's ecological cycle. Perhaps our produce, fish, and water could one day again be safe to eat and drink.

A great deal of controversy surrounds the plan, however, and it may be years before it is put into effect. People don't want lagoons to be built in their vicinity, for they falsely equate lagoons with swamps. Through lack of knowledge, they think of such unpleasant things as mosquitoes, malaria, and snakes. Some farmers mistakenly believe that their crops would be fertilized and watered with "Chicago's filth." If an intelligent explanation of the causes of environmental and body pollution were to be promoted and advertised as widely as the products of industrial manufacturers, such misunderstanding would not exist. But there are no dollar profits to be gained from informing the public. Obviously, health and the elimination of the root causes of many diseases are not even minor considerations.

### *Bringing Down Baby*

The subtle and gradual poisoning of the land has been completely overlooked by most farmers in their rapid and unquestioning acceptance of chemical farming. It took a few years before the detrimental effects became evident and by that time the fertilizer industry had become so large there was no stopping its crushing wheel of "progress."

The prime component of chemical fertilizers is nitrogen (nitrates) produced in the laboratory. Runoff water containing nitrates often seeps into farm ponds and wells, rendering them unfit for human and animal use. Cattle drinking nitrate-contaminated water lose weight; they are no longer able to completely utilize their feed. Cows show the symptoms of nitrate poisoning by giving less milk, and what they do produce is of inferior quality. If not treated at once, animals and humans soon die.

Nitrogenous fertilizers have their most immediate and drastic effect



on babies. The source can be either polluted water, or vegetables that have absorbed too much of the fertilizer. Public health officials are alarmed at the increasing occurrence of a disease, methemoglobinemia, the cause of which is directly linked to nitrates. In 1945, it was discovered that certain bacteria in the stomach are able to convert nitrogen compounds into poisonous nitrites, similar but deadly. When nitrites enter the bloodstream, they react with hemoglobin (the red pigment in the blood) to form methemoglobin. Since hemoglobin carries oxygen to tissues via the blood and methemoglobin does not, the victim may turn blue and, in some cases, suffocate and die. Infants are particularly susceptible to this form of poisoning, for although their stomachs contain less acid than do those of adults, their intestinal flora contain certain types of bacteria that facilitate the transformation of nitrate to nitrite.

In 1945, only two cases of methemoglobinemia were reported in the United States. In 1950, several years after the introduction of chemical fertilization, 139 cases had been identified in Minnesota alone; 14 of these cases were fatal.<sup>9</sup> In 1962, the Public Health Service recommended that when the amount of nitrates in drinking water reaches 45 parts per million, public warnings should be issued and parents urged to give their children bottled spring water instead of tap water — an expensive and inconvenient solution for most people. Unfortunately, there is no simple test an individual can use to determine whether this danger level has been reached.

Further scientific studies continue to show that food as well as water can be dangerously contaminated by nitrates. In fact, many baby foods contain lethal amounts of these chemicals. A 1971 study at the Missouri Agricultural Experiment Station came up with the evidence that several brands of canned baby food contained as much as 40 milligrams per two-ounce jar. This amount is well in excess of the 12 milligrams of nitrogen as nitrate recommended as a maximum daily consumption limit for infants by the Public Health Service.

Nitrates saturated in soil tend to accumulate in the leaves and stems of certain plants, especially spinach, beets, and carrots. Canners of these vegetables are plagued by the problem of internal corrosion of the cans, caused by an excess of nitrates. These days if the cartoon character Popeye were to eat a steady diet of canned spinach to make himself strong, he would probably turn blue instead. And the old parental admonition would have to be changed to, "Eat your spinach! It'll make you sick."

Still another harmful effect of the high level of nitrates in drinking water and produce is its ability to induce cancer-causing substances known as nitrosamines. Researchers have noted the high incidence of stomach cancer in Japan, Chile, and Iceland, where large quantities of fish are eaten. These fish contain high levels of nitrates because the waters are rich in chemical fertilizers leached from the land. (Other factors which may contribute to the incidence of stomach cancer are the high content of polyunsaturated fat in fish, and traditional habits of eating rapidly.) For Americans, however, nitrosamines present more of a problem in their indiscriminate use by food processors as a preservative for such foods as luncheon meats, salami, hot dogs, ground beef, ham, bologna, and frankfurters.

## The Stop-Growth Trick

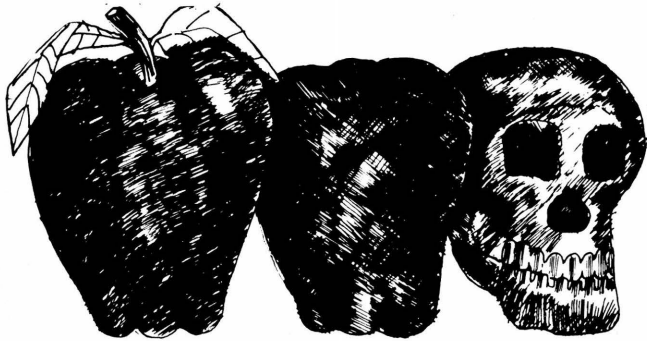
After years of forcing food plants into producing nutritionally inferior abundance, agribusinesses have learned to play a new trick on nature. Just before harvesting, a chemical is sprayed on the leaves of crops that sends them into a state of suspended animation. Absorbed by the foliage, the chemical travels down the stem to the root and stops further cell division — meaning growth. By doing so, the farmers can pick crops at their leisure, and no longer have to wait until harvest time, when vegetables have reached their peak of flavor and nutrition.

There are more than 40 growth-regulating chemicals approved for use by the United States Department of Agriculture, and you can be sure that more are on the way. Maleic hydrazide is used to delay potatoes and onions from sprouting until they get to market, perhaps months later. The growth of sprouts ("eyes") on potatoes and a blossoming stem on onions is part of their natural aging process, which formerly enabled consumers to tell whether they were fresh. Treated this way, all supermarket produce looks fresher than it indeed is.

Maleic hydrazide has been known to cause damage to the liver and nervous system of experimental animals, as well as chromosome damage that results in deformed offspring. Not content with merely deceiving us, growing inferior crops, and polluting the environment, industrial farmers rub salt in our wounds by slipping yet another undesired chemical into so-called "fresh" food. Like most chemicals approved for use by our government, sprout and growth inhibitors have not been adequately tested for safety. Just the fact that these chemicals are able to *stop or delay* the life-processes of a living organism should be cause enough for alarm. The Department of Agriculture should be conducting experiments to answer the question posed by the chemicals' function: Couldn't growth inhibitors also arrest human growth? Until that question can be answered without any doubt, these chemicals should be banned entirely.

Still other chemicals are poured over plants to increase their size. Americans are particularly proud of the size of their produce, and agricultural fairs give prizes to the biggest cabbages, melons, and tomatoes, even though they are not the best. Inside, treated vegetables and fruits tend to be mealy and tasteless, having used up the nutrients they were designed to produce in their own struggle for outrageous growth.

Grapes, for example, are treated with a potentially harmful hormone, gibberellin, which turns them into freak growths. Large and solid, with elongated bodies that adhere tightly to the stems, such grapes lack flavor and juice, which is why many California vintners refuse to use them. Having been bred and conditioned to harvest easily (grapes that fall from the vine are hard to retrieve), they are no longer desirable for human consumption.



## Fruit Cosmetics

Citrus fruits are often colored with dangerous coal-tar dyes — like the infamous cancer-causing Red dye No. 2, which was recently banned — to make them look more palatable in the marketplace. Showing a natural green on the rind of an orange is synonymous with loss of sales, according to the citrus fruit industry, and the offending spots must be roughed over. Again, the quality inside is a minor consideration, and the consumer who grates orange peel into food

must ingest a potentially harmful chemical.

Pears, apples, plums, and other fruits are coated with wax and mineral oil to make them look more attractive, and to improve their keeping qualities. The F.D.A. approved the direct application of these substances on fruit and vegetables in 1964, after years of permitting only their packaging to be coated. That the wax used was the same as that used to polish floors seemed to cause the guardians of the nation's health little concern. Medical researchers at Johns Hopkins Hospital estimate that fruit eaters ingest about 50 grams of mineral oil yearly, which they believe may account for many unexplained tissue injuries. Germany banned such coating in 1938.

Much of this produce is further sprayed with a toxic group of chemicals known as phenols to preserve them during the long journey to the marketplace. Even in doses as small as one and a half grams, phenols are so lethal that they can induce vomiting, circulatory collapse, convulsions, and decay of the mouth and intestinal tract if swallowed. When phenols were first approved for use in the 1950s, the F.D.A. stipulated that a sign would have to be placed next to the container of the treated produce. The wording, "To Maintain Freshness," was another example of how the food industry will subtly twist the truth and convert a warning into an enticing invitation to buy. Under pressure brought to bear by agribusinesses, the F.D.A. relaxed its ruling and the warning card was discarded. American consumers, it seemed, were again being sold out by the protective agency supported by their taxes. Only the Germans and Italians are given that consideration by their governments which have passed laws that require phenol-treated American citrus fruit to be stamped with the following words: "With Dephenyl. Peel Unsuitable for Consumption."

## Can a Catastrophe Be Averted?

The widespread use of chemicals to grow and treat the raw abundance of nature is truly disheartening. As long as we rely on artificial fertilization, it is only a matter of time until all our soil is made useless for growing crops. Ecologists are worried about the arrival of a time when there is no more land to cultivate. It has been estimated that the total destruction of fertile soil and the accompanying disappearance of all plant life on earth would mean the extinction of all animal life within one year. This frightening fact is perhaps the best expression of how dependent humans and other animals are on the proper and natural use of soil.

There is no way to circumvent the life cycles of the soil for very long. They are intrinsic, essential, and far-reaching. We can disrupt them, but if we do, we cannot prevent the ensuing devastation that will be an inevitable result. Only through organic agriculture — working with natural materials that are the core of soil structure — can we cooperate with nature in an intelligent and fruitful manner.

It is time for us to realize that we are only one small part of the food chain. We can never control it, but we can destroy it.

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## If it's not fall-out, could it be A-leak

Jack Cloherty  
Bob Owens

WASHINGTON — Dangerous radiation previously attributed to nuclear testing fall-out is really being leaked by some nuclear power plants, a University of Pittsburgh scientist has charged.

Strontium-90, which has induced leukemia and other forms of cancer in numerous animal studies, is being leaked by two Connecticut plants, Dr. Ernest Sternglass charges. And if these plants are emitting the dangerous radiation, he says others are, too.

"The nuclear industry," Sternglass says in his study, "has repeatedly claimed that no significant amounts of strontium-90 and cesium-137 are released into the air from nuclear power plants."

"However, a detailed examination of the levels of radioactive strontium and cesium in the air, the soil, the vegetation and the milk around two large nuclear power stations in Connecticut, as measured by the utility's own environmental consultants over a period of many years, reveals that this claim was valid only for the first few years of operation, and that in the last few years the levels of these known cancer-producing substances

have reached or exceed the levels observed in Connecticut during the height of nuclear weapons-testing in the early 1960's."

The radiation doses in the local milk, Sternglass found, "are some 50 times larger than bone marrow doses from a typical chest X-ray," and are exceedingly dangerous.

The Federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Environmental Protection Agency have been aware of these radiation levels because the utility is required by law to report them.

However, the levels have been reported under "fall-out" and as "unrelated to plant operations."

"This shows incredible negligence on the part of federal and state agencies," charges Bob Alvarez of the Environmental Policy Center. "They simply accepted the utility's word that it was fall-out but they never bothered to check the fall-out figures."

In his study, Sternglass points out that "the dairies near New London (Conn.) showed milk concentrations as high as 27 picocuries in July of 1976. At the same time, the levels measured by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Hartford, some 40 miles away, showed only 5.7 . . ." Therefore, he reasons, the contamination could not be due to fall-out.

Moreover, Sternglass contends that the radiation levels found in the milk near the Millstone Point plant and the Connecticut Yankee plant dropped sharply when the plants were shut down in April and May of 1976 for refueling.

"Since there is evidence that other nuclear plants have emitted comparable amounts of Sr-90 into the air . . . an immediate investigation by the legislatures of the states as well as by Congress is required."

At this point, an investigation seems unlikely, since all parties said they need time to study, Sternglass' findings.

The Sr-90 question that Sternglass raises, however, is very likely to become another point of contention in the battle over nuclear power.

## Delinquent 1976 Spares Being Delivered by G.M.

A welcome surprise to many N.Y. new car buyers is that General Motors is finally sending out spare tires for their 1976 cars that a tire manufacturer strike prevented from being supplied at the time.

It took New York State Attorney General's office to force the company, already delivering its 1977 models, to ship the tires to the 170,000 spare-less cars sold in the New York and Pennsylvania area alone.

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# FIGHTING CANDY IN SCHOOLS

Marian Burros

WASHINGTON — "If, as may be suspected, there is a nationwide anticandy program being put together area by area, there is need everywhere for vigilance at the local level that will lead to quick and effective response by candy businessmen."

According to the above excerpt from an editorial in *Candy and Snack Industry*, a trade journal, attempts last year to remove "empty calorie" snacks from school vending machines were confined to local jurisdictions. Unable to get the federal government to confront the problem of such foods competing with the school lunch programs, the state of West Virginia, and cities including Bloomington, Ind., Milwaukee and Washington have taken it on themselves to ban what they call "junk foods" from school property.

Actually, according to the same editorial, it was the confectionary industry that succeeded in keeping the federal government from banning such sales: "The National Confectioners Assn. and the National Candy Wholesalers Assn. have worked together effectively to prevent anticandy rulings from becoming part of the National School Lunch Act over the years."

But now the battleground, to use a word from the editorial, is expanding to the national scene. An amendment to the Senate Agriculture Committee's version of the Child Nutrition Act (school feeding program) would return discretionary powers to the secretary of agriculture to decide what alternate foods could be sold at schools.

On Sept. 26, 1972, the Child Nutrition Act was amended to permit the sale of foods in addition to those sanctioned by the Agriculture Department in the school lunch and breakfast programs. The amendment said: "Such regulations shall not prohibit the sale of competitive foods in food service facilities or areas during the time of service of food if the proceeds from the sales of such foods will inure to the benefit of the schools or of organizations of students approved by the schools."

Twice before, Sen. Clifford Case (R-N.J.) has introduced legislation to delete that amendment. Each time it has been defeated. Case is trying again.

Those who favor removing such foods as candy, soft drinks, chewing gum, potato chips and pretzels from school vending machines think they might win

this time. They are encouraged for a number of reasons:

The attempts at local levels to deal with the problem have made themselves felt at the federal level. Agriculture Sec. Bob Bergland has come out strongly in favor of a ban on junk foods. Sen. Robert Dole (R-Kan.) pushed for the Case amendment.

The counterlobbyists are out in force. The Chocolate Manufacturers Assn. has written to all the members of the Senate Agriculture Committee protesting the Case amendment. The letter says chocolate does not cause acne, obesity or tooth decay and is nutritious.

The editorial from *Candy and Snack*

Industry says removing candy from schools just means children would go off school premises to purchase it where they would be "exposed to vehicular traffic and other hazards beyond the control of school authorities."

James Mack, president and general counsel of the National Confectioners Assn., elaborated on the hazards in a letter. When children leave school grounds, Mack wrote, they "well may decide to acquire other items which actually are harmful to them such as tobacco, alcohol or drugs . . ."

Mack also wrote: "To most children, candy is happiness."

*Washington Post*

## FDA RECALL BULLETIN

*Hoffert's Candies, Inc.*, a Pennsylvania based manufacturer, has recalled supplies of its *Orange Turkish Paste Jellied Candy* after it was discovered by the FDA that the product contained quantities of Red No. 2 after the color was banned. The candy company estimates that less than 10 pounds of its product remains on the market.

A California manufacturer has been forced to recall its supply of *Nature's Blend Brand Vitamin B Complex* due to mislabeling of the product. The label declares a Vitamin B content of 1 mg. when actually only 1 microgram is present. According to *National Vitamin Co., Inc.*, approximately 1,000 bottles remain in circulation at this time.

Recall is ongoing in the matter of 487 cases of *Ann Page* pork and beans put out by the *Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company, Inc.*, in Horsehead, New York. The reason: bacterial contamination causing abnormal cans.

Fifty units of Sears, Roebuck Microwave Ovens are currently undergoing field correction as a result of damages suffered during transportation. The ovens, manufactured by *Sanyo Electric Company, Ltd.* in Japan, are being recalled by Sears because after transportation they were found to exceed the emission standard of the Radiation Control for Health and Safety Act of 1968.

Twelve-ounce cans of *Tab Soft Drink* have been recalled by the *Coca Cola Bottling Company of St. Louis, Inc.*, located in Maryland Heights, Missouri, as a result of the discovery of foreign particles found in the cans. The particles are believed to have been produced by deterioration of the inner can linings.

**Velvet Smooth Hand Cream for Extra Dry Skin**, manufactured by **Kolar Laboratories** in Chicago, has been recalled by the distributor because of bacteria in the product. Kolar estimates that 390 units remain on the market at this time.

**The Private Formulae, Inc.** firm in St. Louis has recalled its **Liv-Pro Tablets**, a dietary supplement, due to insect fragments contained in the product. Recall is ongoing and guesses say that 1,200 one hundred tablet bottles remain on the market.

The repackers of **Family Vitamins**, put out by **Devlin Pharmaceuticals, Inc.** in El Segundo, California, have recalled the vitamins because they discovered that the labeling on the bottles does not correspond to the actual content. Recall is ongoing; approximately 16 one hundred tablet bottles are still on the market.



# TEST RESULTS MANIPULATED TO PERMIT SALE OF CANCER PRODUCING PRODUCTS

## THE G.D. SEARLE — ASPERTAME STORY

In CAVEAT EMPTOR of October, 1974 we detailed how FDA approved a sweetener, ASPERTAME, manufactured by G.D. Searle although research scientists, including John Olney, found that it caused cancerous breast tumors in rats. Olney, a distinguished researcher, told us at the time that he had discovered the carcinogenic nature of the product and in addition that when ingested with msg (meat tenderizer) the toxicity increased dramatically.

Our research had discovered that Searle was so sure that they would get this sweetener approved that they had named it, designed a package, ordered containers and had been preparing commercials . . . before the FDA had even approved it for sale.

Olney was backed by Sen. Proxmire who requested the FDA to rescind the temporary approval. They refused, but agreed to do further investigation. A fast audit of tests showed that indeed ASPERTAME could cause cancer and that the data by Hazleton Laboratories of Falls Church, Va., was faked and manipulated. They revoked the clearance on that basis.

At the same time Searle had gotten FDA to approve a diuretic, ALDACTONE, by submitting to the FDA test information that failed to report tumors suffered by the animals tested. Similar misrepresentation was used to obtain clearance of Searle's Flagyl.

Only a long sincere investigation can tell how many more test results submitted to the FDA by Searle were edited to permit them to market deadly poisons to the unsuspecting public.

Does crime pay? You betcha. Searle sells almost a billion dollars worth of products each year. Their profit is in the millions each week.

Commenting on the present investigation an FDA official advised us: "Based on what we've found so far there is a serious question regarding the data generated by any private testing laboratory." He added, "We don't know what data is bad but at the same time we don't know what is good either."

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***Men who falsify tests in order to profit from the marketing of cancer causing drugs and the men who draw hundreds of thousands of dollars per year for their part in conning the FDA into permitting the sale of poisons are murderers.***

---

Other officials we spoke to expressed concern that the animal tests for all pesticides and drugs brought on the market in the past few years is suspect. That means the products themselves are suspect.

Last month the EPA found "deficiencies" in tests performed by Industrial Biotest Laboratory (I.B.T.) of Northbrook, Ill. This lab has done at least 3400 pesticide tests as well as tests for submission to the FDA and the National Cancer Institute.

The investigation disclosed that every major study done by the IBT has shown serious flaws. The facts have been referred to the Chicago U.S. Attorney's office for further investigation and action.

IBT is not alone. At least 4 other labs have been referred for further investigation based on EPA or FDA tests that were faked.

"We're looking at IBT as just the tip of the iceberg," said Edwin L. Johnson, EPA's pesticide chief. "There is no indication that the rest of the industry runs its business any differently than IBT does."

Biometric Testing Inc. of Englewood Cliffs, N.J. was referred to the federal attorney in New Jersey after some of their tests were investigated.

In an effort to in effect give an amnesty to makers of pesticides the FDA has asked manufacturers to check their own tests against the lab tests.

The EPA will be making spot check matching raw data with the final reports submitted to manufacturers.

Some of these checks already done have found such discrepancies as test animals that were dead one week and then found alive on reports the following week.

We asked Anita Johnson of the Health Research Group her opinion as to why these test results were faked. Was it that the labs were careless in an effort to cut expenses?

"The reason these tests were manipulated to show the products were safe is simply that testing companies who find a manufacturer's products unsafe would not be considered friendly and would not get more work."

Men who falsify tests in order to profit from the marketing of cancer causing drugs and the men who draw hundreds of thousands of dollars per year for their part in conning the FDA into permitting the sale of poisons are murderers. Guilty of premeditated murder. First degree murder.

Notice we say men. Companies did not do this. Corporations are pieces of paper and a metal seal capable of no action. If a crime was committed, men did it.

We will follow these cases to see if the guilty corporate officials are treated as murderers (life in prison or death) or like jaywalkers (a fine of 1/1000 of their yearly income).

What's your guess?



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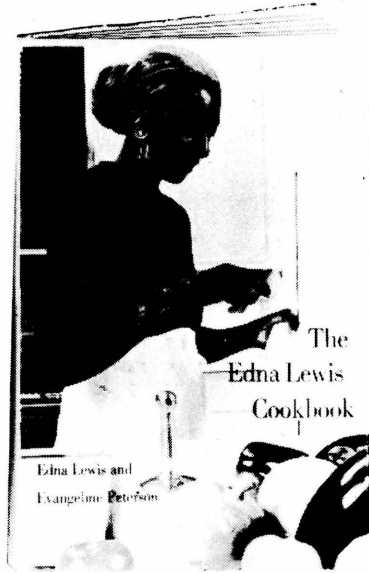
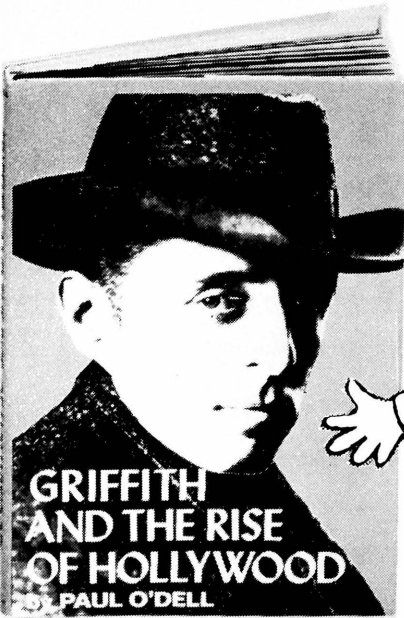
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# consumer news briefs



..... A recent study of 18,000 births in the United States shows that mothers who smoke increase the likelihood of miscarriage, abortion, fetal distress and premature birth. Babies born of smoking mothers are also apt to be shorter, to weigh less, and to have smaller head circumferences. One estimate says that about 1/2 of the pregnant women in this country continue to smoke in spite of warnings and the chance of fetal death in these women is approximately double that of non-smoking mothers. ....

..... Controls proposed on food advertisements. The FDA has proposed that from now on food advertising be considered an extension of food labeling and thus brought under the same controls. Commissioner Donald Kennedy says that the principle already applies to drugs, which are limited as to what manufacturers can say in advertising claims. ....

..... Change in Medicaid Policy. Federal Medicaid regulations have undergone a recent change which should make it easier for patients in nursing homes and long term care facilities to spend more time with their families. Up until now the federal government would reimburse the state for a maximum of 18 days per year during which a patient could leave the institution. Because of this policy most states limited patient absence to these 18 days. Now HEW has removed this limit and will provide states with money for whatever each decides is a good number of days. ....

..... Irresponsibility Causes Car Problems. The Minnesota State Automobile Association conducted a test of 2612 cars and found that 52.7% of them emitted too much carbon monoxide or too many hydrocarbons and were also wasting gasoline. The failures of these cars were based on lack of attention by the cars' owners, poor workmanship and sometimes the owners telling repairmen not to do necessary work. ....

..... Medical Directories Issued. Up until now medical societies have refused to cooperate with consumer organizations' efforts to prepare directories to doctors' services. But a recent reversal in this policy has taken place and directories have been issued by the Clear Creek Valley Medical Society in Denver and by a doctors' union in the vicinity of Tucson. Even the Medical Society of Prince George's County in Maryland is publishing a medical directory. This is quite a switch, since in 1974 when the Health Research Group published the first directory, the Prince George's society very strongly urged its members not to participate in the listings. ....

..... TAGAMET Approved Despite Negative Test Results. The FDA has approved the marketing of Tagamet, a drug put out by SmithKline Corp. for treatment of duodenal ulcers. TAGAMET can be administered orally or by injection and can heal duodenal ulcers as rapidly as within a few weeks time. About 4 million Americans currently suffer from ulcers and in spite of liver and kidney damage produced in animals who were given high doses of the drug, there is a large market for it at this time. ....

.....Egg Advertisements Must Change. A U.S. appeals court has partially sustained an FTC order requiring the National Commission on Egg Nutrition to give the other side of the story in their ads claiming that eggs don't increase the risk of heart disease. The court said that the commission must note in their ads that contrary medical evidence has been found, but they don't have to specifically cite the evidence. ....

. . . . . Consumers Lax on Bills. Consumers in the United States aren't paying their bills the way they used to, in spite of an estimated \$200 billion they owe on credit items such as their cars and furniture. Every year thousands of Americans go bankrupt, and lots of others either move without leaving forwarding addresses or falsify their identification. Government figures say that the number of bad checks circulating in this country has doubled in the last five years. Last year alone, grocery stores--which now cash more checks than do banks--lost \$63 million in bad checks. Currently, debt collectors are able to collect from only 27% of the accounts they receive. Obviously it is harder to get people to pay their bills. Maybe they just don't care as much any more. . . . .

. . . . . Sedatives to be Banned. FDA commissioner Donald Kennedy has announced plans to ban nonprescription daytime sedatives on the grounds that these drugs can cause dangerous drowsiness. The brand names of affected products are Cope, Compoz, Nervine and Quiet World. They are put out by Sterling Drug, Jeffrey Martin Company, Miles Laboratories and Whitehall Laboratories, respectively. The ban is expected to go into effect in mid-1978. Kennedy claims that the "absence of any demonstrated medical benefit" plus the drowsiness risk in these sedatives justifies taking them off the market. . . . .

. . . . . Sterilization Gaining in Popularity. A 1975 survey taken by Princeton University's office of Population Research shows that sterilization as a method of contraception has grown "tremendously." The survey used a sample of 3400 persons and showed an approximate 6.8 million married couples of childbearing age choosing sterilization, as compared to 7.1 million who use the pill. Surveys taken from 1965 until the present time indicate the popularity of sterilization growing so rapidly that it has begun to rival the pill as a method of birth control. . . . .

. . . . . Claybrook Proposes More New Car Information. Since Joan Claybrook, the new administrator of the NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) took office, the agency has been geared to getting more accurate and complete information for the consumer in the new car market. A survey by NHTSA last spring of car dealers showed that 60% were disregarding the law by failing to display a Gas Mileage Guide on their cars. Claybrook warns them now that they will be given heavy fines if they do not comply with the law. Beginning January 1, 1978 a new motor vehicle will be required to have more detailed mileage information and moves have also been made to strengthen a federal law against odometer tampering and fraud. . . . .

.....Savings Banks Offer NOW Accounts. Savings banks have begun offering NOW (Negotiable Order of Withdrawal) accounts, authorizing people other than depositors to withdraw money from savings accounts. They are also trying for authorization to give auto and personal loans in an effort to cut down on their home loans, which are on a long term basis at low interest rates and therefore cannot make as much money for the bank. At this point it seems that since banks are all offering more or less the same services to customers, the only thing they can advertise to draw in more customers is their "friendly service." None can offer an original banking service at this point so they are forced to concentrate on secondary assets which in reality have nothing to do with the actual business of banking. . . . .

. . . . . New Codes Sought for Professional Advertising. In spite of the recent Supreme Court ruling allowing professionals to advertise, medical and legal organizations are trying to develop new codes in this area for doctors and lawyers. The American Medical Association has forbidden doctors from using themes which "solicit patients" and the Federal Trade Commission is holding hearings on this rule, as well as investigating ads by plastic surgeons which the American Society of Plastic and Reconstruction Surgeons claims are deceptive. The FTC has also issued a complaint against the American Dental Association's ban on ads. And, according to the Justice Dept. the American Bar Association is still trying to prevent TV ads for lawyers. . . . .

## POT SMOKERS COURTED IN RADIO ADS FOR PAPERS

As laws restricting the use of marijuana are weakened and public acceptance increases we will be fast approaching the day when pot will be advertised in "straight" newspapers, magazines and on the airwaves.

Right now, according to **Ad Age** magazine, two sellers of cigarette papers are spending over \$1,000,000 on advertising.

These papers, whose users are almost all pot-smokers, are marketed as E-Z Wider and Job. The Job brand was tested on Philadelphia radio stations last year and now are being run in Chicago and Cleveland as well. The ads, backed up by the song "Lake Shore Drive", stress "quality" and "smooth and even" smoking as well as the available flavors. Over Labor day the papers sponsored the broadcast of a Grateful Dead concert over Philadelphia station WMMR. Currently they advertise in **Rolling Stone** and **Penthouse** (full page) and are looking for more traditional publications that will accept their ads.

E-Z Wider, which pushes its double-width papers, is now spending almost \$400,000 on 80 stations and will increase when more stations accept their ads.

It becomes ironic that regular cigarettes cannot be advertised on the air while at the same time ads extolling the "smooth and even" burning of these papers (presumably not empty) is allowed.

Can the advertising of the contents be far behind?

## AMERICANS IGNORANT OF CREDIT RIGHTS

Regardless of age, sex or income, most American consumers are "astoundingly ignorant" of their credit rights, according to a new survey released recently.

American Express polled 202 persons at shopping centers in Atlanta, Massapequa, N.Y., Chicago and Los Angeles for the survey, said spokeswoman Sharon Watson.

"The results were incredible," she said. "Of the 202 people polled, only a few passed and the rest flunked a simple 10-question credit rights test."

She said the purpose of the survey was to "determine whether or not men and

women from all walks of life are able to understand credit legislation that has been passed."

Ms. Watson said the survey indicated that "extensive training is needed to educate the public about credit rights and legislation.

"Most of the respondents were astonishingly ignorant of their rights," Ms. Watson added. Men fared "only slightly better than women, and that was surprising" because men "have legally been handling the family assets far longer than women," she said. The survey said that "in either sex, a high income did not produce more informed credit consumers."

Men and women with salaries ranging from \$7,500 to \$30,000 a year were questioned. Their educational background ranged from no high school to post-graduate levels.

The question missed most by both sexes was: Identify the charge cards that do not have a pre-set spending limit. Ninety-six percent were unable to name the three travel and entertainment cards, such as American Express, that do not have a pre-set limit.

## DIGITAL "TAXI-METER" TO MEASURE POWER USE

Would the average person use less electricity if he could see how much the electricity were costing him as he used it? The answer to the above question is being sought in an experiment sponsored by the Potomac Electric Power Co. and the Energy Research and Development Administration.

Seventy homes in the Washington, D.C. area are being equipped with Fitch "energy monitors." (named after their inventor, J.B. Fitch) Each of these devices is equipped with a digital readout display that shows the cost per hour of the electricity being used as well as the time. Experts from Princeton University will eventually compare the "energy monitor" equipped homes with comparable homes not having the monitors. The hope is that homeowners will cut their usage as they see the bill mount.

## WILL "BIG BROTHER" SHUT OFF YOUR AIR-CONDITIONER?

According to James Serfass of the U.S. Energy and Development Agency, the

day is coming when all utilities in the United States, in order to deal with expected energy shortages, will be able to turn off their customers' air conditioners by remote control.

When power demands on a utility become too great, the utility will send radio or other transmissions to activate cutoff devices it has installed on air conditioners and in some cases, water heaters, thereby preventing brownouts and blackouts.

Experimental programs, funded by the federal government and the Electric Power Research Institute, are already underway in San Diego, Detroit, Omaha, and Raleigh, N.C. By next summer, utilities in Michigan and Arkansas will also have the remote control shutoff capability and people who participate in these programs will receive a credit on their utility bills.

Surprisingly, the use of remote control devices is not new, the Detroit Edison Co. having used such devices on water heaters since 1934, with few complaints having been received from customers over the years.

## NEXT "ADVANCE" MIGHT BE COMMERCIALS AT THE MOVIES

When you next go to the movies you may be in for quite a surprise. Beginning on this date 3,000 motion picture theaters, including 9 of the top 15, will show 3-minute commercial segments during their movies. Screenvision, the United States subsidiary of France's Mediavision, has arranged for the commercials and will give each exhibitor 1/3 of gross profits after the company deducts its own commission. Now maybe you think the average citizen wouldn't stand for this nonsense. After all, don't we have enough advertising thrown at us from TV sets in our own living rooms? Of course we do, but look again, because Screenvision took this into account when it exposed moviegoers to commercials before the idea was made reality, and found that little negative change occurred in audience attitudes toward the movies themselves, the products advertised, or even in plans to see coming attractions. So be prepared, because you could be seeing the Man from Glad dropping down between scenes of the next good movie you go to see. It looks like the public will stand for just about anything.





From the Desk of

**ROBERT BERKO**

Editor and Publisher

**caveat emptor**

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Dear Consumer:

As you requested following the announcement on the Gary Null Show, enclosed is a copy of CAVEAT EMP TOR featuring Gary's article "The Rape of the Soil." Although Gary's by-line was omitted from the article, he authored it in its entirety.

After reading Gary's article, we hope you will review the other material in the issue which we feel you as a consumer will find of particular interest.

CAVEAT EMP TOR reports on every area of concern to you, your pocketbook and your health. In the past, we have exposed advertising frauds by STP, Listerine, Crisco, Campbell Soups and others. We constantly report on mis-prescription and over-prescription of drugs, the medical ripoffs of our society, the razzle-dazzle by the giant oil and gas suppliers that drive up our energy costs, and the mismanagement of government which wastes tax dollars and produces gross incompetence.

These are just a few of the major stories which have appeared in CAVEAT EMP TOR during the past year. Right now we're working on a comprehensive study of the cancer industry, which Gary Null will be chiefly responsible for writing. Gary's coverage will include funding rip-offs, research monopolies, and many other aspects of the fight against this dreaded disease to which the public is rarely exposed.

In upcoming issues, we plan to cover such areas as


(over)

privacy, children's advertising on tv, eyeglasses, air travel, tenant's rights, the telephone company, and special interest lobbies.

In the enclosed issue you will find a subscription form to receive our publication regularly. For just \$5.00 you will get the next nine issues of CAVEAT EMP TOR; plus four back issues with many important stories. For \$10.00 you will receive 24 issues, plus the four back editions.

We're fighting for you. We bring you the facts that help you from being the victim of the con men in our society who are attempting to steal your hard-earned money. CAVEAT EMP TOR is a self-supporting, non-profit consumer advocate and holds allegiance to no one, so we don't pull punches or play favorites like many commercial publications who depend on advertising revenues for survival.

We urge you to join the thousands of readers already subscribing regularly.

Sincerely,  
  
Bob Berko,  
Publisher & Editor