

How Long Shall We Grovel?

A Memo for the Record

by Richard Grossman [1]

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provoked by: the Bill Moyers PBS Special "*Trade Secrets*" [2]

"We have trusted the chemical industry and our government to test the chemicals' effects on health and safety, and to take dangerous ones off the market."

--Altnet.org, 2 April 2001

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Why?

Based on what evidence?

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The point of the Moyers' program was that chemical corporation officials made investment, technology, sales, and promotion decisions to drench their workers and the world with what they knew were poisons, and they didn't come clean. Commenting on the program, *The New York Times* Corporation said that nothing good comes without a price.

The remedies suggested in Moyers' program: passing laws that give people the "right to know" what's in all products, and requiring the testing of chemicals before they are mass produced.

So I asked myself: Did Bill Moyers instruct his staff to discover what was known in the 1950s and 1960s and 1970s and 1980s -- or earlier -- about chemical corporations and poisoning? To find out what people back then were saying and doing? I took a look at my bookshelves and files.

Here are excerpts from reports, articles and books going back 40, 50 and 60+ years. They reveal that knowledge about the mass production, use and dumping of toxic chemicals, and about persistent manipulations, murders, deceptions and usurpations by chemical corporation and government officials, was no secret.

- These excerpts show that diverse people and civic groups -- along with eloquent scientists and even some elected officials -- had a different vision of how to build a prosperous, productive, healthy and just society.

- They show people committed to democracy, human rights and living in harmony with the earth's natural systems.
- They show people organizing to stop corporate and government assaults on human rights, justice and the earth's natural systems.
- They show poisoned people demanding not vengeance but acknowledgment as human beings . . . and then, health care, reparations, justice and sanity.
- They show poisoned people educating themselves, neighbors, public officials and the nation about science, medicine, business, oppression and self-governance.

In 2001, ANYONE who chooses to look will find massive evidence of chemical corporation murder, pillage and lies extending over a century. ANYONE who chooses to look will see persistent corporate denial of people's constitutional and human rights, and government complicity.

This country exalts the platitude "all political authority is inherent in the people." But our great corporations have long been protected by the rule of law . . . empowered by our own constitution and bill of rights.

Our society has bestowed upon Chemical corporation leaders, as upon top officials of all giant corporations, the highest rewards and honors, and great wealth. Great corporations have been exalted by legislators and judges, presidents and governors, police and national guards, by local, state and federal governments.

How long shall we authorize chemical corporate officials to kill? How long shall we *beg* them to tell the truth? To make the earth's air, water and soil, our foods and our jobs, a little less deadly? To please "give us" the right to know?

How long shall we grovel before our elected public servants?

Other species are counting on us to do more than regulate the destruction of the planet.

What do *YOU* think we the people should do now?

- "The United States Department of Agriculture has drafted a bill to revise the Pure Food and Drug Act, with the purpose of protecting the people of America, especially the poor and unsophisticated, against substances proven to be either useless, fantastically expensive, grossly misrepresented, noxious, habit-forming, or deadly. . . .

This fair and strictly serviceable proposal to prevent mass injury, fraud and murder has been met by a veritable avalanche of abuse, obfuscation and indignation. Three great industries are roaring defiance, threatening to deprive congressmen of their seats, newspapers and magazines of their advertising, the administration of support for its recovery program. The drug and cosmetic trades have no more interest in rendering a service to the community than a blind man has in the cinema. The proposed bill threatens sources of income. Vendible values might be lowered. Nothing else matters."

--Stuart Chase, [3] **1934**

- "The 'control of nature' is a phrase conceived in arrogance born of the Neanderthal age of biology and philosophy, when it was supposed that nature exists for the convenience of man. The concepts and practices of applied entomology for the most part date from that Stone Age of science. It is our alarming misfortune that so primitive a science has armed itself with the most modern and terrible weapons, and that in turning them against the insects it has also turned them against the earth." --Rachel Carson, the final paragraph of *Silent Spring*, [4] **1962**

- "As a biologist, I have reached this conclusion: we have come to a turning point in the human habitation of the earth. The environment is a complex, subtly balanced system, and it is this integrated whole which receives the impact of all the separate insults inflicted by pollutants. Never before in the history of this planet has its thin life-supporting surface been subjected to such diverse, novel, and potent agents. I believe that the cumulative effects of these pollutants, their interactions and amplification, can be fatal to the complex fabric of the biosphere. And because man is, after all, a dependent part of this system, I believe that continued pollution of the earth, if unchecked, will eventually destroy the fitness of this planet as a place for human life.

...

If we are to survive, we need to become aware of the damaging effects of technological innovations, determine their economic and social costs, balance these against the expected benefits, make the facts broadly available to the public, and take the action needed to achieve an acceptable balance of benefits and hazards. Obviously, all this should be done *before* we become massively committed to a new technology. . . . The costs of correcting past mistakes and preventing the threatened ones are already staggering, for the technologies which have produced them are now deeply embedded in our economic, social and political structure. . . .

It is already clear that even our present difficulties demand far-reaching social and political actions. Solution of our pollution problems will drastically affect the economic structure of the automobile industry, the power industry, and agriculture and will require basic changes in urban organization. . . . Science can reveal the depths of this crisis, but only social action can resolve it . . ." --Dr. Barry Commoner [5] **1963**

- "In March of **1945**, even before the war was over, the AFL and the CIO worked out an agreement with the US Chamber of Commerce calling for a 'new Charter for Labor and Management' for the postwar period. One of the seven points read: 'The inherent right and responsibility of management to direct the operations of an enterprise shall be recognized and preserved. So that enterprise may develop and expand and earn a reasonable profit, management must be free as well from unnecessary governmental interference and burdensome restrictions.'" [6]
- "A History of Fraud and Deception: Nothing has more characterized the history of occupational health since the industrial revolution than the imbalance between employers and employees in access to hazard information. Many examples could be cited . . .

The Union Carbide Corporation and its subcontractors concealed evidence of an epidemic of acute and often fatal silicosis among tunnel workers in West Virginia [**in the early 1930s**]. The Rohm and Haas Company ignored lung cancer among workers exposed to bischloromethylether (BCME), prevented independent analyses of exposure and medical records, and sought to forestall governmental efforts to evaluate and regulate the substance. The Allied-Signal chemical company was sufficiently concerned about the neurotoxic effects of the pesticide kepone to create a legally separate corporate entity to produce the substance; high exposures among uninformed and unprotected workers caused serious tremors, brain damage, liver enlargement, personality changes and sterility. Employers in mining industries refused to disclose to workers the results of periodic chest X rays but instead used this information to fire workers when their lung disease had progressed to a stage where they might consider filing a compensation claim.

Two aspects of workplace deception stand out. Where the toxic substances are new and produced by only a few firms, industry has often denied the hazard existed and sought to prevent independent researchers from gaining access to data necessary to identify risks. Where the toxic substances are well known and widely used, industry has often concealed the extent of workplace exposures and medical evidence on adverse effects in individual workers. These tactics of obfuscation and deceit have been practiced most widely and effectively by the asbestos industry . . . It is against this backdrop of management deception that the worker right-to-know movement was born in the 1970s." [7]

- "The questions which have been raised recently concerning the hazards of 2,4,5-T and related chemicals . . . may ultimately be regarded as portending the most horrible tragedy ever known to mankind . . . In view of the potential disaster that could befall us -- or conceivably has insidiously befallen us -- absolutely no delay is tolerable in the search for answers." --Senator Philip Hart, April, [8] **1970**
- "This book is about a political tactic and its effectiveness . . . Our specific focus is *environmental job blackmail*. . . . Employers know that for environmental job blackmail to succeed, they must control the terms of public debate. This is because these threats require two kinds of misrepresentation: first, denial of the full extent and costs of environmental destruction; and second, denial that citizens can invent or implement alternative ways to produce and prosper.

"Employers have a well-developed repertoire of tactics designed to control the definition of issues, ranging from elaborate economic analyses to polished public relations campaigns that isolate advocates of change. Those who resort to job blackmail routinely overestimate the costs of production and investment strategies less harmful to workers, citizens and the earth. They consistently under-estimate the costs of continued pollution and the benefits of protecting public health, preserving natural diversity and sustaining the nation's productive capacity. Moreover, they hammer home the message that theirs is the only viable alternative. The public is told: 'Without nuclear power, you will be left freezing in the dark; if millions of acres of forest are closed to logging, local industries and communities will collapse; if your community refuses a toxic waste dump, industrial production will grind to a halt.' These assertions

invariably fail to withstand careful scrutiny. . . .

Coalitions of worker and community groups have countered with documentation of present and future environmental damage. And they have advanced sound alternatives that preserve jobs while protecting health and environment. Unfortunately, job blackmail threats derive authority not from facts and logic, but from power. Employers and their allies use their resources and authority to stifle debate, to maintain control, and to deflect demands for economic democracy. They control the jobs and never let us forget that fact. . . ." [9] **1991**

- "First, an industry will claim that it can't comply with a proposed standard, because the technology to do so does not exist. Next, the industry will claim that the cost will drive it out of business. Finally, companies announce that they can, but it will cost everybody plenty." [10] **1976**
- "As far as we're concerned in the Steelworkers, we don't know of any single facility that had to shut down because of environmental cleanup. Indeed, it's just the converse. . . . We experienced it at the Johnstown, PA, plant; we experienced it at the Lackawanna plant of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation; we experienced it at the United States Steel Corporation in Duluth, Minnesota: When they began to say that they were refusing to abate and comply with the laws, that was an early warning sign that they intended to discontinue production activity at those facilities." [11] **1979**
- "Corporate energy interests, along with most industrialists and some government agencies, are vigorously urging the rapid expansion of energy production. The energy systems they want are large in scale, technologically complex, and will be costly, wasteful, environmentally destructive and dangerous to energy industry employees and to the public. An increasing number of Americans believe that these systems . . . are *too destructive* to the nation's public health -- as well as to workplace and natural environments to be acceptable. These citizens propose instead a large decrease in the nation's waste of energy, plus immediate utilization of proven solar energy technologies and developments of solar technologies almost ready to be utilized. . . . Such a solution to the nation's energy problem *actually leads to a more stable economy and to more jobs* than would the large-scale systems. It does so with less pollution, less disease, less social, disruption, and less interference with community, labor union and individual rights." [12] **1979**
- "I recently traveled through 80 communities in 8 southern states, on a commission from the Interreligious Economic Crisis Organizing Network. I met people who physicians and worker-health experts say are experiencing the symptoms of common industrial practices and the products of science and industry: liver, kidney and blood diseases; gastrointestinal diseases; central nervous system damage; anemia; headaches; miscarriages; cancers; infertility; diarrhea; numbness of feet and hands; decreased mental clarity; irritability; depression; depressed bone marrow functioning; leukemias; birth defects; growth retardation; immune system destruction; premature aging; premature deaths; genetic disorders. The list could go on . . . the people I talked to had endless stores of terrible tales to tell . . .

The South is saturated with poisons, and dominated by poisoners. Industrial producers, government producers, industrial users, government and industrial dumpers, along with government and industrial apologists, intimidaters, rationalizers, and liars, comprise the productive' sector of society. They pour money into advertising and public relations, as they seek to shape public debate with images that obscure, words that deceive. They buy scientists, health officials, newspaper owners, police departments, environmental protection departments, politicians, and even physicians. . . .

Those who want to see only have to go to these places and look. There is also no shortage of documentation. A handful of local newspapers have been diligent. Reports done by [various government agencies] and numerous citizens groups, confirm the tales of woe. The documents show that millions of acres in the South have been stripmined, clearcut, and otherwise ravaged by great machines. Heavy metals -- lead, arsenic, zinc, cadmium, mercury -- are strewn about. So are synthetic organic chemicals, made from petroleum. And radioactive fission products.

As Rachel Carson once wrote, 'no responsible chemist would think of combining in his lab' the multitude of chemicals that are jumbled together when dumped. In 1985, companies in the USA generated 500 billion pounds of synthetic organics (compared with one billion pounds in 1940). Industry now uses 65,000 different chemicals, adding 1,000 new ones each year. Only a handful have been tested, despite the evidence of chemical links to the diseases and disorders listed earlier. Over 400,000 firms generate products capable of producing these ill-effects. Some 25,000 companies transport them, by truck, ship and plane. Another 25,000 companies store, dump, or 'do' things to them, which they are arrogant enough to call 'treatment.' . . . [13] **1988**

- In April, **1979**, *KRON TV* in San Francisco ran a documentary film "Politics of Poison." It focused on herbicide spraying in California, dioxin, miscarriages and birth deformities. It quoted Dow Chemical Corporation spokesman Cleve Goring labeling the public campaign against spraying of this poison as "chemical McCarthyism." The film provoked 40,000 letters from viewers, "demanding action," as Regenstein described.

SF Examiner columnist Bill Mandel wrote: "The only sensible conclusions one can draw are these: that commercial interests are spraying populated areas with herbicides considered too deadly for use as chemical weapons; that government agencies chartered with the protection of the public and the environment are powerless or too cowardly to do anything about this rain of death from the skies; that health officials look everywhere for explanations except at the culprits; and that massive expenditures by the timber and chemical companies paralyze the fact-aimed opposition of scientists and residents of the affected areas." [14]

- In **1972**, William Longwood wrote in *The Darkening Land*: "Each spraying makes more spraying necessary . . . The farmer desperately turns to new and more powerful poisons. More imbalances result. More poison residues are in the crops for people to eat . . . Even after all the spraying, losses due to pests are about the same as they were 50 years ago -- about 10%. . . . We have destroyed the old, and the new does not work. We set out to poison bugs so we could feed ourselves. We wind up feeding the bugs

and poisoning ourselves." [15]

- "Regulation of pesticide use by the Federal Government is critically dependent on the safety testing data submitted by the firms that manufacture and market pesticides." [16] --Senate Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure, December, **1976**
- "We do not know where the millions of tons [of toxic waste] is going. We feel that the things that have turned up like the Love Canal are simply the tip of the iceberg. We do not have the capacity at this time really to find out what is actually happening. In my view, it is simply a wide open situation, like the Wild West was in the 1870s, for toxic disposal. The public is basically unprotected. There just are not any lawmen out there, State or Federal, policing this subject." [17]
- "Our groundwaters are threatened by ruinous contamination . . . this will become the environmental horror story of the **1980's** . . . the most grievous error in judgment we as a nation ever have made." [18]
- "Our communities are threatened by environmental problems caused by racism inherent in land use decisions that result in the location of dirty industries, toxic dumps, incinerators, and military bases close to low-income communities of color. In the Southwest, as in many other regions, social and economic impacts include loss of resources such as clean water, land, and air. The human costs are staggering. New Mexico, best described as a colony of the United States, is a case in point . . .

Indigenous land loss, the privatization of rangelands, and the coming of the railroad in the 1880s dramatically changed the southwest and left people of color in New Mexico economically disenfranchised. State and local governments have largely functioned at the behest of the federal government and for the benefit of outside industries. Barriers have prevented poor communities from exercising electoral power or economic influence even in this limited political arena. . . .

Tremendous amounts of groundwater and surface water have been reserved for military and military-related use, for industry and agribusiness. While poor communities have continually had their rights to groundwater and surface water stolen over the years, that which is still accessible is now being poisoned. . . . Birth defects are increasingly common among children of women working for high-tech manufacturers. . . .

Pesticides are a constant danger to Chicano and Mexican farm workers in southern New Mexico. With the blessings of the state agriculture department, agribusinesses routinely use organophosphates and other insecticides, which poison farm workers and their families and groundwater supplies of local communities, causing cancer and other diseases among many people. . . .

These cases are not confined to New Mexico but also can be seen and heard throughout the Southwest and in communities where there are large numbers of Latinos . . . The McFarland, California, 'childhood cancer cluster' is an area where farm workers and their families live in a federally funded housing tract, built right on top of a highly

contaminated site previously used as a pesticide dump . . . [19] **1994**

- In April **1980**, the President's Council on Environmental Quality issued a report by economics professor A. Myrick Freeman. It concluded that "national benefits which have been realized from reductions in air pollution before 1970 lie in the range from roughly \$5 billion to \$51 billion per year," with the best estimate for 1978 being \$21.4 billion. The savings included lowered damage to human health, crops, forests, vegetation, buildings and other property. [20]
- ". . . In **1928** . . . the Consumers' League of Massachusetts surveyed the extent of female exposure to occupational poisons and tabulated its findings." Here are excerpts from the League's chart listing "some types of industrial poisoning." Women working in the shoe, leather and rubber industries were subjected to "amyl acetate, butyl acetate, pyroxylen or nitrocellulose, benzol, wood alcohol, naptha rubber cement, carbon disulphide, carbon tetrochloride, sulphur . . ."

A companion chart from **1943** on "women's potential exposures to harmful materials during" WWII lists: "skin irritants -- Benzol, Tetryl, Mercury fulminate, Mica dust, Pyranol, Glass silk, materials used in manufactures of plastics, dyes of various kinds, cutting oils and compounds; systemic poisoning -- lead oxides, Benzol, Radium, Mercury, carbon monoxide; Respiratory diseases: Silica dust; steel dust, mica dust; Acid burns -- Nitric acid; x-ray burns, heat prostration . . ." [21]

- "At the **1936** United Auto Workers Convention, Dr. I Ruskin reported that there had been 13,000 cases of lead poisoning in auto factories since 1929 -- 4,000 in 1934-35 alone. John W. Anderson, who worked at the Dodge plant in 1932, described the conditions: '[There] was no attempt to ventilate the work areas or to take the pollutants out of the air . . . It was an accepted fact that thousands of metal finishers in the auto industry suffered from lead poisoning.' [22]
- Among the social costs of production discussed are the individual and social losses caused by industrial accidents, occupational diseases, women and child labor; social costs are also reflected in the manifold destructive effects of air and water pollution resulting from inadequate methods of combustion and from the disposal of untreated waste products into streams, rivers and lakes by private firms; moreover, important social costs of production tend to be bound up with the competitive exploitation of both self-renewable and exhaustible natural wealth such as wildlife, petroleum and coal reserves, soil fertility, and forest resources. Social losses also arise in connection with technical changes and the manner and rate of introduction of innovations by private enterprise. . . .

What these losses have in common and what makes them truly *social* costs is the fact that they do not enter into the cost calculations of private firms. They are shifted to and are paid for in one form or another by individuals other than the entrepreneur or by the community as a whole or by both . . ." [23] **1950**

- A group of Long Island citizens led by the world-famous ornithologist Robert Cushman Murphy had sought a court injunction to prevent the **1957** spraying [of

DDT-in-fuel-oil by the US Dept of Agriculture and the NY Dept of Agriculture and Markets upon truck gardens and dairy farms, fish ponds and salt marshes . . . quarter-acre lots of suburbia . . .].

Denied a preliminary injunction, the protesting citizens had to suffer the prescribed drenching with DDT, but thereafter persisted in efforts to obtain a permanent injunction. But because the act had already been performed the courts held that the petition for an injunction was 'moot.' The case was carried all the way to the US Supreme Court, which declined to hear it. Justice William O. Douglas, strongly dissenting from the decision not to review the case, held that 'the alarms that many experts and responsible officials have raised about the perils of DDT underline the public importance of this case.'" [24]

- "The **1972** *President's report on Occupational Safety & Health* stated that 'at least 390,000 new cases of disabling occupational disease' develop each year. This figure, apparently derived from a projection of California workers' compensation data, is probably far below the true incidence rate, given the barriers erected against compensating occupational disease . . . [this report] estimated that 'there may be as many as 100,000 deaths per year from occupation-caused diseases.' . . .

It is certainly plausible that 100,000 deaths are caused annually by job-related diseases if heart disease, lung disease, and cancers of the lung, kidney and bladder are even partially linked to occupational exposure. A federal study, cited by HEW Secretary Joseph Califano, estimated that from 20-40% of cancer deaths were caused by on-the-job exposure." [25]

- ". . . EPA chose to discount all of this evidence, including its own study conducted in **1973**, which seriously undermined Velsicol [corporation's] claims that leptophos was safe. Instead, EPA chose to credit and rely upon reports developed for and submitted by Velsicol -- all of which concluded that leptophos was safe. And on May 31, **1974**, EPA granted tolerances for leptophos in and on tomatoes and lettuce." [26]
- ". . . no testing has been conducted under [Toxic Substances Control Act]. Monitoring or regulating existing chemicals that might be hazardous has been unsuccessful, and the agency has no access to chemical manufacturers' health and safety studies or records. Outside of the barebones parameters set down by Congress, TSCA remains a law virtually undeveloped despite five years of attempted implementation." [27] **1982**
- ". . . some of the pesticides . . . are so long-lasting and so pervasive in the environment that virtually the entire human population of the Nation, and indeed the world, carries some body burden of one or several of them." [28] **1980**
- from "*Major Industrial Air Polluters for Ten Selected Toxic Chemicals in Los Angeles County.*" [29]

chemical	company	1989 emissions, in pounds
benzene	Monsanto	167,000
	Chevron	14,895
perchloroethylene	Polycarbon, Inc.	241,367
	Northrop Aircraft	196,000
Methylene chloride	Crain Industries	920,000
	Douglas Aircraft	630,000
	General Motors	450,250
Methyl Chloroform (TCA)	General Motors	1,612,260
	Chase Packaging	619,000

- "Since **1987**, [the Mothers of East LA] have fought state plans to build a hazardous waste incinerator in Vernon, and one in East LA. Aurora Castillo of MELA explained: 'Because we are a poor and Hispanic community they think we will accept destructive projects if they promise us jobs.' . . . Juana Gutierrez of MELA added, 'The state wants to place all of society's problems in our community -- a prison, a pipeline, and an incinerator. But if we keep up the pressure, they will have to solve all these problems, not just dump them from one place to another.'" [30]
- "Hooker [Chemical Corporation] admits to burying about 21,800 tons of various chemicals in [Love] Canal, but, this is all they will admit to. The Army denies burying wastes, yet there are residents who testified to seeing Army personal and trucks on the site. . . .

Every time I went to another house, I learned something new. In one home, I met a graying, heavyset man with a pitted face. He couldn't walk very well. He had worked for Hooker at one time, and now he had chloracne, a condition that results from exposure to certain chemicals. I didn't know it then but chloracne is also a symptom of dioxin poisoning. Dioxin is toxic in parts per trillion. Later we learned that it was in Love Canal. The man was as nice and pleasant as he could be, but his face looked awful. It was all I could do to look at him. He wanted to go ahead with a class-action suit; but he was afraid to jeopardize his pension from Hooker. I thought to myself: *How could you be so concerned with your pension? The law will protect you. Who cares about Hooker? Look what they've done to you in the plant, let alone what they've done to your family living here on one of their dump sites.* It was hard to understand why people were so afraid of Hooker, of what the company might do to them. Why weren't they angrier? . . .

Commissioner Robert Whalen, Dr. Vianna, Dr. Alexrod (who would become the next health commissioner), Dr. Kim and a few others were sitting on the stage. Commissioner Whalen . . . read an order stating that the residents of Love Canal were not to eat food from their gardens and that the 99th Street School would be closed during remedial construction. The bombshell came when he recommended the evacuation of pregnant women and children under the age of two because, he said, the state was concerned about a danger to their health. . . .

I called the child-abuse hotline in Albany and demanded that Commissioner Whalen be arrested for child abuse. I was quite serious. I called the hot line and said I would like

to report a case of child abuse. Hundreds of children were being abused. A child in the area had died. I wanted to press charges against Commissioner Whalen, New York State's Health Commissioner . . . Then I tried to call Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, Joseph Califano, but I couldn't get through to him. He was never around, or he was always in a meeting. I talked to someone else though . . . The man said I would have to talk to the Environmental Protection Agency. By now I knew what the initials 'EPA' meant. I told him the EPA wasn't doing anything. It had put up a small amount of money to repair the canal but had nothing to do with health studies. We needed someone to protect the health and welfare of our children. But he just gave me the runaround; there was nothing he could do, he said.

I was beginning to learn how fragmented the federal government is, how far removed the top people are, protected by secretaries, regulations and paper from contact with ordinary people. . . .

David Axelrod surprised me. He is a respected scientist. I always thought that when he became commissioner, we would have a chance. But the position made it difficult for him to separate science from politics. He couldn't hold his head up straight or look us in the eye when he talked with us. If I've learned anything from this experience, it's that science is not separate from politics, no matter how much the scientists pretend it is. . . .

More and more people arrived. I was afraid the situation was getting out of control. No one was thinking with a clear head, and I was afraid I wouldn't be able to reason with them. I'm not sure even I had a clear head. I was as angry as they were! I *was not* going to take my children back to our house on 101st Street. It wasn't safe. I had almost lost Missy a few months ago because of a blood disorder, and I didn't want to go through that again. . . .

I looked at both and told them they were hostages of the 'Love Canal People.' I told them no harm would come to them, but if that they left the office, I could not be responsible for what the crowd, now numbering nearly 500 people, would do. We had no guns, no other weapons; but for their own protection, I advised them to stay in our office. . . .

I put in a call to Jack Watson. He was President Carter's chief of staff and had been involved in Love Canal on and off since 1978 . . . His secretary answered. . . . In a few moments, she said she would deliver my message to Watson. She went on to say that we were wrong, that we should let the EPA officials go, adding: 'You people have blown Love Canal all out of proportion. I have friends who have cancer and they don't live at Love Canal . . .' I told her to go to hell! . . .

Love Canal is not over. The families will suffer from Love Canal the rest of their lives. If the Revitalization Committee has its way, they will resell most of the homes to new, innocent victims. Five or ten years from now, you will probably hear the cries from people at Love Canal once again. The residents of Love Canal learned a lesson; I'm not sure that government and industry have. It will be up to us, as citizens, to tell them forcefully they can't cover over Love Canal. All our lives are at stake." [31] **1982**

- "PCB's have been found in all organisms analyzed from the North and South Atlantic Oceans, even in animals living under 11,000 feet of water. Based on all available data, it seems safe to conclude that PCB's are present in varying concentrations in every species of wildlife on earth." [32] **1975**
- ". . . humans are exposed to heptachlor epoxide from the moment of conception on throughout life." [33] **1974**
- ". . . heptachlor is carcinogenic at the lowest levels tested (1/2 part per million) in laboratory experiments . . . significant levels are found in 95% of samples of adipose (fat) tissue taken from this country's populace . . ." [34] **1974**
- "In February, **1981**, in a move admittedly aimed at curtailing the powers of EPA and the Occupational Safety and Health administration, President Reagan signed an executive order restricting the ability of government departments and agencies to issue regulations. Shortly thereafter, Vice President George Bush, as head of the administration's Task Force on Regulatory Relief, announced that EPA would propose easing Clean Air Act pollution control regulations in California dealing with oil refineries and automobile plants. . . .

Also being prepared, as the *Washington Post* reported, was: 'a target list of major health, safety, environmental and social regulations that the President's aides are determined, in the words of budget director David Stockman, to 'defer, revise, or rescind.' They range from testing of food and drugs to safety and pollution control equipment on autos to industry's handling and disposal of hazardous chemical wastes.'" [35]

- "In August [**1981**], Bush announced additional proposed changes in 30 regulations, including allowing more lead in gasoline, which would represent a serious potential threat to children in urban areas, who absorb the toxic metal from the air and dust. Other targeted regulations included those under the Toxic Substances Control Act dealing with notification and testing requirements for the introduction of new chemicals." [36]
- "Last year, Americans used well over a billion pounds of chemical pesticides and herbicides. We are all served up a stew of chemical leftovers as residues of these pesticides and the compounds to which they degrade find their way into our food and water . . . The effect of these substances on our health, not to mention the health of the environment, is not completely known . . .

Since WWII the production of toxic pesticides has doubled every nine years to reach a staggering total of 1.6 billion pounds in 1980. Many of the most hazardous of these poisons have been banned, but are still produced in the US for export. . . . The pesticide manufacturers claim they test the safety of their product, but it is rare that they go to the expense of performing exhaustive tests. Federal agencies lack either the will or the clout to demand adequate safety tests . . ." [37] **1981**

- "There simply are not enough of either natural colors or natural flavors available to produce the quantity and variety of foods which American consumers demand. Artificial colors and flavors help fill this demand." [38] **1981**
- "A new artificial chocolate favor -- Chocolim II -- is offered for use in ice cream, yogurt, beverages, candies and all other foods in which natural chocolate is generally used . . . one ounce of this synthetic oil can replace about seven lbs. of cocoa at a consider savings in cost." [39]
- "In England [in **1951**] . . . the Ministry of Agriculture considered it necessary to give warning of the hazard of going into the arsenic-sprayed fields, but the warning was not understood by the cattle (nor, we assume, by the wild animals and birds) and reports of cattle poisoned by the arsenic sprays came with monotonous regularity.

When death also came to a farmer's wife through arsenic-contaminated water, one of the major English chemical companies (in **1959**) stopped production of arsenical sprays and called in supplies already in the hands of dealers, and shortly thereafter the Ministry of Agriculture announced that because of high risks to people and cattle restrictions on the use of arsenites would be imposed. In **1961**, the Australian government announced a similar ban. No such restrictions impede the use of these poisons in the United States, however." [40]

- "The Business-As-Usual system referred to above -- the food system that is profligate with energy, cropland and water, that produces pesticide-contaminated food, bankrupt farmers, unacceptable levels of topsoil loss, tomatoes more crash resistant than car bumpers . . . and 12,000 new products a year --the system is, as the Carrying Capacity analysis shows, clearly leading us rapidly to disaster." [41] **1991**
- "In summary, we believe that toxic chemicals are adding to the disease burden of the US in a significant, although as yet not precisely defined, way. In addition, we believe that this problem will become more important in the years ahead . . . We believe that the magnitude of the public health risk associated with toxic chemicals currently is increasing and will continue to do so until we are successful in identifying chemicals which are highly toxic and controlling the introduction of these chemicals into our environment." [42]
- "The advantages [of biological control of serious pests] over chemicals are obvious: it is relatively inexpensive, it is permanent, it leaves no poisonous residues. yet biological control has suffered from lack of support . . .

There is, then, a whole battery of armaments available to the forester who is willing to look for permanent solutions that preserve and strengthen the natural relations in the forest. Chemical pest control in the forest is at best a stop-gap measure bringing no real solution, at worst killing the fishes in the forest streams, bringing on plagues of insects, and destroying the natural controls and those we may be trying to introduce . . .

Through all these new, imaginative and creative approaches to the problem of sharing our earth with other creatures there runs a constant theme, the awareness that we are

dealing with life -- with living populations and all their pressures and counterpressures, their surges and recessions. . . .

The current vogue for poisons has failed utterly to take into account these most fundamental considerations. As crude a weapon as the cave man's club, the chemical barrage has been hurled against the fabric of life -- a fabric on the one hand delicate and destructible, on the other miraculously tough and resilient, and capable of striking back in unexpected ways. These extraordinary capacities of life have been ignored by the practitioners of chemical control who have brought to their task no 'high-minded orientation,' no humility before the vast forces with which they tamper." [43] **1962**

- "It should be evident, from nearly everything that has been said in this book, that no economic system can be regarded as stable if its operation strongly violates the principles of ecology. . . . both socialist and capitalist theory have apparently developed without taking into account the limited capacity of the biological capital represented by the ecosystem. As a result, neither system has as yet developed a means of accommodating its economic operation to environmental imperatives. Neither system is well prepared to confront the environmental crisis; . . . nature is not 'the enemy,' but our essential ally. The real question is to discover what kind of economic and social order is best adapted to serve as a partner in the alliance with nature." [44] **1971**
- "In our progress-minded society, anyone who presumes to explain a serious problem is expected to offer to solve it as well. But none of us -- singly or sitting in committee -- can possibly blueprint a specific 'plan' for resolving the environmental crisis. To pretend otherwise is only to evade the real meaning of the environmental crisis: that the world is being carried to the brink of ecological disaster not by a singular fault, which some clever scheme can correct, but by the phalanx of powerful economic, political, and social forces that constitute the march of history.

Anyone who proposes to cure the environmental crisis undertakes thereby to change the course of history. But this is a competence reserved to history itself, for sweeping social change can be designed only in the workshop of rational, informed, collective social action. That we must act is now clear. The question which we face is how." [45] **1971**

- "National Pest Control Month is an excellent time to focus attention on the persistence of pests and to discuss how we can all work to contain and control them. The National Pest Control Association and the industry it represents are to be commended for their participation in this educational observance." [46] **1985**
- "Have we perhaps grown up in a perverse sort of way and now accept that spectacular progress like that of the last half-century cannot be achieved without tradeoffs? Nothing good, be it democracy or more durable house paint, comes without a price." --*The New York Times* Corporation's, Neil Genzlinger instructing viewers how to think about Moyers', PBS program, 3.26.01

The literature on this topic is vast. Here is just a handful of books:

- Lewis Regenstein, *America The Poisoned*, Washington DC: Acropolis Books, **1982**
- Karl Grossman, *The Poison Conspiracy*, Sag Harbor: The Permanent press, **1983**
- Michael Brown, *Laying Waste*, NY: Pantheon, **1979**
- Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, Greenwich, CT: Crest, **1962**
- Barry Commoner, *The Closing Circle*, NY: Bantam, **1972**
- Samuel Epstein, *The Politics of Cancer*, SF: Sierra Club Books, **1978**
- Jeanne Mager Stellman, *Women's Work, Women's Health: Myths and Realities*, NY: Pantheon, **1977**
- Daniel Berman, *Death On the Job: Occupational Health and Safety Struggles in the United States*, NY: Monthly Review Press, **1978**
- Ralph Nader, Ronald Brownstein, John Richard, *Who's Poisoning America*, SF: Sierra Club Books, **1981**
- Robert van den Bosch, *The Pesticide Conspiracy*, NY: Anchor Books, **1980**
- David Wier and Mark Shapiro, *Circle of Poison*, SF: Institute for Food and Development Policy, **1981**
- Richard Kazis and Richard L. Grossman, *Fear At Work: Job Blackmail, Labor & the Environment*, Gabriola Island, BC: **1982**, second edition - **1991**
- Eric Mann with the Watchdog Organizing Committee, *L.A.'s Lethal Air*, Labor/Community Strategy Center, **1991**
- K. William Kapp, *The Social Costs of Private Enterprise*, NY: Schocken Books, **1950**
- Joan Dye Gussow, *Chicken Little, Tomato Sauce and Agriculture*, NY: The Bootstrap Press, **1994**
- Robert Bullard, ed., *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice & Communities of Color*, SF: Sierra Club Books, **1994**
- James C. Robinson, *Toil and Toxics: Workplace Struggles and Political Struggles for Occupational Health*, Berkeley: Univ. of Cal. Press, **1991**, pp. 109-111
- Dr. Marion Moses, *Designer Poisons*, SF: Pesticide Education Center, **1995**
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- *Clinical Memoranda on Economic Poisons*, US Public Health Service Publ. # 476, **1956**
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- Brooks, F. A., "The Drifting of Poisonous Dusts Applied by Airplanes and Land Rigs," *Agric. Engin.*, Vol 28, **1947**
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- Graham, R. J., "Effects of Forest Insect Spraying on Trout and Aquatic Insects in Some Montana Streams," *Biological Problems in Water Pollution*. Transactions, **1959** seminar, US Public Health Service Technical Report W 60-3, **1960**
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Some studies cited by K. William Kapp in his **1950** book, *The Social Costs of Private Enterprise*:

- National Resources Committee, *Report on Water Pollution by the Special Advisory Committee on Water Pollution*, **July 1935**
- *Petroleum Investigation*, **1934**, Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, House of Representatives, 73rd Congress
- H. B. Meller, "A Modern Plan for a Community Campaign Against Air Pollution," *American Journal of the Medical Sciences* # 2, **August 1933**

- H. Cristiani and J. Stoklasa, *The Loss to Agriculture Caused by Factory Fumes*, Intl Institute of Agriculture, Rome, **1927**
- *Ad infinitum. Alas.*

Let's close with this simple chart from **1950**:

Comparison of Estimated Value of Products Manufactured with Estimated Cost of Industrial-Waste Treatment for Major Industries Contributing to the Pollution of Surface Water in the United States [47]

product	total value (1935)	est. costs of waste treatment [48]
food & beverages	\$8,830,896,000	\$205,400,000
textiles	2,516,157,000	54,000,000
chemicals	1,366,311,000	28,300,000
petroleum refining	1,823,793,000	30,000,000
ferrous metals	1,902,909,000	20,000,000
nonferrous metals	382,526,000	21,000,000
rubber	469,400,000	1,000,000
paper	822,719,000	129,000,000
gas	203,751,000	5,000,000
	\$18,318,461,000	\$494,300,000

The chemical corporation role in nuclear bomb and nuclear power activities over the past 60 years is incalculable. Nothing about this aspect of US history has been included in this memorandum for the record. --RLG

Footnotes

1. Co-Director, Program on Corporations, Law & Democracy , P.O. Box 246, S. Yarmouth, MA 02664-0246. ph: 508-398-1145; fax: 508-398-1552 email: people@poclad.org; formerly, Director of Environmentalists For Full Employment, 1976-1985; co-founder, Stop the Poisoning (STP) Schools at Highlander Center, Tennessee.
2. As Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney recently pointed out, officials of corporations which have contracted with the Pentagon in Colombia to spray chemicals from the skies, train terrorists, supply weapons of great destruction and heaven knows what else have refused to provide her with information about what precisely their corporations are doing in Colombia. The excuse: *corporate trade secrets*.
3. Stuart Chase, *The Economy of Abundance*, NY: Macmillan Co., **1934**, pp. 25-6
4. Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, p. 297
5. Barry Commoner, *Science & Survival*, NY: Viking, **1963**
6. *Fear At Work*, p. 185
7. James C. Robinson, *Toil and Toxics: Workplace Struggles and Political Struggles for Occupational Health*, Berkeley Univ. of Cal. Press, 1991, pp. 109-111
8. Regenstein, p. 21
9. Richard Kazis & Richard L. Grossman, *Fear At Work: Job Blackmail, Labor & The Environment*, second edition, Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers, **1991**, p. xi-xii. [first edition: **1982**]

10. Leonard Woodcock, President, United Auto Workers, **1976**, in *Fear At Work*, p. 57
11. John Sheehan, legislative director of the United Steelworkers of America, **1979**, in *Fear At Work*, p. 21
12. Richard L. Grossman & Gail Daneker, *Energy, Jobs & the Economy*, Boston: Alyson Publications, **1979**
13. Richard L. Grossman, "The Saturation of the South," in *The Egg*, Summer **1988**
14. Regenstein, pp. 25-6
15. Regenstein, p. 82
16. "The EPA and the Regulation of Pesticides," staff Report to this senate committee, Washington DC, December, **1976**.
17. James Moorman, Assistant Attorney General for Land and Natural Resources, US Dept of Justice, testifying before the House Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, May 16, **1979**, in Regenstein p. 136
18. Eckhardt Beck, EPA assistant administrator, July 25, **1980**, in Regenstein p, 168
19. Richard Moore and Louis Head, in *Unequal Protection: Environmental Justice & Communities of Color*, edited by Robert D. Bullard, SF: Sierra Club Books, **1994**, pp. 195-200
20. Regenstein, p. 205; nb: a significant "benefits" literature has existed for decades
21. Jeanne Mager Stellman, *Women's Work, Women's Heath: Myths and Realities*, NY: Pantheon, 1977, pp. 85-86
22. *Fear At Work*, p. 174
23. K. William Kapp, *The Social Costs of Private Enterprise*, NY: Schocken Books, 1950, pp. 229-30
24. Carson, *Silent Spring*, p. 158-9
25. Dan Berman, *Death On The Job*, pp. 44-46
26. Senate Subcommittee on Administrative Practice and Procedure, chaired by Edward M. Kennedy, in Regenstein, p. 233
27. *Chemical Regulation Reporter*, 15 January, **1982**, in Regenstein p. 271
28. Library of Congress study, August **1980**: "Health Effects of Toxic Pollution: A Report from the Surgeon General," and "A Brief Review of Selected Environmental Contamination Incidents with a Potential for Health Effects," reports prepared by the Surgeon General, Dept of HHS, and the Library of Congress, for the Committee on Environment and Public Works, US Senate, in Regenstein p. 245
29. Eric Mann & the WATCHDOG Organizing Committee, *L.A.'s Lethal Air: New Strategies for Policy, Organizing and Action*, LA: A Labor/Community Strategy Center Book, **1991**, p. 17
30. *LA's Lethal Air*, p. 18, **1991**
31. Lois Marie Gibbs, *Love Canal: My Story*, as told to Murray Levine, Albany: State University of NY Press, **1982**, pp. 3, 6, 22, 30, 75-6, 141, 148-9, 174.
32. Dr. George Harvey, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, **1975**, in Regenstein p. 296

33. Russell Train, EPA Administrator, November, **1974**, in Regenstein p. 363
34. Environmental Defense Fund, October **1974**, in Regenstein, p. 363
35. Regenstein, p. 375
36. Regenstein, p. 375
37. "Status Report on Pesticides," SF: Friends of the Earth, **1981**, in Karl Grossman, p. 35
38. Institute for Food Technologists, a chemical industry "educational" non-profit corporation, in a pamphlet titled "Quick Answers to Commonly Asked Questions About Food," **1981**, in Karl Grossman, p. 85
39. advertisement from Ritter International Corporation, in Karl Grossman, p. 83
40. Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, NY: Houghton Mifflin, **1962**, pp. 35-6
41. Joan Dye Gussow, *Chicken Little, Tomato Sauce & Agriculture*, NY: The Bootstrap Press, **1991**, p. 34
42. "Health Effects of Toxic Pollution: A Report from the Surgeon General," August 1, **1980**, in Karl Grossman, p. 102
43. Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, NY: Houghton Mifflin, **1962**, pp. 294-96. And so we must also deal with the reality that the institutional vehicle for moving from science to technology and then to mass production is the modern giant corporation, which our courts and culture have armed with the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. See: poclad.org.
44. Barry Commoner, *The Closing Circle*, NY: Knopf, **1971**, pp. pp. 277-282
45. Commoner, *The Closing Circle*, final paragraph p. 300.
46. President Ronald Reagan, "National Pest Control Month," June, **1982**, in Karl Grossman, p. 241
47. "Compiled for the volume of production indicated by the 1935 Census of Manufacturers and based upon the judgment of engineers who have had wide experience in the treatment of industrial waste. See National Resources Committee, *Water Pollution in the United States*, pp. 31, 53-54." In Kapp, p. 90
48. These figures do not include costs of treating diseases, of people's lost income, or the "value" of coerced and premature deaths. They do not include costs of across-generation genetic damage, harms to non-human species, the removal of land from agricultural production and human habitation. They do not quantify the costs of air and soil detoxification. They do not quantify the costs of detoxifying the nation's educational and self-governing processes, or the detoxification of the law. And no columns on this chart list people's agonies or the long-lived distortions arising from the toxification of the nation's values.