

Editorial Comment:

waste: the american way

The average American household dog eats better than almost half of the rest of the world. This is not to say that American food is all its cracked up to be, but the fact remains that Americans probably throw away more food than most other humans get a chance to eat.

Being a dishwasher is not usually considered an intellectually edifying occupation but it does get one point across and that is that we are woefully wasteful and almost incredibly alienated from the basic processes of living.

Somehow, we as a generation have been so pampered, so sheltered that to throw away food means nothing; if it doesn't serve our pleasures, then we are content to see it thrown away. The irony of the situation is appalling.

At a time when we scream ECOLOGY, indicting the corporations and calling for stiffer fines on oil spills, we throw away food, drive our cushioned cars on our growing freeways and go home to our tight, secure little suburban homes where we while away the time reading about ecology and buying ecology stickers.

"Children in Asia are starving" is all we used to hear and still it hasn't made its mark. Children in India and Asia ARE Starving and yet still we lounge and over-consume and stroke our fat bellies with our soft hands and seem to think we are justified to be God's chosen people.

The food we throw away would be feasts for many of the other peoples of the world. Our trash could become other men's palaces. We over-consume and think we are justified in worshipping our gluttonous, distended appetites.

And while we look at our bread and decry that it is bleached and nourishment-less, we are turning over what would be a holiday for

many.

Washing dishes, scraping off good food to be taken to hogs is sobering for the offal of a people often tells more about them than their finest art and there is our story; there is our worshipped garbage, our monuments made to ourselves: the plastic and metal cities, and concrete freeways and oily air and mounds of garbage.

Waste has become one of the most important facets of the American way-of-life.

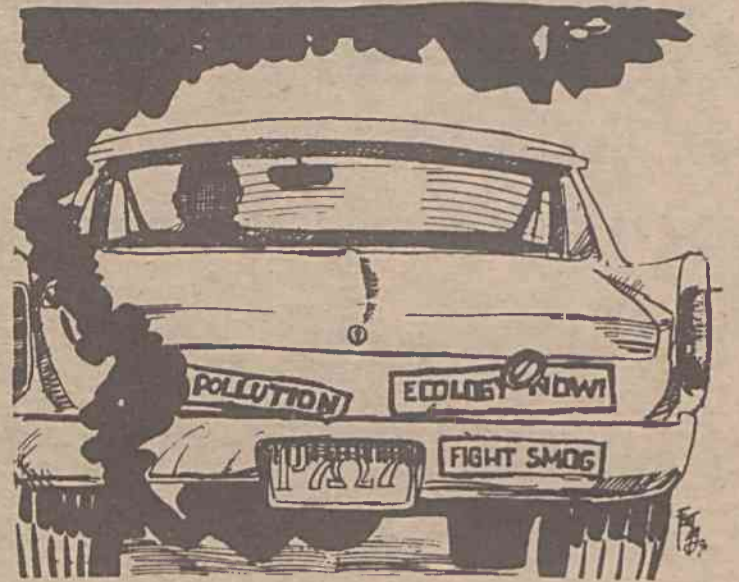
A friend of our is a junk dealer and he muses that we pour out so much junk, so much good that we consign to the junkyard. Planned obsolescence is so much a part of our lives that to have a car for only two or three years seems reasonable and throwing out electrical appliances gets to be a major occupation; they are too cheap to have fixed, better to throw them out.

And the ecology books, oh! the ecology books. How many pines have been cut down so that America's pre-pubescent intellectuals could READ about nature? disgusting.

The irony of the ecology fad is that it, like every other fad in modern America (including the Jesus Freak Movement) has been co-opted into the society to make it even more innocuous than it was to begin with. It is like Leonard Bernstein and the Black Panthers (radical chic); we've gotten to the point that we don't think twice about seeing an ecology sticker on a smoking car. We have become desensitized to the irony.

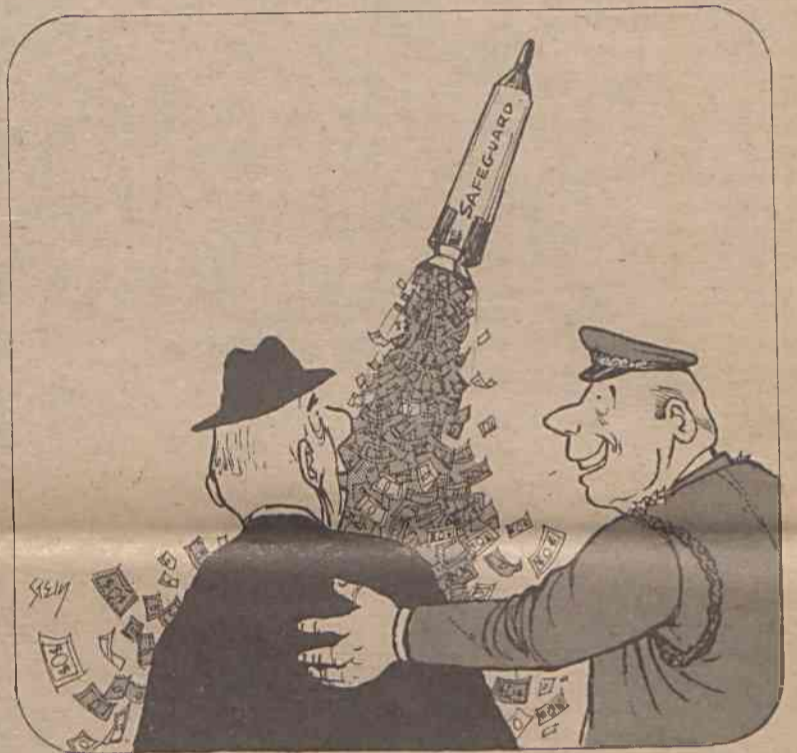
The cure for America's problem is less consumption, not more. Conserve and waste less is what we must do to save this nation from becoming what it is so quickly beginning to look like; a king-sized, (special coupon enclosed) savings-sized garbage heap.

— Fred Myers



SORRY!

The last issue of The Ridgerunner was late due to a printing botch-up. We're doing better, please be patient.



"See Senator. I told you it would fly. All it needed was the right fuel."

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