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About the Continued Poisoning of Tacoma by Asarco.

Definitely I shall be unable to attend. But you have set a day and time for me to be heard. Lest my non-attendance seem to be complaisance or approval, I put this in writing:

STOP THE POISONING OF THIS CITY BY ASARCO SMELTER.

This is the hardest letter I have ever written. In alarm that borders on despair, I read the numerous interviews with you. In the Tacoma News Tribune, by my neighbor John Gillie; In the New York Times, in which you babble about some kind of a mandate; always you project the same baffling image.

I called your old office here, in order to get your address. I find you visited here over the week-end. People in the office regard you as human. You are not just a coat hanger, over which the nebulous robes of your officialdom flutter in the showroom. You are not just a flack-job contrived by Tom Ambrose to bemuse old ladies into voting Republican and Big Business, and Reaganomics. You have an intrinsic, human reality. But that is not how you see yourself. (Or, for that matter, how you see the children to be poisoned.) Beyond Human Reality is the entire scope and framework of your education, your millieu, your job orientation.

Some nice people, (rich people,) have given you a job. The "unseen hand" of Adam Smith will reward you for doing it well. If your tender conscience frets, as all things come to him who gets, you can merely resign and look holy, and be hired by another firm with a PR job to do. This is the Weltanschauung you project. Yours not to protect the people from the poison, but to conduct an orderly plebecite on the order and magnitude of their permissive poisoning. Let environmentalists environmentalate, and let you judge the efficaciousness of their cantankerousness. Balance the equities. Quantify the number of protesters who show up, the tolerable unemployment from lack of poisoning, the tolerable amount of abuse each environmentalist will endure in order to environmentalate. But when you're through, who and what are you, besides being hard to talk to.

Paul J. Braune

