

(Cassidy
written to several
people at
Jan. 9. Rally.)

A FEW THOUGHTS AND QUESTIONS ABOUT THE I-40 EXPRESSWAY
AND THE MEMPHIS ENVIRONMENT: January 9, 1971

1. "The nation's health costs could be cut by \$2 billion annually if there were a 50% reduction in air pollution levels in major urban areas, say Dr. Lester B. Lave and Eugene B. Seskin, two Pittsburgh, Pa., economists." Note that word: economists! (Quoted from page 3 of January 1971 ORGANIC GARDENING AND FARMING MAGAZINE. One public library copy only: downtown in Cossitt.) How can our local INSURANCE MEN tolerate the current proposition to funnel into our central city literally tons of all kinds of pollutants, not merely from our own high-powered-high-emission autos, but from OUT-OF-STATE TRAFFIC AS WELL? How can our Chest-and-Respiratory Disease specialists tolerate this threat to their patients? They know that cigarettes--if indeed they are the culprit; an open question--are not the only carcinogens in our environment. What about carcinogenic particulate rubber from tires, asbestos pollution from brake linings, oxides of nitrogen, aldehydes, sulphur compounds organic acids, ammonia--not to mention the too-well known pollutants, lead and carbon monoxide? (For documentation: See THE ENVIRONMENTAL HANDBOOK, Page 264, page 115, and passim.)

2. Why does the apparently well-meaning COMMERCIAL APPEAL today publish another half-truth editorial about pollution? Title: "War on Pollution." Subject: "throw-away" pollution especially, with the exhortation, "Now it is the people who need to be aware, to use nature's resources with thrift, and to recycle them in a way that does not upset the balance." Pot calling the kettle black? When is our estimable publishing monopoly going to clean its own ecological house? When is it going to help up in the important task of

RECYCLING NEWSPRINT!? Memphis Publishing Company could take a tip from the San Francisco Examiner and Chronicle, which some months ago ran a banner headline: "SAVE YOUR PAPERS--AND SAVE TREES." Now quoting that paper: "For every ton of reprocessed newsprint, the equivalent of 17 trees will be saved. For every ton reclaimed, there will be one less ton for disposal."

3. And that brings up another point: Why should the city be using taxpayers' money--yours and mine--to prosecute the conservationists who are acting in the best interests of an entire city, instead of USING TAXPAYERS' MONEY to teach us to cut down on pollution, waste, and the exorbitant cost of garbage disposal? Proper sorting of solid wastes and careful recycling by homeowners' with information about management of soil, compost, and other pertinent facts of today's ecological crisis is where our money should go, and our news stories as well. How long will out-of-town business want to come to an ecologically backward town that destroys its parks, packages its waste in non-degradable plastic sacks, and persecut its conservationists with threats of punitive fines?

THIS IS MY CITY. IT HAS BEEN MY ANCESTORS' HOME since long before the Civil War. I HOPE I CAN LIVE TO BE PROUD AGAIN. BUT TODAY I AM ASHAMED!

OPG 16-05