

• VOICE OF THE PEOPLE •

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POLLUTION PROBLEM

Chicago, Sept. 2—It is ironic that altho motor vehicle exhausts create 35 per cent of the pollutants that account for smog little is said, and less is done, about one of the most obvious and obnoxious sources of air pollution—city bus exhausts.

Chicagoans in this respect have been noticeably less vocal than residents of Washington, D. C. There citizen complaints were so numerous and insistent that the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit commission was forced to appoint a committee to see what could be done about the problem.

Following trial installations of special mufflers on city buses, it was found that: 1. There was, especially under heavy load, a lessening in exhaust pollutants. 2. The character of the odor seemed more tolerable. 3. There was no adverse effect upon the operation of the buses.

Unless Chicagoans become similarly indignant it is unlikely any relief will be forthcoming, since the recent exhaust emission control standards issued by the department of health, education, and welfare apparently apply only to "gasoline powered new motor vehicles . . . beginning with the model year 1968," thereby exempting all diesel and propane powered buses and trucks from controls.

Lest there be fear of the cost of installing exhaust control devices, it should be noted that the filth spewed forth by Chicago's aging bus fleet is most acute in areas such as the Loop, North Michigan avenue, and Sheridan road, where there are frequent starts and stops [80 per cent of exhaust pollutants are expelled during acceleration and deceleration], and where the problem is more acute due to the convergence of many buses on one route.

A start could certainly begin in these areas but, at the very least, buses should be required, as trucks are now, to expel exhausts six or seven feet above the ground, rather than in the faces of helpless pedestrians.

Unless progress is made in attacking air pollution it is doubtful that pedestrians will ever be able to march into the Great Society or, if they are able to, they'll find when they get there that the promised land is suffused in the aroma of automobile and bus exhaust.

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