

Editorials & Letters

San Jose Mercury News

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Sunday, June 21, 1992

Bush & crew have gutted our Clean Air Act

The Bush administration's recent decision to weaken the permits section of the Clean Air Act is illegal, jeopardizes public health and undermines the public's right to be informed about toxic air pollution in their communities. This is yet another slap in the face from our self-acclaimed environmental president.

Under the law, every polluter must obtain a permit from the government which sets limits on the amount of air pollutants they discharge. Changes to permits must be approved by the states, with public consultation.

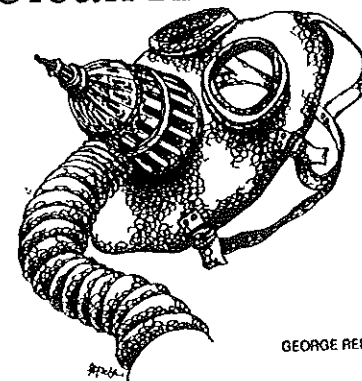
But the so-called Council on Competitiveness, chaired by Vice President Dan Quayle, has decided to allow polluters to change their own permits without public scrutiny or input, and without meaningful review and approval by state

pollution control agencies. This giveaway to polluters directly violates the law.

The permits section of the Clean Air Act is the heart and soul of the law. It is clear and unambiguous. It is what makes the Clean Air Act a "people's law," one in which the more than 150 million Americans living in cities that violate clean air standards can make sure that the pollution crippling our children, elderly and sick can be reduced or stopped.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency wanted to include public participation requirements in permit rules, but the administration's Council on Competitiveness objected.

Don't let the federal government get away with this. Write to the president and your local Congress



GEORGE REBH

person to protest this back-room theft of the Clean Air Act, and insist that they restore our rights to be heard about pollution in the air we breathe.

— Ted Smith
Executive Director
Silicon Valley Toxics Coalition