

## Furious over withheld aid

## SEMCOG chief blasts Washington

The boss says you have a job to do. The boss says you have 18 months to do it in. The boss says you will be fined if you don't get it done in 18 months because that's the law.

The boss won't give you the tools to do the job. You get mad.

The boss, in this case, is U.S. Department of Transportation. The worker is the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments.

The job is to draft an air quality plan for "mobile source pollution," i.e., car and truck exhaust.

The tools are \$20,000 for work already done and another \$75,000 for the first six months of 1979. So far the tools haven't arrived.

"I'VE BEEN getting a sympathetic ear from bureaucrats for months. I have a sore ear," SEMCOG Executive Director Michael Glusac told the general assembly last week.

"I'm getting mad. We don't have taxing power. We don't seek it. We need some local officials to stand up and secure Sec. 175 planning funds," said Glusac, urging them to write to state and federal agencies and key congressmen.

Glusac's withering attack on the lack of federal funding, after commitments had been made, drew a warm ovation from SEMCOG delegates, officials of 194 member governments.

## THE BACKGROUND is this:

Congress in 1977 amended the 1970 Clean Air Act to establish revised air quality standards. The standards must be attained in 1982, in some cases, and 1987 in others.

SEMCOG last February sought and received designation as the areawide air quality planning agency. Because SEMCOG has no local tax funds, it

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— SEMCOG Executive Director  
Michael Glusac

sought a waiver of a provision that it provide local matching funds for the study.

Then, as Glusac described it: "Our appeals for assistance to do air quality planning did result in an EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) commitment of \$20,000 to prepare our initial SIP (state implementation plan) submit which was effectively a plan of 'attack' for pursuing air quality work."

"The \$20,000 commitment, made this past July, has yet to be honored and apparently will not be for two to three months. As of the end of 1978 calendar year, the council (SEMCOG) will spend all of the committed funds and will have to find additional funds if air quality planning is to continue."

SEMCOG SOUGHT EPA funds recently appropriated by Congress. Meanwhile, administrative agencies must write rules on how the funds are to be distributed, according to SEMCOG Chairman David Shepherd, mayor of Oak Park.

"They're involved in a ponderous rule-making process. And Congress wants a veto power on rule-making," Shepherd said.

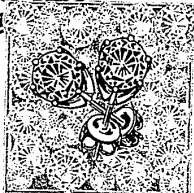
A memo from Valdas V. Adamkus, acting regional administrator of EPA, said there are "automatic penalties if the required plan is not submitted or approved. Those are:

air pollution control funds and some sewage treatment funds to the state.

"3. Where an acceptable plan is not approved in areas where transportation control measures are necessary, the Department of Transportation cannot award federal highway funds to the state except for funds for air quality and safety improvements."

Will Hardy, Wayne County delegate to SEMCOG, said southeast Michigan isn't the only region with a problem. "All regional councils are in the same boat," Hardy said.

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