

# Oil Refineries Found to Be Cause of Much Smog in Los Angeles Area

Industry Trying to Control Fumes of 'Skunk' Variety

[This is the fourth in a new series of articles on smog which will be continued with a summarized report by The Times on a preview to a survey to be conducted by Prof. Raymond R. Tucker of St. Louis, nationally famous smoke expert, who is being brought here Sunday on a public service by this newspaper.]

BY ED AINSWORTH  
Oil refineries form one of the major industries of Southern California.

They also undoubtedly are large contributors to smog in Los Angeles.

The fumes which they give off—both large and small refineries—are of a nature to cause the eye-smarting that results in so many complaints.

What is being done about this problem and what is going to be done?

**Processes Change**  
The industry itself has increased its activities in seeking a solution in the last two years, but there are peculiar complications. The oil business is highly competitive. The enormously costly processes in the manufacture of gasoline are changing rapidly. Valuable machinery may become virtually worthless overnight because of technological advances.

As a result the industry naturally hesitates to spend large sums merely for fume control when it knows that it may have to repeat the process on some new form of plant equipment next year. The men in charge of an individual plant try to make fume control also "pay" its way either in the form of more efficient operation in the production of salable by-products. Smoke control is vital, because it means that the plants are operating efficiently if they are smokeless.

**Increase Efforts**  
With this in mind, it becomes easier to understand why refinery fumes in some instances have persisted longer than they should have.

It must be said in all fairness, however, that the large companies recognize the value of good public relations and therefore have increased their efforts at fume control in recent months. For many years, in fact, the industry in this area has employed a full-time engineer on waste disposal. Eli S. McCol of Long Beach holds this position. The public health committee of Western Oil and Gas Association conducts regular meetings in an effort to improve conditions. Its chairman is George Murray, who also is chairman of the Chamber of Commerce smoke and fumes committee.

Refineries in Los Angeles County extend from El Segundo over to the Orange County line.

**One Plant in City**  
The only major refinery entirely within the city limits of Los Angeles is the Union Oil Co. plant at Wilmington. I visited it with Maj. Harry Kunkel, director of the city Bureau of Air Pollution Control.

This vast, sprawling industrial wonderland is one of the oldest refineries in the area, dating back to about 1918, but now almost completely modernized.

Hundreds of thousands of barrels of crude oil pass through its vast system of pipes, 200-foot stacks, cracking units and other complicated equipment each week. And in the process of transforming the crude oil into high octane gasoline the operators are confronted every moment with the problem of the confinement and eventual disposal of noxious gases, two in particular.

One is made up of the many "skunk" gases—the mercaptans which are extremely offensive and even dangerous; the other is

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**WHAT ABOUT IT?**—Oil refineries in Los Angeles area undoubtedly contribute to smog nuisance. The industry is striving for a solution but fast technological changes in gasoline processing make radical revisions difficult. Here is El Segundo plant.

## Smog Irritates Flyers on Nation-wide Survey

Baron Reginald Steengracht, van Moyland, lieutenant-flyer in Queen Wilhelmina's royal Netherlands navy, and Comdr. Charles Evans, pilot in King George VI's royal British navy, yesterday were doing something concrete about international amity.

They were voyaging through the United States in an American-made Beechcraft light trans-

"Precisely," avowed the commander.

Both men were World War II heroes. The Hollander doesn't like being called a "Dutchman"—says it's always confused with "Deutschlander" fought through Java and along side the R.A.F. in Europe. The Briton led the squadron that downed the first Nazi plane of the war in September, 1939, has



**BROKE THROUGH**—Baron Reginald Steengracht of van Moyland of the Netherlands, left, and Comdr. Charles Evans of the British navy are touring country in a plane. They flew without incident until they ran into smog here.

port, assigned to the Briton, inspecting U.S. naval aircraft as air attaches for their respective embassies.

Here on the far western leg of their journey, the Hollander and the Englishman gave a joint interview at the Hollywood Roosevelt. They agreed on practically everything.

**Bothered by Smog**  
"We flew without incident from Washington," said Baron van Moyland, "until we reached Los Angeles."

"Then," observed Comdr. Evans, "things got quite irritating. We found we couldn't see where we wanted to land."

16½ enemy craft to his credit, and later commanded airmen on a British carrier that operated with Adm. William F. Halsey's 3rd Fleet.

**Sports Red Beard**  
Comdr. Evans, who sports a bricked beard which his Greek war bride demands he retain because she's never seen him clean-shaven, looks toward the day of all-jet aircraft. He's down jets and admits he "likes em." He is proud that the British Vampire was the forerunner of jet-propelled naval fighter planes.

The baron's uncle, Jack van Braam, is Southern manager of K.L.M.—Royal Dutch Airlines—which recently ordered eight Lockheed Constellations and seven Douglas DC-6's.

## Gifts to Chest Now \$4,109,056, 63 Pct. of Goal

With 300,000 contributors still to be solicited, the Community Chest drive yesterday stood at \$4,109,056, or 63 per cent of the goal for support of the 152 welfare agencies in the Los Angeles area.

This was made known yesterday at a gathering in the Billmore of 100 Chest campaign leaders. A. J. Gock, campaign chairman, told them that there are "excellent prospects for a final drive to the goal within the next three weeks."

Bad weather has somewhat delayed the canvass recently.

**Studios to Come**  
The Community Chest, Gock said, is again depending on the Permanent Charities Committee of the motion-picture industry for a repeat performance of the \$1,000,000 it turned over to the Chest last year.

Under the chairmanship of M. C. Leves, the P.C.C. is about to go into its second annual single-united appeal, and the Chest, as in the past, will be one of the major beneficiaries, Gock stated.

The general chairman praised the army of voluntary workers and urged them to greater efforts in the next fortnight. He announced the standings of the various divisions. Corporations under the chairmanship of H. Morgan Craft has raised 71.4 per cent of quota and special gift, directed by James R. Page and Edward Valentine, 72 per cent of quota.

**GLENDALE BURGLAR SUSPECT BOOKED ON HEELPRINTS**  
A man and his wife were

Division Amount %

Division	Amount	%
Business dists.	\$ 322,459	71.7
Public schools	150,592	100.3
Parochial schools	6,207	124.1
Public employees	184,296	92.3
Residential dists.	383,758	72.8
Hollywood	201,372	67.1
Associated cities	477,862	73.8
Establishments	1,031,812	69.8
Metropolitan	1,501	100
Water Dist.	477,237	—
Other sources	—	—
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$4,109,056</b>	<b>63.3</b>