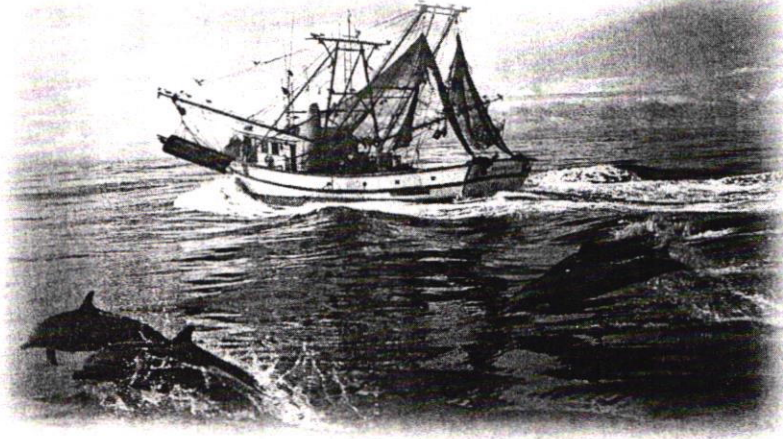


## SENATORS IN THE FISH HOUSE

I'm actually a very mild, quiet-type person. Believe it or not, I took speech for ten years when I was a kid, and I hid under the bed anytime anybody would come into the house—I was that quiet of a person. But on that TRI information, I just formed an environmental group. All I did was call a meeting in my town and I ended up with bank presidents, chambers of commerce. I had senators down there in the fish house. And I had people calling me a terrorist. They were certain, certain, absolutely certain, that I was a spy for the state of Louisiana, because what they were trying to do was bring down that \$2 billion chemical plant out of Taiwan. And the reason why was because it had gotten kicked out of Taiwan, and they were coming down to the state of Texas.

So Chairman Wong was just going back and forth between Louisiana and Texas and seeing which one was going to give him the most money for coming down and polluting their bays and waters. Texas got the prize because we gave him \$200 million. And we gave him the little ship channels and we gave him the banquets. And for that reason, because I protested their expansion, I was considered a spy. I was considered a terrorist. I remember at one time Formosa even threatened to sue me, and I had every single one of my board members quit because they were afraid that they were fixing to get sued.

People would come up to me very quietly and tell me they couldn't get involved because they had to have bank loans, they had to have some of their kinfolk working at some of the plants. Because when the fishing industry goes down, you have a hard time. And these are poor people, so sometimes during the winter, when it really gets rough, they have to get jobs at these petrochemical plants. And so what happened was—I'll bring in a little quote by Gandhi (I'm real big about bringing out quotes): it's a myth to believe that you need a lot of people and that you need a lot of money because you don't. All you got to do is have your commitment and your belief and all it needs to do is start with you. All it takes is one person. So what I did, was I absolutely drew a line in the sand and I said they were not going to take those bays any longer. I had set there and watched the dolphins die off. We had one of the



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largest dolphin die-offs ever recorded in the Mammal Stranding Network's history. All the dolphins, all the alligators—they were just sitting, rolling in the water. And you would go out there and you would find just hundreds of dead dolphins. I remember one of the most tragic pictures I ever—it was acres, acres of land with the dead dolphins

coming out of our bays laying stretched out there.

We set there and watched the red tides, the brown tides, the green tides. We set there and watched Alcoa Aluminum, with a permit from an agency, create a mercury Superfund. Now you've got mercury in the sediment, you got mercury in the fish. And what do the shrimpers do? They sit on top of the Superfund out in the bay, and they take the shrimp up,

and you folks out here are getting nice, mercury-laden shrimp. This is what is going on.

## YOU CAN SAVE THE WATER

But the point is, twenty years ago we could have done zero discharge, except nobody's asking for it. I remember one time I spoke before a Gulf of Mexico symposium and I was before industry and I was talking zero discharge, and these CEOs in the background were saying, "What are we talking here? Philosophy?" Zero discharge is a philosophy? No, it's not a philosophy, it's a technique. It can be done. There is a lot of technology around. It has been done a long time. For instance in the Arab countries they've been doing it, not because they were so worried about the pollution and they were real conservation minded, but because they had to have the water. They couldn't waste their water. A lot of the zero discharge technology arose from this desire to keep the water in a closed loop. And that's one of the real benefits of it. You not only can close the loop on pollution and discharges going into the water, but you can save water.

Like in the agreement I finally got with Formosa—and like I said, it took being outrageous, because in the beginning nobody believed me; they thought I was a real nut. Now they just think I'm a real persistent nut. But that's what it takes. When I first started talking zero discharge with these companies—and these companies know about technology—they said there's no such thing as zero discharge. You can't do that. But the thing of it is, you persistently bring this up. I went on three different

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