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The Greening of the Blue Collars

Tough-minded, hard-working American men, the kind who know how to strap a twelve-gauge shotgun onto the back of a pickup, could always count on a few magazines—*Sport Truck*, *Car and Driver*, and *Motor Trend*, for example—to stand up against doom-saying environmental and bureaucratic wimps. But in the same magazines that have long defended the oil and automotive industries against the likes of Ralph Nader and the Sierra Club, we now find a turn toward environmentalism.

The November 1989 issue of *Sport Truck*, for example, called on Detroit to provide technology that is friendly to the environment. "Even if performance has to be compromised by clean air legislation," an editorial conceded, "we're just going to have to bite the bullet. Because when our enthusiasm butts heads with our health, something has to give."

Car and Driver showed glimmerings of environmentalism even earlier than *Sport Truck*. For two decades the magazine railed against "safety twits," the Clean Air Act, "Eco-Fascists," endangered species programs, seat belts and air bags, speed limits, welfare cheats, and government regulations in general. In the November 1989 issue, however, columnist Brock Yates came out in favor of corporate average fuel-economy (CAFE) standards. "Like it or not," Yates wrote, "our beloved car is an irksome source of pollution, urban congestion, and excessive fossil-fuel consumption. Calls for an end to the CAFE standards—recently heard from no less an eminence than General Motors president Robert Stempel—seem selfish and simple-minded. I am no Greenpeacer, but I believe we face larger prob-

lems on this globe than the search for more horsepower-per-cubic-inch or the financial welfare of the auto industry."

In the August 1989 *Car and Driver*, William Jeannes, a columnist who historically echoed Yates's diatribes against environmental regulations, jumped on the bandwagon. "If you are concerned about planet Earth

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