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## *Solid Waste → Resource Recovery → Decision-Making*

In the summer of 1971, correspondence was initiated with the late Phil Witt, Chairman of the Solid Waste Section of the Environmental Division, to explore areas suitable for *Journal* Reviews. Many topics were considered. The two finally selected appear in this issue.

The first, by James Abert and Morris Zusman, reviews the state-of-the-art of handling municipal refuse with emphasis on the recovery of resources from such an operation. Successful implementation of many of the proposed techniques would be as a real advance in our attempt to minimize undesirable waste storage or disposal, as well as supplementing our decreasing supply of natural resources. So many of the new solid waste handling schemes involve traditional chemical engineering that it is fitting that this journal emphasize the problems and possible solutions.

The second review, by Albert Klee, deals with decision analysis. Why is this topic in the *Journal*? Quoting from some early correspondence with Phil Witt, "It is impossible to evaluate a waste disposal process by the usual means. There is usually a negative return on investment; constraints are imposed by regulatory bodies and the public reaction may be adverse. Understandably, everyone is reluctant to make a decision, yet one must be made."

Dr. Klee's more broadly based review is applicable to areas other than just solid waste handling. The key is the use of expert opinion in the decision-making process. Many of us act as consultants or experts both within and without our own organizations. Many of us also use consultants or experts regularly to provide input in areas for which we have insufficient expertise. How effective is this process in producing optimum decisions? After reading Dr. Klee's paper, perhaps we can view the interaction more objectively and benefit from his conclusions.

The *Journal* extends its appreciation to the Environmental Division for sponsoring these two reviews, and special thanks are due to Dr. Kurt Tauss and Professor Gary Bennett for shouldering much of the responsibility.