

## "VERY SORRY' DELOREAN DRUG BUST STUNS GM

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Thursday, October 21, 1982  
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Ever since his widely publicized resignation from General Motors in 1973, **John Z. DeLorean** has been a sensitive subject on the GM headquarters' 14th Floor, where the company's highest officials work.

"On a Clear Day You Can See General Motors," **DeLorean**'s scathing account of life inside the giant corporation, written by J. Patrick Wright, reportedly touched many raw nerves at GM.

So the news that **DeLorean** had been arrested in Los Angeles for alleged involvement in a major drug deal to save his collapsing auto company struck GM like a thunderbolt Wednesday morning. Shocked active and retired executives who knew **DeLorean** as a highly confident and talented businessman couldn't believe he had become so desperate.

"I'M JUST GLAD that I didn't have this problem, and that I wasn't faced with this kind of temptation," said Thomas Murphy, retired GM chairman. "I feel very sorry for his family, in particular."

GM public relations officials felt the news was so important that they informed Chairman Roger Smith Tuesday night at his home. Smith, who knew **DeLorean** from the days in the early 1970s when both were group vice-presidents with offices on the same hall, expressed "total shock and surprise," according to a GM spokesman.

Some outside observers predicted that some in the GM hierarchy would be glad that the haughty, jet-setting **DeLorean**, who never fit the GM mold, had finally been humbled.

"The 14th Floor isn't going to feel real bad," said David Cole, director of an automotive study project at the University of Michigan and son of former GM President Edward Cole. "He's in a whole lot of trouble, and there are a lot of people in the Detroit area who wouldn't mind pouring more on him."

Added one GM official who worked with **DeLorean** when he was general manager of the Chevrolet Division, "I haven't noted any particular sympathy for him."

BUT MOST GM officials said their first reaction was one of disbelief rather than gloating. "I haven't heard any snickering," said one GM official.

**John McNulty**, vice-president for public relations, said the arrest should call into question some of **DeLorean**'s criticisms about GM in the 1979 book. "Somebody told me that the book is required reading at some business schools," said McNulty. "I would think they would now have to think again about using it."

Wright, a Grosse Pointe author, responded that the book stands on its own merits, and that it has gained wide acceptance in the business community. He added that he "never anticipated" **DeLorean** would find himself in such a mess. "I was shocked, and I'm sure that is the reaction at GM, too."

Even those who have been close to **DeLorean** at his new company , **DeLorean** Motor Co., were flabbergasted Wednesday.

"I'm amazed that he would do something like that, but I guess desperate times breed desperate acts," said Mike Knepper, who was public relations spokesman for **DeLorean** until March. "But I never saw any of that desperation at the office; he always displayed extreme self-confidence. Never did we feel that the boss was about to give up."

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Caption: Pix

Edition: METRO FINAL

Section: BIZ

Page: 1B

Index Terms: DELOREAN; DRUGS ; ARREST ; REACTION ; GM

Record Number: 8301160491

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