

hundreds of square miles of farmland to be paved over, and strip mines gouge immense scars across the country to get ores that feed insatiable smelters. Countless forests are hacked away to make more and more paper. Leaky oil wells are drilled in more dangerous places. And freeways expand over the land. The skies get grayer, the rivers browner, more people get sick, and life becomes more dreary for those without the means to escape.

It's not that the world is dying—it's being killed. The murder can be prevented. But technology won't cure pollution because the real cause of pollution is a lot more than just technology.



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POLLUTION: THE NATURE OF THE BEAST

PEOPLE DON'T POLLUTE

The human race has been around for a million years. Nature engineered us very carefully so we wouldn't interfere with the balance of life, which supports all living things—including humanity.

You breathe in oxygen and breathe out carbon dioxide (CO₂). You give off solid and liquid wastes.

Plants breathe in CO₂, and take in minerals and nitrogen from animal and human waste. They use sunlight to turn these things into food substance, and they grow.

Animals eat the plants, then humans eat these animals and plants as well. After we die, our bodies decompose, and become food for the plants.

The cycle is closed. Nothing is wasted.

Pollution interferes with this natural cycle of life, a cycle which depends on air, land and water. Pollution is smoke and oil slicks and junk cars and weed-killers. Pollution pours out of smokestacks, exhaust pipes, culverts, dump trucks.

Pollution comes from producing things and from the things that are produced.

We've already seen what makes the air so dirty. Cars and industries do an equal job of poisoning the atmosphere.

Water is even more the victim of the factory. Industry uses and pollutes almost two-thirds of our water supply, and agribusiness (big farms using irrigation) accounts for most of the rest.

People themselves use less than 1/7 of all the water consumed in America. Sewage, the waste that humans put into water, can be removed. The oil, acid, ammonia, dissolved metal and pesticides from industry and agribusiness in most cases cannot be removed.

It's the same story with land pollution (garbage). Industrial and commercial waste makes up 60% of the hundreds of millions of tons of garbage discarded annually. The other 40% comes from "people." But look more closely and you find that much unavoidable people garbage—discarded food, paper and the like—breaks down or can be recycled. The problem comes from all the "convenience" packages.

The no-deposit, non-returnable cans and bottles are hard to get rid of. They pile up on the scrap heaps—over 100 billion a year—and actually cost us a lot more money than the old returnable types. Each one costs you an extra 30¢ in taxes for disposal, a tab the manufacturer never mentions. That's one reason they started



Is it really the wishes and demands of the people that run America? Does America's immense, swelling economy really work for us—or against us? Who benefits from it?

We have to look at what America makes.