

PLAINTIFF'S
EXHIBIT

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Pollution Expert Believes World May Become Unfit for Habitation

Dispatch of The Times, London

LONDON—A warning that the world before long could become unfit for human habitation has been voiced here by a leading authority on pollution. Prof. Barry Commoner, professor of botany at Washington University, St. Louis, spoke of "a terribly grim challenge" to mankind to solve the environmental crisis.

Addressing a conference organized by the Soil Association, he forecast a crisis, a point of no return, that could reach the fields or waters of major American farming areas in 25 to 50 years unless action was taken.

"If we are to survive as inhabitants of a world increasingly transformed by technology," he said, "we need to reassess our attitudes towards the actual world on which our technology intrudes."

Professor Commoner said that the world had become enmeshed into a nearly fatal illusion that we had at last escaped from our dependence on the rest of nature.

The professor asserted that the pollution problems resulted from fundamental faults in technology. Triumphs in developing the modern automobile have been balanced by failures in their operation, he said.

"Once the automobile is allowed out of the factory and transformed," Professor Commoner added, "it then reveals itself as an agent which has rendered urban air carcinogenic, burdened human bodies with nearly toxic levels of carbon monoxide and lead, embedded pathogenic particles of asbestos in human lungs, and contributed significantly to the pollution of surface waters."

Once a nuclear reactor begins to operate, it threatens rivers and lakes with its heated waters and human bodies with radiation, the speaker said. Speaking of insecticides, Professor Commoner recalled that they had helped to breed resistant strains of "big, strong, strapping bugs." In parts of South America, he reported, parasitic pests have had to be imported to prey on the smaller pests to redress the balance of nature after the use of insecticides.

Professor Commoner said the world should start looking at the environment as a whole instead of breaking it down into a number of special disciplines when considering pollution. Little leeway is left in the system, and "time is short," he said.

But Dr. Kenneth Mellanby, chairman of the Soil Association's research advisory committee, said that all was not lost.

"The air of London today is cleaner than for a century," he asserted. "The Thames, until recently a stinking sewer, is much less offensive, even if additional impurities are taking their toll."

"A concentration of some persistent pesticides in our bodies and in our food is demonstrated. I hope we will disown ourselves as an agent which has rendered urban air carcinogenic, burdened human bodies and their is nothing left worth saving."

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