

CHAPTER 9: WASTE

"WE TAKE PLASTIC FOR GRANTED":

Just how many things today are made from plastic?

... waste bins, bin liners, ashtrays, cigarette lighters, potties, nappy sacks, feeding bottles, cat loos, pet beds, plant pots, plastic fruit, brushes, mops, combs, drinking straws, milk bottles, milk crates, suntan lotion bottles, cooking oil bottles, ice cube trays, picnic sets... "Perfect for the job..."

"TUPPERWARE: Storage containers. Introduced because this was hygienic. Sold through a catalogue. To keep goodness in, badness out. Very much a sanitary product. Free from insects and vermin. Invented by Earl S. Tupper- a reclusive chemical engineer, who left DuPont in 1942 to experiment with new plastics technology. He used a plastics waste product - black, putrid - referred to as 'slag'. He created a brilliant new product- polyethylene- a pure, white, translucent, non-toxic, odourless substance- almost Heavenly- God-given. A miracle transformation" said Alison Clarke, a British historian at Brighton University. All you have to do to seal Tupperware is to snuggle the top of the rim of the bowl and press. Seal made good with a so-called Tupperware burp. Seal took advantage of the flexibility of polyethylene. The top was made smaller than the diameter of the bottom of the bowl- a raised groove creates tension- the groove flexes out when pressure applied, but snaps back to original shape once in position, forming a smooth water & air-tight seal. Can be refrigerated. Worries in the kitchen could be banished. Tupperware offered more than the technology for keeping bad odours at bay. **The Tupperised Cupboard:** All products for the kitchen could be stored in a well ordered fashion. It was keeping things in their right places- very important" (BBC, 24/10/1994) ("Now there's a man who could make the dark change into light... A man who understands how it should be. He told me to close my eyes, don't let grace go by...")

"Like to hold a **Tupperware** party to make some cash?" "Would you like to look at these Air-tight plastic containers?" "Very useful. Very convenient." "Very popular!" ("... it's the item we're all looking for!") "We need more finesse!"

"**STACK 'N STORE:** Plastic containers, some with lids. Bright colours. Brilliant. I *wish* these were made bigger..." (1992).

... plastic Garden furniture... **ADVERT:** "Table covers, garden chair covers, hammock covers- made from strong, water-proof, woven polythene which are protected against UV sun-rays. Save your valuable hammock from the destructive forces of the wind, rain and sun with this tough all-over cover. Rust-free eye-lets to keep it fixed" (Ideal Home mail order catalogue, 1992).

... plastic tumblers, CD's, videos... ("Cut. That's a wrap." "The film industry uses **tons** of plastic.")

... plastic money-bags, purses, cheque book covers, pens, plastic plugs (**PLUGS:** "The **EEC** has **plans** to **change** all British plugs- to bring these in line with other European countries. That's a **joke**, isn't it? Their **standard** is a **lower** than ours. What a **waste** of precious plastic.")

... plastic sockets, conduit, circuit boards, folders, visors..... plastic printing cartridges ("**300 million dumped annually**.")

... plastic chopping boards, traffic cones, riot shields, margarine containers, fast food packaging... ("**Supermarkets generate huge amounts of plastic**...")

... plastic medicine bottles, syringes ("Nearly all plastic used in medicine is made from coal...")

...plastic jewellery, rain Macs, razors, containers for sweets, cigarette lighters,

"**SAFETY HELMETS:** "We tried smashing a plastic hard hat - sort found on building sites, with a hammer. Good things. Didn't break! Gave it all we've got" said 2 BT engineers (1993).

ADVERT: "... so STRONG an elephant could stand on it without breaking it... " (Tonka?)

... plastic TOYS. SO MANY plastic toys! Many tested to be virtually indestructible... ("Children love testing everything to destruction..." (toys have to be Super-Strong!)

Frisbees: "The military studied the Frisbee to see if this could be used as a weapon."

Rubik Cubes: "10 million people bought one - 4 new puzzles have been launched since..."

1988: ADVERT: "**BUILD AND PLAY TOY TUBES:** The FUN construction set for girls, suitable for ages 4+. Sturdy plastic pieces join together. Makes many different play accessories EG. chairs, baby walker, stroller, high chair, rocker, slide, recliner. Easy to assemble and take apart. No tools required. 68 pieces in a deluxe set" (Copyright M & S Shiller, Brooklyn, New York).

"**There aren't** many MODULAR designs about. Problem is the fixing. If pieces only pushed together, may not get pushed enough to make a strong connection, so danger of structure collapsing" (said the owner of a toy shop, UK, 1992).

"The UK toy industry is **worth £1 Billion**" (1992).



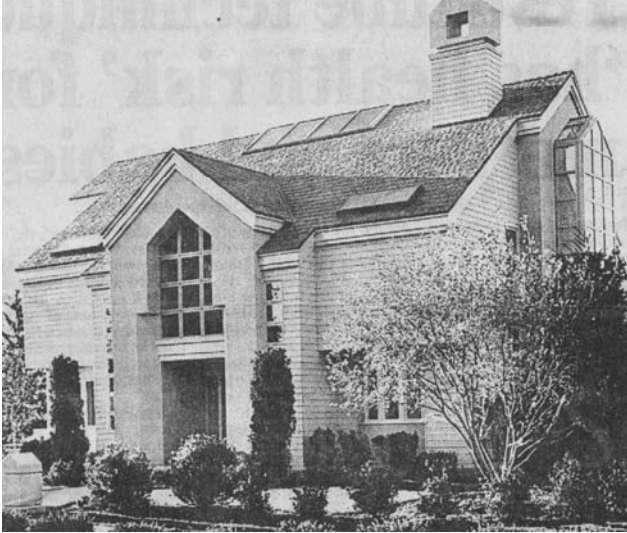
... plastic inflatables: "An inflatable toy castle used for jumping on by children - not tied down, took off with 4 children on board" (UK, 1992).

Plastic Housings... for computers: "Americans throw away 10 million computers a year."

Plastic Housings... for lawnmowers, vacuum cleaners, radios, hairdryers, telephones, power tools, cameras.. . the list is endless. **But no HOUSINGS to PROTECT PEOPLE! WAH!** "**MODERN HOMES. THE NEW APPROACH?**"

"**SCRAPYARD BITS INTO TOMORROW'S HOME:** In the future, people will live in homes made from

discarded beef burger packs and bits of car trim reclaimed from the scrap-yard, according to representatives of **GE Plastics**, an American multinational company producing advanced plastics. The claim was made when the company recently unveiled its *revolutionary* new house in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. **The colonial-style house...**



... almost **1/3rd** of which is made from **recycled** and **advanced** polymers and **resins**, **makes use of advanced design and building methods**. They are meant to **demonstrate** that plastic is the material of the future for **cheaper, safer and more easily constructed homes**. 'We are very excited in **sharing** with you what we feel the future home is' Mr. Uwe Wascher, vice President of marketing for GE Plastics, **told architects and builders**. The 3,000 sqr ft, **4-storey** building features a **façade that resembles timber**, achieved by using a plastic claimed to be **damp resistant, damp-repellent and flame-resistant**. The matt black plastic door with an inlay of cherry wood has a built-in infra-red sensor and camera that produces a photo of the visitor. Inside **the walls are of corrugated plastic**, offering strength and fire resistance. Polymer films control the level of light through the windows and the translucence of the **glass can be switched by adjusting an electrical switch, giving the option of clear windows or opaque glass for privacy or shade**. The floor has a **wood finish**, but a **plastic base** allows wiring and piping to be discreetly run throughout the house. The **roof tiles** are flame, moisture and warp resistant. Company representatives say the great advantage is malleability, versatility and **low weight for shipping and handling**. A GE spokesman said: 'You don't **paint** it. You just replace it'...' (The Times, 28/10/1989) (**A Non-biodegradable? Disposable? Or Recyclable? Standard-looking house? RESIN - to repeat traditional mistakes? Wrong Approach!**) **"PLASTIC: It's THE FABRIC OF THE 1990's."** "Washable, **hygienic** and cheap, plastic has become the **favoured** material for almost

everything. It has saved lives, helped put men into space... plastic has revolutionised our lives... "*It's the stuff of alchemy* and it has a very **humble** role as a **utility** material - tolerated, enjoyed, it is **functional and beautiful...** How could we exist without it?"

"THE 21ST CENTURY. Tap in a few numbers. Everything's plastic. It's fantastic!" **"I** was born with a **plastic** spoon in **my** mouth..."

"Plastic is replacing metal..."

"(Thanks to NEW MOLDING techniques... Plastic LIBERATES us... new shapes, new designs. The Mother Earth thing - round shapes... Space-Age design gives us hope, a bright outlook. It has a futuristic appeal. Be into roundness. It's nifty, funny, zany- that's why I like it..." "Its new shape..." "Its **simple curves...**" "Its simplicity itself." "It's so fine, so fine."

"Plastic is usually thought of as 'unnatural' even though fashionable hair gels, the latest silicone implants and the slinkiest of nylons are made from **plastic composed of the same atoms and molecules as trees and flowers.**

Ever since plastic 1st appeared more than a century ago, **it has had a struggle to prove its worth** and no matter how hard designers and critics have tried to make plastic acceptable, traditionally **it has been seen simply as a cheap substitute** for luxurious natural materials. But **it is an alternative to** horn, tortoise-shell, ebony, marble and other **precious substances in short supply**. Catching up with the imaginable and the future for this **versatile** material looks extremely *exciting*."

"Plastic is the face of the future."

"... it's DISPOSABLE." = **chuck it in the bin** **"...it's not worth anything" ?**

"We are choking on plastic **waste.**"

"Rubbish': One of the biggest causes is plastic waste going into landfill sites."

"650,000 tons of Non-Biodegradable Plastic dumped in landfill sites each year" (UK?)

"At present, **1% of plastic waste is recycled"** (14/9/1990).

DUMPED: "You've thrown it away!" "...it's all gone now." "That's the way it goes... saying it's all a load of rubbish! It's not rubbish! It isn't rubbish! It isn't rubbish! It's not a heap of trash. It's plastic - it's worth SAVING! Stupid... to throw... it ... all... away!"

"Please! DON'T waste it..."

VANISHING PLASTIC because **they** say: **"There's no money in it..."**

"NEW' DEVELOPMENT: The continuous plastic bag for super-markets. Now each item can be wrapped individually in a bag made to fit" (1990) **WAH! "There could be a SHORTAGE of plastic soon..."** "Here today, **gone tomorrow...**" "You never know **what's** around the corner..." **The WASTE of it all!**

UK: "Little done by plastics industry to **recycle...** The Plastics Federation said: '**No** quantity collecting. **Costs too high** to warrant **investment**. If **more collected**, costs justified.' **Failed to get any interest** in **plastic bottle recycling** - they're so cheap to make. **We can't get any money out of it, so it won't be done.**"

EXPERT: (studied recycling for 20 years): "Government has to take the lead to appoint a minister to **create** Tax **incentives**. Industry says difficult to take a lead as no profit- same as car industry" (14/9/1990) ("**Plastics are a growth industry which will respond to demand...**")

"**MOUNTAINS OF PLASTIC WASTE:** Is there any point in collecting it? **Some** types of **plastic bottles recycled** to produce fibres for clothes, carpets. Recycling plastic is very difficult. Bales take a lot of space. Each item has to be hand sorted and identified as many different types of plastic used... **Wealthy homes throw away twice as much** as council tenants" (8/10/1993).

GERMANY's **GOOD WORK** -v- UK's **LETHARGY:** "Rubbish from Germany is 'threatening' Britain's recycling efforts. **Germany sends waste to UK**. So much waste! Can't deal with it. Paper and **plastic**. System over-loaded. **400,000 tons of plastic**. Much more than we thought. LinPacs plastic recyclers fear **recycling may collapse**. Tim Yeo, UK minister in charge, says **it is unfair to dump waste on us**. Need way out. 'We have to stimulate follow-up' said the German **Environment** minister. **Germany is having to lower their standards regarding recycling!**" (28/10/1993) (LinPac make vacuum extruded polystyrene high performance insulation board, **CFC Free** Polyfoam).

"**Anything** made from **virgin plastic can be made from recycled plastic**" said LinPac..."

"... in Germany the strictness of the packaging ordains has given rise to instances of **cargos of plastic being shipped abroad**, because there is no money to be made from it... German rubbish has turned up in landfill sites in Portugal and South Africa..." (17/9/1992).

"**GOT SO MUCH PLASTIC WASTE BUT DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH it:** German **people** now have **another bill to pay - the rubbish bill**. Rubbish from each household is weighed by truck - households receive a bill according to how much rubbish is disposed of. **So many** German **people are into recycling**. Have been '**too successful at it.**' Now **many DUMPS** of **plastic waste just waiting** for someone to deal with **it. Until there's a market for it...**" (19/9/1993).

UK: "Plastic producers pay to collect waste. **10,000 tons of plastic waste they don't want**. Can't they do **something useful with it?** We are building **MOUNTAINS** of **WASTE** we can't use. A **British industrialist re: Plastics, said:** 'There's no point getting all that waste if there's no useful products at

the end that can be made from it'..."

"**Is all the plastic from CARS recycled?** **Average life expectancy of a car is 11 years**. A car is made using at least 8 different types of plastic. A lot of the plastic **could be recycled**. **Charge** builds up on the **plastic, different static** properties denotes which type of plastic... **Instant Identification Plastic** is cheap.

Some say **it's not worth recycling**. At present going to landfill..." "By weight 95% of a car will be recyclable by 2015, compared with **75%** of the 1.5 million currently **scrapped annually**" (1994).

"**Plastics** used to make lorry springs, hip joints, heart valves, and Concorde's nose. **It can conduct electricity, be stronger than steel and more transparent than glass**. Plastics have thrown away their cheap and nasty image. Are now collector's items, gaining value" (12/3/1994).

"**Each week container ships leave British ports bound for the Far East full with plastic waste...**" (24/8/2001) (**Any way they can, they waste and rubbish plastic**. One day they will regret this...)

"**WHAT WE NEED IS A GREAT BIG MELTING POT?**" (1960's song).

"**86% of plastics** used today are Thermo-set i.e. **cannot be re-melted** (means: If heated to melting point, the plastic **decomposes...**)

"... **polymers shrink when heated...**" (Ref. www.askascientist.com).

"**These days specialists can recycle plastic without this problem occurring.**"

"**LOW HEAT AIDS RECYCLING:** A new US technique allows plastics to re-molded without using heat to melt / weaken them. MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology) in Cambs, USA have developed a system whereby **plastic** can be shredded and **re-molded 10 times without changing their properties**. Thus making recycling less energy intensive and make recycling more feasible. **Molding at room temperatures** could eliminate problems..." (BBC, 26/11/2003).

"A team at Cornell University hope **C02** could one day **be collected & used to make plastic** - similar to **polystyrene...** having done **experiments** with orange peel. **This could provide an alternative building block to using oil.**" (**WHEN?**)

JAPAN: "**Plastics** reprocessed to make insulation & roofing materials..." (BBC, 20/1/2005).

UK: "**75%** of councils **do not recycle plastics** as there is no **use** for **it**. **Each year** Britons get through **5 million tonnes** of **plastic**. Barely **1/10th** of this **is recycled**. Therefore **much goes into landfill or the incinerator - up in smoke.**"

THROWING MONEY AWAY: "Take it away at once" say **non-thinking consumers**. "**PUT it OUT with the rubbish.**" "**GOOD riddance to BAD RUBBISH.**"

UK: "20 million tons rubbish thrown away annually. Of this, **80% is recyclable.**"

UK: "In paper, we consume the equivalent of a **FOREST** the size of Wales every year."

"6 million tons of paper and cardboard are imported into the UK every year. ½ is thrown away." "The USA and UK import huge quantities of paper... the cost of doing that..."

"We discard up to **10 times** our body weight in textiles, paper, glass, plastic, metal and kitchen waste."

"WHAT is in an average BIN? **36% paper**, 9% metal, 10% glass, 4% textiles, **21% food waste**, 6% plastic, 14% other materials. 25% of the average dustbin is vegetable waste. **Additionally, a lot of wood is thrown away**" (Ref: Friends of the Earth Recycling Directory, 1991).

"DANGERS OF METHANE: Many people live on top of old rubbish dumps. Methane gas can gather, seep-out, explode... lethal quantities, a risk to life. Landfill sites are a risk to public health. Government has allowed crisis to creep up. Hardly any councils have tested sites for safety, those few tested all have a methane problem. No gas yet found in houses. But not safe to start a car. **EXPLOSIVE** levels monitored. Houses being demolished. Tenants being **evicted!** Council sold houses *after* they knew there was a problem! Houses described as a 'tinder box.' Private house-holders not told- no tests done. **Government repeatedly alerted but stopped research. Failed to see consequences.** Government going to legislate. Is the answer to dig a trench all round these houses?" (16/10/1990) (Give **them** an **alternative!**)

Methane Gas = An Explosive Time Bomb (methane is **smelly...**)

"Methane Gas could be **a main contributor to The Greenhouse Effect.**" "Methane is **10 times stronger than CO2...**"

"**TREES are not bearing fruit- they're dead or dying due to methane gas.**"

UK: "At Arpley, Cheshire, **Biotreatment** is involved with a group that will use soil microbes to draw out and use methane from **a new dump** that will **receive 13 million tonnes of rubbish during the next 25 years.** At peak production, the tip will yield 6 million therms a year" (1990).

UK: "It's the **COUNCIL'S FAULT**": "Regarding our rubbish filled streets, the councils are to blame for **all the litter**, not louts as they so rudely suggest. Shop-keepers are told to tie up rubbish in black bags and put these out for collection. **This rubbish is all along our streets, often spilling out, in little semblance of order.** People with their take-away food happen along and view this as a way of disposing of unwanted items. Councils should address this problem before criticising others" (letter by A. Richardson).

UK: "**THE NOISE OF THE DUSTBIN CARTS!** At 5am the dustbin men arrive in their **exceedingly**

noisy dustcart... the pipe sticking out of the roof, belching out smoke. **Are they burning 'rubbish' as they drive along?"** "One poor dustman got his foot stuck in a **crushing lorry...** at Christchurch... he was in agony!"

"Volume of rubbish is reduced by squashing & grinding..." "**Anything that has been shredded and mixed, cannot be recycled.**"

UK: "**Sales of dustcarts** have really gone through the roof! This model **costs £100,000**, and this is not top of the range...It's become **very BIG business, moving rubbish**" (1990).

"In **HOT** countries, rubbish has to be removed **daily** to prevent **outbreaks** of insects..."

GREECE: DUSTBIN STRIKE: "The Acropolis, shrouded in brown smog, is surrounded by **uncollected rubbish** as a dustmen's strike enters the 9th day in Athens. Fears are growing that the rotting piles and the **pollution** could pose a health hazard..." (19/1/1990),

UK: "**Running out of landfill sites...**" (1990).

"**53,000 tons of rubbish every day** in Great Britain. **Takes land and space.** Rubbish covered with soil to stop it blowing away... now **trying 'something new'** i.e. **covering it with foam** - an elastic membrane to keep smells in, pests out. Will allow methane gas to escape. **More rubbish still piled on top.** Still under test. Regarded as being 'more efficient' (by Mrs Thatcher)..." (1990).

"We in the middle classes have nothing to lose but our comfort..."

"**Every person** in London produces almost **½ a ton of rubbish a year.** **Commerce and industry produce 11.5 million tons a year. 1.5 million tons goes to landfill. 500,000 tons are incinerated.** The remainder goes to other counties, like Essex, to be **dumped...**" (1994).

"**LANDSCAPES ruined by tips.**" "The **PONG!**" "Landfill sites are **badly maintained.**" (Fleas, rats, excreta...)

"Now **MORE RATS** in Britain **than people!**" "Some **people think there's a new plague on the way...**" "Several thousand rats near the rubbish dump. People do live nearby. There will come a time when there is **another Black Death - only this will spread** right across Europe to a greater degree- a population **controller, unless rubbish dumping is nipped in the bud.** **SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED!**"

"... the boy is now recovering after being gnawed whilst he slept at his family's council home - the **rats** (which **spread disease... the new 'super rats' are immune to poison...**) got into the house... His Mum said his bed was covered in blood - she thought he had been stabbed- it is too horrific to think about..." ("The cat ate the rat...")

SEA GULLS: Debate: "Should we shoot them? They are a noisy pest..." "Don't feed the Sea-gulls." "She was attacked...The seagull cut her head..."

"**Sea gulls do have a purpose.** They excrete

much-needed goodness into the Sea..." (Man upsets *their natural fishing at Sea* by **leaving rubbish everywhere**. Seagulls come inland to scavenge food scraps especially from rubbish **dumps**. (We might get rid of them from our towns by leaving fish-scraps for them regularly on the beaches near cliffs).

1990's: The **Buzz** phrase: **"Think GLOBALLY. Act LOCALLY."**

"WE ARE MAKING THIS WORLD UNINHABITABLE..."

"750,000 Plastic and paper disposable nappies are needed for orphans each day." "... will take **600 - 800 years** to disintegrate in **landfill**." "It takes **500 years to decompose plastic carrier bags**." Now companies are selling devices to seal each nappy in a plastic bag to reduce odours..." (1990).

(*They should at least use BIO-DEGRADE** for nappies and bin bags!) ("The UN's 'Clean Up The World' event focused on **reducing** the use of plastic bags...")

"WOEFUL DAYS & WASTEFUL WAYS..."

NEW YORK: **"27,000 tons of mixed 'rubbish' put in land fill sites every day."** **"200,000 tons of paper used every year."** (1990).

"If all the bags of rubbish Yanks dump in one week were lined up they would circle the Earth 6 times. They throw out 60,000 bags a minute."

"The number of town and cities in the USA with **recycling** schemes has swelled from 140 to 2,700..."

"Both sides of the Atlantic now suggest recycling may not benefit the Environment as much as many believe, and is certainly not as economically viable as hoped. Recycling is a complicated business. People are now aware of how rubbish is collected and sorted, but they forget about *the marketing of the end product*... **Paper can only be recycled 6 times** because the cellulose breaks down..." (**Better to re-use 6 times** than only **once**. **That will save 6? HUGE FORESTS EVERY year!**)

"... therefore 'EXPERTS' are convinced **refuse-derived fuel** is the best way to dispose of household rubbish..."

EXPERT: **"Plastics** are a good example, as they are derived from petroleum, and can be incinerated as a concentrated form of petroleum energy..." (**Once plastic is burnt, it can never be re-used. For the sake of a few minutes energy, we have lost its potential to make something really long-lasting and worthwhile.**)

EXPERT: "... Owing to the various molecular structures of different plastics, they should be recycled individually if they are to be used for their intended purposes... that is a tricky and expensive business..."

EXPERT: "50 different types of plastic are on the market. Each **has to be hand-picked. Therefore not**

considered **viable to recycle plastic. Most is bailed and sent away for reprocessing...**"

EXPERT: "... Some companies have tried blending plastics to make **products such as traffic cones and park benches** but there is a limit to the number of road cones people want..." (**You could try to widen the range...**)

THE HOUSE BUILT OF JUNK: A resource conserving home, built **from recycled materials**, was made 'The National Assoc. of Home Builders Research Centre.' This was made from old steel, shredded newspapers, wood mill scraps, **plastic roof tiles** supplied by GE Plastics, and recovered mineral wool, recycled copper... **Fast food containers** were **a problem**... The Research Centre has dozens of such projects..." (Popular Science Magazine, January 1993).

"The architect, Michael Reynolds, calls his houses: 'Earth Ships.' Aluminium drinks cans cover the Earth (**mud**) walls. He uses car tyres with Earth rammed in with a sledge-hammer. Makes a strong, 3ft thick wall which maintains a 70 degree geo-thermal temperature. Uses bottles and cans for infill i.e. walls & partitions. Wooden frames, doors and ceilings. Earth is a good material- so are steel tyres. Both are readily available with no cost (i.e. additional burden) to the Environment" (BBC2, 4/7/1994).

"... Countries such as **Denmark, Japan, Sweden, Switzerland and Britain** have **started establishing incineration plants** to burn household refuse to ensure some form of energy is recovered... **More and more governments are legislating to encourage recycling** but companies complain they are not given enough time to find out what is feasible, or necessary, or just a waste of time..." ("You know we need to speed it up, slow it down...If I could just make you turn around...") (song.)

INCINERATION = WE HAVE TO CARRY ON MINING & CHOPPING TREES TO GET MORE RAW MATERIALS...

"THE MASS BURN INCINERATOR releases **poisonous gases** into **the atmosphere**. Difficult to reduce **pollution**, or control for sure. **British Plastics** is advocating **burning plastic** to release **its energy**... Looking to make best use of oil reserves. We need to re-use- vital. We have to **change**. The waste years will wage on" (15/11/1992).

EXPERT: **"Everything** chucked in? **Car batteries** contain **large amounts of lead. Batteries cannot be economically recycled** because **they contain high levels of highly TOXIC materials**. Denmark has **banned Mercury** oxide batteries. **Rechargeable batteries** have a **very high Cadmium content**..."

EXPERT: **"Batteries** contain **Heavy Metal. Contents do not bio-degrade. Should be illegal to throw batteries away. Burning rubbish puts a wide variety of DANGEROUS CHEMICALS** in the

air- all sorts of impurities..."

"Vacuum cleaner **dust** contains **lead...**" EXPERT: "Aluminium is one of the most expensive and **POLLUTING** metals... the metal is mined, much in **tropical rainforest areas**. The mining process destroys large areas of natural vegetation, leaving the soil bare. The resultant **erosion** causes rivers to **silt** up and huge quantities of **slag contaminate** the water supply..." "Aluminium **costs** £1,000 a ton so it is worth recycling" (1991) (**Aluminium** is used to **make cars and planes...**)

EXPERT: "Phone the manufacturers. If they don't know how to **safely** dispose of their products, **they SHOULDN'T BE MADE.**"

EXPERT: "**GOT MONEY TO BURN? Whatever you do, don't burn it.** The **smoke breaks down THE OZONE LAYER** and contains **cancer causing gas.**"

PEOPLE SAID: "**There won't be any OZONE if you dafties don't stop burning** all the rubbish!" "**It's deadly serious. Think of the damage! What does it feel like to be exterminated?**"

"Waste disposal company 'Cory Environmental' want to build **Europe's biggest Waste-to-Power incinerator** in Kent, England" (12/5/1993).

BURNING WASTE: "10 NEW WASTE INCINERATION plants awaiting Planning Permission / Construction..." (London, 1993).

"TOXIC POLLUTION FEARS: 'The London Waste Regulation Authority' **plan to build 5 GIANT INCINERATORS** over the next 20 years, to cope with London's **growing 'rubbish' mountain, has been widely condemned.** **Environmentalists want a logical approach.** Incineration will add to pollution. Incinerators will damage **air quality** and the remaining **ash contains a high concentration of toxic** substances which is disposed of in landfill. **Asthma** levels are already way above the national average..." (10/3/1994).

"IS RECYCLING A WASTE OF TIME? It saves energy. It saves Trees. It makes Eco-sense. Reusing it makes us feel good..."

"80% of waste could be recycled... IF there was the will to do it..."

"Collection bins in **car** parks... Is there any **logic** to recycling efforts? **Muddled idealism. Recycling has to be** concentrated on **glass and metal? Plastic and paper not** regarded as cost effective, say 'experts'! **Has to be recycled** into packaging! **Over-packaging costs the Earth. Yet amount of packaging** for products is **increasing** all the time. **A waste of resources and production.** How to control? A tax on packaging? **EEC** targets unrealistic. **Incineration favoured by many 'experts'!** **Burning** is regarded as 'high efficiency'! **Make less in the first place?**" (15/12/1993).

THE OVER-PACKAGING ROW: Incpen ('The Industry Council for Packaging and the Environment') and **Friends of the Earth** have a

joined a battle concerning the definition of 'over-packaged.' Just what does this mean?" (**Far too much 'disposable' plastic** is used to package products- often impossible to open without a knife, or scissors!) "East Germany had the best system in the world. **Simple** packaging!"

WHO ('The World Health Organisation') estimates **30 - 50% of food** in parts of the developing world **fails to reach** Human mouths due to **inadequate packaging.** **Friends of the Earth** say the government should take **action** to ensure packaging is reduced at source... their report says **too much packaging** is **wasting** money and **resources**, and alleges **the public is being 'ripped off.'** This drew criticism... " (19/6/1993).

... it's ALL A MATTER OF STORAGE": (The **simple answer** is to put food-stuffs etc in **re-useable / plastic** containers- like Tupperware- just make sure brands are clearly identifiable by shape / style / colour. Don't use labels that leave load of sticky gunk...)

USA: "There are more than 200 **dumpsters** in the county of Prince George - only one is segregating wood, cardboard, and steel. **As costs of dumping waste** from construction at a landfill site **risers**, builders **will turn to recycling** their waste. **Construction land fills are as toxic as municipal ones...**" (1993).

"Hidden among the household waste, is toxic waste dumped by criminals - waste dangerous to human life... **Illegal dumping** makes **\$Billions. Garbage is big business. \$3 million per day profit.** People shot dead-silenced. Each violation \$10,000 fine. A big problem. Odds **favour the criminal.** The problem is realising how much the Environment is being damaged. Tipping poisonous chemicals down the drain is illegal in USA. 24,000 tons of rubbish every day- **how much is toxic? Going into the soil?** A dozen other countries are interested in solving waste disposal problems and are looking to America. Will garbage cops be exported? (22/3/1990).

"... the major problem is finding corporations and hauling contractors to participate in **recycling waste...**" **"Transporting stuff for recycling costs money and takes energy..."** **"We use HUGE amounts of energy. How can we save energy?"** "The great thrust- how to get the same level of service **efficiently?**" (**"STOP and TIDY UP! We've got to do it." Recycle, using Alternative Energy!**)

GREECE: "READY FOR A DUST-UP? Wherever they go, armed police monitor their every move... watching for an ambush... Who are they? The **dustmen** of Naples. The newly-**privatised** dustmen's **contract worth £300 million** has recently been secured by a company who were bidding against the mafia... and the Cosa Nostra is not happy..." (9/9/1990).

"One dust cart (a huge lorry) now costs £120,000

- £150,000" (UK, 2005).

GERMANY: "Over 80% glass, plastic and paper waste is recycled under 'The Green Dot Scheme.' Over 40 major producers produce goods displaying a green recycling logo. Householders place these items in big yellow bins. **A private company collects-** obliged by law to collect packaging - **consumer has to pay.** This helps keep the country clean without having to raise taxes. **Low-paid** immigration workers **hand sort waste.** **Remainder put in landfill.** Collection costs subsidised by consumers. **Mountains of waste turned into** toilet rolls. **Plastic is washed, converted into pellets, made into plastic bags** for supermarkets. **Very cheap source of plastic.** **Without knowing it** - all paid for and subsidised by consumers and German recyclers."

DENMARK: "'SOPHISTICATED' **HOME COLLECTION SCHEME:** The Danes want **50% recycling...** have a scheme whereby **Household waste is separated into 2 bins-** one is for **recycling-** is sold back to industry... they **increased Taxes** on land deposit sites. Now cheaper to go to a **recycling dump.** A tougher land-fill Bill..." (1990).

UNIFIED WASTE SYSTEM COMING IN EUROPE: "New European law- a standard, unified Europe... We should look at this again and ask what it does for the whole of Europe, not only **copy Germany...** For **this** we may have to **wait** many years. **Should government set new standards? What is worthwhile? A saving of oil, the re-using of product? We should leave it to the market to discuss and decide."**

"Europe is being **smothered in waste, motivated by economics...** A 1992 survey revealed **only 2% of waste is being recycled!** That is a long way from the government's target of **25%** by year 2000..."

"There is **no incentive** to build **recycling plants"** (UK, 1990). **"It's** on their lists - **awaiting funds."**

"Only 1 in 5 councils in the UK **have a recycling scheme"** (September 1990) (**"They are too busy counting money."**)

"Red-tape is delaying plans to build a waste recycling centre... the council applied for a licence to 'The London Waste Regulation Authority' but is **still waiting...** The council has the money set aside to start the scheme to recycle paper, oil, cans, white metal, wood and rags, and so **preserve natural resources...**" "... **the centre opened 17 months later...** at the opening ceremony were **the children** who petitioned the council, pleading for such a centre..."

"... trouble is, **people can't** be bothered to take their **stuff to the (recycling) dump...**" ?

UK: REFUSED REFUSE: "... local residents are complaining their streets are being turned into an unofficial dumping ground, because **the local**

recycling centre is so popular... the recycling depot **is over-flowing...** **the recycling bins are not emptied regularly,** bins are choc-a-block... **The council said** this is the responsibility of the **private contractors** who pledged to empty the bins once a week... There might be an **accident...** our cleansing manager will try to sort **something out...**" (**"I'd treasure your love. I'd like to tell you how best to use it."**)

"They offered to give **us** bags to **separate** rubbish but nothing ever came of it. They said they couldn't get a supplier for the bags!"

LEEDS: "An example of the way things could **go in the future** in Europe. Leeds, a kerb-side recycling scheme, started as a 6 month trial, has been going for 2 years... Probably 'the **most advanced recycling project in the world'** - **other countries ask for their help.** **Each household is issued with** a green and brown bin. **The brown bin** is divided in 2 sections. All compost-able kitchen and garden waste is placed in the front and non-recyclable material in the rear. In the **green bin** goes paper, card, plastic and cans. Bins are **collected once a fortnight.** The rubbish is then sorted and recycled appropriately. The **scheme is expensive** but ultimately saves money because it costs money to send rubbish to landfill and this cost rises every year. There is a chance of selling **compost** to firms as **an alternative** to peat..."

"In Essex, '**mobile**' **recycling Banks** are **shifted from place to place (by lorry) to help** people in remote **villages...**"

"ARE FRIENDS OF THE EARTH BEING STITCHED UP?" "There's a growing stench surrounding the councils and their business backers..."

"WHERE THERE'S MUCK, THERE'S BRASS..." **"Scrap metal merchants** quickly became millionaires..."

WHO IS GETTING THE PROFITS FROM RECYCLED WASTE? "Do **investors** know where their money is going?" "No. Not really."

"THEY WANT YOU TO THROW IT AWAY AND BUY A NEW ONE!" **"You should be able to take it back to the store and make it good as new again..."** ("Don't be fooled!")

"Ripping off the public..." "The public are going to get cynical." (**"We already are!"**)

"We will draw attention to the **CON** and advise **Green investors** from now on" said **Friends of the Earth** (1990) **"Reducing threats to our Environment has bought nationwide support-** Friends of the Earth now has over **230,000 supporters** in England and Wales, Scotland has **5,000 members"** (June 1990).

"The actual cost to collect house-holders rubbish each year is only a few £'s per year..."

"LABOUR PRIVATISING 'RUBBISH' DISPOSAL: Liverpool council **selling** the right to collect rubbish

to a French company arguing **this** is needed for **quality** of service" (17/6/1991). ("The disputes are likely to continue...")

"Tell me, what do **they** do with **all the LEAVES** and rubbish you sweep up?" **Council Street Cleaner:** "It's **all taken** to the **recycling centre**- the (**filthy**) place where **the big lorries drive up... the rubbish is tipped** from the top of the building **into huge metal skips. Then it's taken to the furnaces.** The council these days doesn't waste..."

GLASS RECYCLING: "Glass doesn't lose quality when recycled..." **UK: RETURNABLE!** Drinks manufacturers used to give you money back for returning bottles. **People faithfully returned them- no problem.**" "... the council has 15 **Bottle Banks** which accumulate **500 tonnes** of glass each year..." "There are 190 bottle Banks nationwide" (1990) "You know those coloured collection bins in the streets for collecting glass- green for green glass, brown for ... yeh? Well, I watched the man come in his lorry to empty them- he **tipped all the glass together!** What's the use of that?" "**A lorry that had collected a load of glass for recycling was followed- all the way to the landfill site!**"

"... the recycling bins are there so you feel you are doing something good for the Earth..."

"Only **16% of glass is recycled** in the UK. 40% in Germany. 50% in Holland. Tin- only 10% in UK. 35% Germany, 45% Holland" (1990).

UK: A WOOD STORE: "... a timber store is proposed encouraging people to bring, buy and re-use softwoods. The aim is to minimise the use of hardwoods... the idea is that people phone us and we arrange for items to be collected and taken to the centre... We will even lay on skips for heavier items..." (*Great idea but did such a store open? Surely every area could benefit?* In Spain, no scraps of wood anywhere- every bit grabbed by people for recycling or burning for fuel).

"**FRANCE** is using **high quality paper to make toilet paper!** To be flushed away! **Lost forever!** **Advertised as:** 'Environment Friendly!' Britain is way behind France. UK **imports** the cardboard rolls" (1990).

"If **not enough** places producing **recycled paper** at **low prices, more TREES** will be **chopped down and the cycle of destruction continues...**"

"Newspapers are **only** using **20% recycled fibre** – they **estimate** will be using 40% by 2010. Most **newspapers** are **not recycled.** They **end up in landfill.** Cost of recycling machinery high" (1991) (*You only need a paper shredder, a plastic tank, some water = Pulp. It is not hard to make recycled paper!*) (Newspapers use '**dirty**' ink- hence **not nice** to recycle?)

"Buying **1 newspaper a day, plus 2 at the weekend = ONE TREE every 6 months.**"

"**NO PLANS TO INCREASE RECYCLED PAPER:** "Plans **killed** for new mills using **recycled paper.**

UK not cutting back on paper used for **newspapers.** "We want to sell newspapers. We need the best fibres. But **if more readers said they want us to use more recycled fibres, we would'...**" (1990).

DAILY... NEWS PAPERS - TONS & TONS TOSSED - without a thought or care for the World!

UK: "2 MILLION TONS of newspapers are read in Britain **every year.** Only **¼ recycled.** 'Collection is **not economical.**' Industry **can't cope, with all the paper** there is to collect. There is **no demand** for **recycled paper products.** **The Public need to put pressure on** editors..." (1991) (*I keep trying to buy recycled paper in preference to any other quality. I have been repeatedly told: "We don't stock recycled paper because it costs twice as much..." Uh?)* **WAH! "We want recycled products."** **UK POLL:** "Investment funds sent out questionnaires: "**There are 37 million would-be Green** purchasers."

"But companies only have to advertise they are **Green...**"

"Oh, we've got **such a lot of paper work...**"

Usage of PAPER IS UNSUSTAINABLE! "You'd **think they would** at least **REDUCE** the amount of **JUNK** mail, **TO SAVE TREES!**" "**So much paper, for so much crap!**"

Every 2 weeks, I throw away the equivalent of ½? a tree in unwanted junk mail.

UK: "... collections are made regularly at **schools...** we hope businesses and traders will **realise the rewards of recycling...**" ("... local schools don't want paper, cardboard etc for recycling. They've **nowhere to store it all!**")

"The GLOBAL DEMAND FOR PAPER IS SET DOUBLE in 25 years..."

"**PAPER** made from **TREES** is **yellow- requires chlorine bleach.** Huge quantities of toxic chlorine discharged into rivers... **PAPER made from HEMP is Stronger - recycled, will last 100's, 1,000's of years...**"

(Go to: www.livingtreepaper.com) (also see: **Hemp**).

UK: "GOVERNMENT FINANCE ON OFFER TO ENCOURAGE RECYCLING: ... The government hopes some of the cash available will encourage **councils** to set up more recycling schemes for plastic, glass and tin cans. **A team of consultants** has been picked by the Dept. of **the Environment** to work out what sort of costs the authorities will face..." (2002) ("We are **only** interested in new ideas for what to do with waste at **council-owned 'recycling' centres...**")

UK: "It's on the cards, as sure as fate is fate, **soon** they will be **charging all of us for dumping our 'rubbish'** (by drastically increasing the amount we pay for refuse disposal. At present, this figure is very low). **Councils** are also considering levying **penalty payments - fines,** for 'customers' who **do not recycle waste,** so they can meet EC

targets..." (UK, 2004).

"Tip officials have been told to **do something about the way the rubbish smells.** **Locals** have **complained** about the smell drifting across houses and schools.. **A spokesman said:** 'We have been drilling a series of **Gas** wells on the site to install pipe-work to extract landfill gas to be used to generate 'renewable' electricity. We apologise for the smell..." (March 2005).

"**PILOT SCHEME:** ... an experimental recycling scheme in Kent will turn **unwanted plastics** into **gutters, spare car parts and clothing...**" (BBC, 6/7/2004).

UK: "BURNING WASTE IS 'BETTER' FOR THE ENVIRONMENT than burying it in landfill sites- therefore the Dept. of the Environment plans **22 new GIANT WASTE INCINERATORS,** selling the idea to the country by saying **these will provide 'Green energy.'** **Action is not being taken to reduce** the amount of waste we generate. **29 million tons is thrown away every year- 5.5 million tons is recycled and composted"** (Daily Mirror, 14/2/2006).

"The people make regular Inspection trips..."

"We've come down from the valley- we're looking for the land of milk and honey. We've got our babies in our arms. We're looking for Maggie's farm. We're looking for a rainbow..." (UK: 1990).

PEOPLE SAID: "WE ARE ALL DOWN IN THE DUMPS THESE DAYS..."

"DIRTY, SMELLY RUBBISH ... especially in **hot** weather..." **"All the piles of white goods..."** "Who knows what **this** stuff is, or **where it comes from?"** "I've just found an unused carton of cream. Say's 'Eat within one month of purchase.' There's no date on it. The label says 'Use a whip'... I would if I had one..."

FREecycle: "A Grass Roots organisation / network around the Globe. How does it work? **Pass it on.** Email your local group to offer something for **free.** Giving it away = **Why landfill something if someone can benefit from it?** (Ref. www.freecycle.org).

"The council **charges us** for **compost** made from **our** deposited **green matter,** and uses this on municipal beds..."

THE INTELLIGENT NETWORK: "You and I paid for it. Giving it away (to them) is not right. It belongs to us - the family..." **"SORT it OUT!"** = **"POWER TO THE PEOPLE!"**

"Let's Do it People!" RECYCLE = "Collect it"

"Save it, save it, save it, SAVE it."

"Don't throw it away!" "It would be **criminal to throw it away."** **"Don't use it all up!"**

"... it's something you can't refuse..." **"It offers you a whole new world, shining and FREE."**

"RECYCLE it!"

"RECYCLING WORKS BEST WHEN MATERIALS

ARE PURE..." Basically, **nothing should be made unless it can be recycled.** That would be **sensible / ideal.** We **should aim to recycle 99%** (not 25%). Everything clearly labelled (don't use tiny print). To quickly identify plastic - a manufactured embossed symbol on the plastic will do!

COMMUNITY ACTION: Just separate the (small) stuff you don't want into **2 plastic bins:**

One (small'ish) **GREEN** bin **with a lid** for (**wet**) fruit & veg waste (keep in the kitchen - **just empty regularly** - if you do not have a compost heap - use **a green bin bag**) + a bin for (dry) waste EG. paper.

(**WET** (**Uncooked**) **GREEN vegetable / plant matter / organic** EG. used **teabags, coffee grindings, egg shells...** **Save for Composting.** **"Think of falling leaves, dying plants and kitchen waste as valuable."**

"... it's good for the garden..."

COMPOSTING: **"Helps soil structure, increasing the water retaining properties, especially of sandy soil, and returns valuable nutrient to the soil."** **"Rich, organic compost would do the world a lot of good."**

(**SEAWEED:** "I have to laugh. Our council uses a tractor to 'remove' seaweed from the beaches- but then they leave it there in piles. Apparently 'they do not have the money to dispose of it.'" **"Seaweed is the main ingredient of many tomato plant feeds. Seaweed is used because this has a balanced range of nutrients. Seaweed, washed to remove salt, and shredded- is an excellent fertiliser for growing Trees..."**)

The Community should decide what to do with all the valuable compost...

Advice: Don't use **plastic bins to make compost!** Those form **sludge.** **Let the air, the sun, the rain and grass cuttings break this down naturally.** Keep branches, twigs **separate- shred,** or burn to create potash (a natural fertiliser). Do **this** work at **The Community Recycling Centre.**

WET: (Unwanted) **cooked food / raw meat / slops cannot be composted.** So, remove packaging, put in a specially marked container kept in the freezer, to reduce **putridity** until **collected / deposited...** or, have a **red bin / bag for 'smelly, don't sort.'**

"FOOD SCRAPS MAKE PLASTIC: 22 million tonnes of food waste USA each year..." 1992: "ICI made a bio-degradable polymer but was expensive... Now process made cheaper by Natural Institute in Honolulu..." (Ref. www.newscientist.com).

Old Oil = Keep in a container, when collected- store in a tank - when full tank collected / replaced. **The oil cleaned / reused / recycled.**

This simple process will **eradicate the disgusting smell associated with rubbish,** will stop **rubbish forming a soggy mass,** will keep paper, card, textiles etc clean, **thereby make it possible for sorters to handle all the goods for recycling.**

LANDFILL = Only old rubble. Put in abandoned quarries...

DRY: = Wool (old carpets, mattresses etc, fabrics = **Fibres** (can be reused...) paper (recycled) plastic and wood (all recycled) **Metal?** *Ahh!* (It was in the Earth's crust to **strengthen** it). **Put it back now!** (Wrap broken glass or anything sharp in old newspaper). (Glass bottle recycling = **Sterilise and Re-use** / not **smash, melt, reform**).

Large items - arrange collection.

EVERYTHING collected, sorted, stored at The Community Recycling Centre... Could be recycled at the Recycling centre?

Or, **give it to well deserving causes.**

Or, **customers** collect costed / weighed amounts – the fee paid = the running costs of **The Community Recycling Centre** i.e. wages for sorters... equipment etc.

NOTE: Name changed - no longer called 'The Tip,' **Rubbish Dump** or 'Local Refuse.'

This benefits the local community...

It is an opportunity to provide local employment, training – an option for the Community to own / manage the Recycling Centre, as a Co-operative, using surplus gains to benefit the (local and Global) community.

The bags containing the goods for recycling could carry an identification label to show which household has deposited each bag - to ensure residents etc., separate their rubbish correctly.

"CLEANLINESS IS NEXT TO GODLINESS."

"RECYCLING will help save the Environment."
("... it eases my troubles, that's what it does.")

"THE RUBBISH 'VISION' EFFECT": ...the proportion of burned waste could rise from 9% to 25% in the next 15 years. 'New' Labour's surprise plans a **3-fold rise in building more waste incinerators...** **Ministers support more burning** as it provides a 'green' source of energy- a **state-of-the-art plant...** would produce usable energy from the burning of waste.... (and it) reduces our dependence on foreign fuel, (and) incineration (provides an) effective way of meeting strict European landfill targets...

Waste Strategy 2000 sets out how England and Wales should meet the targets of **the EU Landfill directive** which sets **targets** for **reducing** landfill and **increasing recycling:**

- by 2010 to reduce landfill to 75% of 1995 figure and increase recycling to 30% • by 2013 to reduce landfill to 50% of 1995 figure and by 2015 to increase recycling to 33% • by 2020 to reduce landfill to 35% of 1995 figure.

(In **spite** of) long running **campaigns against incinerators...** **serious health concerns** ... **Ecologically damaging...** could **discourage recycling** in the future... **incinerators need a high level of waste** to be run cost-effectively...

Critics say: 'In **the 21st century, the only Green**

solution is to reduce packaging, increase recycling-levels, and build smaller-scale anaerobic digestion plants.' 'The government should take **urgent action** to legislate against **profligate packaging** - like the polluter, 'the packager should pay.'

Friends of the Earth are calling (for) **reducing the amount of waste generated and expanding recycling** so that at least **half** of household waste is recycled by 2010.

What should our **future** policy be on waste disposal? What **do you think?**" (BBC, 22/1/2006).

CHILD: "I think it's absolutely bonkers..."

"The UK is one of the **worst** countries in the EC for recycling waste, also Portugal and Greece" (re: research by the Institute of Public Policy, BBC, 28/8/2006) (see: Chapter 14, Africa).

"Many newspapers are losing customers because of the internet..."