

Alleviating the Greenhouse Effect With Solar Energy

A Published Letter to the *Los Angeles Times*

August 9, 1988

You are to be soundly congratulated for your editorial exposing the international scientific and political controversies surrounding the subtle, yet cataclysmic artificial exaggeration of the "greenhouse effect" and the absolute necessity to reduce global deforestation and fossil-fuel burning before we're boiled in our own broth.

However, you are to be soundly reproached for going on to suggest that we can "transform the [nuclear power] industry into an enterprise that can produce clean power without threatening the life around it." That would violate the known laws of physics—endlessly toxic nuclear wastes and catastrophic nuclear accidents are the unavoidable consequences of that industry.

There is but one safe, endless supply of energy for us on Earth—the power behind the weather itself and behind photosynthesis, and thus fossil fuels and life itself: "The faraway sun is a giant, safe nuclear reactor. ... Most of the sunlight that has reached the Earth, though, has not been put to work for people. This has been the greatest waste of a natural resource that people have ever seen." [Please note that I have just quoted another of my letters published in the *Times*.]

Where there's a will there's a way: We can harness solar energy, if and only if in this next decade we have leadership that will be as dynamic and imaginative as our work force is now underemployed, yet inherently ambitious.

The next time Michael Dukakis utters the word "photovoltaics," I hope it's no longer chic to snicker.