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K-108 Radio (Sat. am 8am-9am)  
Honolulu, Hawaii

### **Earth Day 2002 Hypocrisy**

The list of events planned around the U.S. for earth Day 2004 was chilling. While tens of thousands of people die from soil, air, and water poisoned with pesticides and scores of toxic chemicals, craft fairs, discussion groups, and lectures were held. Lost was the passion and sense of urgency that heralded in the first Earth Day 34 years ago.

The 34<sup>th</sup> Earth Day this year marked an unprecedented time resource consumption and environmental violence against the Earth and our health.

On Earth Day this year, while the speeches, conversations and trinket sales took place:

603 people worldwide died from exposure to pesticides and countless more suffered serious health threats from chronic exposure.

5,400 to 11,000 children died from diarrhea from drinking polluted drinking water.

27,000 children died from curable infectious diseases.

164 babies were born that were affected by mercury poisoning because their mothers ate contaminated fish, while government agencies recommend that pregnant women eat several servings of fish each week.

Over 103,000 animals were killed for fur coats.

Nearly 2 million gallons of engine oil was poured down the drain and entered our nation's waterways.

Over 41 million pounds of trash was dumped at sea worldwide, with about 77% of all ship waste coming from cruise ships.

Over 3 million pounds of hydrocarbons were released into the atmosphere from jet skis, lawn mowers, boat engines, and other 2-cycle motors.

At least 1200 gallons of oil leaked from aging and malfunctioning pipelines in the U.S., polluting groundwater, lakes, rivers, oceans and soil.

313 million gallons of fuel, enough to drain 26 tractor-trailer trucks every minute, were used in the U.S.

18 million tons of raw materials were taken from U.S. soil, and topsoil was depleted at enormous rates to accommodate the U.S. animal consumption frenzy.

Some would argue that although many people are more aware of environmental issues today than in 1970, little has been done to stem the tide of environmental destruction in a world where economic growth outweighs planetary health. If anything, the destruction is happening at a greater level than ever before. It is often less visible because industry leaders and politicians know how to keep things quieter with the help of well paid public relations firms and controlled media.

Since the first Earth Day 34 years ago, global population has increased by as much as it did in the last 100,000 years. The global economy has more than doubled in the past 33 years, putting pressure on most countries to increase export income, often at the expense of natural resources.

At least 31 antibiotics and anti-bacterial compounds were found in water samples from around the country, and these chemicals are linked to deformed sex organs in wildlife, sex reversals in some fish, declining fertility in humans, and cancers.

Thirty-four years after the first Earth Day, Earth Day 2004 was a Hallmark card holiday of a few beach clean-ups, educational booths, tree plantings, speeches and parades.

Stop the hypocrisy and do your part in showing your love and appreciation for all that our planet offers us.

Stay tuned!