



In all the welcome variety of commentary on Earth Day, two columnists in particular contribute little to an understanding of the issues.

William Safire (Daily News, April 17) is patronizing in advising us not to take the environmentalists too seriously, even though "they saw a legitimate health con-

cern before most of us did.”

In advocating “economic incentives” to clean the air and water, he is disingenuous as well. The environmental movement has proposed exactly that over the years, in the form of stiff fines for violation of pollution laws, and tax credits for responsible corporate environmental policy.

Debra J. Saunders should have leavened her venomous attack on “nice people” with a little economic savvy. Solar power could become economically viable precisely because of tax credits, as well as a commitment by government to be a market for environmentally sound processes. The economy of scale needed for the development of the silicon chip, and the consequent explosion in microelectronics, is largely due to the market provided by the Defense Department.

Conservatives’ defensiveness on the environment is understandable, since they have never taken it seriously. Let us hope they don’t try to take credit for bringing the issue to our attention in the first place.

— Bill Becker  
West Hills

DAILY NEWS  
4/26/92 ■

Public Forum  
Daily News  
P.O. Box 4200  
Woodland Hills, CA 91365

TEXT within "[...]"  
omitted by editor

April 20, 1990

Dear editor,

In all the welcome variety of commentary on Earth Day, two columnists in particular contribute little to an understanding of the issues.

William Safire (Daily News op-ed, April 17) is patronizing in advising us not to take the environmentalists too seriously, even though "they saw a legitimate health concern before most of us did."

In advocating "economic incentives" to clean the air and water, he is disingenuous as well. The environmental movement has proposed exactly that over the years, in the form of stiff fines for violation of pollution laws, and tax credits for responsible corporate environmental policy. [Safire must know that the free-enterprisers he has lauded these many years have been the major obstacle to every worthwhile environmental program ever proposed.

Finally, does he really believe that "think globally, act locally" originated with President Bush, and not in the environmental movement itself? C'mon, Bill.]

Debra Saunders should have leavened her venomous attack on "nice people" with a little economic savvy [April 19]. Solar power could become economically viable precisely because of tax credits, as well as through a commitment by government to be a market for environmentally sound products and processes. [The federal government the nation's single largest consumer. [Barry Commoner, L.A. Times op-ed, 4/20]]] The economy of scale necessary for the development of the silicon chip, and the consequent explosion in micro-electronics, is largely due to the market provided by the Defense Department.

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Sincerely,

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Bill Becker