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up the price of a new car by between £100 and £1000 depending on the model. Volvo, however, is now offering to fit catalytic converters free on all newly-bought models. If the UK Government is serious about stopping the greenhouse effect it should stop wasting time on long-term impracticalities such as nuclear power and look at what can be achieved now. Greenpeace Spokesperson on the subject of catalytic converters, 1989. In an attempt to encourage drivers to opt for cars with converters, or to have them fitted on older models, some European countries are offering tax incentives. West Germany and Greece, for example, offer a discount on road tax dependent on reduction of exhaust emission. Denmark and Holland are considering similar schemes. A green transport policy Using unleaded petrol and fitting catalytic converters will dramatically reduce the levels of pollution caused by vehicle emissions. But, despite the technology, cars will still continue to be one of the principal contributors to air pollution. Catalysts convert carbon monoxide into carbon dioxide, which is less toxic, but equally polluting to the environment. What is needed, say environmentalists, is a complete rethink of transport policy which will look at the long-term effects of transport, not just the short-term solutions. A policy which will consider not only air pollution, but problems such as energy efficiency, safety, noise, the implication of different systems of transport on cities and the countryside and ultimately society at large, to establish which are the most environmentally sound and economically efficient methods of moving from A to B for the sake of both humans and the planet . A transport policy which advocates private cars is not a policy which protects the environment. Quite apart from the question of air pollution, individual cars are avid consumers of valuable energy sources which will not last forever. The following table shows how many litres of petrol per 100 passenger kilometres different modes of transport consume. From the table we see that cars and taxis exceed aircraft in terms of fuel expenditure per hundred passengers and are by far the least efficient of the land-based modes of transport. Given that pollution levels relate to fuel consumption, private cars and taxis are also the greatest polluters. Air pollution and energy conservation aside, private vehicles also come under attack when we consider rural and urban environments. Current levels of traffic seriously undermine the quality of life in our cities. **Noise** and danger resulting from too many vehicles has played a significant role in making inner cities **unpleasant** places to be. Surveys in the 1970s showed that 40 per cent of Britain's urban population **suffered** from **traffic-induced noise**. Added to this is the vibration caused by heavy goods vehicles and

the annoyance of air traffic suffered by all city dwellers

. In the last ten years, 62,000 people have been killed on Britain's roads, 800,000 people have been seriously injured, and 2,500,000 have been slightly injured. A situation exists where citizens have to alter their behaviour to ensure their safety; children can not walk to school, it is too dangerous to ride a bicycle, and the elderly or disabled can not cross the road quickly enough. Then there are the implications that

	an excessive number of cars have on society s infrastructure. Roads can not only ruin the countryside, but also divide communities. Because cars take up room, they have the overall effect of spreading people out and making them more insular - driving to a distant supermarket in your car is a different experience to walking to the local shops, where you may meet other members of the community on the way. The answer is, of course, to reduce the number of private motor vehicles. But to do this there must be viable, efficient and economic alternatives, either pleasant and safe facilities in which to walk or cycle, or reliable modes of public transport. A traffic jam in Swansea. Not an unfamiliar sight to city dwellers! Providing for pedestrians must be a top priority for any environmentally-conscious government. Surveys show that an overwhelming proportion of the journeys people use cars for could easily be done on foot or by bicycle. The problem is that roads and pavements are often too busy, noisy or polluted to make walking a pleasant alternative to driving. Reallocation of space within the structure of roads is necessary to allow for wider pavements, and greater emphasis should be placed on creating pedestrianised areas. A similar programme is needed for cyclists. Statistics show that far more people are able to ride bicycles than drive cars, yet are put off doing so by the dangers of urban traffic. Cycling has been ignored in transport planning for years. Even today, little effort is made to cater for the ever-growing demand for safe cycling routes. Environmental groups are campaigning for more money and importance to be placed on the needs of cyclists, with a target of doubling cycle use over the next five years. The greatest incentive, however, to reduce car use is to provide an efficient and popular public transport service. In many European cities, and more recently in the USA, it has been accepted that the only efficient and cost effective way of moving people in and out of cities is by rail. In Britain delays, strikes and overcrowding on trains make this public service an undesirable option. Environmentalists call for priority to be given to provide a frequent, reliable and cheap railway and tube network which will encourage more