

Still Another 'Population' Bomb

The numbers keep exploding beyond the ability of technology to keep up. This time the explosion is in the number of automobiles. The World Resources Institute in Washington, D.C., in a report called "Driving Forces," says the United States is losing the battle to control carbon dioxide from auto emissions because of the exploding numbers of vehicles. Four million more cars and trucks take the road each year and cancel out the gains being made in fuel efficiency. The report says that if Congress were to mandate one percent increases in the fuel efficiency of new cars every year from now to 2010, the total carbon dioxide emissions would still grow by several percent.

The worldwide situation is even worse. There is less carbon dioxide coming from each vehicle than there was 20 years ago, but the number of cars has increased to such a degree that cars and trucks spew at least 63 percent more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere now than in 1971. By 2010 that could mean a further increase of 20 to 50 percent of worldwide carbon dioxide emissions from motor vehicles.