

*THE WAY WE LIVE NOW*, 2018  
Script

IS 270 – Systems and Infrastructures  
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## **INTRO**

### **THE ENERGY CRISIS**

*V/O: The 1970s energy crisis was a pivotal period for the future of America's tenuous electrical infrastructure. Extreme overuse in combination with major industrial petroleum shortages triggered by the 1973 OPEC Oil embargo caused gas prices to rise upwards of 350%.*

*Increasing inflation, a stagnant economy, and eventual high unemployment resulted in mass panic, frustration, and anxiety.*

### **JIMMY CARTER**

*Throughout the decade, the nation looked for solutions to the energy crisis and, in 1978, President Jimmy Carter signed one of his most controversial pieces of legislation: The National Energy Act of 1978. The bill, along with the Renewable Energy Resources Act of 1980 and several others, pushed the country to rethink the way it relied on energy and allowed the private sector to utilize government funds for renewable energy research.*

### **FADE INTO SAN GORGONIO PASS, DRIVING UP**

*Which brings us to the San Gorgonio Pass, a natural land formation between Los Angeles and Palm Springs that is considered one of the windiest regions in the country. The first large scale wind farm in the United States, San Gorgonio is now home to thousands of wind turbines that are connected to far reaching electrical, oil, and nuclear power structures across California and in Arizona.*

*As a beneficiary of the Carter Administration's energy investment in the early 1980s, San Gorgonio persists to be a glowing example of how government funding paves the way for new forms of infrastructure – in this case one that is both heavily privatized and an active participant in the so called "free market global economy."*

### **PRIVATIZATION**

*Due to mass privatization, nearly every aspect of the the wind farms within the pass are owned, operated, funded, and constructed by private entities. Some locally owned, many not. At San Gorgonio, privately-owned land is leased to private companies who bring in giant turbines and then sell whatever energy accumulates to private energy corporations like Southern California Edison. Much of the energy created here, does not stay here.*

*Through modularity, the wind farms at San Gorgonio are able to present a public face that embodies clean energy and local ingenuity. It's pollution free energy! The energy of the future!*

## **GLOBALISM & POLLUTION**

*Often left out or buried in conversations about wind energy is the role that miners play. Deep inside each turbine, all over the globe, sits a small amount of rare earth minerals. These minerals make up the essential magnets that allow turbines to move and generate electricity.*

*Over 95% of the materials necessary for these magnets are mined in China, as lax environmental standards allow companies to sell their products at roughly a third of the price of their international competitors. The work of miners obtaining these minerals is highly toxic, dangerous, and results in excessive pollution.*

*Since there is no strict independent auditing system currently in place in China to prevent pollution, the wind energy industry is simultaneously improving our environment and further destroying it.*

## **PRIVATIZING PUBLIC SPACE**

*Now, wind energy isn't all nefarious and is, in countless ways, a huge improvement on fossil fuels. However, beyond the greenwashing and hidden pollution found far from the public eye, wind farms like San Gorgonio are also participating in a slow encroachment on public space.*

*These farms rest along public highways and roads, in front of houses and factories, along our skylines and mountains. Though people within and outside the wind energy industry argue that turbines benefit the view of our environments, there's something to say about what we lose when we give up our public spaces – whether that be land or air – to private companies who make choices that are in their favor rather than ours.*

*The wind energy industry is the energy of the future for as long as its stakeholders can make a profit.*

*There is public good happening throughout the wind energy industry and in the San Gorgonio Pass, no question, but could there be more? Will green energy ever be entirely green? And is there any guarantee that our public spaces, even the sky, will stay public?*