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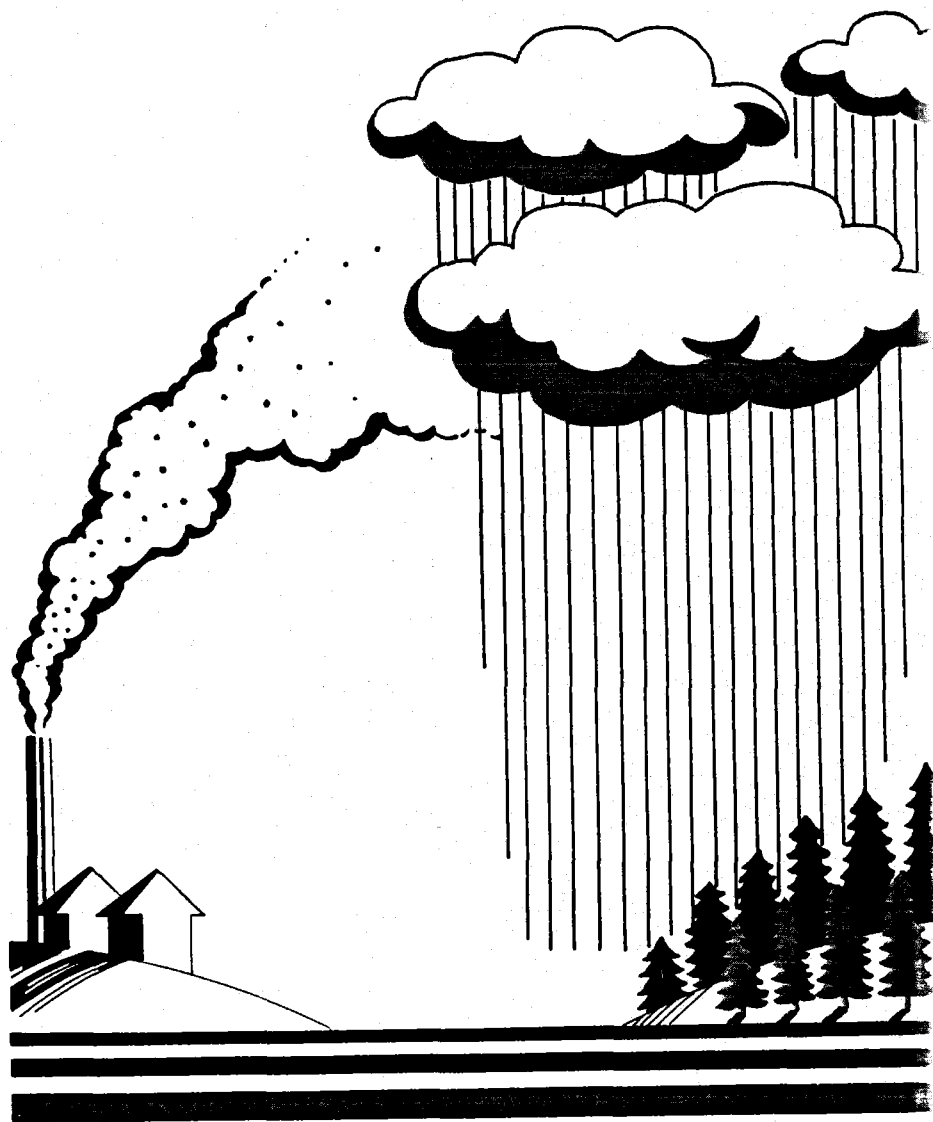
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AIR POLLUTION, ACID RAIN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Edited by
KENNETH MELLANBY

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This is the second report of the Watt Committee's Working Group on acid rain, which was set up in 1981. The Watt Committee's interest in acid rain arises from the fact that, among its causes, the man-made ones emanate from energy generation and use. Because it represents all the relevant disciplines required for the study of this topic, the Watt Committee is well placed to consider the relationship between natural and man-made factors and the effects of possible remedial strategies.

In the first phase of the Watt Committee's study, which culminated in the publication of its first report on acid rain in 1984, the Working Group looked at the fate of airborne pollution, vegetation and soils, freshwater and remedial strategy. In this second report, which contains the results of a further phase of study, these topics are included, but have been brought up to date, and the scope of the report has been extended to include buildings and non-living materials. Although consideration is given to the problem of acid rain and air pollution worldwide, emphasis is placed on the United Kingdom. The main conclusion of the report is that more research is necessary on some aspects of acid rain and air pollution, but some of the alarming reports of widespread damage caused by acid rain cannot be confirmed.

As an independent organisation for the study of energy matters, with a membership of 61 professional institutions in the United Kingdom, one of the main aims of the Watt Committee is to promote public debate and public understanding. Simple answers to the complex questions that need to be answered in order to understand acid rain are unreliable. It is hoped that the reader of this report will gain a clear, factually based understanding of the options open for national and international decision making. It will also be of interest to those for whom an objective account of the acid rain phenomenon will be of value in their professional lives.

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THE WATT COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

Contents

<i>Members of The Watt Committee on Energy Working Group and Sub-Groups on Air Pollution, Acid Rain and the Environment</i>	ii
<i>Foreword</i> G.K.C. PARDOE	v
<i>Introduction</i> KENNETH MELLANBY	ix
Section 1 <i>Production and deposition of airborne pollution</i> BARRY SMITH	1
Section 2 <i>Vegetation and soils</i> WILLIAM BINNS	13
Section 3 <i>Freshwater</i> DESMOND HAMMERTON	23
Section 4 <i>Corrosion of building materials due to atmospheric pollution in the United Kingdom</i> MICHAEL MANNING	37
Section 5 <i>Control and remedial strategies</i> CYRIL DAVIES	67
Appendix 1 <i>Nineteenth Consultative Conference of The Watt Committee on Energy</i>	119
The Watt Committee on Energy: Objectives, Historical Background and Current Programme	121
Member Institutions of The Watt Committee on Energy	123
Watt Committee Reports	124
<i>Index</i>	125