

Plain Talk

You're Part of the Solution

COLUMN BY ROB BUKSAR

I think it's time we blow our own horn. Rebuilding is good for America and rebuilders are good Americans.



We now live in times of dwindling natural resources, insufficient energy, global warming, depleted ozone, more garbage and refuse than big holes in which to bury it. That's not to mention lost opportunities and jobs. The environmental folks claim we can't afford to keep doing what we're doing so we should stop doing it and save the planet. The big business folks contend—for obvious reasons—we can't afford to stop or change so relocating out of the country makes sense.

What a quagmire! Yet do you ever stop to realize as rebuilders our way has been part of the solution from the start? The current situation reminds me of country music star Barbara Mandrell singing how she was country before country was considered cool. Long before all the incredible challenges we face today, rebuilders (the ultimate recyclers), by very nature of what we do and how we've done it, have been frugal with resources and energy and good stewards of the environment even before it was fashionable to do so.

I'll bet you've never really thought how little energy, fuel and natural resources you use compared to basic manufacturing. Rebuilding is a planet-saving business and I know we don't receive the positive attention we not only deserve, but desperately need.

Remanufacturing in general is considered the ultimate form of recycling. Recycling commonly refers to products that are returned to their original raw material state, removing them from the waste disposal stream by using the raw materials to manufacture new products, such as melting down engine casting and using the metals to make new parts.

A 1981 study by the Massachusetts

Institute of Technology on the remanufacturing of auto components indicates that nearly 85 percent of the energy expended in the manufacture of the original product was preserved in the reman product. The raw material saved yearly through reman would fill 155,000 railroad cars. Furthermore, the energy saved each year through global reman efforts equals the electricity generated by five nuclear power plants or 10,744,000 barrels of oil.

Our type of reman takes recycling to the limit. Every day a rebuilder pumps new life into what once was a non-functional or discarded component.

Excuse me for sounding melodramatic, but rebuilders have been performing a little magic for decades. Dead and useless components are restored with a brand new life cycle with next to no negative effects on resources, fuel supplies or the environment. In the most balanced fashion I don't think commerce or industry could get any better than that! Everybody wins when it's rebuilt or restored.

So how do we sound our horns? I intend on writing President Bush, my congressmen, the federal trade people, and every environmental "watchdog" group I can find an address for. Our industry and others like ours need to be encouraged and supported at all levels through incentives, grants, low-interest loans, and tax breaks. Reman is America's overall best bet for the long haul.

A copy of my letter to President Bush will be in next month's *Exchange*. Feel free to fill your own name in and send one yourself if you're moved to do so.

God bless America and help the small domestic businessman.

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