Surface or "strip mining" is modern technology at its peak of development. The hills of East Kentucky, rich in deposits of coal, have in a few brief years been laid bare in the race to secure the minerals to provide energy, power and wealth. This process has left behind poverty and degradation and a seemingly total disregard for the worth of the land itself. The industries which have perfected these methods of extraction have paid little attention to restoration. But perhaps Appalachia can serve as a lesson to the developing nations around the world. As they accelerate the work of exploiting their own land, they may be reminded by the landscape of Kentucky that some mining methods leave scars that centuries cannot erase.

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Produced in cooperation with the New York State Department of Education by United Nations Television

Production No. 72031 Release Date: October, 1972

72-48010

United Nations, New York, N.Y. 10017