



40 Shades of Green: The Rise of Radical Environmentalism

By William A. Borst, Ph.D.

Historians have characterized the fruitless raids on suspected terrorists authorized by Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer in 1920 as the *Red Scare*. Similarly, the Environmentalist Movement has fostered an atmosphere of fear and anxiety in creating a *Green Scare* that has permeated American society the last half century. Under the rubric of science, it has terrified the public into believing that the world will choke on its own pollutants unless its economic behavior changes dramatically.

THE SKY IS FALLING

Dire predictions are not new in western culture. Violent death from plagues, volcanoes, warfare, and earthquakes have been a quotidian occurrence. Ronald Bailey's 1994 book *Eco-Scam* stated that the last 25 years have been beset by a constant litany of dreadful prophecies about the alleged dangers, emanating in the greed to control and abuse the world's natural resources. Apocalyptic images of global disaster have achieved a wide currency of belief, and have been fully accepted by many world leaders. Armed with Ph.Ds in microbiology and astrophysics, today's soothsayers see gloom and doom in every air molecule and raindrop from the sky.

The situation is reminiscent of James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps' 1849 classic fable. After being hit in the head by an acorn from a tree *Chicken Little* went on a mission to warn the other barnyard animals that the sky was falling. The story serves as a modern allegory, representing the alarming scientific forecasts of the disappearance of the rain forests, global warming, ozone depletion, deforestation and overpopulation.

WATERMELON RADICALS

Environmentalist fear and trembling traces its roots to the second half of the 19th century, which witnessed a period of unprecedented economic growth on the wings of great technological inventions. The 20th century, with its world wars, the Holocaust, Gulags, and a major Depression, stood in stark contrast, pushing the United States into a questioning of its material past with its promises of endless progress. During this

time many intellectuals had fallen prey to the liberal preaching of French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau who taught that civilized society corrupted human life. He urged a return to the primitive times of hunters and gatherers. Factories belching lung-searing pollution, and money hungry capitalists were living proof of what ailed American society.

It was the radical politics of Karl Marx that promoted the idea, according to historian Paul Johnson, *that capitalist society...is ultimately self-destructive*. The world environmental crisis, caused by capitalism, became the new agent of history that would eventually destroy it. Instead of strangling on its class conflicts of the old Marxist paradigm, capitalism *will choke to death on its own wastes*.

The Environmentalist Movement, with its emphasis on pristine nature, its Luddite disdain for capitalism and modern technology has a quasi-religious flavor. Like a secular *green religion*, environmentalists share a tradition with the utopian movements of the early 19th century. With the earth as their mother church and Marx as their priest, they believe that they are the only ones capable of recognizing and understanding the impending catastrophe that awaits an unsuspecting and benighted public. These radical environmentalists, or *watermelon radicals*, that is, green on the outside and red in the middle, have an inflated sense of self-importance that empowers them with the task of saving the planet, even if they have to destroy the United States in the process.

Their activity has translated into a flurry of regulatory laws that continue to hamper American business and technology. Since 1960 Congress has passed thousands of new environmental laws and regulations. The annual cost has been over \$100 billion. In 1970 President Richard M. Nixon signed the Environmental Protection Agency into law. It immediately became the bane of American commerce.

A BABBLING BROOK

One of *Time Magazine's 100 Most Important People in the 20th century*, Rachel Carson, made her early mark in writing about the sea, especially her 1951 award-winning book, *The Sea around Us*.

Carson and her close colleague Clarence Cottam later

became alarmed by what they perceived as government abuse of new chemical predator pesticides such as DDT. Carson was deeply disturbed by *man's attitude toward nature* and she achieved international celebrity with the publication of her book, *Silent Spring*. To her, *man is part of nature and this war against nature is inevitably a war against himself*. According to her New York Times obituary of April 15, 1964, *Silent Spring hit the affluent chemical industry and the general public with the devastating effect of a Biblical plague of locusts*.

Carson's book sparked a crusade to banish Dichlor Diphenyl Trichlor (DDT) from the earth. She wrote that *the sprays, dusts and aerosols now applied...to farms, gardens, forests and homes...have the power to kill every insect, the good and the bad, to still the song of birds...though the intended target may be only a few weeds or insects*. Despite the fact that no study has ever proven that DDT or other pesticides harmed humans, scores of countries, especially in the Third World, banned its use. It became readily apparent that the real threat to mankind was not pesticides but the destructive armies of insects that stripped the forests, decimated crops, ravaged the food supply, leaving millions defenseless against life-threatening diseases of Biblical proportions.

Malaria, which was nearly eliminated, has come back in Africa and Southeast Asia with a deadly vengeance. After DDT was introduced in Sri Lanka in 1946, malaria cases dropped from 3 million to just 29 in 1964. That same year the country banned DDT, and new cases shot up to over a half million by 1969. Charity dictates that these deaths were just the unintended consequences of a noble pursuit gone awry and not an evil plot to decimate the world's population through starvation and disease. One thing is certain, Carson's naiveté made her sound more like a babbling brook than a silent spring.

A JOCKEY OF DOOM

The most influential of all environmentalist preachers, according to Daniel Flynn's 2004 book, *Intellectual Moron: How Ideology Makes Smart People Fall for Stupid Ideas*, has been Professor Paul Ehrlich of Stanford University. Born in 1932, Ehrlich shared a common bond with the late Alfred Kinsey of Indiana University. Both men grew up in northern New Jersey and liked to collect bugs. Kinsey's specialty was the gall wasp, while Ehrlich's passion was butterflies. Both men wanted to reshape *society according to their own tastes*.

Ehrlich studied the teachings of the Reverend Thomas Malthus who asserted in his 1798 *An Essay on the Principle of Population* that unchecked population reproduced geometrically and food production arithmetically. Malthus' influence is evident in Ehrlich's best-selling 1968 book, *The Population Bomb*, which predicted that in the 1970's the world *will undergo famines—hundreds of millions of people are going to starve to death*. In his 1990 book, *The Population*

Explosion, Ehrlich claimed that food production had finally peaked and billions more would perish. For years Ehrlich has steadfastly predicted that atomic war, massive famines, killer-smog, food riots, poisoned water, and global epidemics would kill billions of people. None of his baleful predictions has come true.

Ehrlich and other like-minded environmentalists have a schizophrenia with regard to population. While they insist on saving humanity from itself, they stress the need for vastly reducing the world's population. Ehrlich believes the earth's population, which is hovering over six billion, should be reduced to an acceptable level, estimated at 1.5 billion people.

Like Kinsey, Ehrlich hid behind the Teflon-coated mantle of science in deflecting criticism and the grim reminder of his spurious environmental predictions. Like a relentless *jockey of doom*, Ehrlich has ridden his apocalyptic predictions all the way to the bank. Foundations and charities kept the financial pipeline pumping, putting their blind faith in a man with a track record of being wrong about virtually every issue in the environment. In 1990 he was awarded a MacArthur Foundation grant valued at \$345,000. If both Kinsey and Ehrlich had concentrated on their bugs, science and the world would have been better off.

THE GREENHOUSE EFFECT

Another vexing issue is *global warming*. It did not make headline news until June of 1988 with the Senate appearance of Goddard Institute for Space Studies scientist James Hansen. He testified that he was *99% confident* that the warmer weather of the 1980's was due to a *greenhouse effect*. Simply stated, the *greenhouse effect* was the belief, held by some scientists, that the apparent increase in earth temperature was caused by rising levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere due to industrial pollution.

The summer drought that followed these June meetings convinced an unsuspecting public that the earth was getting inordinately hot and that global warming was a scientific fact. Computer models advanced this hypothetical condition by predicting even warmer temperatures and the melting of the polar ice caps by the 21st century. The National Geographic devoted its September issue of last year to the subject. Amid scores of colorful photos the magazine pronounced that global warming was *not a belief but an observable fact*. The June 13, 2005 issue of USA Today declared that *the debate is over* and global warming *is an accepted fact*.

Climate treaties, such as the anti-capitalist Kyoto Treaty of 1995, have insured that politics and grant money have trumped truth and honest research. To its credit, the U. S. Senate voted 95-0 in 1997 for the Byrd-Hagel Resolutions, which assailed the provisions of the Kyoto Protocol. In 2005 Senator John McCain introduced a bill that would resurrect a mini-version of the moribund treaty, by imposing stricter regulations of fossil fuels in deference to the global warming myth. President Bush has been under tremendous pressure to join the other G-8 world

leaders in ratifying the Kyoto Protocol.

THE PUCK STOPS HERE

In 1998 17,000 scientists signed a petition urging the government to reject the Kyoto Treaty. The *Wall Street Journal* of June 21, 2005, opined that *most global warming alarms are based on computer simulations that are largely speculative and depend on a multitude of debatable assumptions*. Since Climatology's data goes back fewer than 200 years, broad predictions run against the legitimate scientific grain.

The WSJ also discussed the *hockey stick theory* of American geoscientist Michael Mann. He produced a temperature graph for the past millennium which was flat until the 20th century, when the temperature spiked sharply upwards, like a hockey stick with the blade in the air. The global warming lobby fully embraced his theory as irrefutable proof that global warming was a reality. On the contrary, studies like that of mathematician Stephen McIntyre and economist Ross McKittrick demonstrated that Mann's data was riddled with *collation errors, unjustifiable truncations or extrapolations of source data, obsolete data, geographic location errors, and other quality control defects*.

MAN'S FLOWER BED

Environmentalism is a new arena for the Catholic Church. Pope John Paul II reminded the world in his *The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility that respect for life and for the dignity of the human person extends also to the rest of creation, which is called to join man in praising God*. In 1999 he condemned *the mindless damage to the natural environment*.

The U. S. Catholic Conference of Bishops has called global warming a *universal moral challenge*. They must realize they are floating in dangerous waters when they elevate global warming to a legitimate science, given the serious doubt surrounding its methodology and conclusions. The Bishops must also be very careful when dealing with the Environmentalist Movement when it employs terms such as *sustainable development*, a code phrase for population control, which has abortion, euthanasia, and contraception as its linchpins.

In direct reaction to the Bishops Conference's environmental positions, there is a movement afoot to redefine the debate in light of traditional Catholic teachings on man's relationship to God's creation. For years conservative Catholics have anchored their views on the environment to Genesis 1:28, which stated that God *granted dominion over every living thing that moves on earth*. People were granted the right to subdue it and control it but with deep respect for God's lesser creations.

In October of 1999, 25 economists, environmental scientists, and policy experts convened in West Cornwell, Connecticut to draft the *Cornwell Declaration on*

Environmental Stewardship. Rev. Robert A. Sirico, President of the Acton Institute and its driving force, has been *concerned* for several years *about the misguided theological trends in the environmental movement*. Sirico's organization warned against social collectivism, while stressing the natural contest between stewardship and private property that must proceed without government interference.

Some of the inter-faith movements such as the United Religions Initiative (URI) favor the creation of the new earth-based global spirituality. The Vatican opposes the URI, but Catholic support for it has spread worldwide. Syncretic religious observances have continued to mark URI gatherings since 1955, and public worship services have used banners representing the world's major religions, including a banner for the Wiccans according to the Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute booklet: THE UNITED RELIGIONS INITIATIVE. Thirteen communities of Catholic Sisters have published a book titled: SHARING SACRED SPACES to share their belief that the land and rivers are sacred spaces and to urge people to engage in earth-friendly ventures. Many of the communities are signatories of the controversial Earth Charter which calls for, among others things, ecological integrity and interdependence of human beings and nature.

CUI BONO-WHO BENEFITS?

The Environmentalist Movement has more shades of green than Ireland on a rainy day. The June 2005 DeWeese Report published by the American Policy Center, Warrenton, VA reports the following: "From June 1-5, San Francisco was the site of an international conference called World Environment Day. But the agenda was much bigger than...a hippy dance in the park. The meeting of the global elite had a specific goal, the full implementation of the UN's Agenda 21 policy called Sustainable Development, a ruling principle for top-down control of every aspect of our lives-from food, to health care, to community development, and beyond. The UN's new tactic...is to ignore federal and state governments...and to press city mayors to specific goals by signing a slate of United Nations accords."

The *Economist* has observed that as long as the income, fame and fortune of the scientific community depends on supporting *the most alarming versions of every environmentalist scare*, pressure groups, journalists and fame seekers will no doubt continue to *peddle ecological catastrophes at an undiminished speed*. The lure of money and the public pressure to accept the lies of global warming and false threats to the planet has turned too many scientists and their media allies into a casserole of *Chicken Littles*.

William A. Borst is the author of *Liberalism: Fatal Consequences* and his new book *The Scorpion and the Frog: A Natural Conspiracy*, which are available from the author at PO Box 16271, St. Louis, MO 63105, for \$17.50 ppd. (*Consequences*) and (*Scorpion*) for \$19.95 soft and \$35 hardcover ppd.

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"By the love you have for one another, says the Lord, everyone will know that you are my disciples."

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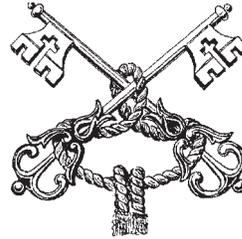
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