

The Books That Begat ‘Big Green’

Environmentalists’ War on the Poor is rooted in opposition to growth and modern technology

By Paul Driessen and Ron Arnold with Steven J. Allen

Summary: Environmentalists, it seems, don’t worry about the negative consequences of their doomsday predictions. A handful of doomsaying bestsellers has made possible the vast environmentalist movement that today holds a tight grip on government policy. These books don’t hold up as science or as prophecy, and have seriously hindered economic and technological progress that would have saved the lives of millions of poor people. (This article is adapted from the new book *Cracking Big Green*.)

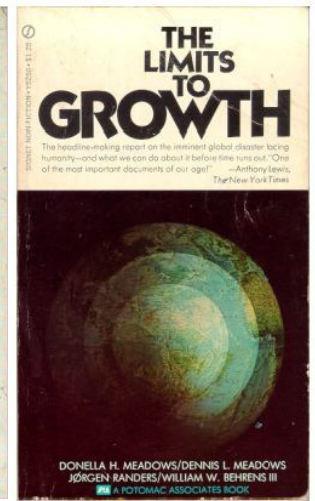
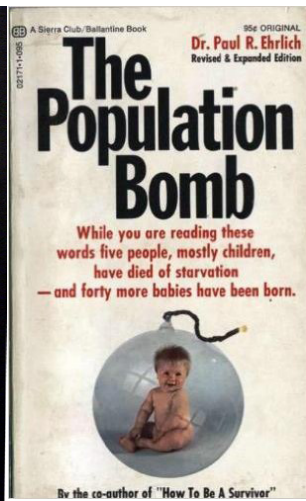
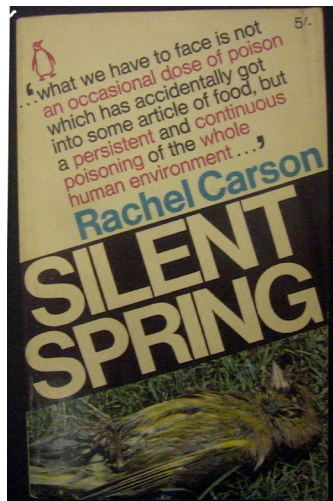
For good or evil, books change minds. From the New Testament to *The Wealth of Nations*, from *The Origin of Species* to *The Communist Manifesto*, books have altered the course of history many times.

Big Green—the modern environmental movement, in its current form, scope, and level of power—is rooted in *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson, *The Population Bomb* and related books by Paul Ehrlich *et al.*, and the Club of Rome’s *Limits to Growth*. These books helped lay the foundation for “green” ideology, empowered the world’s privileged elites, and killed millions of poor people. Today, the environmental bureaucracy and the media are dominated by followers of the ideas expressed in these books. One of Ehrlich’s co-authors currently sits in the White House as science advisor to the President.

Silent Spring roars

Big Green was born 53 years ago with the publication of a book on pesticides.

September 27, 1962, saw the publication of *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson, a marine biologist and best-selling author. Wikipedia notes: “The book was widely read—especially after its selection by the Book-of-the-Month Club and the *New York Times* best-seller list—and inspired widespread public concerns over pesticides and pollution of the environment. *Silent Spring* facilitated the ban



Silent Spring by Rachel Carson, *The Population Bomb* and related books by Paul Ehrlich and his colleagues, and *The Limits to Growth*, published by the Club of Rome, helped create a radical environmentalist movement that couldn’t care less about the victims of its policies.

of the pesticide DDT for agricultural use in 1972 in the United States.”

DDT is a chemical, harmless to humans, that kills insects by, in effect, locking their nerve cells into the “on” position, which causes spasms and death. It protected food supplies and was critical to control of malaria, a parasitic disease spread by mosquito bites.

Upon the release of *Silent Spring*, epidemiologists, academics, farmers, and other experts denounced Carson’s factual errors and seemingly deliberate corruption of science, which were interwoven with her gifted, poetic, persuasive prose. Most of the media dismissed the fact-checking as part of a massive conspiracy and cover-up by chemical interests. Carson’s critics were drowned in a flood of exploitative, fear-mongering headlines, and near-hysteria among the reading public. Some of those who were ignored included public health experts who had led the DDT-based campaigns that eradicated malaria in the United States, Europe, Siberia, and other places where the disease had sickened and

killed countless people for centuries. (Ever wonder why the headquarters of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is in Atlanta? It’s because the agency’s original purpose was to fight the malaria that was once endemic in the South.)

The first precursor of Big Green, today’s powerful environmentalist movement, was the Environmental Defense Fund, which was a direct outgrowth of *Silent Spring*. Founded in October 1967 by a group of lawyers and scientists, for the single purpose of banning DDT, the EDF claimed that

August 2015

The Books That Begat ‘Big Green’
Page 1

Green Notes
Page 8

DDT spraying had caused the disappearance of ospreys, eagles, and other raptors (birds of prey) by thinning the birds' eggshells and killing their chicks. (Dr. Joel Bittman, who originally reported the DDT connection to eggshell thinning, said he later realized he had been feeding his study birds diets that were seriously deficient in calcium, the main ingredient in eggshells. When he repeated his research with corrected diets, there was no thinning. Nevertheless, because of intense continued efforts by Big Green, the eggshell thinning myth remains a cornerstone of environmentalism to this day.)

Eco-activists of the 1960s portrayed themselves as guardians of the planet, but their true motives were far less virtuous. "If the environmentalists win on DDT," EDF scientist Charles Wurster told the *Seattle Times* in 1969, "they will achieve a level of authority they have never had before."

Corrupt, fake "science" in the service of environmentalism would henceforth shelter malaria from DDT and allow the disease to continue ravaging the developing world. Meanwhile, U.S. raptor populations continued to increase, thanks to state and federal laws that had finally made it illegal for people to *shoot* these magnificent, vitally important birds.

In 1970, President Richard Nixon issued an executive order to consolidate 15 federal units into the Environmental Protection Agency. As EPA's first administrator, Nixon selected William Ruckelshaus, an Indiana lawyer and politician who had just lost a tight race for the U.S. Senate to Birch Bayh. The clamor generated by *Silent Spring* and the Environmental Defense Fund was too

Editor: Steven J. Allen

Publisher: Terrence Scanlon

Address: 1513 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036-1480

Phone: (202) 483-6900

E-mail: sallen@CapitalResearch.org

Website: CapitalResearch.org

Green Watch is published by Capital Research Center, a non-partisan education and research organization classified by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) public charity. Reprints are available for \$2.50 prepaid to Capital Research Center.

great to ignore, and Ruckelshaus convened a scientific panel to deal with the DDT issue. It held six months of hearings, compiled 9,312 pages of studies and testimony, and concluded that DDT was *safe and effective and should not be banned*.

Nevertheless, without attending a single hour of hearings or reading a single page of the report, Ruckelshaus banned U.S. production and use of DDT in 1972. At that time, over 80 percent of DDT was being exported for disease control in countries that were being decimated by malaria and other insect-borne diseases.

Ruckelshaus, in an interview, told Ron Arnold that his decision had nothing to do with science. It was strictly political, and concern about malaria victims apparently never crossed his mind.

(As of 2013, malaria was killing an estimated 584,000 to 855,000 people a year, according to the World Health Organization, with 90 percent of the deaths occurring in Africa. If the U.S. population were losing the same proportion of its population as the 54 African countries are, we would be suffering losses that equal one to one-and-a-half September 11 attacks per week.)

The devastation caused by malaria may have never crossed the mind of William Ruckelshaus, but others took note—those who considered the world's biggest problem to be uncontrolled growth of the human population. That segment included Sierra Club executive director David Brower, U.S. Senator and Earth Day founder Gaylord Nelson, "human ecology" professor Garrett Hardin, DDT co-developer and Club of Rome co-founder Alexander King, and *Population Bomb* author Paul Ehrlich.

Taking Carson global

Silent Spring started the modern environmental movement in the United States with its anti-DDT message, but the movement really took off on fears of overpopulation, with Paul Ehrlich the leading fearmonger on the issue.

Today Paul Ralph Ehrlich is a biology professor at Stanford University; Anne Howland Ehrlich is associate director of her husband's Center for Conservation Biology at Stanford. Their 1968 book *The Population Bomb* prompted the creation of Zero Population Growth, the first American group

overtly promoting the elimination of excess human population.

The Population Bomb was written at the suggestion of the Sierra Club's David Brower and of Ian Ballantine of Ballantine Books, who had helped create Ballantine's "Sierra Club Books" division. Brower had been intrigued by *Silent Spring*, but anti-pesticide campaigning had no natural constituency among club members. The population explosion was different, a bigger threat and one linked to an earlier "science" movement, eugenics.

The eugenics movement—spearheaded by scientists, and widespread in America and Europe in the early decades of the twentieth century—called for selective breeding of humans and for the sterilization of "undesirables" such as habitual criminals, people with disabilities, and mountain folk ("hillbillies"). The new population control movement would likewise target groups that were politically vulnerable. (For example, China's One Child policy, an outgrowth of population control ideology, has resulted in the elimination, through forced abortion and infanticide, of millions of children. That includes an estimated 1 to 1.5 million girls a year who are eliminated for being the "wrong" sex.)

Brower and Ballantine were aware of numerous public appearances that Ehrlich made to promote his views on population and the environment, and they wanted a book on the theme. Ehrlich's wife Anne collaborated with him on the book, but the publisher insisted that a single author be credited. The publisher also changed the title, *Population, Resources, and Environment*, to a more dramatic and marketable one: *The Population Bomb*.

The Population Bomb, in its early editions, began:

The battle to feed all of humanity is over. In the 1970s hundreds of millions of people will starve to death in spite of any crash programs embarked upon now. At this late date nothing can prevent a substantial increase in the world death rate . . .

Immediate action was needed to limit population growth and mitigate the damage, Ehrlich contended.

Nothing could be more misleading to our children than our present affluent

society. They will inherit a totally different world, a world in which the standards, politics, and economics of the 1960's are dead. As the most powerful nation in the world today, and its largest consumer, the United States cannot stand isolated. We are today involved in the events leading to famine; tomorrow we may be destroyed by its consequences. Our position requires that we take immediate action at home and promote effective action worldwide. We must have population control at home, hopefully through a system of incentives and penalties, but by compulsion if voluntary methods fail.

Got that? Compulsion, but only “if voluntary methods fail.”

As things turned out, the famine didn't occur. *The Population Bomb* bombed as prophecy, wildly underestimating the resilience of human beings and of the planet. When their predictions failed, the promoters of the book and of population “science” didn't blink an eye; they just continued to insist that those beliefs are fundamentally sound.

Like *Silent Spring* earlier, *The Population Bomb* in 1968 scared enough people to become a best-seller. Ehrlich, Connecticut lawyer Richard Bowers, and Yale professor Charles Remington formed the organization Zero Population Growth to promote policies based on their beliefs. A key figure in this movement for population control was a man named Holdren, and it wasn't the last time we'd hear of him.

The rise of John Holdren

In 1971, Paul and Anne Ehrlich met and befriended John P. Holdren, a freshly minted Stanford Ph.D. in plasma physics. Together they wrote *Human Ecology: Problems and Solutions*, published in 1972. Holdren would go on to teach at Harvard for 13 years and at the University of California at Berkeley for more than two decades. He served as one of President Bill Clinton's science advisors for seven years. Holdren was chair of the executive committee of the Pugwash Conferences, which brought scientists from the West together with scientists and intelligence agents from the Soviet bloc to work for a left-wing vision of “peace.” In 1995, he delivered the Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech on behalf of Pugwash. Later, he served as president of the American Association for

the Advancement of Science, whose political arm had backed Hitler during the time of the Hitler-Stalin Pact.

In 2009, Holdren was appointed as President Obama's top science advisor—senior advisor to President Barack Obama on science and technology issues through his roles as Assistant to the President for Science and Technology, Director of the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, and co-chair of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST). That means his views carry a lot of weight on Global Warming, redistribution of wealth, energy policy, resource/economic development, and, as Holdren calls it, “de-development.” It is clear from his recent statements that, as the President's science advisor, he continues to use the supposed depletion of natural resources and need for “sustainability” to justify and promote counterproductive and inhumane policies.

Consider the following excerpt from 1972's *Human Ecology: Problems and Solutions* by Holdren and the Ehrlichs. (When parts of this excerpt came to light, Holdren claimed that the book's policy prescriptions were meant to be imposed by “market forces.” The exact opposite is true.) This is from pages 278 and 279, with emphasis added in boldface.

Political pressure must be applied immediately to induce the United States government to assume its responsibility to halt the growth of the American population. Once growth is halted, the government should undertake to influence the birth rate, so that the population is reduced to an optimum size and maintained there. It is essential that a grassroots political movement be generated to convince our legislators and the executive branch of the government that they must act promptly. The program should be based on what politicians understand best: votes. Presidents, Congressmen, Senators and other elected officials who do not deal effectively with the crisis must be defeated at the polls, and more intelligent and responsible candidates must be elected. It is unfortunate that **at the time of the greatest crisis the United States and the world have ever faced**, many Americans, especially the young, have given up hope that the government can be modernized and changed

in direction through the functioning of the elective process. Their despair may have some foundation, but we see no choice but to launch a prolonged and determined attempt to wrest control of the political system from the special interests which now run it and to turn it over to the people.

. . . A massive campaign must be launched to restore a high-quality environment in North America and to *de-develop* the United States. De-development means bringing our economic system (especially patterns of consumption) into line with the realities of ecology and the global resource situation. Resources and energy must be diverted from frivolous and wasteful uses in overdeveloped countries to filling the genuine needs of underdeveloped countries. . . . The need for de-development presents our economists with a major challenge. They must design a stable, low-consumption economy in which there is a much more equitable distribution of wealth than in the present one. Redistribution of wealth both within and among nations is absolutely essential, if a decent life is to be provided for every human being.

In 1977, the Ehrlichs and Holdren authored a textbook—that's right, a textbook—*Eco-science: Population, Resources, Environment*, which suggested possible solutions to the world's problems:

► Exhibiting disapproval of single motherhood: “One way to carry out this disapproval might be to insist that all illegitimate babies be put up for adoption—especially those born to minors, who generally are not capable of caring properly for a child alone. If a single mother really wished to keep her baby, she might be obliged to go through adoption proceedings . . . It would even be possible to require pregnant single women to marry or have abortions, perhaps as an alternative to placement for adoption, depending on the society.”

► Involuntary birth control: “Adding a sterilant to drinking water or staple foods is a suggestion that seems to horrify people more than most proposals for involuntary fertility control. . . . To be acceptable, such a substance would have to meet some rather stiff requirements: it must be uniformly effective, despite widely varying doses

received by individuals, and despite varying degrees of fertility and sensitivity among individuals; it must be free of dangerous or unpleasant side effects; and it must have no effect on members of the opposite sex, children, old people, pets, or livestock.”

► A two-child limit: “In today’s world, however, the number of children in a family is a matter of profound public concern. The law regulates other highly personal matters. For example, no one may lawfully have more than one spouse at a time. Why should the law not be able to prevent a person from having more than two children?”

► World government: “Perhaps those agencies, combined with UNEP and the United Nations population agencies, might eventually be developed into a Planetary Regime—sort of an international superagency for population, resources, and environment. Such a comprehensive Planetary Regime could control the development, administration, conservation, and distribution of *all* natural resources, renewable or nonrenewable, at least insofar as international implications exist.”

In an expression of totalitarianism that is truly jaw-dropping, the Ehrlichs and Holdren suggested that involuntary population control is allowed under the U.S. Constitution if the crisis is bad enough. They wrote:

To date, there has been no serious attempt in Western countries to use laws to control excessive population growth, although there exists ample authority under which population growth could be regulated. For example, under the United States Constitution, effective population-control programs could be enacted under the clauses that empower Congress to appropriate funds to provide for the general welfare and to regulate commerce, or under the equal-protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Such laws constitutionally could be very broad. Indeed, it has been concluded that compulsory population-control laws, even including laws requiring compulsory abortion, could be sustained under the existing Constitution if the population crisis became sufficiently severe to endanger the society. Few today consider the situation in the United States serious enough to justify compulsion, however.

Today, Holdren’s defenders note that he and

the Ehrlichs qualified their position, that they wrote that involuntary population control measures would be implemented under the Constitution “if the population crisis became sufficiently severe to endanger the society.” Their policy prescriptions are just hypothetical—right? What the defenders ignore is that Holdren and the Ehrlichs, in their *Human Ecology* book, had declared the so-called population crisis to be “the greatest crisis the United States and the world have ever faced.” (See the quotation from that book, above.)

Holdren and his colleagues considered totalitarian measures “even including laws requiring compulsory abortion” to be legal in a crisis “sufficiently severe to endanger the society” (as they wrote in *Ecoscience*), and they believed that we were in the midst of such a crisis (as they wrote in *Human Ecology*).

Today, Holdren declares that it’s man-made climate change that endangers us. CNN reported last year: “‘Climate change is not a distant threat,’ said John Holdren of White House Office of Science and Technology Policy to CNN. ‘It already is affecting every region of the country and key sectors of the economy.’” The official government declaration that is the legal foundation for the Obama administration’s policies on “climate change”—the declaration that we are endangered by it—is actually known as the Endangerment Finding.

With the Ehrlichs, Holdren wrote that the Constitution gives the government “ample authority” to enact totalitarian measures such as “compulsory abortion,” but only if such measures are really, really necessary. How reassuring to know Holdren is still the top science advisor to President Obama!

Malaria: Death must be promoted

The malaria threat links the anti-DDT and population-control aspects of the “green” movement. As Ehrlich put it, the “instant death control” provided by U.S. DDT exports was “responsible for the drastic lowering of death rates in UDCs” [underdeveloped countries]. Those countries were not pursuing a solution to the problem of high birth rates—and thus needed to have imposed upon them a solution related to *death* rates. In other words, if you can’t stop babies from being born, at least you can stop people from overstaying their time among the living.

(India, Ehrlich said in a 1967 speech, “will be one of those we must allow to slip down the drain.”)

The environmentalist movement was in lockstep with Rachel Carson on the alleged ecological impact of DDT. Yet the “greens” contradicted themselves, claiming at the same time that (a) DDT’s high effectiveness made the human population problem worse and (b) DDT’s lack of effectiveness made the malaria problem worse. Supporters of population control claimed “public-health use of DDT was so effective that it was an unacceptable contribution to limiting death,” as noted by medical entomologist Donald Roberts and Africa Fighting Malaria founder Richard Tren in *The Excellent Powder: DDT’s Political and Scientific History*. Meanwhile, Carson “claimed the justification for public-health use of DDT didn’t make sense.” DDT, she said, “quickly became ineffective [because mosquitoes became resistant to it] and that only made [malaria] problems worse.”

It was easy for activists like Paul Ehrlich to support a ban on DDT. It wasn’t his children dying from a lack of DDT. It was millions of dark-skinned Third World children dying.

As political pressure mounted, DDT use declined precipitously. The EPA’s U.S. ban broadened into a formal ban in Europe and most other developed countries, and into a *de facto* ban across most of the impoverished “developing” world. As DDT virtually disappeared from global public-health programs, Big Green intensified its opposition to insecticides in general.

Donald Roberts, the medical entomologist, observed that the environmentalists’ campaign “totally squashed any kind of interest in new public-health insecticides. All investment dried up and—thanks to Rachel Carson, environmentalists and many others—few people now understand just how much agony can be avoided, and how many lives can be saved, with manmade chemicals.”

Environmentalists and anti-insecticide public health officials become incensed when anyone confronts them over the effects of their policies. They claim malaria is a disease of poverty—that, because of poverty, poor countries don’t have enough funds, doctors, or medicine to prevent malaria or treat it.

They have it backwards. Poverty doesn't cause malaria, which can be prevented relatively cheaply. Malaria causes poverty. The disease, for weeks on end, leaves victims unable to work, tend their fields, or care for their families. Medicines and hospital stays drain their families' meager savings. Babies can get the disease from their mothers before or during birth. Many victims are left permanently brain-damaged and unable to contribute to their families and communities. Impoverished families beget impoverished countries, perpetually dependent on foreign aid, much of it stolen by corrupt dictators. (There's an old saying: "Foreign aid is taking from poor people in rich countries, to give to rich people in poor countries.")

Anti-pesticide activists also like to say they support interventions other than insecticides and DDT, especially education, "capacity building," modern drugs, and bednets. Indeed, international funding for malaria prevention and treatment has risen from perhaps \$40 million in 1998 to some \$2 billion in 2012. Millions of women and children now sleep under insecticide-treated nets. Millions now get diagnosed quickly and receive decent care and medicines.

These anti-malaria programs "saved nearly 750,000 lives over the past ten years," the World Health Organization proclaimed in 2010. "That represents an 18% reduction in child mortality, compared with 2000."

That's not good enough. We would never tolerate the current rates of infection and mortality if American or European kids' lives were at stake and a 90 percent reduction were possible, as it is.

With three billion people still at risk of getting malaria, and 250 million actually infected every year, the absence of comprehensive *vector control* is unacceptable. (Vectors are organisms that transmit pathogens from reservoirs to hosts, such as the mosquitos that transmit malaria to humans.) Insecticides, spatial repellants, and sometimes larvacides (chemicals that kill "baby" mosquitos) are absolutely essential to break the cycle of transmission from malaria victims to mosquitos to new victims.

The Sierra Club, the Audubon Society, the Environmental Defense Fund, the Pesticide Action Network, Greenpeace, the World Wildlife Fund, and other Big Green pressure groups especially target the use of DDT.

DDT is the most powerful and longest lasting mosquito repellent ever invented. Spraying the walls and eaves of houses once or twice a year with this powerful spatial repellent keeps some 80 percent of mosquitos from even entering a home; it irritates any that do enter, so they don't bite; and it kills any that land. DDT puts a long-lasting mosquito net over entire households. Even hanging DDT-soaked cloth strips by doorways helps tremendously.

No other chemical, at any price, can do this. None even comes close. And almost no one (certainly not Big Green) is working to develop a replacement.

The Global Environment Facility, an international entity created by the World Bank in cooperation with the United Nations, calls itself the "largest public funder of projects to improve the global environment." GEF has spent nearly \$1 billion on efforts to eliminate DDT and other "persistent organic pollutants" (POPs). It budgeted nearly \$150 million in 2007 alone on its campaign to ban DDT production and use. It has spent barely \$25 million all-together researching alternatives to DDT for vector control, and, of course, it has spent nothing helping disease control teams use DDT.

Elimination of DDT was the issue that put Big Green on the map, that put the environmentalists on the path to unprecedented power, prestige, influence, and cash. But billions of children and parents got malaria, and millions died.

Warming beckons

The final step in the formation of today's Big Green ideology began with the publication on October 1, 1972 of *The Limits to Growth: A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*. It was a blockbuster, and one of the century's most controversial "academic studies" (as it was characterized).

The Limits to Growth's doomsday warning was direct, written in clear, dispassionate language by a team of MIT graduate students led by two young scholars, Dennis and Donella Meadows. The message was stark: If 1970 rates of economic growth, resource use, and pollution continued unchanged, then modern civilization would face environmental and economic collapse, with massive human die-offs, sometime in the middle of the 21st Century.

The leftist magazine *The Nation* noted in 2012:

Launched with great fanfare and a massive transatlantic PR effort, *Limits* combined the glamour of Big Science—powerful MIT computers, support from the Smithsonian Institution [and a \$250,000 grant from the Volkswagen Foundation, according to Donella Meadows]—with a focus on the interconnectedness of things, which fit perfectly with the new countercultural *zeitgeist* [spirit of the times].

The Limits to Growth introduced three fateful concepts to a mass audience:

- ▶ Computer modeling designed to predict future conditions
- ▶ Anthropogenic (man-made) climate change
- ▶ The notion that global catastrophes can be managed only by strong governments

Ponder those three concepts for a moment. By themselves, they are simple statements of scientific premises. Taken by policy makers who see in them the power to frighten the population and expand their own enormous but unaccountable authority, the concepts are the perfect tools to put control of modern civilization in the hands of a credentialed elite.

Limits provoked intense and broad-ranging criticism in academic journals. It was drubbed as over-simplified, confusing, irresponsible doomsday prophecy, and even a publicity stunt. Many critics expressed doubts about the validity of the authors' assumptions, especially with regard to the computer model, the output of which was suspiciously similar to the subjective preconceptions of Dennis and Donella Meadows.

(It's easy to create a computer model that "proves" anything you want it to prove. For example, one model presented in recent years as proof of Global Warming turned out to generate this supposed proof 99 percent of the time even when the numbers being plugged into the model were random—just "made up" or taken from a phone book!)

The *Limits* model, some said, represented a case of "the computer that cried wolf." But many, many people eagerly accepted the book's message.

The public was clearly ready for global doom in 1972. *The Limits to Growth* sold

12 million copies, was translated into thirty-seven languages, and remains the record-holder as the best-selling environmental book ever published, better even than *Silent Spring*. The *New York Times* called it “one of the most important documents of our age.”

On the book’s 10th anniversary, the *Washington Post* noted that the book “touched off controversy because of its dire warning that the earth could not support population and industrial expansion at existing rates for more than 100 years. Fallout from debate touched off by their book and other warnings about dangers to the earth’s environment soon spread to American politics; President Carter spoke of the needs for sacrifices because of resource limits, for example, while President Reagan has emphasized that there should be no limits to economic growth.”

We should not tiptoe past that sales figure, for it shows that people were eager to believe in another doomsday craze in the endless history of ends-of-the-world. In a 2012 article in *Foreign Affairs*, Bjørn Lomborg, author of *The Skeptical Environmentalist*, dissected *Limits*:

In an age more innocent of and reverential toward computers, the reams of cool printouts gave the book’s argument an air of scientific authority and inevitability; hundreds of millions of logical microcircuits seemed to banish any possibility of disagreement. The model was neither simple nor easy to understand. Even the graphic summary was mind-numbingly convoluted, and the full specifications of the model were published a year later, in a separate book of 637 pages.

Still, the general concept was straightforward. The team “examined the five basic factors that determine, and therefore, ultimately limit, growth on this planet—population, agricultural production, natural resources, industrial production, and pollution.” Crucially, they assumed that all these factors grow exponentially [i.e., at a faster and faster rate].

Doom was approaching rapidly, according to *Limits*, because resources aren’t renewable and must ultimately be depleted. Lomborg, explaining the logic of the doomsayers:

As each person consumes more food and products, meeting the total demand “requires an enormous input of re-

sources.” This depletes the resource reserves available, making it ever harder to fulfill next year’s resource demands, and eventually leads to the collapse of the economic system. Because of lags in the effects, population keeps growing until a staggering increase in the death rate driven by a lack of food and health services kills off a large part of civilization. . . .

What if the world gets better at conserving resources or finding new ones? It doesn’t matter. Run the model again with double or infinite resources, and a collapse still occurs -- only now it is caused by pollution. As population and production explode, pollution does, too, crippling food production and killing off three-quarters of the population. What if pollution is kept in check through technology and policy? It still doesn’t matter. Run the model again with unlimited resources and curbs on pollution, and the prediction remains bleak. As production soars, the world’s population does, too, and with it demands for food. Eventually, the limit of arable land is reached, and industry is starved as capital is diverted into ever-feebler attempts to increase agricultural yields. With food production back at the subsistence level, death rates shoot up, and civilization is again doomed.

In the view of the doomsayers, doom is inevitable unless we turn control of the world over to them, and unless we reduce population drastically, by any means necessary.

Members of the Club

Who or what was this Club of Rome that concocted *The Limits to Growth*? The book was hazy about that, which left many people with a mental image of a faceless, impersonal, colossal building with THE CLUB OF ROME chiseled in marble, with warnings about earth’s “predicament” issued by the temple’s mysterious, preternaturally wise inhabitants. In reality, there were six founders of the Club, and only three of those founders had lasting influence.

► Aurelio Peccei (1908-1984) was the intellectual and financial force behind the Club of Rome. He was an Italian industrialist with the resources to promote the idea of impending global doom.

► Alexander King (1909-2007) was a Scottish scientist who met Peccei while serving

as head of scientific affairs for the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development), an international economic progress and world trade body based in Paris. King, believe it or not, was one of the developers of DDT, which was used to protect Allied forces in World War II. He came to oppose its use to protect civilians: “My chief quarrel with DDT, in hindsight, is that it has greatly added to the population problem.”

► Erich Jantsch (1929-1980) was an Austrian astronomer and technology forecaster, and a co-worker of Alexander King in the OECD. He can plausibly be branded as the scientist who did the most to corrupt science into a political force, rather than an objective judge of reality. He did so by evangelizing for the belief that *science cannot be neutral*.

That idea spawned today’s blend of science and politics of which the principal example may be the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Today, scientists are expected to produce findings that support certain political causes—causes such as the attack on economic freedom that is the driving force behind Global Warming theory.

In order to prevent ecological and social collapse, Jantsch once said, Western countries must halt their economic growth and surrender their goods for equitable distribution throughout the world. The alternative: “an eventual worldwide class war.”

Simon’s bet

Over time, of course, it would be possible to test the claims of the Limits team. Either resources would be more scarce—and get more expensive—or they would become more plentiful, and drop in price. Famously, University of Maryland professor Julian Simon made a bet that prices would fall. The magazine *The Economist*, in a 1998 article marking Simon’s death, told the story this way:

In 1980, Mr. Simon challenged the popular (and still widely held) view that there were limits to growth; in particular that the earth’s natural resources were becoming so scarce that they would become ever costlier. He offered to bet that the prices of raw materials would actually fall. Paul Ehrlich, a fierce critic of further growth, took up the bet. The two men agreed to check the prices of

five metals—copper, chrome, nickel, tin and tungsten—in ten years' time. In 1990, as Mr. Simon had predicted, all had fallen in price, even without allowing for inflation. Mr. Ehrlich paid up in settlement of the modest, but much-publicized, bet, grumbling that it was “a matter of marginal environmental importance.”

Bjørn Lomborg noted the involvement of John Holdren:

The *Limits to Growth* camp argues that as resource constraints get tighter, prices will rise. Mainstream economists, in contrast, are generally confident that human ingenuity will win out and prices will drop. A famous bet between the two groups took place in 1980. The economist Julian Simon, frustrated by incessant claims that the planet would run out of oil, food, and raw materials, offered to bet \$10,000 that any given raw material picked by his opponents would drop in price over time. Simon's gauntlet was taken up by the biologist Ehrlich and the physicists John Harte and John Holdren (the latter is now U.S. President Barack Obama's science adviser), saying “the lure of easy money can be irresistible.” The three staked their bets on chromium, copper, nickel, tin, and tungsten, and they picked a time frame of ten years. When the decade was up, all five commodities had dropped in price, and they had to concede defeat (although they continued to stand by their original argument).

And, as the decades have rolled past, *Limits* has been proven wrong again and again and again. The past 20 years have seen more than a billion people raised out of extreme poverty. Population growth rates have plummeted throughout the world. The fracking/horizontal drilling revolution that has pushed back the date of carbon-based fuel depletion by hundreds of years. (Uh-oh! Paul Ehrlich once declared that “giving society cheap energy is like giving an idiot child a machine gun.”)

Ideas have consequences

To all reasonable, well-informed people, *Silent Spring*, *The Population Bomb* and related works, and *The Limits to Growth* are laughingstocks today. Yet the lesson of the past 53 years—indeed, the lesson of

history—is that being right isn't enough. Countless millions of people have died, and many billions have suffered, as the direct result of ideas that, from the standpoint of any reasonable person, had been long discredited.

Here's a little story about malaria:

► Fina Nantume's little body shook with teeth-chattering chills. The next day her torment worsened, as nausea and vomiting continued even after there was nothing left in her stomach. Her retching ebbed and chills turned to fever, drenching her young body in sweat. Then more chills, fevers, nausea, convulsions and tears—amid constant unbearable pain in every muscle, bone and joint.

She cried out, her anguished voice growing steadily weaker. No one could help her.

She had no money for doctors, medicines, or a hospital room. She didn't have a mother or father to comfort her. All the orphanage school staff could do was caress her, pray, and hope she'd get better, and wait for her to die.

In agony that never stopped from the time the malaria first struck her down, Fina did die. So did 49 of her classmates, out of 500 students in the APEA Primary School for orphans in Kampala, Uganda, in just one year, 2005. Most of the survivors were also afflicted with malaria at least once that year. Some died. Some made it through their torment and lived. Some suffered permanent brain damage.

Fina didn't have to die. None of these spirited, beautiful young students had to die. None of them had to get malaria. The disease is preventable, treatable, and curable.

Then why did they? Why is half the world's population still at risk of getting malaria? Why are some 250 million people infected annually, with 90 percent of the agonizing chills, fevers, nausea, brain damage and death occurring in sub-Saharan Africa?

The primary reason is Big Green: environmentalist groups; foundation, corporate, and individual donors; public officials, including politicians and their staffers and bureaucrats in government agencies. With the help of DDT, malaria was virtually eliminated in advanced countries (including the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, all of Europe, and most of Latin America), but Big Green battled against and lied about

DDT, and denied DDT and many other life-saving insecticides to other nations.

Fiona “Fifi” Kobusingye, a Ugandan business woman and human rights activist, lost her son, two sisters, and four cousins to malaria. She herself barely survived malaria on multiple occasions and must be constantly vigilant to prevent its recurrence. In 2010, she wrote:

Environmentalists are using African parents and children in anti-DDT experiments. Against all the evidence from decades of using only nets and drugs and maybe other insecticides, they want to keep ignoring DDT as a long-lasting spatial insect repellent. They want to keep us doing what has at best worked only partially, on the assumption that maybe it will work better next year – or that a 30% malaria reduction is good enough.

They are playing with our lives. So are the government agencies, health NGOs and others who support their policies. This is wrong and immoral. It is criminal! And it is only one of the ways they use Africans as experimental laboratory animals. They are also denying us access to other modern technologies that can improve and save lives.

In the 1930s, millions in Ukraine died in a Soviet-created famine. In the larger world, it seemed, no one cared. In fact, the *New York Times* helped cover it up. The view of many on the Left was highlighted in an apocryphal story in which Stalin interrupted an aide's accounting of Ukrainian deaths with the comment: “If only one man dies of hunger, that is a tragedy. If millions die, that's only statistics.”

To Big Green, victims of their policies aren't even statistics. They are interchangeable cogs in the machine, disposable, unworthy of attention even as numbers on a spreadsheet.

Paul Driessen is a senior policy advisor with the Committee For A Constructive Tomorrow (CFACT) and the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise. Ron Arnold is executive vice-president of the Center for the Defense of Free Enterprise. Green Watch editor Dr. Steven J. Allen based this article on excerpts from Driessen and Arnold's book Cracking Big Green: To Save the World from the Save-the-Earth Money Machine.

GW

GreenNotes

Former **U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan** wants people to eat more insects, according to a report by **Michael Bastasch** of the **Daily Caller News Foundation**, because a reduction in meat consumption would, Annan said, “reduce heart disease, cancer, and other diseases” and help prevent Global Warming. **Achim Steiner**, director of the **U.N. Environmental Program**, wants people to fight Warming by changing their diets, such as by cutting down on hamburgers. But **Cato Institute** climate scientist **Chip Knappenberger** ran the numbers and found that even if every American became vegetarian, and “If we were to stick to this vegetarian diet between now and the end of the 21st Century, we’d collectively help to keep global temperatures two-hundredths of a degree below where they’d otherwise be.” So hold off, for now, on the cricket sandwiches.

There is no basis for claims by environmental groups that fracking (hydraulic fracturing) does systemic harm to drinking water. That’s according to—believe it or not!—the **Environmental Protection Agency**. An EPA study, conducted over several years, found rare instances of contamination of drinking water wells, but no major harm to groundwater. Even **Energy Secretary Ernest Moniz**, an environmentalist, has argued that fracking can be done safely with the proper regulations in place. Yet **Maryland** in June banned fracking for two and a half years, **New York** banned it in December, and **Scotland** and **Wales** recently passed bans, joining such countries as **France** and **Germany**.

“Whenever government gets bigger, somebody’s getting rich. That’s a general rule in **Washington**,” wrote **Tim Carney** of the **Washington Examiner**. The sugar industry, he noted, was behind **Citizens for Health**, a group opposed to the use of corn syrup as sweetener; casino money was behind the **Coalition to Stop Internet Gambling**; and life insurers were behind the **Coalition for America’s Priorities**, which backed the inheritance tax (death tax). So guess who’s behind **Citizens for Fire Safety**? “Chemical companies that will profit by forcing school buses to include flame-retardant chemicals in their seats,” Carney noted. “And studies suggest that these chemicals are harmful.” Indeed, the **Los Angeles Times** reported that the chemicals are linked to cancer, neurological problems, and impaired fertility... and that a burn doctor, testifying in support of the chemical companies, simply made up stories about children dying from burns caused by candle-fires.

Eric Schmidt, chairman of **Google**, announced last year that the company would no longer support the **American Legislative Exchange Council**, a national organization of conservative/mainstream state legislators. Why? Because ALEC opposes “green” scams that bilk taxpayers and ratepayers, such as mandates for wind and solar power. Schmidt, a billionaire and top advisor to **President Obama**, called ALEC a climate-change denier: “Everyone understands climate change is occurring and the people who oppose it are really hurting our children and our grandchildren and making the world a much worse place, and so we should not be aligned with such people—they’re just, they’re just literally lying.” Now Google is considering ways to use its rankings to penalize websites that, in the company’s view, pass along false information—you know, sites like those run by “deniers.” Besides the obvious problem, which is that such a system would constitute censorship on a world scale, there’s this: Google itself denies the natural climate change that has occurred over the last 11,000 years.

Type “average earth temperature” into Google, and a fact-box appears in which Google claims that “Since the dawn of agriculture 11,000 years ago, civilization has enjoyed a relatively stable climate.” That’s an important claim made by **Warmers**, who believe that earth’s climate was fine until mankind messed things up with factories and SUVs and capitalism and other bits of modern civilization.

The claim is spectacularly wrong. Within that 11,000-year period, entire civilizations rose and fell due to climate change. **Africans** used to pull 300-pound fish from the waters of the **Sahara**. When the Sahara dried up, people moved to the **Nile valley**, leading to the creation of **Egypt**. The melting of sea ice and advance of the forests created a vast swath of the world dominated by **Vikings**. When the climate changed again, the Vikings’ empire disappeared. The **Mayan civilization** in **Mexico** fell after a series of decades-long droughts. When it was warm, there were vineyards in **northern England**, and, when it was cold, **Londoners** used to hold “frost fairs” on the frozen surface of the **Thames**. Google’s motto is “Don’t be evil.” Someone should remind Google of that.