

Freedom Matters

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We are a free people in a republic, under a constitution which limits the powers of government to those necessary to secure the unalienable rights of each person to their life, liberty and property. Yet, when a legislature is in session, no one's life, liberty or property is safe. It's the curse of a democracy. That's why we have a republic instead. *Freedom Matters* dedicates itself to the fight to restore our republic. Most of the press and courts fail to do so. They've forgotten that freedom matters.

Geopolitical Update: Civilization Is Not the Enemy!

By Mike Byrne & Bob Bowman

Generally, environmental alarmists use bad science. Fortunately, good science drives out bad. Environmental alarmists exploit two "isms": (1) Malthusianism (humans are exhausting the resources of the earth), and (2) Naturism (humans are destroying the natural world).

Malthusianism starts with Thomas Malthus, who in 1798 premised that population grows exponentially (i.e., at an increasing rate) but food production only at a constant rate, dooming humans to outstrip their food supply. Modern Malthusians generalize this, saying humans outstrip all their resources. Hence, Malthusians try to cut our consumption by cutting our productivity. They disguise this return to feudal peasantry as "sustainability" and "smart growth."

Naturism, the other leg of environmentalism, laments loss of wildlife habitat, loss of species, contamination by industrial pollutants, etc., and ends up at Gaia, or earth worship. It accuses human profligacy of creating global warming, which they claim will doom us.

This twin mantra of outstripping resources and sacrilege against nature is more religion than reason. It is the drumbeat of our news media, a party line to which dissent is treated like a sin. But is it based on facts? Is it true?

The Malthusian economist Paul Ehrlich (Stanford U.), was the darling of the alarmists for writing *The Population Bomb* (1968), predicting mass starvation in the 1970s, and writing *The End of Affluence* (1974), predicting resource shortages by the 1980s. Both wrong. Ehrlich's critic, economist Julian Simon (U. Maryland), bet him \$10,000 that resources would become cheaper rather than exhausted. Simon won.

Thus, history and Simon did Ehrlich in. Yet Malthusianism lives on in the nonsense called "smart growth." A bad idea with many disguises is hard to kill, and keeps begetting bad ideas.

Another Malthusian doomsayer Lester Brown, head of Worldwatch Institute, has annually predicted environmental disasters in WI's *State of the World*. As with Ehrlich, his Chicken Little sky-is-falling view is discredited by facts.

Julian Simon was the early critic of Ehrlich/Brown. His "long-run forecast"(1997) was:

"The material conditions of life will continue to get better for most people, in most countries, most of the time, indefinitely. Within a century or two, all nations and most of humanity will be at or above today's Western living standards."

Simon's view was echoed in *Earth Report 2000* (Ron Bailey, Editor, 2000), a review by 12 experts, including scientists. Now comes another proponent of Simon's view, a Danish statistician, Bjorn Lomborg, urging scientific balance, in a 2001 book titled *The Skeptical Environmentalist*. His book is refreshing. He is an environmentalist who meant to prove Simon was wrong and instead found that the Malthusians were wrong. He shows that the sky-is-falling predictions of Brown and others were based on flimsy data and short time spans. He uses data from major world agencies and analyzes over long time spans to see the actual state of events. He cites that contrary to Malthus, UN data indicate world population will peak at 10 billion people by 2100, then decline. He says the official data show that we are succeeding in reversing environmental degradation while increasing productivity. He says we mainly need to stay this course.

The doomsayers are in a tizzy over Lomborg's book. *Scientific American*, a popular science magazine, responds even less scientifically than ever. It sics four party-liners on Lomborg's book, and the anger, vindictiveness and vituperation lurking in their reviews warn us not to believe them. More credible is the civil review in *Science* by Michael Grubb, a British climate scientist and Kyoto kind of guy; yet even he uses polemics, calling those who disagree with him "contrarian," and the failings he claims in Lomborg are not telling ones. He rests on the IPCC report (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change). Despite IPCC's title itself being a pre-judgment, Jeff Jacoby, Boston Globe reporter, quotes the IPCC as saying, on global warming and climate change, that the evidence still isn't there.

We must resolve environmental extremism in favor of freedom and industrial progress. If we retreat back into feudal peasantry, or into the soviet-style central planning of "smart growth," then our nation, and the world, will fail.

Readers' Bulletin Board. e-mail us your comments. Include your name, for publication by *Freedom Matters*

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