

Illinois Real Estate Letter

Global Warming: Could We Be So Lucky?

Edward C. Krug

The following article, penned by OREER's favorite environmental expert, offers a new perspective on the topic of global warming. While issues involving the world environment may not always seem to relate directly to real estate analysis, the pages that follow discuss environmentalism's serious implications for resource allocation, land use, and property rights, all of which are of great importance to the future of our real estate markets. The accompanying "CONSERVATION CHIC" & REAL ESTATE describes houses and daily living in a hypothetical future characterized by the extreme austerity favored by some environmental activists. Readers who enjoy reasoned commentary on environmental issues can subscribe to Krug's newsletter ENVIRONMENT BETRAYED (Box 1161, Winona, MN 55987; \$39 per year).

To date, those who have argued that there is no need to sacrifice modern Western Civilization on the altar of global warming have done so on the basis that global warming theories are not reliable. For example, had forecasters in earlier periods possessed today's global warming theories, they could not accurately have predicted the climate of the 20th century. The critics' point therefore is well made. In fact, a Gallup poll taken

just before the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro found that only 19% of US atmospheric scientists believe the world to be undergoing man-made global warming.¹ Among climatologists (those who are truly expert in climate change) surveyed, none believed that we are experiencing man-made global warming.

Once we recognize the weakness of global warming theories, we can better comprehend some statements made by environmental activists. We can understand, for example, why Maurice Strong (who headed the 1992 Earth Summit) has said that "we cannot wait for confirming diagnosis" of his assertion that global warming is the "primary risk to the human future."² We can also see why President Bush's demand for facts before acting on global warming was labelled obstructionist before the 1990 Earth Day by Sierra Club president Michael McCloskey.³ Statements like those of Mr. Strong and Mr. McCloskey reflect the frustration of being confronted by scientists or a President who know that no scientific evidence exists that the earth is undergoing man-made global warming.

Yet the purpose of this article is not to dispute the claims of those who warn of man-made global warming. The approach offered is friendlier toward global warming claims than were the

"Conservation Chic" & Real Estate

Recent media accounts in the author's local area illustrate how the austerity of "conservation chic" affects real estate markets. The editor of *Midwest Home and Design* magazine writes in the November 7, 1993 issue of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* (page 19A) that home owners should not enjoy the benefits of multiple bathrooms, master bedrooms, walk-in closets, or even such modern furnishings as second refrigerators. The writer asks, "Why must Americans... consume so much...?" and opines that "...the optimal domain...will always be the cottage... They are not greedy consumers of power and water."

And what will the house/cottage of the future look like? When the *Winona Daily News* posed that question (September 11, 1993, page 4), the answer was that "It's built with such unorthodox materials as recycled newspapers, ryegrass straw, and tiles made from fluorescent light bulbs. It blends energy efficiency with a concern for the environment..." As noted in a half-page "Eco-Info" ad in Winona's other newspaper, the *Winona Post* (September 23, 1993, page 5B), "It is easier to conserve energy now than pay for those possibilities...acid rain, climate change, and global warming later." The straw hut thus is promoted as the house of the future. Those who falsely claim to represent the scientific and social mainstream would compel us to huddle together in rabbit warrens.

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Editor: Peter F. Colwell, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Associate Editor: Joseph W. Trefzger, Illinois State University

Secretary: Shirley J. Wells

Address correspondence to:
Office of Real Estate Research
304-D David Kinley Hall
1407 W. Gregory Drive
Urbana, IL 61801
Phone (217) 244-0951
FAX (217) 244-3102

ORER Advisory Committee

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views of Bush and the climatologists polled by Gallup. Indeed, skepticism regarding predictions of global warming is eschewed in favor of an assumption that human activities *will* induce global warming. Based on the assumption that global warming is a reality, the analysis proceeds to an examination of what science and history tell about global warming. We can then determine whether to impose “conservation chic” — the central tenet of environmental living, whose austere self-denial would severely impact real estate — so as to avoid global warming’s potential consequences.

Newspeak: Global Warming is Bad

According to Albert Gore, global warming is the most serious of all threats to the environment.⁴ The Vice President has not been alone in making dire predictions regarding the earth’s future. “Is There Life After Climate Change?” is the title of an article that appeared a few years ago in the prestigious journal *Science*.⁵ The question posed in the title is addressed in the text of the article, and the answer is that there will be an after-life — and it will be hell. Green prophets have described a nightmarish Greenhouse world, created by alleged evils of modern Western Civilization, where we will either drown or fry.⁶ Unless we change our ways, the *Science* article states, coastal areas are doomed to be inundated. A *Discover* article predicts that sea levels will rise greatly because of melting ice caps plus thermal expansion of the warming oceans: “[A] lot of...real estate is going to be under water...national extinction...In the past people have run away from famine or oppression. But they’ve never been physically displaced from a country because a large part of it has disappeared.”⁷

Furthermore, we are warned, there will be no sanctuary for the survivors of Greenhouse flooding. Computer-generated maps graphically depict worldwide drought⁸ and the devastation of life-sustaining ecosystems. For example, the Sahara Desert is predicted to jump over the Mediterranean and swallow southern Europe. Most of Spain and Portugal, along with the forest lands of Turkey, Greece, and much of Italy, will become part of a super-Sahara, according

to hundreds of “scientists.” According to a *Scientific American* offering, these analysts also write off US forests west of the Mississippi and in the Gulf states other than Florida⁹ — what little is left of Florida after Greenhouse flooding.¹⁰ The author of the latter piece doesn’t have the stomach to describe the heart-wrenching Greenhouse predictions for Africa.

In short, Green prophets have convinced many people that global warming will bring massive coastal flooding and interior desertification, the most horrible crisis ever to have confronted mankind. They say that averting such drastic ends calls for the comprehensive control of human activity. Among these prophets have been Mostafa Tolba (head of the UN Environment Program) calling for a “*complete change in attitudes and lifestyles...*”¹¹ and prestigious scientific journals such as *Nature* promoting the call “*to alter the behaviors of nations (and in turn their constituents).*”¹² The implication is that there is a “great and good” demand to save mankind from our “incompetent” selves and the terror of man-made global warming.

Oldspeak: Global Warming Is Good

A serious problem, however, with eager social engineers’ attempts to save the planet from global warming is that world history shows global warming to be *good*, not bad. Historians and paleoecologists document global warming as benefiting both man and beast; they have named the various warmer periods of the past “Climatic Optima.”¹³ If it is possible for human activities to induce global warming, then history cries out that we should, at the very least, not try to prevent it. It is therefore sad to note that any meaningful discussion of natural history is absent from the global warming debate.

We hear no mention, for example, of any credible record that sea levels were ever significantly higher than they are today, even when Florida-type vegetation grew in northern Illinois several thousand years ago. Also absent from the so-called debate are the voluminous data showing that global warming is accompanied by increasing *wetness* inland, not by desertification. Conversely, at the height of the most recent ice age, “*the [Sahara] expanded to cover most of the [African]*

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continent.”¹⁴ In summary, the world’s behavior has been exactly opposite that predicted by recent global warming theories. Climatic history shows these theories to be as absurd as gravity models predicting that apples would detach from trees and fall upward into outer space.

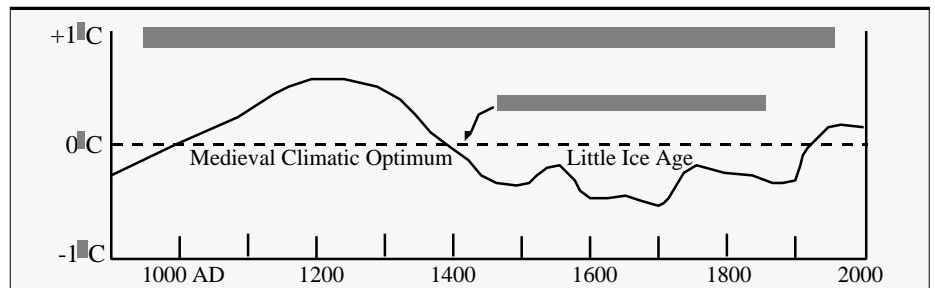
Climate History: 1000 AD to Present

The world is not as warm today as it was 800 years ago during the “Little Optimum” (also called the Medieval Warm Period and the Medieval Climatic Optimum; see Figure 1). The literature reviewed by Hubert Lamb,¹⁵ the father of modern British climatology and founder of the renowned Climate Research Unit at East Anglia University, also shows that the world during the Little Optimum was not only a warmer place, but also a better place, in which to live than today’s so-called Greenhouse (albeit colder) world.

The Medieval Climatic Optimum was a wetter period, relative to today’s conditions, for lower latitudes, such as Central America, Indo-China, the Sahara, the Mediterranean Basin, and the Near East. Greater wetness also characterized the higher latitudes of both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres; specifically for the latter, Lamb references Patagonia (southernmost South America), Antarctica, and New Zealand. While New Zealand’s average temperature a millennium ago was at least 4° Fahrenheit higher than today’s, the climate was also so much wetter that forests could grow where semiarid vegetation grew previously, and has grown subsequently.

The Arctic Ocean became ice-free (below 80° north latitude) during the summers of the warmest part of the Medieval Climatic Optimum. North American Eskimos were able to settle Ellesmere Island after 900 AD. As the climate warmed further, these peoples expanded their range to the northwest as far as the New Siberian Islands and to the northeast past northern Greenland. Vikings, who settled southern Greenland during the same period, planted crops on land that is permanently frozen today. Farther south, “Archaeological evidence from the western Great Plains, the Upper Mississippi Valley, and the arid Southwest of the United States indicates a moister regime giving enough rainfall

Figure 1: Relative Temperature Change — 1000 AD to Present



to support small agricultural settlements that were progressively abandoned from about 1250 onwards...By the 15th or 16th century tree studies suggest marked drought on the Plains; wind-blown deposits...overlaid the humus of the earlier period there.”¹⁶

Similarly, across the Atlantic, northern Europe was enjoying the halcyon years of the Little Optimum. Growing seasons were longer than those that prevail today. Crops, pastures, and forests grew farther north and at higher altitudes than they do today. Europe enjoyed a cornucopia of plenty with global warming during the early Medieval period. The continent experienced starvation and plague with the cooling of the subsequent “Little Ice Age.” Finally, on the global scale, it is interesting to note that sea level during the Medieval Climatic Optimum was no higher than today’s.¹⁷

In summary, world climate history over the last 1,000 years shows that *global warming is good* and that *global cooling is bad*. Global warming alarmists predict that such warming will produce hell on earth: an apocalyptic flooding coupled with severe droughts. History shows, however, that there was no flooding or global drought during our most recent period of global warming. Instead, the bread baskets of the world blossomed and expanded. Thus, histori-

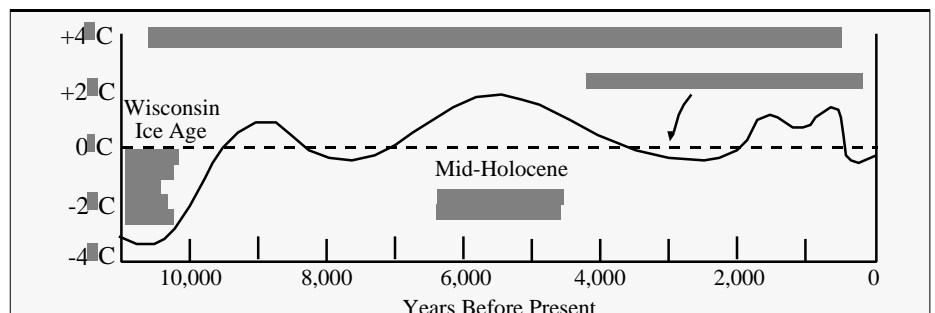
ans and paleoecologists do not describe this warm period in apocalyptic terms. On the contrary, the name “Little Optimum” indicates that the early Medieval period’s warmth is seen as beneficial.

A Longer-Term View

“Nothing suggests that the warmth of the early Medieval period attained that of the Climatic Optimum...the great post-glacial warm epoch.”¹⁸ The warmest climate, by far, that man has experienced occurred during the Mid-Holocene period 4,000 - 6,000 years ago (see Figure 2). As is true of the Little Optimum, historians and paleoecologists describe this great warming in terms anything but apocalyptic. This warmest period in the earth’s recent history is called *The Climatic Optimum*.

Whereas the Little Optimum of the Medieval period produced a modest greening of the world, the big Climatic Optimum during the Mid-Holocene produced greening on a grand scale. The warming of the Mid-Holocene was accompanied by the virtual elimination of the world’s deserts (which cover much of the globe on either side of the Equator between 30°N and 30°S latitude). Thus, while some recent theories predict that the Sahara Desert will grow substantially with global warming, history shows that during the Climatic Optimum the Sahara virtually disappeared. The scientific

Figure 2: Relative Temperature Change — Ice Age to Present



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consensus is that the vast majority of today's desert lands emerged within the last 4,000 years as the result not of global warming, but of global cooling.¹⁹

It is truly astonishing that the global warming debate remains so disconnected from the natural history of climate change. Several types of damage control make possible such deception as obfuscating the truth that global warming means greener and wetter, while global cooling means browner and drier. The first line of damage control is institutionalized scientific censorship. We live in an age of problem-oriented research, in which political activists locate a "problem" and then pay scientists to do supporting studies. This process is, by definition, dogmatic, but dogma brings home the bacon. Academic researchers obtain research grants, publish so as not to perish, and acquire prestige (and tenure). "Saving the planet" offers the bonus of letting these individuals feel good about their activities. A holy war is waged against those too principled to conform to the self-serving dogma.

The second line of damage control involves filling the scientific void with the hypnotizing mantra that global warming brings flooding and desertification. This claim is supported by the seeming authority of media darlings, whose cajoling is purported to be backed up by supercomputer-based analysis. The third line of damage control consists of occasional vague allegations that "climate change" historically has induced desertification; of course, we have been preconditioned by the mantra to hear "climate change" as global warming rather than global cooling. Finally, the few minds not yet closed are simply left believing, incorrectly, that natural history shows global warming to have brought about global desertification.

A recent example of such obfuscation occurred on October 27, 1993. On that date, the Discovery Channel aired "Baking Deserts," an episode of the British Broadcasting Corporation's *The Living Planet* documentary series. The program was narrated by David Attenborough, an esteemed and seemingly objective British naturalist. The host correctly cited the scientific consensus that the major deserts of the world

formed within the last 4,000 years as the result of climate change. He proceeded, however, to leave viewers "understanding" the causal change as global warming, not cooling. Viewers were misled by assertions that the desertification process began with the end of the most recent ice age. As the great ice sheets melted and retreated north, Mr. Attenborough said, the great bands of rainfall just to the south of the ice sheets also moved north. Thus, he stated, global warming initiated a world-wide drying that culminated in the formation of the Sahara and the other great deserts of the world.

However, the Sahara was at its maximum during that most recent ice age (see Figure 2), known as the Wisconsin

[during the glacial maximum] than they are today. They characterized almost 50% of the land between 30°N and 30°S, forming two vast belts. In between, tropical rain forests and adjacent savannas were reduced to a narrow corridor, in places only a few degrees of latitude wide. This fits the concept of 'ice age aridity' in the tropics, which has recently replaced that of 'ice age pluvials' [abundant rain]." Conversely, during the Climatic Optimum, "[O]nly... minor dune fields were reported... On the other hand, at some 100 key localities in former deserts all over the world, C[arbon]-dated outcrops establish humid environments such as that of soil formation, which exclude dune activity."²³

If it is possible for human activities to induce global warming, then history cries out that we should, at the very least, not try to prevent it.

Ice Age. Scientific research consistently shows that "at glacial maxima the Sahara sands spread southward to the Upper Nile and Congo rivers, while the Kalahari sands reached north, also crossing the Congo... [T]hese great tropical rivers were partially overwhelmed by desert sands and almost dried up at certain stages of the Wisconsin Maximum."²⁰ Yet the Sahara Desert virtually disappeared during the heat of the Climatic Optimum.²¹

Other scientific research shows what happened in Africa — cooling equals dry and warming equals wet — to have been generally true worldwide: "Nearly everywhere in the low latitudes the principal result of the reduced air and ocean temperatures and the expansion of the continental ice sheets during the [Wisconsin] glacial phases was a reduction in rainfall at low elevations... [A]rid to semiarid climate dominated large portions of equatorial South America ...in complete contrast to the present-day ...humid tropical climate. Analogous histories have been lately worked out for tropical Africa and India..."²² In addition, "...deserts were much more widespread

This view has not merely survived under scientific scrutiny; it has gained increased acceptance. As noted by Hobgood and Cerveny, it "is generally agreed that the tropics were much colder and drier" during the most recent ice age than they are today.²⁴ Similarly, not only has it been documented that increasing aridity accompanied cooling in tropical regions after the end of the Climatic Optimum some 4,000 years ago, but "Within the past fifteen years accurate radiocarbon dating and plant microfossil analysis of tropical lake sediments in Africa and elsewhere have revealed that the early Holocene [7,000 - 10,000 years ago] was generally wetter than today throughout the tropics, in contrast to the last glacial maximum, which was cool, dry, and windy. Desiccation [began] 4,500 years ago..."²⁵ Drying with cooling also has been shown to have been present in high northern latitudes.

Indeed, the more that we learn, the greater the drying that we associate with global cooling and the greater the greening that we associate with global warming. A 1969 *Science* article reported the startling finding that during the most

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recent ice age the Amazon basin was dry, not wet; “[T]he Amazonian forest was divided into a number of smaller forests...isolated from each other by tracts of open, nonforest vegetation...the lowlands probably remained ‘tropical’ ...the present continuity of the Amazonian forest seems to be a rather recent and temporary stage in the vegetational history of South America.”²⁶ Further paleoecological research on the Amazon of South America and the Congo of Africa have revealed even drier conditions. Much of what was earlier thought to be non-forest ice age vegetation separating ice age tropical rain forests was not vegetation at all, but was actually sand-blown desert.²⁷

Greater global warming could serve only to further increase the world supply of arable land and to increase its productivity. Sea level should drop as deserts turn into “gardens.”

As scientists learned more during the 1970s, they came to doubt previously-held beliefs regarding tropical rain forests (and global wetness) during the height of the most recent ice age, concluding that the rain forests had occupied only narrow corridors rather than extensive areas.²⁸ Continuing research in the 1980s reduced the estimate of the extent of ice age tropical rain forests even more, down to small, isolated pockets called *refugia*.²⁹ The findings that current tropical rain forests have only recently developed led evolutionary ecologists to move away from the previously-held belief that the high number of species living in tropical rain forests resulted from the great age and stability of the forests. They now theorize instead that the high diversity results from evolution in the isolated refugia, which, in the presence of subsequent global warming, expanded and coalesced to form today’s giant rain forests. However, the fact that a great number of tropical species exists at all seems miraculous, in that scientists cannot locate the ice age tropical forest refugia when they try to find them.³⁰ As stated in *Science*, “[W]ith the possible

exception of one site in Brazil, every paleobotanical test of putative refugia in tropical America has shown the forest to be absent in the late Pleistocene [glacial maximum of the Wisconsin ice age].”³¹

In summary, all of history shows that the warmer the climate, the greener the planet. Presently, the amount of arable land is principally restricted by cold and desert. If a new period of global warming were to match that of the Mid-Holocene Climatic Optimum, the restrictions placed on agriculture by cold and desert would be largely eliminated; we could expect the world’s major deserts to be converted to arable land. A repeat of Mid-Holocene warming would create a gain in arable grazing and crop land, in the Sahara

alone (3.5 million square miles), three times the size of that now available in the US. This scenario would be repeated for the Gobi, the Kalahari, and other great deserts; and currently marginal semiarid land would be converted to lush pasture and cropland. At the same time, crop growing zones would extend northward to the Arctic Circle, matching the northward extent of deciduous forests during the Climatic Optimum. A conservative estimate is that global warming equivalent to that of the Climatic Optimum would triple the world’s arable lands. Warming greater than that level could serve only to further increase the world supply of arable land and to increase its productivity. Finally, sea level should drop as deserts turn into “gardens”; sea level 4,000 years ago was lower than today’s (probably slightly more than one meter lower).³²

What’s It All About?

“‘We’ve got to ride the global warming issue,’ Sen. Timothy Wirth (D., CO) explained to a reporter. ‘Even if the theory is wrong, we will be doing the right thing in terms of economic and

(continued from the first page)

Minneapolis and St. Paul are passing “[a] carbon dioxide reduction plan that could alter the way Twin Cities employees work and how residents travel and light and heat their homes...to cut the amounts of carbon dioxide...by 6 million tons a year by...2005” (*Pioneer Press*, September 17, 1993, pp. 1C and 4C). Commuters and business people will be penalized in various ways for driving cars, and a “bike highway [will be] built through the Twin Cities by 1995.” The plan is clearly designed to be nothing more than a deterrent to commuting. For those living in town, taxes and mortgages will be designed to encourage “environmentally-sound” living. The article makes it plain that these actions are considered but a “modest” first step.

Environmental chic will be enforced not only through making travel more difficult, but also through making it more difficult to keep and maintain the traditional American home. For example, in another taxpayer-funded, half-page “Eco-Info” ad, we are told that the “environmentally-sound” household does not use disinfectants or cleansers; we should instead use table salt, baking soda, or vinegar (*Post*, September 8, 1993, p. 3C). The home owner should also eschew labor-saving devices; cutting grass with a push mower instead of a power mower allegedly permits a family to do its share in reducing greenhouse gases and other air pollutants.

When the past summer’s extensive rainfall brought a slug infestation (after several days of rain the grass would grow too high to cut with the prescribed hand mower), a University of Minnesota extension agent advised handpicking as the best control method. Alternatively, the University suggests installing rough textured blocks; if the slugs crawl over these, then beer baits (which the agent admits can be “tedious”) or such natural slug predators as “garter snakes...toads...salamanders...” are recommended. Pesticides are to be used only as a last resort (*Post*, July 18, 1993, p. 10A).

If owning a home surrounded by a lawn and garden is beginning to look unattractive, you ain’t seen nothin’ yet. The *Pioneer Press* (Sept. 10, 1993,

(continued on page 7)

environmental policy.'³³ What is global warming all about? As noted by Mr. Wirth (now the State Department's top global environmental official), global warming is simply a means to an end. He and others who sound the global warming alarm are not concerned with discerning the realities described above. Indeed, they actively work to suppress reality, because these self-serving social engineers seek to craft a "useful" apocalyptic perception of global warming, much as a mechanical engineer purposefully designs a tool. In the case of global warming, social engineers' purpose is to empower themselves with the authority to administer "Rights of Nature" under which the rights of the rest of humanity would be subjugated.

Government takes our money and uses it to buy land so that we cannot use it. On the remaining private property, government regulations increasingly limit what is permissible.

Tyranny in the name of a "just cause" is as old as history itself. Recall the tyranny of world peace under the Roman Empire, or the purely political murder of 66 million citizens as the "human face of communism" sought to end man's exploitation of fellow men. Today's environmental elite also have had to find a way to make totalitarianism seem laudable; they use the issue of global warming to enforce conservation chic. In earlier times, forcing people to "do without," both materially and socially, would have been correctly seen as oppression. Today it is but the latest form of tyranny that has achieved some acceptance by defining itself as "virtue."

Yet despite environmentalist New-speak's success in framing conservation chic as virtue rather than as oppression, enforcing conservation chic has been an uphill battle because the ascetic "virtue" of denying to oneself and others the benefits of technology conflicts with human nature. Given the choices and the means, most people elect to travel long distances in cars rather than on bicycles, to cut their lawns with power mowers rather than by hand, and to inhabit homes

with modern conveniences rather than in primitive cabins. Few voluntarily live in small apartments and walk or pedal to work for the express purpose of saving Mother Earth. Indeed, while environmentalists prescribe self-denial, we do not see Ted Turner, Robert Redford, Maurice Strong, or even David Brower (the "Arch Druid" himself) living under such environmentally-correct conditions.

The environmental elite therefore have known from the outset that their job would not be easy. Undoing the uniquely "errant values" of modern Western Civilization — opportunity, freedom (choice), and prosperity (means) — would require great effort. An ecological "crisis" of apocalyptic proportions was

seen by extremists as the key to overcoming human nature. They had to convince us that faith in ourselves and in our democratic institutions has been misplaced. After years of trying, the social engineers have finally succeeded in establishing global warming as *the* ecological crisis by which to convince us that our instincts are so perverse that we are unfit to make decisions for ourselves.

The arrogant environmental philosophy that was limited to a radical fringe a generation ago now is embraced by leaders of the world's great democracies. Vice President Gore is famous for saying that modern Western Civilization is "dysfunctional." The purported solution? It is in our self-interest to have our values and institutions reinvented by our moral and intellectual superiors, because, in the Vice President's words, "...*Our ecological system is crumbling as it suffers a powerful collision with the hard surfaces of a civilization speeding toward it out of control.*"³⁴ The "invisible hand" of individual free choice on the "steering wheel" of civilization must be replaced if we are to avert ecological "crises," particularly the phantom apocalypse of

global warming. Mr. Gore and others tell us that we must be guided by the hands of a morally superior and intellectually superior elite, such as themselves.

Although there would seem to be no evidence that the environmental bureaucratic elite possesses moral or intellectual superiority (in fact, this article offers proof that the opposite is true), the elite has succeeded in creating thousands of environmental laws and regulations that redefine what we can and cannot do. We are told, of course, that the restrictions on our freedoms serve a "just cause." In examining these restrictions we can gain insights into the fundamental assumptions of Greenthink, and insights regarding what we can expect in a world managed so as to avoid the "terror" of global warming. Implicit to environmental regulation, for example, is an assumption that "We the People" are not competent to choose where and how to live. Government therefore takes our money and uses it to buy land so that we cannot use it. Government now owns more than 40% of all US land, and on the remaining private property government regulations increasingly limit what is permissible.

Our Homes, Our Futures

To limit opportunity, the self-appointed guardians of the earth's future find a spotted owl here and a red coked woodpecker there. The 200 different kinds of restrictions that they have imposed on US Forest Service land and on the means of wood production³⁵ place increasing limitations on families' ability to buy homes. Real estate is further impacted by environmental regulations on other construction materials. For example, rock that contains .1% or more quartz (common beach sand) is regulated as though it causes cancer.³⁶ The only purpose that such senseless regulation can serve is to promote conservation chic. As noted by the president of the Mineralogical Society of America, we now import common earth materials for construction from Canada, Mexico, and Europe, because excessive environmental regulations have made local quarrying expensive, if not impossible.³⁷

For thirty years, then, environmentalists have promoted conservation chic by requiring that we expend more resources

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in producing less. Our democratic institutions are increasingly used to restrain us, to repress us both materially and socially. Yet the steps taken to oppress us to date are minor compared to those that we will see if fears of global warming become increasingly important in setting the social and regulatory agenda. Even the estimated \$5 trillion needed for replacing CFCs in the world's refrigerators, freezers, and air conditioners is minuscule compared to the fiscal and social controls planned for dealing with the alleged problems of global warming.

As if such a realization is not troubling enough, the man a heartbeat from the Presidency states that "In any effort...to heal the global environment, the essence of realism is recognizing that public attitudes are still changing — and that proposals which are today considered too bold to be politically feasible will soon be derided as woefully inadequate..."³⁸ If Vice President Gore has his way, measures now considered draconian will seem conservative, even cowardly, in the not-so-distant future. Yet the reality is that global warming — if it occurs at all — is not the most serious crisis ever to have faced the world. Global warming would, in fact, be beneficial to life on our planet. The crisis that we face is the use of global warming to dismantle the fundamental values of modern Western Civilization. These values are our most potent weapons in defending against the unlimited ambitions of those who would enslave us in the name of environmental protection.³⁹

The reality of global warming therefore differs markedly from the inflammatory statements of the most vocal elements among the environmental elite. Just as atomic engineers of the 1940s built a doomsday weapon as a tool to win the war for freedom, so have social engineers "built" the doomsday weapon of global warming as a tool for use in their war against freedom. We know, however, that eternal vigilance is the price of freedom. It is time for individuals of courage and reason to begin holding the "great and good" of the environmental movement accountable for actions that, if not protected by the magic word *environmental*, would be considered crimes against humanity. ■

Footnotes

- 1 *Detroit News*, July 6, 1992, p. 11A.
- 2 *Detroit News*, July 6, 1992, p. 11A.
- 3 *Washington Times*, April 19, 1990, p. F2.
- 4 Gore, A. *Earth in the Balance*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1992, pp. 88 - 89.
- 5 *Science* 242 (1988), pp. 1010 - 1012.
- 6 See, for example, *Science* 241 (1988), pp. 23 - 24; *Discover*, October 1988, pp. 50 - 61; *Scientific American*, January 1989, pp. 20 - 21; *Scientific American*, April 1989, pp. 36 - 44; *National Geographic*, October 1990, pp. 66 - 89.
- 7 *Discover*, October 1988, p. 55.
- 8 *Science* 232 (1986), pp. 626 - 628.
- 9 *Science* 259 (1993), pp. 1694 - 1696.
- 10 *Scientific American*, April 1989, pp. 36 - 44.
- 11 Associated Press, October 30, 1990.
- 12 *Nature* 349 (1991), p. 451.
- 13 See, for example, Lamb, H.H. "The Early Medieval Warm Epoch and Its Sequel." *Paleogeography, Paleoclimatology, Paleocology* 1 (1965), pp. 13 - 37.
- 14 Nicholson, S.E. "African Drought: Characteristics, Causal Theories, and Global Teleconnections." In *Understanding Climate Change* [Berger et al., editors], *Geophysical Monograph* 52, IUGG Volume 7, 1989, pp. 79, 82.
- 15 See Lamb.
- 16 Lamb, pp. 16 - 17.
- 17 See Lamb.
- 18 Lamb, p. 14.
- 19 See, for example, *Nature* 272 (1978), pp. 43 - 46; *Nature* 309 (1984), pp. 49 - 51; and Nicholson.
- 20 Damuth, J.E. and R.W. Fairbridge. "Equatorial Atlantic Deep-Sea Arkosic Sands and Ice-Age Aridity in Tropical South America." *Geological Society of America Bulletin* 81 (1970), pp. 189 - 206. (This article is truly a work of genius.)
- 21 Nicholson, p. 80.
- 22 See Damuth and Fairbridge.
- 23 Sarnthein, M. "Sand Deserts During Glacial Maximum and Climatic Optimum." *Nature* 272 (1978), pp. 43 - 46.
- 24 Hobgood, J.S. and R.S. Cerveny. "Ice-age Hurricanes and Tropical Storms." *Nature* 333 (1988), pp. 243 - 245.
- 25 Mawson, R. and M.A.J. Williams. "A Wetter Climate in Eastern Sudan 2,000 Years Ago?" *Nature* 309 (1984), pp. 49 - 51.
- 26 Haffer, J. "Speciation in Amazonian Forest Birds." *Science* 165 (1969), pp. 131 - 137.
- 27 See Damuth and Fairbridge. See also *Science* 185 (1974), pp. 695 - 698; *Nature* 253 (1975), pp. 617 - 618.
- 28 See Sarnthein.
- 29 Leyden, B.W. "Guatemalan Forest Synthesis After Pleistocene Aridity." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science USA* 81 (1984), pp. 4856 - 4859.
- 30 See Leyden.
- 31 Lewin, R. "Fragile Forests Implied by Pleistocene Pollen." *Science* 226 (1984), pp. 36 - 37.
- 32 See, for example, Flint, R.F. *Glacial and Quaternary Geology*. New York: Wiley, 1971, pp. 322 - 329. See also Cronin et al., "Quaternary Climates and Sea Levels of the US Atlantic Coastal Plane." *Science* 211 (1981), pp. 233 - 240.
- 33 *Readers Digest*, February 1990, p. 97.
- 34 Gore, p. 42.
- 35 Arnold, R. *Ecology Wars*. Bellevue, WA: The Free Enterprise Press, 1987.
- 36 Ross, M. "Suspect Minerals and Human Health: A Commentary." *Lattice* 7(1) (1991), pp. 10 - 11.
- 37 See Ross.
- 38 Gore, pp. 304 - 305.
- 39 Schaeffer, F.A. *Pollution and the Death of Man*. Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1970. See also Neuhaus, R. *In Defense of People*. New York: Macmillan, 1970.

Figures 1 and 2 are adapted from *UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (C&EN), April 27, 1993, p. 11.

Dr. Krug is an environmental consultant in Winona, Minnesota, and Editor of ENVIRONMENT BETRAYED. He has also held government and academic positions as an environmental scientist.

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pp. 1A, 9A) approvingly notes that the Twin Cities are proposing ordinances that would limit home owners' use of lawn fertilizer. Those who fear that eliminating fertilizer would encourage weeds to grow in place of grass should not plan on using herbicides to control the weeds. In yet another tax-funded half-page "Eco-Info" ad (*Post*, September 15, 1993, p. 4C), a Winona park supervisor states that "People should not be fertilizing or herbiciding..." to achieve weed-free, bug-free lawns. "The city of Winona uses no fertilizers, herbicides, or insecticides, except... where neighbors have pressured the city to do so." There should be no green lawns, because "...Storm sewers carrying lawn fertilizers and herbicides lead directly to Lake Winona..." where fish and microorganisms are said to be harmed. Yet microorganisms in the lake are doing just fine. The fish are endangered, but the threat comes from environmentalists who would happily watch the picturesque lake become a mosquito-breeding swamp. In the name of preserving marsh and mire, the environmental elite has prevented dredging (to combat serious sediment buildup) that would preserve Lake Winona for fish and recreation (*Post*, September 12, 1993, pp. 1, 11).

So we have a glimpse of the future envisioned by the fevered green brows who administer the "Rights of Nature," to which the rights of man must take a back seat. While aspects of the news stories discussed above seem absurd, note that the articles cited were offered uncritically, even approvingly; the writers' statements were not ridiculed or even questioned. Indeed, try to rebut such an article and see whose ideas are labelled absurd. Question the environmental elite, even in the open atmosphere of a university, and see whose views are "extremist." The technology that has provided successive generations with ever-increasing wealth and freedom of choice is impugned as providing mere "conveniences," which must be eliminated for the "common good." Compelling needless sacrifice in the name of the environment is redefined as the virtue of conservation chic.