

Depopulation lobby mobilizes for the Earth Summit

by Nancy Spannaus

The propaganda war on the population issue couldn't be hotter. In the month of April, no fewer than four supposedly "authoritative" studies came out, purporting to show that the world is in imminent danger of disaster if measures for reducing the world population are not taken immediately, especially at the occasion offered by the Earth Summit which will begin in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil on June 3.

As of this writing, it appears that the vast majority of participants at that summit, who come from the poorer countries of the world, will refuse to come to heel on the population issue. But there are unmistakable signs that they, as well as the industrialized countries, are buying the underlying assumption of these reports—the scurrilous assertion that technological development creates pollution, and that it must be slowed down at least some place in the world, if disaster is not to strike.

Barring a coup in Brazil, which is not impossible, or the uncontrolled outbreak of cholera in Rio, which is just around the corner, the Earth Summit will go ahead, and it will not be boycotted by either the leaders of the developing sector, who had threatened to stay home, or by Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who has said he will come.

The population lobby speaks

The four studies which came out in April were prepared by the WorldWatch Institute, the United Nations Development Program, the United Nations Population Fund, and the team that produced the *No Limits to Growth* book in 1972, Donella Meadows and Jay Forrester. All were intended to scare the credulous into new ecological fascist measures, on the assumption that the birth of people is the cause of poverty and environmental degradation.

As we report the results, it should be noted that each and every author has been discredited as alarmists, or frauds, over the past 20 years.

On April 23, the United Nations Development Program, which operates out of London, issued a report on the relationship between poverty and the environment. The report correctly states that "poverty is as great an enemy of the environment as misspent affluence," but proceeds to adopt the view of Britain's Prince Charles, who argued that "we will not protect the environment until we address the issues of population growth and poverty in the same breath."

The WorldWatch Institute, based in Washington, D.C., issued a report on April 25 which argued that "unprecedented biological collapse" is under way worldwide, requiring emergency action to protect eco-systems, species, and genes that make up what these authors call "biodiversity." Author John C. Ryan explicitly advocates a return to the methods of "indigenous people" in protecting resources—overlooking the fact that under such methods, the bulk of the world's population would be left to die.

During the same week, Meadows and Forrester, joined by economist Jorgen Randers, held a press conference in Washington, D.C. to release their new study, called *Beyond the Limits: Confronting Global Collapse, Envisioning a Sustainable Future*. The book reviews the results of a computer model called "World3," which allegedly proves that it is necessary to cut living standards and reduce population. The lying basis of this model is underscored by the fact that the only energy resources which are modeled are solar and wind, with no attention at all to nuclear power.

In its effort to show that economic growth can be replaced by "sustainable development," the authors argue the need for "visioning," "networking," "truth-telling," and "loving." But all these nice sentiments are based on the lie that mankind doesn't have the resources to deal with population growth.

Demanding fewer people

The fourth study, the annual report of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), is by far the most pernicious, however, as it pretends to be the most authoritative. Called "A World in Balance," it was released April 29 in London by UNFPA Executive Director Nafis Sadik, and in Washington by zero population growth fanatic Paul Ehrlich and U.N. representative Catherine Pierce.

The UNFPA study raises the alarm that the world population is headed toward a level of 10 billion people by the year 2050. It argues that this increase will cause disaster, and that "concerted actions to reduce family size during the 1990s are essential to prevent acute pressures on land and water resources and threats to wildlife."

The major fraud in the UNFPA report, which purports to be primarily concerned with alleviating the poverty among the world's 1 billion poorest people, is that it argues that population growth is responsible for virtually all environ-

mental ills, as well as for this poverty.

But a close reading of the report itself indicates that the UNFPA's own studies show no correlation between a reduction in population growth rate and economic health during the period between 1965 and 1980. While the statisticians argue that there is a small such correlation during the 1980s, this is almost insignificant compared to the total impoverishment of every part of the world but Asia during that decade.

What is left out, as usual, is the role of introducing new technologies into the economic process. Without taking new technologies into account, of course it appears that the birth of every individual is a drain on a country's resources. But the fact is that new technologies increase economic productivity at a geometric rate much higher than population growth, and actually create conditions where every individual creates more wealth for a society.

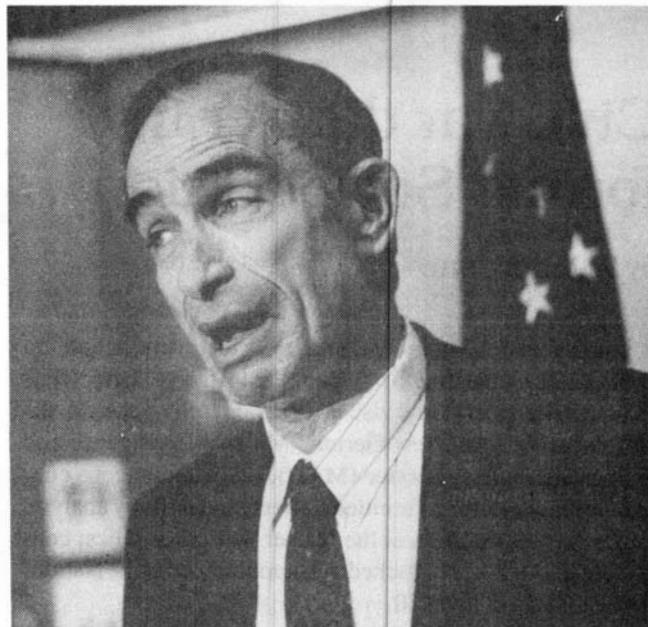
This point cannot be lost on anyone who looks back at the malthusian projections of the late 18th century, and sees what happened. But the depopulators always come back to project a new catastrophe on the horizon. One is drawn toward the conclusion that one of the most central problems in their thinking, is their inability to understand the unique value of every individual human mind and life.

Miffed

Dr. Sadik did not mince words when she released her report. She openly expressed her disappointment that a combination of institutions, including the Vatican and the governments of the Philippines and Argentina, had prevented population control from being put on the agenda explicitly at Rio. At the same time, she singled out for praise the rather nutty scion of the British Royal Family, Prince Charles.

Indeed, the whole British government is on the depopulation bandwagon. In an effort to "preserve environmental diplomacy," Prince Charles gave a speech April 22 before the Brundtland Commission in London, demanding that population be placed prominently on the agenda in Rio and otherwise throwing the monarchy's backing behind the Earth Summit. Charles himself was echoing his mother, Queen Elizabeth II, who had made support for the Rio summit the central theme of her "Commonwealth Day" speech on March 9. Charles's intervention has received big support from the malthusian lobby in Britain, typified by a barrage of letters to the press in favor of malthusian measures against the developing world.

More recently, British Environmental Secretary Michael Howard went to the United States and arranged a compromise deal over "global warming," in order to win American support for a convention to be signed at Rio on this. The London *Times* on May 5 devoted its lead editorial to Howard's visit, defending him against critics, especially in the European Community bureaucracy, who claim that he has sold out the environmental cause by making concessions to the Ameri-



Zero population growth fanatic Paul Ehrlich, one of the authors of a new report by the U.N. Population Fund.

cans: "The choice is not between a weaker and a stronger convention, but between one with or without a U.S. signature. Without U.S. participation, a convention would be useless. And like it or not, in an election year dominated by worries about recession, Mr. Bush is not about to lay himself open to charges that he has put American jobs at risk. Better to have the United States on board, leaving it to peer pressure and American public opinion to ensure that in practice, America meets the guidelines."

Noting that Washington fears that the developing countries could be using the Rio meeting to revive earlier discussions for "a new international economic order," the *Times* wrote: "Rio's broader goals—an earth charter to lay down principles of 'green government' and an action plan for the 21st century—have been jeopardized by the way these goals have been inflated and politicized. The priority now must be to prevent Rio degenerating into a rerun of the North-South disputes of the 1970s. The negotiations on the threat to the ozone layer in the 1980s show what can be done by incremental steps. Mr. Howard's compromise on global warming may not save the planet. But it could preserve environmental diplomacy from disappearing into a rhetorical never-never land. And that would be a worthwhile change of direction."

The same issue of the *Times* has a news article saying that the British government has saved the "Global Forum," the parallel meeting of non-governmental organizations and others in Rio, by infusing \$1 million into the forum's coffers, at a time when it was otherwise threatened with financial collapse. The NGOs include the most rabid of the genocidal population lobby, including the "back to the Aztecs" WorldWatch.