

Environment and Health

Health care is one of those thorny issues generating a lot of heat but little light. Many Americans and their political leaders have called for what amounts to nationalization of our health-care industry. Before buying in to this siren song, we would do well to examine the delivery of health-care services in countries that have already nationalized their health-care industry, such as Canada, the United Kingdom, and Sweden. The Vancouver, British Columbia–based Fraser Institute has a yearly publication titled “Waiting Your Turn.” Its 2006 edition gives waiting times, by treatment, from a person’s referral by a general practitioner to treatment by a specialist. The shortest waiting time was for oncology (4.9 weeks). The longest waiting time was for orthopedic surgery (40.3 weeks), followed by plastic surgery (35.4 weeks) and neurosurgery (31.7 weeks).

Canadians also face significant waiting times for various diagnostics, such as computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), and ultrasound scans. The median wait for a CT scan across Canada was 4.3 weeks, but in Prince Edward Island, it’s 9 weeks. A Canadian’s median wait for an MRI was 10.3 weeks, but in Newfoundland, patients waited 28 weeks. Finally, the median wait for an ultrasound was 3.8 weeks across Canada, but in Manitoba and Prince Edward Island it was 8 weeks.

London’s Observer carried a story saying that an “unpublished report shows some patients are now having to wait more than eight months for treatment, during which time many of their cancers become incurable.” The Observer also reported, “A recent academic study showed National Health Service delays in bowel cancer treatment were so great that, in one in five cases, cancer which was curable at the time of diagnosis had become incurable by the time of treatment.” Another Observer article read, “According to a World Health Organisation report to be published later this year, around 10,000 British people die unnecessarily from cancer each year—three times as many as are killed on our roads.”

According to European think tank Health Consumer Powerhouse’s

Euro-Canada Health Consumer Index 2008: "Waiting times for care, long a problem in Sweden and too often deadly wherever they're found, are now the longest on the Continent."

There's a cure for our health-care problems. That cure is not to demand more government but less government. I challenge anyone to identify a problem with health care in America that is not caused or aggravated by federal, state, and local governments.

Considerable evidence suggests that the earth's temperature has increased about one degree Celsius over the past century. Environmentalists have seized on this to argue that mankind's activities are creating a global climate disaster. In 2006, sixty prominent scientists signed a letter saying that "observational evidence does not support today's computer climate models, so there is little reason to trust model predictions of the future. . . . Significant [scientific] advances have been made since the [Kyoto] protocol was created, many of which are taking us away from a concern about increasing greenhouse gases. If, back in the mid-1990s, we knew what we know today about climate, Kyoto would almost certainly not exist, because we would have concluded it was not necessary."

False concerns about this pending disaster has and will lead to loss of lives and a reduced standard of living. American deaths due to environmental activist callousness pale in comparison to other countries. How about a few statistics? In 1972, the activist-controlled Environmental Protection Agency banned DDT, a pesticide once considered a "miracle" for all of the lives it saved by killing the mosquitoes that carried malaria. The ban went into effect despite evidence that with proper use it posed no health hazard to humans and only little harm to animals. The EPA ban led to diminished DDT production, making the pesticide less available to the world.

What were the effects? In what is now Sri Lanka there were 2,800,000 malaria cases and 7,300 malaria deaths in 1948; with the use of DDT there were only seventeen cases and no deaths in 1964. After DDT use was discontinued, Sri Lankan malaria cases rose to 500,000 in 1969. Worldwide malaria's devastating effects all but disappeared during the time DDT use was widespread, roughly 1950 to 1970. DDT was seen as such a miracle that it earned its inventor, Dr. Paul Muller, the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1948. In 1970, a committee of the Na-

tional Academy of Sciences wrote, "To only a few chemicals does man owe as great a debt as to DDT. In a little more than two decades, DDT has prevented 500 million deaths due to malaria that otherwise would have been inevitable."

The environmental extremists' true agenda has little or nothing to do with climate change. Their true agenda is to find a means to control our lives. The kind of repressive human control, not to mention government-sanctioned mass murder, seen under communism, has lost any measure of intellectual respectability. So people who want that kind of control must come up with a new name; that new name is environmentalism.

There's a much more important issue that poses an even greater danger to mankind. That's the effort by environmentalists to suppress disagreement with their view. According to a March 11, 2007, article in London's Sunday Telegraph, Timothy Ball, a former climatology professor at the University of Winnipeg in Canada, has received five death threats since he started questioning whether mankind was affecting climate change. Richard Lindzen, professor of atmospheric science at MIT, said, "Scientists who dissent from the alarmism have seen their funds disappear, their work derided, and themselves labeled as industry stooges." Nigel Calder, a former editor of New Scientist, said, "Governments are trying to achieve unanimity by stifling any scientist who disagrees. Einstein could not have got funding under the present system."

The columns that follow lay out the dangers we face allowing government to have greater control over our lives in the name of health care and saving the environment.

Busybodies or Tyrants?

Wednesday, March 22, 2006

Some call the people behind the Washington, D.C.-based Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) busybodies, but I call them wannabe tyrants. Let's look at their agenda, which seeks greater control over our lives.

Last year, CSPI filed a lawsuit against the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to reduce the amount of salt in packaged foods. They also called for the FDA to mandate warning labels on non-diet soft drinks that consumption increases the risk of obesity, tooth decay and osteoporosis. Earlier this year, CSPI announced its intent to sue Viacom Inc. and Kellogg Company for marketing junk food to children.

CSPI has long called for excise taxes on fatty foods, cars and TV sets. Their justification is that obesity adds to Medicare and Medicaid health costs. They want some of the tax revenue used to fund exercise facilities and government fitness campaigns.

There's no end to CSPI's consumer control agenda. They say, "Caffeine is the only drug that is widely added to the food supply." Therefore, they've called for caffeine warning labels. To deal with teenage and adult overconsumption of alcohol, they've called for doubling the tax on beer. According to them, "The last thing the world needs is more drinkers, even moderate ones."

To fight obesity among young people, CSPI calls for a fast-food advertising ban on TV programs seen by children. CSPI's director, Michael Jacobson, said, "We could envision taxes on butter, potato chips, whole milk, cheeses, [and] meat," adding that "CSPI is proud about finding something wrong with practically everything."

I'm guessing that most Americans, except politicians, find this control agenda offensive. Politicians might not find it offensive because controlling lives is their stock in trade, plus there's the promise of the higher revenues from food taxes. Most Americans who might

find the CSPI agenda offensive are not motivated by principle. It's a matter of whose ox is being gored.

You say, "What do you mean, Williams?" CSPI tyrants are following almost to the letter the template created by the nation's anti-smoking zealots. Their fellow traveler, New York University professor Marion Nestle, says that the food industry "can't behave like cigarette companies. . . . Yet there are a lot of people who benefit from people being fat and sick, and the whole setup is designed to make people eat more. So the response to the food industry should be very similar to what happened with the tobacco companies."

The anti-smoking zealots started out with "reasonable" demands, such as warning labels on cigarette packs and no smoking sections on airplanes. They made exaggerated claims about the cost that smokers were imposing on the health care system. Then cigarette manufacturers faced multimillion-dollar lawsuits and multibillion-dollar local, state and federal extortion, not to mention confiscatory taxes, all of which are passed on to smokers in the form of higher prices.

Just recently, the City of Calabasas, Calif., adopted an ordinance that bans smoking in virtually all outdoor areas. Partial justification is to protect children from bad influences—seeing adults smoking. Had the anti-smoking zealots revealed their entire agenda back in the '60s and '70s, they wouldn't have gotten much. By using the piecemeal approach, they've been successful beyond their dreams, and the food zealots are following their example.

I'd be interested to know just how many Americans would like to see done to our food industry what was done to the tobacco industry: massive multibillion-dollar lawsuits against food companies; massive suits against restaurants that serve too large a serving, and confiscatory taxes levied on foods and snacks deemed non-nutritious.

Consumers will pay for all of this in the form of higher food prices and fewer choices. There's also the possibility that food zealots in some cities, emboldened by the success of the anti-smoking zealots in Calabasas, who are concerned about smokers passing on bad habits to our youth, might call for an ordinance banning public appearance of obese people so as not to pass bad eating habits on to our children.

Global Warming Heresy

Wednesday, March 28, 2007

Most climatologists agree that the earth's temperature has increased about a degree over the last century. The debate is how much of it is due to mankind's activity. Britain's Channel 4 television has just produced "The Great Global Warming Swindle," a documentary that devastates most of the claims made by the environmentalist movement. The scientists interviewed include top climatologists from MIT and other prestigious universities around the world. The documentary hasn't aired in the U.S., but it's available on the Internet (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XttV2C6B8pU>).

Among the many findings that dispute environmentalists' claims are: Manmade carbon dioxide emissions are roughly 5 percent of the total; the rest are from natural sources such as volcanoes, dying vegetation and animals. Annually, volcanoes alone produce more carbon dioxide than all of mankind's activities. Oceans are responsible for most greenhouse gases. Contrary to environmentalists' claims, the higher the Earth's temperature, the higher the carbon dioxide levels. In other words, carbon dioxide levels are a product of climate change. Some of the documentary's scientists argue that the greatest influence on the Earth's temperature is our sun's sunspot activity. The bottom line is, the bulk of scientific evidence shows that what we've been told by environmentalists is pure bunk.

Throughout the Earth's billions of years there have been countless periods of global warming and cooling. In fact, in the year 1,000 A.D., a time when there were no SUVs, the Earth's climate was much warmer than it is now. Most of this century's warming occurred before 1940. For several decades after WWII, when there was massive worldwide industrialization, there was cooling.

There's a much more important issue that poses an even greater danger to mankind. That's the effort by environmentalists to suppress disagreement with their view. According to a March 11 article in London's *Sunday Telegraph*, Timothy Ball, a former climatology professor

at the University of Winnipeg in Canada, has received five death threats since he started questioning whether man was affecting climate change. Richard Lindzen, professor of Atmospheric Science at MIT, said, "Scientists who dissent from the alarmism have seen their funds disappear, their work derided, and themselves labeled as industry stooges." Nigel Calder, a former editor of *New Scientist*, said, "Governments are trying to achieve unanimity by stifling any scientist who disagrees. Einstein could not have got funding under the present system."

Suppressing dissent is nothing new. Italian cosmologist Giordano Bruno taught that stars were at different distances from each other surrounded by limitless territory. He was imprisoned in 1592, and eight years later he was tried as a heretic and burned at the stake. Because he disagreed that the Earth was the center of the universe, Galileo was ordered to stand trial on suspicion of heresy in 1633. Under the threat of torture, he recanted and was placed under house arrest for the rest of his life.

Today's version of yesteryear's inquisitors include people like the Weather Channel's Dr. Heidi Cullen, who advocates that the American Meteorological Society (AMS) strip their seal of approval from any TV weatherman expressing skepticism about the predictions of manmade global warming. Columnist Dave Roberts, in his Sept. 19, 2006, online publication, said, "When we've finally gotten serious about global warming, when the impacts are really hitting us and we're in a full worldwide scramble to minimize the damage, we should have war crimes trials for these bastards—some sort of climate Nuremberg."

There are literally billions of taxpayer dollars being handed out to global warming alarmists, not to mention their dream of controlling our lives. Their agenda is threatened by dissent. They have the politician's ear; not we, who will suffer if they have their way.

Trans Fat Ban

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

In the wake of New York City's ban on restaurant use of trans fat, Mayor Michael Bloomberg said the ban is "not going to take away anybody's ability to go out and have the kind of food they want, in the quantities they want. . . . We are just trying to make food safer."

That, my friends, is tyrannical double-talk. Let's look at it. Trans fats are derived from partially hydrogenated vegetable oils. They can raise blood levels of LDL, the "bad cholesterol." According to Dr. Elizabeth Whelan, president of American Council on Science and Health, trans fats are about two percent of our daily caloric intake, while saturated fats, which also raise LDL blood levels, make up 10 to 15 percent.

Naturally, we might ask, why the attack on restaurants using trans fats and not saturated fats? The answer's easy; we just need a historical reference. When the anti-smoking zealots started out, they too went after a relatively small target by demanding non-smoking sections on airplanes. That success emboldened them to demand no smoking on planes at all and in airports as well. Then came laws against smoking in restaurants.

Today, in Calabasas, Calif., smoking is prohibited outside, and several California cities have banned beach smoking. Had the anti-smoking zealots revealed their full agenda when they started out, they wouldn't have been nearly as successful. They would have encountered too much resistance.

The nation's food zealots have taken a page from their anti-smoking counterparts. They've started out with a small target—a ban on restaurant use of trans fats. Here's what I predict is their true agenda: If banning a fat that's only two percent of our daily caloric intake is wonderful, why not ban saturated fats, the intake of which is much higher? Then there's the size of restaurant servings. Instead of a law simply requiring restaurants to label the calories in a meal, there will be laws setting a legal limit on portions.

There's a Washington, D.C., organization, Center for Science in the Public Interest, that some call busybodies, but they are more accurately described as petty tyrants. They've made a list of foods you shouldn't eat. Among them are: Dove and Haagen-Dazs ice cream, Mrs. Field's cookies and McDonald's Chicken McNuggets. If they are successful, you shouldn't be surprised to see a ban on these and similar foods.

Food zealots, who share the mindset of Mayor Bloomberg and are ". . . just trying to make food safer," will not be satisfied controlling restaurant menus. After all, most eating is done at home. So why wouldn't the food zealots enact bans on what can and cannot be sold in supermarkets? Nine chances out of ten, most of a person's saturated fat intake occurs during the family dinner.

You say, "Williams, that's ridiculous! They would never tell us what we can eat at home." That's precisely what you might have said when the anti-smoking zealots started out. Belmont, Calif., has recently enacted a law not only banning smoking in apartments and other attached dwellings, but also on the street, in a park and even in one's own car.

Smokers have been relatively passive and have allowed the anti-smoking zealots to run roughshod over them. The question is whether those of us who wish to eat as we please will allow the food zealots to do the same. These people are cowards, and here's why: If Mayor Bloomberg and other food zealots think I'm eating too many trans fats, let them personally come and take fatty foods off my plate or remove them from my shopping cart. Since they don't have the guts to do that, they correctly deem it safer to use the brute force of the state to control what I eat.

Fearmongering

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

Political commentator Henry Louis Mencken (1880–1956) warned that “The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed—and hence clamorous to be led to safety—by menacing it with an endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary.” The Weather Channel has taken up that task with its series “It Could Happen Tomorrow.”

The Weather Channel started its “It Could Happen Tomorrow” series in January 2006. The program includes episodes where a tornado destroys Dallas, a tsunami destroys the Pacific Northwest, Mount Rainier erupts and destroys nearby towns, and San Diego is devastated by wildfires.

They omitted a program showing a meteor striking my house, for it, too, could happen tomorrow. Of course, any one of these events could happen tomorrow, but I’m reminded of a passage in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, where after Macbeth listens to the predictions of the witches, Banquo warns him that “ Oftentimes, to win us to our harm, the instruments of darkness tell us truths, win us with honest trifles, to betray us in deepest consequence.” That is, gain our confidence with trifle truths to set us up for the big lie.

The big lie, conceived by the Weather Channel in cahoots with environmental extremists, is to get us in a tizzy over global warming, and they’re vicious about it. Dr. Heidi Cullen, the Weather Channel’s climatologist, hosts a weekly program called “The Climate Code.” Dr. Cullen advocates that the American Meteorological Society (AMS) strip their seal of approval from any TV weatherman expressing skepticism about the predictions of manmade global warming, according to a report by Marc Morano, communications director for the U.S. Senate Committee on Environment & Public Works.

Dr. Cullen has had a lot of help in demonizing skeptics of catastrophic manmade global warming. Scott Pelley, CBS News “60 Minutes” correspondent, compared skeptics of global warming to

“Holocaust deniers,” and former Vice President Al Gore calls skeptics “global warming deniers.” But it gets worse. Mr. Morano reports that on one of Dr. Cullen’s shows, she featured columnist Dave Roberts, who, in his Sept. 19, 2006, online publication, said, “When we’ve finally gotten serious about global warming, when the impacts are really hitting us and we’re in a full worldwide scramble to minimize the damage, we should have war crimes trials for these bastards—some sort of climate Nuremberg.” (See the Morano report at: <http://epw.senate.gov/fact.cfm?party=rep&id=264568>.) He didn’t say whether the death penalty should be administered to those found guilty of global warming denial.

The environmental extremists’ true agenda has little or nothing to do with climate change. Their true agenda is to find a means to control our lives. The kind of repressive human control, not to mention government-sanctioned mass murder, seen under communism has lost any measure of intellectual respectability. So people who want that kind of control must come up with a new name, and that new name is environmentalism.

Last year, 60 prominent scientists signed a letter saying, “Observational evidence does not support today’s computer climate models, so there is little reason to trust model predictions of the future. . . . Significant [scientific] advances have been made since the [Kyoto] protocol was created, many of which are taking us away from a concern about increasing greenhouse gases. If, back in the mid-1990s, we knew what we know today about climate, Kyoto would almost certainly not exist, because we would have concluded it was not necessary.”

They added, “It was only 30 years ago that many of today’s global-warming alarmists were telling us that the world was in the midst of a global-cooling catastrophe. But the science continued to evolve, and still does, even though so many choose to ignore it when it does not fit with predetermined political agendas.” These scientists have probably won The Weather Channel’s ire and might be headed toward a Nuremberg-type trial.

Do We Want Socialized Medicine?

Wednesday, February 14, 2007

Problems with our health care system are leading some to fall prey to proposals calling for a nationalized single-payer health care system like Canada's or Britain's. There are a few things that we might take into consideration before falling for these proposals.

London's *Observer* (3/3/02) carried a story saying that an "unpublished report shows some patients are now having to wait more than eight months for treatment, during which time many of their cancers become incurable." Another story said, "According to a World Health Organisation report to be published later this year, around 10,000 British people die unnecessarily from cancer each year—three times as many as are killed on our roads."

The *Observer* (12/16/01) also reported, "A recent academic study showed National Health Service delays in bowel cancer treatment were so great that, in one in five cases, cancer which was curable at the time of diagnosis had become incurable by the time of treatment."

The story is no better in Canada's national health care system. The Vancouver, British Columbia-based Fraser Institute has a yearly publication titled, "Waiting Your Turn." Its 2006 edition gives waiting times, by treatments, from a person's referral by a general practitioner to treatment by a specialist. The shortest waiting time was for oncology (4.9 weeks). The longest waiting time was for orthopedic surgery (40.3 weeks), followed by plastic surgery (35.4 weeks) and neurosurgery (31.7 weeks).

Canadians face significant waiting times for various diagnostics such as computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and ultrasound scans. The median wait for a CT scan across Canada was 4.3 weeks, but in Prince Edward Island, it's 9 weeks. A Canadian's median wait for an MRI was 10.3 weeks, but in Newfoundland, patients waited 28 weeks. Finally, the median wait for an ultrasound was 3.8 weeks across Canada, but in Manitoba and Prince Edward Island it was 8 weeks.

Despite the long waiting times Canadians suffer, sometimes resulting in death, under federal law, private clinics are not legally allowed to provide services covered by the Canada Health Act. Regardless of this prohibition, a few black-market clinics service patients who are willing to break the law to get treatment. In British Columbia, for example, Bill 82 provides that a physician can be fined up to \$20,000 for accepting fees for surgery. According to a Canada News article, "Shortage of Doctors and Nurses Could Hurt Medicare Reforms" (3/5/03), about 10,000 doctors left Canada during the 1990s.

There's help for some Canadian patients. According to a Canadian Medical Association Journal article, "U.S. Hospitals Use Waiting-List Woes to Woo Canadians" (2/22/2000), "British Columbia patients fed up with sojourns on waiting lists as they await tests or treatment are being wooed by a hospital in Washington state that has begun offering package deals. A second U.S. hospital is also considering marketing its services." One of the attractions is that an MRI, which can take anywhere from 10 to 28 weeks in Canada, can be had in two days at Olympic Memorial Hospital in Port Angeles, Wash. Already, Cleveland is Canada's hip-replacement center.

Some of our politicians hold up the Canadian and British nationalized health care systems as models for us. You can bet that should we ever have such a system, they would exempt themselves from what the rest of us would have to endure.

There's a cure for our health care problems. That cure is not to demand more government but less government. I challenge anyone to identify a problem with health care in America that is not caused or aggravated by federal, state and local governments. And, I challenge anyone to show me people dying on the streets because they don't have health insurance.

Phony Science and Public Policy

Wednesday, April 11, 2007

The public has become increasingly aware that the science behind manmade global warming is a fraud. But maybe Americans like bogus science in pursuit of certain public policy objectives. Let's look at it.

Many Americans find tobacco smoke to be a nuisance. Some find the odor offensive, and others have allergies or asthma that can be aggravated by smoking in their presence. There's little question that tobacco smoke causes these kinds of nuisances, but how successful would anti-smokers have been in a court of law, or public opinion, in achieving the kind of success they've achieved based on tobacco smoke being a nuisance?

A serious public health threat had to be manufactured, and in 1993 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) stepped in to the rescue with their bogus environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) study that says secondhand tobacco smoke is a class A carcinogenic.

Why is it bogus? The EPA claimed that 3,000 Americans die annually from secondhand smoke, but there was a problem. They couldn't come up with that conclusion using the standard statistical 95 percent confidence interval. They lowered their study's confidence interval to 90 percent. That has the effect of doubling the margin of error and doubling the probability that mere chance explains those 3,000 deaths.

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) said, "Admittedly, it is unusual to return to a study after the fact, lower the required significance level, and declare its results to be supportive rather than unsupportive of the effect one's theory suggests should be present." The CRS was being kind. This kind of doctoring of research results would get a graduate student expelled from a university.

In 1998, the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer released the largest ever and best formulated study on ETS. The research project ran for 10 years and in seven European countries. The study, not widely publicized, concluded that

no statistically significant risk existed for nonsmokers who either lived or worked with smokers.

During the late '90s, at a Washington affair, I had the occasion to be in the presence of an FDA official. I asked him whether he would approve of pharmaceutical companies employing EPA's statistical techniques in their testing of drug effectiveness and safety. He answered no. I ask my fellow Americans who are nonsmokers: Do you support the use of fraudulent science in your efforts to eliminate tobacco smoke nuisance in bars, restaurants, workplaces and hotels?

You say, "Okay, Williams, the science is bogus, but how do we nonsmokers cope with the nuisance of tobacco smoke?" My answer is that it all depends on whether you prefer liberty-oriented solutions to problems or those that are more tyranny-oriented.

The liberty-oriented solution has to do with private property rights, whereby the owner of property makes the decision whether he will allow smoking or not. If one is a nonsmoker, he just doesn't do business with a bar or restaurant where smoking is permitted. A smoker could exercise the same right if a bar or restaurant didn't permit smoking. Publicly owned places such as libraries, airports and municipal buildings, where ownership is ill defined, presents more of a challenge.

The tyranny-oriented solution is where one group uses the political system to forcibly impose its preferences on others. You might be tempted to object to the term "tyranny," but suppose you owned a restaurant where you did not permit smoking and smokers used the political system to create a law forcing you to permit smoking. I'm sure you'd deem it tyranny.

The public policy debate on smoking has been settled through bogus science. My question is, how willing are we to allow bogus science to be used in the pursuit of other public policy agendas, such as restrictions on economic growth, in the name of fighting global warming?

FDA: Friend or Foe?

Wednesday, May 30, 2007

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is charged with ensuring that only safe and effective drugs are marketed. Such a task is highly complex and fraught with difficulties. Consumers, the ostensible beneficiaries, should examine and question the incentive structure that FDA officials face.

Some drugs are highly beneficial to certain patients but pose an unacceptable risk to others. Vioxx along with Celebrex are in a class of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID) known as COX-2 inhibitors. Salicylates, such as aspirin, are a subset of such drugs. COX-2 inhibitors are sometimes prescribed to adult patients for management of acute pain associated with osteoarthritis. Vioxx, since removed from the market, was very beneficial to patients who suffered from stomach bleeding and ulcers when they took other NSAIDs. For other adults, Vioxx presented an increased risk of a stroke or a life-threatening cardiovascular event.

So if you're an FDA official, what are your incentives in terms of whether to approve or disapprove the marketing of a drug that has a tremendous benefit to some patients and poses a health threat to others? Former FDA Commissioner Alexander Schmidt hinted at the answer when he said, "In all our FDA history, we are unable to find a single instance where a Congressional committee investigated the failure of FDA to approve a new drug. But the times when hearings have been held to criticize our approval of a new drug have been so frequent that we have not been able to count them. The message to FDA staff could not be clearer."

There's little or no cost to the FDA for not approving a drug that might be safe, effective and clinically superior to other drugs for some patients but pose a risk for others. My question to FDA officials is: Should a drug be disapproved whenever it poses a health risk to some people but a benefit to others? To do so would eliminate most drugs, including aspirin, because all drugs pose a health risk to some people.

According to the May 17th edition of the *Wall Street Journal*, in an editorial, “Our Lawless FDA,” by Hoover Institution scholars Drs. David Henderson and Charles Hooper, the FDA recently rejected Arcoxia, a new COX-2 inhibitor from Merck. In explaining the FDA’s disapproval, Robert Meyer, director of the agency’s Office of Drug Evaluation, told reporters that “simply having another drug on the market” wasn’t “sufficient reason to approve the product unless there was a unique role defined.”

Henderson and Hooper argue that this position greatly exceeds the FDA’s mandate to determine a drug’s safety and effectiveness. Arcoxia has been tested on over 34,000 U.S. patients. Moreover, it has been approved for use in England, Germany and 61 other countries in Asia, Latin America and Europe. Meyer’s explanation is nothing less than fascist arrogance.

According to the FDA’s literature, its mandate is: “Once a new drug application is filed, an FDA review team—medical doctors, chemists, statisticians, microbiologists, pharmacologists, and other experts—evaluates whether the studies the sponsor submitted show that the drug is safe and effective for its proposed use.” Nothing in the FDA mandate requires that a drug has to be better than what’s currently available in order to win approval.

Henderson and Hooper argue that in the worst-case scenario where Arcoxia is no better than existing drugs, it would compete with those drugs. Two centuries of economic theory and evidence show that competition is good. A new drug that competes with existing drugs would moderate drug prices and cause competitors to stay on their toes.

While Henderson and Hooper don’t say it, I smell a rat. Arcoxia is produced by Merck, which has several major competitors in the COX-2 inhibitor market. Some scientists on the FDA’s advisory panel have paid affiliations with companies who’d benefit from less competition.

Health Care: Government vs. Private

Wednesday, July 25, 2007

Sometimes the advocates of socialized medicine claim that health care is too important to be left to the market. That's why some politicians are calling for us to adopt health care systems such as those in Canada, the United Kingdom and other European nations. But the suggestion that we'd be better served with more government control doesn't even pass a simple smell test.

Do we want the government employees who run the troubled Walter Reed Army Medical Center to be in charge of our entire health care system? Or, would you like the people who deliver our mail to also deliver health care services? How would you like the people who run the motor vehicles department, the government education system, foreign intelligence and other government agencies to also run our health care system? After all, they are not motivated by the quest for profits, and that might mean they're truly wonderful, selfless, caring people.

As for me, I'd choose profit-driven people to provide my health care services, people with motives like those who deliver goods to my supermarket, deliver my overnight mail, produce my computer and software programs, assemble my car and produce a host of other goods and services that I use.

There's absolutely no mystery why our greatest complaints are in the arena of government-delivered services and the fewest in market-delivered services. In the market, there are the ruthless forces of profit, loss and bankruptcy that make producers accountable to us. In the arena of government-delivered services, there's no such accountability. For example, government schools can go for decades delivering low-quality services, and what's the result? The people who manage it earn higher pay. It's nearly impossible to fire the incompetents. And, taxpayers, who support the service, are given higher tax bills.

Our health care system is hampered by government intervention,

and the solution is not more government intervention but less. The tax treatment of health insurance, where premiums are deducted from employees' pre-tax income, explains why so many of us rely on our employers to select and pay for health insurance. Since there is a third-party payer, we have little incentive to shop around and wisely use health services.

There are "guaranteed issue" laws that require insurance companies to sell health insurance to any person seeking it. So why not wait until you're sick before purchasing insurance? Guaranteed issue laws make about as much sense as if you left your house uninsured until you had a fire, and then purchased insurance to cover the damage. Guaranteed issue laws raise insurance premiums for all. Then there are government price controls, such as the reimbursement schemes for Medicaid. As a result, an increasing number of doctors are unwilling to treat Medicaid patients.

Before we buy into single-payer health care systems like Canada's and the United Kingdom's, we might want to do a bit of research. The Vancouver, British Columbia-based Fraser Institute annually publishes "Waiting Your Turn." Its 2006 edition gives waiting times, by treatments, from a person's referral by a general practitioner to treatment by a specialist. The shortest waiting time was for oncology (4.9 weeks). The longest waiting time was for orthopedic surgery (40.3 weeks), followed by plastic surgery (35.4 weeks) and neurosurgery (31.7 weeks).

As reported in the June 28 National Center for Policy Analysis' "Daily Policy Digest," Britain's Department of Health recently acknowledged that one in eight patients waits more than a year for surgery. France's failed health care system resulted in the deaths of 13,000 people, mostly of dehydration, during the heat spell of 2003. Hospitals stopped answering the phones, and ambulance attendants told people to fend for themselves.

I don't think most Americans would like more socialized medicine in our country. By the way, I have absolutely no problem with people wanting socialism. My problem is when they want to drag me into it.

Deadly Environmentalists

Wednesday, August 15, 2007

Environmentalists, with the help of politicians and other government officials, have an agenda that has cost thousands of American lives.

In the wake of Hurricane Betsy, which struck New Orleans in 1965, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers proposed building flood gates on Lake Pontchartrain, like those in the Netherlands that protect cities from North Sea storms. In 1977, the gates were about to be built, but the Environmental Defense Fund and Save Our Wetlands sought a court injunction to block the project.

According to John Berlau's recent book, "Eco-Freaks: Environmentalism is Hazardous to Your Health," U.S. Attorney Gerald Gallinhouse told the court that not building the gates could kill thousands of New Orleanians. Judge Charles Schwartz issued the injunction despite the evidence refuting claims of environmental damage.

We're told that DDT is harmful to humans and animals. Berlau, a research fellow at the Washington, D.C.-based Competitive Enterprise Institute, says, "Not a single study linking DDT exposure to human toxicity has ever been replicated." In one long-term study, volunteers ate 32 ounces of DDT for a year and a half, and 16 years later, they suffered no increased risk of adverse health effects.

Despite evidence that, properly used, DDT is neither harmful to humans nor animals, environmental extremists fight for a continued ban. This has led to millions of illnesses and deaths from malaria, especially in Africa. After WWII, DDT saved millions upon millions of lives in India, Southeast Asia and South America. In some cases, malaria deaths fell to near zero. With bans on DDT, malaria deaths and illnesses have skyrocketed.

Environmental extremists see DDT in a different light. Alexander King, co-founder of the Club of Rome, said, "In Guyana, within almost two years, it had almost eliminated malaria, but at the same time, the birth rate had doubled. So my chief quarrel with DDT in

hindsight is that it greatly added to the population problem.” Jeff Hoffman, environmental attorney, wrote on grist.org, “Malaria was actually a natural population control, and DDT has caused a massive population explosion in some places where it has eradicated malaria. More fundamentally, why should humans get priority over other forms of life? . . . I don’t see any respect for mosquitoes in these posts.” Berlau’s book cites many other examples of contempt for human life by environmentalists and how they’ve made politicians their useful idiots.

In 2001, thousands of Americans perished in the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. In the early 1970s, when the World Trade Center complex was built, the asbestos scare had just begun. The builders planned to use AsbestoSpray, a flame retardant that adhered to steel. The New York Port of Authority caved in to the environmentalists’ asbestos scare and denied its use. An inferior substitute was used as fireproofing.

After the attack, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) confirmed other experts’ concerns about asbestos substitutes, concluding, “Even with the airplane impact and jet-fuel-ignited multi-floor fires, which were not normal building fires, the building would likely not have collapsed had it not been for the fireproofing.”

Through restrictions on asbestos use, our naval vessels are more vulnerable to our enemies, a disaster waiting in the wings. The Columbia spaceship disaster was a result of the EPA’s demand that NASA not use freon in its thermal insulating foam.

Congress mandates auto fuel mileage standards—Corporate Average Fuel Economy, or CAFE, standards—resulting in lighter, less crashworthy cars. In 2002, the National Academy of Sciences calculated that CAFE standards caused 2,000 additional traffic deaths each year. In 1999, a *USA Today* analysis of government and Insurance Institute data found that since the 1970s CAFE standards went into effect, 46,000 people died in crashes which they would have likely survived had they been riding in heavier cars.

None of this is news to politicians. It’s just that environmental extremists have the ears of politicians, and potential victims don’t.

Global Warming Hysteria

Wednesday, September 26, 2007

Despite increasing evidence that man-made CO₂ is not a significant greenhouse gas and contributor to climate change, politicians and others who wish to control our lives must maintain that it is.

According to the *Detroit Free Press*, Rep. John Dingell wants a 50-cents-a-gallon tax on gasoline. We've heard such calls before, but there's a new twist. Dingell also wants to eliminate the mortgage tax deduction on what he calls "McMansions," homes that are 3,000 square feet and larger. That's because larger homes use more energy.

One might wonder about Dingell's magnanimity in increasing taxes for only homes 3,000 feet or larger. The average U.S. home is around 2,300 square feet, compared with Europe's average of 1,000 square feet. So why doesn't Dingell call for disallowing mortgage deductions on houses more than 1,000 square feet? The reason is there would be too much political resistance, since more Americans own homes under 3,000 square feet than over 3,000. The full agenda is to start out with 3,000 square feet and later lower it in increments.

Our buying into global warming hysteria will allow politicians to do just about anything, upon which they can muster a majority vote, in the name of fighting climate change as a means to raise taxes.

In addition to excuses to raise taxes, congressmen are using climate change hysteria to funnel money into their districts. Rep. David L. Hobson, R-Ohio, secured \$500,000 for a geothermal demonstration project. Rep. Adam B. Schiff, D-Calif., got \$500,000 for a fuel-cell project by Superprotonic, a Pasadena company started by Caltech scientists. Money for similar boondoggles is being called for by members of both parties.

There are many ways to reduce CO₂ emissions, and being 71 years of age I know many of them. Al Gore might even consider me carbon neutral and possibly having carbon credits because my carbon offsets were made in advance. For example, for the first 15 years of my life, I didn't use energy-consuming refrigerators; we had an icebox.

For two decades I listened to radio instead of watching television and walked or used public transportation to most places. And for more than half my life I didn't use energy-consuming things such as computers, clothes dryers, air conditioning and microwave ovens. Of course, my standard of living was much lower.

The bottom line is, serious efforts to reduce CO₂ will lead to lower living standards through higher costs of living. And it will be all for naught because there is little or no relationship between man-made emissions and climate change.

There's an excellent booklet available from the National Center for Policy Analysis (ncpa.org) titled "A Global Warming Primer." Some of its highlights are:

"Over long periods of time, there is no close relationship between CO₂ levels and temperature."

"Humans contribute approximately 3.4 percent of annual CO₂ levels" compared to 96.6 percent by nature.

"There was an explosion of life forms 550 million years ago (Cambrian Period) when CO₂ levels were 18 times higher than today. During the Jurassic Period, when dinosaurs roamed the Earth, CO₂ levels were as much as nine times higher than today."

What about public school teachers frightening little children with tales of cute polar bears dying because of global warming? The primer says, "Polar bear numbers increased dramatically from around 5,000 in 1950 to as many as 25,000 today, higher than any time in the 20th century." The primer gives detailed sources for all of its findings, and it supplies us with information we can use to stop politicians and their environmental extremists from doing a rope-a-dope on us.

Silencing Dissent

Wednesday, August 8, 2007

Global warming has become a big-ticket item in the eyes of its supporters. At stake are research funds, jobs and the ability to control lives all over the globe. Most climatologists agree that over the last century, the Earth's average temperature has risen about one degree Celsius.

The controversy centers around the source of the temperature change—manmade or natural causes. Global warming alarmists hold the view that it's manmade emissions of CO₂ that's driving climate change, and they seek to suppress any dissent suggesting other causes.

According to the July 16 *Washington Times*, Michael T. Eckhart, president of the American Council on Renewable Energy (ACORE), sent a threatening missive to Marlo Lewis, senior fellow at the Washington, D.C.-based Competitive Enterprise Institute, which read: "Take this warning from me, Marlo. It is my intention to destroy your career as a liar. If you produce one more editorial against climate change, I will launch a campaign against your professional integrity. I will call you a liar and charlatan to the Harvard community of which you and I are members. I will call you out as a man who has been bought by Corporate America. Go ahead, guy. Take me on."

The Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce and the Department of Energy are all members of ACORE. Sen. James Inhofe, R-Okla., ranking member of the Environment and Public Works Committee, held hearings on the matter. Following the hearings, the senator sent letters to the agencies asking them to "reconsider their membership in ACORE."

Speaking at the American leg of Live Earth: The Concerts for a Climate in Crisis, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., the son of the late Robert F. Kennedy, said, "Get rid of all these rotten politicians that we have in Washington, who are nothing more than corporate toadies." Referring to skeptics of manmade global warming, he said, "This is trea-

son. And we need to start treating them as traitors.” Traitors are either shot or imprisoned. I wonder which Robert Kennedy has in mind for the skeptics.

University of Oregon’s George Taylor holds the title of state climatologist. Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski wants to take that title from Taylor. The governor said Taylor’s skepticism interferes with Oregon’s stated goals to reduce greenhouse gases, the accepted cause of global warming in the eyes of a vast majority of scientists.

Earlier this year, the Weather Channel’s Dr. Heidi Cullen called for the decertification of weathermen who were skeptical of manmade global warming. *Grist Magazine*’s staff writer David Roberts said that his solution for the “bastards” who were members of what he termed the global warming “denial industry” is, “When we’ve finally gotten serious about global warming, when the impacts are really hitting us and we’re in a full worldwide scramble to minimize the damage, we should have war crimes trials for these bastards—some sort of climate Nuremberg.”

“Global warming driven by greenhouse gas pollution (but ultimately by greed, racism and lying) is killing our Planet,” says an article in *Media With Conscience*. It goes on to say, “Our Planet, the Earth—is under acute threat from Climate Criminals threatening the Third World with Climate Genocide and the Biosphere with Terracide (the killing of our Planet).” Sen. Inhofe maintains a website citing these and other many examples of attacks on skeptics of manmade global warming. (See http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Minority.Blogs&ContentRecord_id=04373015-802a-23ad-4bf9-c3f02278f4cf.)

This kind of suppression of different ideas and dissent is simply the tip of a much larger iceberg that has many of its roots on today’s college campuses. Suppression of ideas is far more dangerous to our civilization than manmade global warming—real or imagined. Given the horrible history of brutal attempts to silence people who have different ideas or dissent from the conventional wisdom, those of us in the academic and scientific communities ought to openly repudiate and condemn the efforts to silence global warming skeptics. This is particularly so in light of the mounting evidence that manmade CO₂

emissions have little or nothing to do with climate change. (See http://epw.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=Files.View&FileStore_id=c5e16731-3c64-481c-9a36-d702baea2a42.)

Do We Want This?

Wednesday, June 22, 2005

America's socialists advocate that we adopt a universal healthcare system like our northern neighbor Canada. Before we buy into complete socialization of our healthcare system, we might check out the Canadian Supreme Court's June 9th ruling in *Chaoulli v. Quebec* (Attorney General). It turns out that in order to prop up government-delivered medical care, Quebec and other Canadian provinces have outlawed private health insurance. By a 4 to 3 decision, Canada's high court struck down Quebec's law that prohibits private medical insurance. With all of the leftist hype extolling the "virtues" of Canada's universal healthcare system, you might wonder why any sane Canadian would want to purchase private insurance.

Plaintiffs Jacques Chaoulli, a physician, and his patient, George Zeliotis, launched their legal challenge to the government's monopolized healthcare system after having had to wait a year for hip-replacement surgery. In finding for the plaintiffs, Canada's high court said, "The evidence in this case shows that delays in the public healthcare system are widespread, and that, in some serious cases, patients die as a result of waiting lists for public healthcare. The evidence also demonstrates that the prohibition against private health insurance and its consequence of denying people vital healthcare result in physical and psychological suffering that meets a threshold test of seriousness." Writing for the majority, Justice Marie Deschamps said, "Many patients on non-urgent waiting lists are in pain and cannot fully enjoy any real quality of life. The right to life and to personal inviolability is therefore affected by the waiting times."

The Vancouver, British Columbia-based Fraser Institute keeps track of Canadian waiting times for various medical procedures. According to the Fraser Institute's 14th annual edition of "Waiting Your Turn: Hospital Waiting Lists in Canada (2004)," total waiting time between referral from a general practitioner and treatment, averaged across all 12 specialties and 10 provinces surveyed, rose from 17.7

weeks in 2003 to 17.9 weeks in 2004. For example, depending on which Canadian province, an MRI requires a wait between 7 and 33 weeks.

Orthopaedic surgery might require a wait of 14 weeks for a referral from a general practitioner to the specialist and then another 24 weeks from the specialist to treatment. That statistic might help explain why Cleveland, Ohio, has become Canada's hip-replacement center.

As reported in a December 2003 story by Kerri Houston for the *Frontiers of Freedom Institute* titled "Access Denied: Canada's Healthcare System Turns Patients into Victims," in some instances, patients die on the waiting list because they become too sick to tolerate a procedure. Canada's Prime Minister Paul Martin responded to the court's decision saying, "We're not going to have a two-tier healthcare system in this country. What we want to do is strengthen the public healthcare system." That's the standard callous political response. He's telling Canadians to continue waiting, continue suffering and perhaps dying until the day comes when there's no more waiting. And though Canadian politicians can't give their citizens a date certain when there'll be no more waiting, they're determined to deny them alternatives to waiting for government-provided healthcare. I'd bet you the rent money that Prime Minister Martin and members of the Canadian Parliament don't have to wait months and years for a medical procedure.

I wonder just how many Americans would like to import Canada's healthcare system, which prohibits the purchase of private insurance and private healthcare services. In British Columbia, for example, Bill 82 provides that a physician can be fined up to \$20,000 for accepting fees for surgery. In my book, it's medical Nazism for government to prohibit a person who wishes to purchase medical services from doing so. But let's not look down our noses at our northern neighbors, for we too are well along the road toward medical Nazism.

Destructive Western Policy

July 7, 2004

Ever since Rachel Carson's 1962 book "Silent Spring," environmental extremists have sought to ban all DDT use. Using phony studies from the Environmental Defense Fund and the Natural Resources Defense Council, the environmental activist-controlled Environmental Protection Agency banned DDT in 1972. The extremists convinced the nation that DDT was not only unsafe for humans but unsafe to birds and other creatures as well. Their arguments have since been scientifically refuted.

While DDT saved crops, forests and livestock, it also saved humans. In 1970, the U.S. National Academy of Sciences estimated that DDT saved more than 500 million lives during the time it was widely used. A scientific review board of the EPA showed that DDT is not harmful to the environment and showed it to be a beneficial substance that "should not be banned." According to the World Health Organization, worldwide malaria infects 300 million people. About 1 million die of malaria each year. Most of the victims are in Africa, and most are children.

In Sri Lanka, in 1948, there were 2.8 million malaria cases and 7,300 malaria deaths. With widespread DDT use, malaria cases fell to 17 and no deaths in 1963. After DDT use was discontinued, Sri Lankan malaria cases rose to 2.5 million in the years 1968 and 1969, and the disease remains a killer in Sri Lanka today. More than 100,000 people died during malaria epidemics in Swaziland and Madagascar in the mid-1980s, following the suspension of DDT house spraying. After South Africa stopped using DDT in 1996, the number of malaria cases in KwaZulu-Natal province skyrocketed from 8,000 to 42,000. By 2000, there had been an approximate 400 percent increase in malaria deaths. Now that DDT is being used again, the number of deaths from malaria in the region has dropped from 340 in 2000 to none at the last reporting in February 2003.

In South America, where malaria is endemic, malaria rates soared

in countries that halted house spraying with DDT after 1993—Guyana, Bolivia, Paraguay, Peru, Brazil, Colombia and Venezuela. In Ecuador, DDT spraying was increased after 1993, and the malaria rate of infection was reduced by 60 percent. In a 2001 study published by the London-based Institute for Economic Affairs, “Malaria and the DDT Story,” Richard Tren and Roger Bate say that “Malaria is a human tragedy,” adding, “Over 1 million people, mostly children, die from the disease each year, and over 300 million fall sick.”

The fact that DDT saves lives might account for part of the hostility toward it. Alexander King, founder of the Malthusian Club of Rome, wrote in a biographical essay in 1990: “My own doubts came when DDT was introduced. In Guyana, within two years, it had almost eliminated malaria. So my chief quarrel with DDT, in hindsight, is that it has greatly added to the population problem.” Dr. Charles Wurster, one of the major opponents of DDT, is reported to have said, “People are the cause of all the problems. We have too many of them. We need to get rid of some of them, and this (referring to malaria deaths) is as good a way as any.”

Spraying a house with small amounts of DDT costs \$1.44 per year; alternatives are five to 10 times more, making them unaffordable in poor countries. Rich countries that used DDT themselves threaten reprisals against poor countries if they use DDT.

One really wonders about religious groups, the Congressional Black Caucus, government and non-government organizations, politicians and others who profess concern over the plight of poor people around the world while at the same time accepting or promoting DDT bans and the needless suffering and death that follow. Mosquito-borne malaria not only has devastating health effects but stifles economic growth as well.

Envirobamboozled

August 20, 2001

Time magazine: "Scientists no longer doubt that global warming is happening, and almost nobody questions the fact that humans are at least partly responsible." U.S. News & World Report chimed in, referring to the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), "The most definitive—and scary—report yet, declaring that global warming is not only real but man-made."

According to a Consumers' Research article (July 2001) "Global Warming Science: Fact vs. Fiction," written by Messrs. LaRochelle and Spencer, the media has it all wrong. The news media leaped to erroneous conclusions from a summary of a yet-to-be-released 3,000-page report. A follow-up study on global warming was released June 2001 by the National Research Council (NRC) of the National Academy of Science.

MIT Professor Richard Lindzen, one of the NRC panelists and lead author of the IPCC report says, "Our primary conclusion was that despite some knowledge and some agreement, the science is by no means settled. We are quite confident (1) that global mean temperature is about 0.5 degrees Celsius higher than a century ago; (2) that atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide have risen over the past two centuries; and (3) that carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas whose increase is likely to warm the earth. But—and I cannot stress this enough—we are not in a position to confidently attribute past climate change to carbon dioxide or to forecast what the climate will be in the future." Adding, "That is to say contrary to media impressions, agreement with the three basic statements tells us almost nothing relevant to policy discussions."

That conclusion shows just how much confidence we can have in what the media and environmental radicals tell us. You say, "Williams, are the environmentalist lying and deliberately frightening us?" That's part of their strategy. Consider what environmentalist activist Stephen Schneider said, "We have to offer up scary scenarios, make

simplified dramatic statements, and make little mention of any doubts we may have. Each of us has to decide what the right balance is between being effective and being honest.” (*Discover* 1989). Here’s what former Senator Timothy Wirth (D. Colo.) said, “We’ve got to ride the global warming issue. Even if the theory of global warming is wrong, we’ll be doing the right thing, in terms of economic policy and environmental policy” (Michael Fumento’s *Science Under Siege*).

Dr. Fred Singer, president of The Science & Environmental Policy Project in Arlington, Virginia says there are four different independent data sets for measuring temperature. First are thermometers at weather stations around the world; they show warming over the past 30 years—but not in the U.S. The second are weather satellites. They show no warming. The third are weather balloons; they show no warming. The fourth are called proxy dates: tree rings, ice cores, lake sediments, etc. They show no warming.

Basing public policy on erroneous observations and predictions can be very costly in terms of human welfare and economic growth. Environmental activist predictions have been dead wrong. In *National Wildlife* (July 1975), Nigel Calder warned, “the threat of a new ice age must now stand alongside nuclear war as a likely source of wholesale death and misery for mankind.” In the same issue, C. C. Wallen of the World Meteorological Organization warned, “The cooling since 1940 has been large enough and consistent enough that it will not soon be reversed.” In 1968, Dr. Paul Erlich, author of *The Population Time Bomb* and environmentalists’ guru, predicted that the earth would run out of food by 1977 and that the earth’s 5 billion population would starve back to 2 billion people by 2025. Dr. Erlich also warned Britain’s Institute of Biology in 1969, “If I were a gambler, I would take even money that England will not exist in the year 2000.”

Why do we listen to these people?

Is This the America We Want?

June 11, 2003

Oreo cookies should be banned from sale to children in California. That's according to Stephen Joseph, who filed a lawsuit against Nabisco last month in California's Marin County Superior Court. Oreo cookies contain trans fat, an ingredient that makes the cookies crisp and their filling creamy. Joseph says that trans fat is so dangerous that our children should be protected from it.

Last year, Los Angeles Unified School District voted unanimously to ban the sale of soft drinks at all of the district's 677 schools. They said the new rule, scheduled to go into effect January 2004, will improve the health of its 736,000 students, of whom a recent survey of 900 of them found 40 percent to be obese.

New York lawyer Samuel Hirsch and George Washington University's Professor John F. Banzhaf brought lawsuits against fast food restaurants Burger King, McDonald's, Wendy's and Kentucky Fried Chicken. Hirsch and Banzhaf contend that these fast food restaurants are responsible for obesity; they ignore the fact that two-thirds of all meals are served at home.

The Washington-based Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) also demands government control of what we eat. It calls for excise taxes on fatty foods, additional taxes on cars and television sets, and a doubling of the excise tax on beer. By making cars and televisions more expensive, it thinks it will force people to walk more and stop being couch potatoes.

CSPI's Michael Jacobson said, "We could envision taxes on butter, potato chips, whole milk, cheeses (and) meat." CSPI wants the tax revenues earmarked for government-sponsored exercise programs.

These tyrannical schemes also have government support. According to a *Consumer Freedom* article (www.consumerfreedom.com), former USDA spokesman John Webster said, "Right now, this anti-obesity campaign is in its infancy. . . . (W)e want to turn people around and give them assistance in eating nutritious foods."

The anti-obesity campaign might seem preposterous and amusing were it not for the successes of the anti-tobacco campaign premised on the idea that individuals are not responsible for their choices. It's a logical follow-up: Food producers, not people themselves, are responsible for overindulgence. Since we have socialized medicine, obesity adds to the nation's health-care costs through its contribution to obesity-related health problems such as diabetes, cancer and cardiovascular disease. According to the food Nazis, that means government has a stake in controlling what we eat.

Americans salute the results of the anti-tobacco campaign that brought successful multibillion-dollar suits against tobacco companies and levied steep tobacco taxes. In some jurisdictions, such as New York City, taxes have led to the tripling of cigarette prices, not to mention the creation of black markets. I'm wondering whether my fellow Americans would like the food Nazi campaign to produce the same outcome. In other words, how would we like taxes that create \$10 hamburgers, \$5 cans of beer and \$12 for a pound of Oreo cookies?

Maybe as an alternative to taxes, there might be a call for laws similar to what's called the Dram Shop Act in some states, which prohibits the sale of alcohol to intoxicated persons. Applied to food, that law might ban the sale of hamburgers and fries to a fat person, or a mandate that scales be placed in front of cash registers where a customer is weighed prior to a sale.

Instead of hamburgers and fries, an overweight customer is offered a tasty salad instead. Instead of suing Nabisco to stop children from eating Oreos, we might have a law requiring proof of age prior to purchase. We could use endangering minors law to exact stiff penalties against parents who gave Oreos to their children.

The anti-obesity movement is simply another step down the road to serfdom and, what's worse, Americans are voluntarily assisting the nation's tyrants.

Weak-Kneed Corporate CEOs

February 16, 2005

On Jan. 20, 2005, J.P. Morgan Chase announced that it had completed research to determine whether it had any links to slavery. Its website (www2.bankone.com/presents/home/) announced: "Today, we are reporting that this research found that between 1831 and 1865 two of our predecessor banks—Citizens Bank and Canal Bank in Louisiana—accepted approximately 13,000 enslaved individuals as collateral on loans and took ownership of approximately 1,250 of them when the plantation owners defaulted on the loans."

J.P. Morgan Chase went on to "apologize to the American public, and particularly to African-Americans, for the role that Citizens Bank and Canal Bank played during that period." They added, "Since these events took place in Louisiana, we are establishing a \$5 million college scholarship program for students living in Louisiana."

In January 2004, U.S. District Judge Charles Norgle dismissed a reparations lawsuit brought against companies such as J.P. Morgan Chase, Fleet Boston Financial and Brown & Williamson Tobacco that contended that either they or their corporate ancestors profited from insuring slave ships, using slaves or financing businesses built with slave labor. Judge Norgle said the statute of limitations had long past, the plaintiffs did not have standing, and they failed to establish a clear link to the companies they targeted. The court's decision comes close to a kiss of death for reparations through the judicial process but not through the mau-mau process.

Some corporations have chief executive officers who double as the corporation's chief appeasement officers. A CEO/CAO will do nearly anything to befriend anti-capitalist forces, and J.P. Morgan Chase is seen as a soft target. Maybe that's why the Rainforest Action Network, an eco-activist group, transported Fairfield County, Connecticut second-graders to New York City in an attempt to pressure J.P. Morgan Chase CEO William B. Harrison into agreeing to stop lending money to development projects that "cause global warming."

Corporate Social Responsibility Watch (csrwatch.com) keeps an eye on the leftist attack on American corporations and corporate cowardice in the face of these attacks. Last year, CSRW listed the “Top Ten Worst Moments in Free Enterprise for 2004.”

Among those listed are Monsanto’s CEO Hugh Grant, who caved in to pressure from Greenpeace and announced the company was shelving plans to develop genetically engineered wheat. Ford Motor Co. CEO William Ford Jr., in an effort to befriend environmentalists, publicly supported a 50-cent-per-gallon gas tax.

British Petroleum’s CEO John Browne devised a \$100 million-a-year public relations campaign that characterizes oil as a “necessary evil” and in the process deceitfully started changing its corporate identity from “British Petroleum” to “Beyond Petroleum.”

Citigroup and Bank of America agreed to allow Rainforest Action Network to dictate their lending practices—such as not financing projects that don’t meet with environmentalists’ approval.

Also included among CSRW’s top 10 are Whole Foods, Starbucks, Dunkin’ Donuts, Kraft Foods and Procter & Gamble, which have been mau-maued into paying higher, so-called “fair trade” prices for coffee beans in the name of helping struggling farmers.

Do corporations have social responsibility? Yes. Nobel Laureate Professor Milton Friedman put it best in 1970 when he said that in a free society “there is one and only one social responsibility of business—to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud.”

Only people, not businesses, have responsibilities. A CEO is an employee. He’s an employee of shareholders and customers. When the corporate executive community fails to recognize that fact, and engages in activities unrelated to the pursuit of profits, lower national wealth, higher product prices, and lower return on investment are the result. Corporate executives caving in to anti-capitalists’ attacks will not buy peace. Capitulation only whets anti-capitalist appetites for bigger, bolder and more widespread attacks and extortion.

Killing People

October 7, 2002

Activists in the environmentalist movement have a callous disregard for people. You say, "What do you mean, Williams? We can't think of a more caring people." First, I'm not talking about sensible people who're concerned about clean air and water. I'm talking about the movement leaders and the politicians they have under their thumbs. Let's look at it.

The New York Green Party said in its opposition to pesticide spraying to halt the spread of West Nile disease, "These diseases only kill the old and people whose health is already poor." In East Meadow and Hempstead, New York, local officials, following the advice of environmental activists, decided not to spray. Nassau County's Health Commissioner said, "We believe the risk of infection for residents remains quite low." Two county residents became infected with West Nile disease and died. Environment activist Lynn Landes says, "West Nile may be a nasty experience for a very few, fatal for an exceedingly rare number, but as diseases go it's no big deal." According to the most recent Centers for Disease Control statistics, 2,530 Americans have been infected with West Nile disease and 125 died, but to environmentalists that's "no big deal."

American deaths due to environmental activist callousness pale in comparison to other countries. How about a few statistics? In 1972, the activist-controlled Environmental Protection Agency banned DDT, a pesticide once considered a "miracle" for all of the lives it saved by killing the mosquitoes that carried malaria. The ban went into effect despite the evidence that with proper use it posed no health hazard to humans and only little substantial harm to animals. The EPA ban led to diminished DDT production making the pesticide less available to the world.

What were the effects? In what is now Sri Lanka there were 2,800,000 malaria cases and 7,300 malaria deaths in 1948; with the use of DDT there were only 17 cases and no deaths in 1964. After

DDT use was discontinued, Sri Lankan malaria cases rose to 500,000 in 1969. Worldwide malaria's devastating effects all but ended during the time that DDT use was widespread, roughly 1950–1970. DDT was seen as such a miracle that it earned Dr. Paul Muller the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1948. In 1970, a committee of the National Academy of Sciences wrote, "To only a few chemicals does man owe as great a debt as to DDT. In a little more than two decades, DDT has prevented 500 million deaths due to malaria that otherwise would have been inevitable."

According to the World Health Organization, now about two and a half million people die of malaria each year. Most of the victims are in Africa and are children. According to American Council on Science and Health's president, Dr. Elizabeth Whelan, some sixty million or more lives have been needlessly lost since the ban on DDT took effect. Dr. Whelan says, "It's a real tragedy that DDT has been so demonized over the years by activist organizations such as Environmental Defense and the regulatory bodies that they have duped."

C.S. Lewis made an observation applicable to do-gooders everywhere, "Of all tyrannies a tyranny exercised for the good of its victims may be the most oppressive. It may be better to live under robber barons than under omnipotent moral busybodies. The robber baron's cruelty may sometimes sleep, his cupidity may at some point be satiated; but those who torment us for our own good will torment us without end for they do so with the approval of their own conscience."

They're Coming after You

February 25, 2002

Most Americans were pleased with the legislative attack on cigarette smokers, not to mention confiscatory tobacco taxes. We reveled in the EPA's dishonest study concluding that second hand smoke causes cancer. And, by the way, I'd like to hear whether the Food & Drug Administration would sanction pharmaceutical companies employing EPA's research methods to test drug safety, and if not, why not? The real reason for the attack on smokers is that many people are offended by the tobacco odor. Unfortunately, in their quest to eliminate tobacco fumes, Americans are willing to trade away constitutional principles and rule of law.

Tyrants are never satisfied. They've lined up new victims. Surgeon General David Satcher has provided them with ammunition by describing obesity as America's number one killer costing 300,000 lives annually. As a result of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other obesity-related illnesses, it's costing us billions upon billions of health dollars. That means, according to John Banzhaf of George Washington University School of Law and other tyrants, America's food industry is to blame and is liable. New York University Professor Marion Nestle agrees saying that the food industry "can't behave like cigarette companies. . . . Yet there's a lot of people who benefit from people being fat and sick, and the whole setup is designed to make people eat more. So the response to the food industry should be very similar to what happened with the tobacco companies."

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) is one of the Washington lobbies who want to control what we eat. These tyrants not only propose taxes on what they deem as non-nutritious foods, they've also proposed a 5 percent tax on new television sets and video equipment and a \$65 tax on each new car or an extra penny per gallon of gas. You might ask why tax these items. CSPI Nazis see watching television and videos, riding instead of walking, as contributing to obesity. And, as they see it, just as tobacco companies were

responsible for people smoking, television manufacturers are responsible for people being couch potatoes, automobile companies are responsible for people riding instead of walking, and the food industry is responsible for people eating too much.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) have joined these tyrants. No reasonable person advocates drunk driving but MADD has another agenda. They wish to outlaw driving even after having one drink. They've successfully pushed Congress to lower the blood/alcohol level for a drunk driving arrest to .08 percent. But their true agenda was revealed by Steve Simon, Chairman, Minnesota State DUI Task Force when he said, "If .08 percent is good, .05 percent is better. That's where we're headed, it doesn't mean that we should get there all at once. But ultimately it should be .02 percent." That's the way Nazis work—incrementally. If they had demanded Congress to make the blood/alcohol .02, they wouldn't have gotten anything—not even .08 percent. I wouldn't be surprised if their ultimate agenda is alcohol prohibition.

The Center for Consumer Freedom (www.consumerfreedom.com) keeps up-to-date information on these and other tyrants. You might say, "What's the fuss, Williams? These people will never get away with controlling what we eat and drink!" Think again. In the '60s, when the anti-smoking zealots were simply asking for smoking and non-smoking sections on airplanes, no one would have ever anticipated today's tobacco taxes, laws and regulations.

Most evil done in the world is done in the name of promoting this or that good. By turning away from rule of law and constitutional government, Americans are following in the footsteps of the decent Germans who, during the 1920s and 30s, built the Trojan Horse that enabled Hitler to take over.