

Critics of Garrett Hardin Disregard the Big Picture

BRENDA WALKER

Garrett Hardin was truly a man of consequential vision, who recognized human population growth as a source of great future peril and an issue that has become better understood by realistic environmentalists as more important since his death in 2003. His voice would be particularly welcome now, since the message of world overpopulation has fallen from public discourse just as the danger worsens.

Sometimes when a global problem becomes too complicated, it disappears from the public debate because the media and organizational explainers fear offending someone somewhere.

These days, the idea of limits to growth in the population realm steps on the toes of the politically correct left, who apparently believe that it's perfectly fine for women in Niger to have seven kids (the average there). But who would think that situation could be beneficial for anyone, particularly the family?

Hardin addressed the issue in common sense terms, but with a steely spine that lurked in the background, warning that failure to rein in population excess will bring a disastrous result. He was not radical but reasonable — though he seemed extreme to some because he spoke honestly about difficult choices forming up in the overpopulated world.

Hardin's 1993 book, *Living within Limits*, began with the basic facts about unduly prolific humanity:

A funny thing happened on the way to the second nationwide Earth Day in 1990. Twenty years earlier the first Earth Day had been saluted with much talk about population problems. At that time world population stood at 3.6 billion. But when the second Earth Day rolled around, the topic of popu-

lation was almost completely ignored. Was that because world population had stopped growing? Hardly: in the intervening two decades it had increased 47 percent to an estimated 5.3 billion, an increase of 1.7 billion (more than six times the present population of the United States).

Today's numbers reveal no let-up. As of April, 2019, the widely used Worldometer live population counter showed 7.7 billion humans residing on our little planet. That number is a doubling since 1972, the year when the Watergate break-in occurred and *The French Connection* got the Best Picture Oscar — just 47 years ago. We are living through unprecedented times in regards to human population growth.

Africa comes to mind as being particularly fecund, where some projections show a continent of four billion persons at the end of this century, a quadrupling of today's number. How will Europe's culture survive with so many poor neighbors who are already leaving their homes for the imagined "better life" in the nations to the north?

The United Nations expects us to reach eight billion in 2023 and ten billion in 2055. But such futures are little discussed by today's environmentalists and the press.

Instead, climate change is the major environmental problem these days, according to the media. It helps that the topic is conveniently vague, plus it can be blamed on America even though Red China emits more carbon from burning fossil fuels than the United States and Europe combined.

Many times when climate change is brought up as being the cause of a problem, a major factor is extreme population growth. For example, reports on the Cape Town South Africa drought that started four years ago usually overlooked the city's growth from 800,000 residents in 1960 to 4.1 million in 2015 — that's quite an increase in water users that worsened the effects of little rainfall.

To billions of poor around the planet, America is the World Welfare Office of choice, and we taxpaying citizens exist to serve them. Foreign moochers don't think

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of themselves as invaders or job thieves: they believe we need their cheap labor to maintain our luxurious lifestyles.

Some of the left-wing persuasion agree and regard open borders to the excessively wealthy America as the highest virtue, and anyone who disagrees is a racist.

On the contrary, the belief that darker-skinned people are incapable of improving their own countries and must be rescued by immigration to pale America is the genuine racism. In fact, Latin America has had a long history of revolution — remember Fidel Castro? — and only easy travel to the U.S. has erased the urge toward self-determination in Central America. The aliens' shame of abandoning their homeland shows in the omnipresent Honduran flags carried by caravans of migrants.

At the time of this writing, 100,000 illegal aliens, mostly from the Northern Triangle countries of Central America, are crossing the border every month using the asylum claim scam. We shouldn't be too surprised since Honduras has quadrupled in population since 1960, which has enormously increased the push factor of more human density in an agricultural economy.

The Honduras example brings to mind a Hardin maxim: "Every 'shortage' of supply is equally a 'longage' of demand," a simple formulation illustrating that when population is increased opportunity may be diminished, which is often the case in a low-skilled economy.

Another Hardin quote reveals the direct stress between extreme population growth and maintaining quality of life: "Having accepted disease control, the people [of poor countries] must now accept population control."

But curiously, some on the left have found Hardin's common-sense warnings about population growth to be racist. Actually, the buttons are pushed among the open-borders left, particularly the Southern Poverty Law Center (aka SPLC), one of the most misleadingly named organizations in history: it is indeed located in Alabama, but the Poverty Center is also known to have many millions of dollars tucked away overseas.

Recent news from the unscrupulous SPLC has brought some long overdue proof of its deep corruption: on March 13, the organization's president Richard Cohen fired founder Morris Dees over allegations of sexual harassment; a few days later Cohen resigned, admitting responsibility for problems that occurred "on my watch." A former White House official, Tina Tchen, is pursuing an audit of the organization to investigate charges of sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and racism.

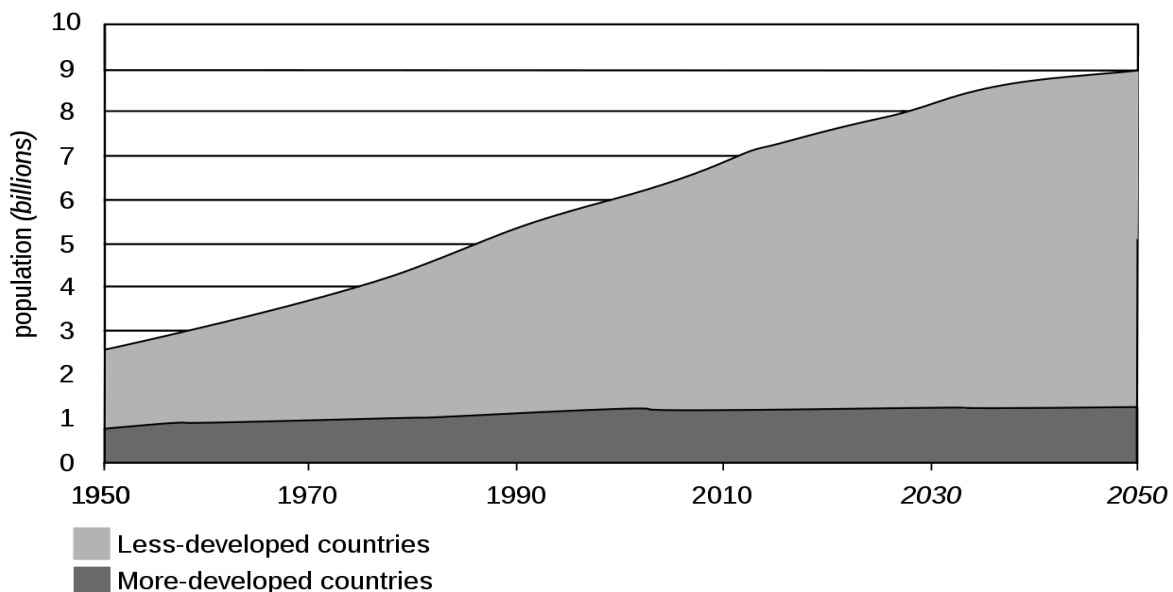
These are the people who condemn citizens who merely demand U.S. borders be protected from invasion.

In addition, there have been persistent reports of the organization parking increasingly large sums of money offshore in the Cayman Islands, which is an odd thing for a nonprofit to do. A March 12 headline in the *Free Beacon* specified: "Southern Poverty Surpasses Half Billion in Assets; \$121 Million Now Offshore."

So the SPLC's moral authority has been severely damaged, to say the least.

That outcome is not surprising since the organization has always been more concerned with making money than outing any dangerous anti-social groups. In fact, America does not generate enough genuine monsters like the KKK to keep the SPLC afloat, so it has con-

Population Growth in More- and Less-Developed Countries, 2002



demned numerous persons whose only crime is to take national sovereignty seriously.

As a consequence, the SPLC’s bash page of Hardin remains online in its selection of 131 “Extremists” who range from true fanatics like David Duke to some who just believe that America’s immigration laws should be enforced.

Here’s a sample of SPLC calumny against the sensible environmentalist:

About Garrett Hardin

Hardin used his status as a famous scientist and environmentalist to provide a veneer of intellectual and moral legitimacy for his underlying nativist agenda, serving on the board of directors of both the anti-immigrant Federation for American Immigration Reform and the white-nationalist Social Contract Press. He also co-founded the anti-immigrant Californians for Population Stabilization and The Environmental Fund, which primarily served to lobby Congress for nativist and isolationist policies.

In his own words:

“Promoters of more diversity maintain that the more immigrants the better; and the greater the variety the richer America will become. Many of these promoters are ‘Europhobic’ — fearful of, or revolted by, European civilization and values. They say we should stop taking in North Europeans, urging us instead to solicit the Filipinos, the Taiwanese, and the Salvadorans.... Diversity is the opposite of unity, and unity is a prime requirement for national survival.”

—“How Diversity Should be Nurtured,”
The Social Contract, 1991

So the world population will roll on to eight billion in a few years, and America’s border remains wide open, but we should remember Garrett Hardin’s admonition for the future: “To be generous with one’s own possessions is one thing; to be generous with posterity’s is quite another...” ■

Mass Immigration and National Survival

GARRETT HARDIN

The interests of the whole community, though great, are diffuse....At the present time no constituency in the United States is sufficiently informed and powerful to secure the end desired by the vast majority, namely a sharp curtailment of immigration. We suspect that democracy may be in jeopardy because of its apparent inability to meet the first test of any system—survival.

As the proportion of recent immigrants increases, their political power will increase proportionately. We already see signs of this in the growing intransigence of “Chicano” leaders, the younger generation of Mexican-Americans. At some level of population—five percent of the total population? Ten percent?—the recent immigrants may well reach a “critical mass” (to borrow a concept from nuclear physics) whose power the more comfortable and passive multitude of longtime residents will find irresistible. As militant immigrants fight to keep the borders open, they will be aided by native political activists, left over from the 1960s, who seek new worlds to conquer. When the political power of this coalition becomes irresistible, the United States will have lost control of its destiny. Hoping to diminish world poverty by neglecting to control movements across our borders, the nation will merely have become sucked into a global commons that universalizes poverty. ■



[From *Naked Emperors: Essays of a Taboo-Stalker*. Los Altos, CA: William Kaufmann, Inc, pp. 27-28, 1982]