THE U.S., WITH 5% OF THE WORLD’S POPULATION, USES 25% OF THE WORLD’S ENERGY AND EMITS 22% OF ALL CO2 PRODUCED...

WELL...WE'RE AMERICANS! PROFLIGATE CONSUMPTION OF THE PLANET'S NATURAL RESOURCES IS OUR BIRTHRIGHT!...

SUPPORT THE TROOPS

DESPITE THESE FACTS, PRESIDENT BUSH REFUSED TO EVEN ATTEND THE RIO EARTH SUMMIT UNTIL PLANS FOR A TREATY PUTTING SPECIFIC CAPS ON CO2 EMISSIONS WERE SCUTTLED...

THIS GREENHOUSE EFFECT THING-- --IS JUST AN UNPROVEN THEORY!

RATHER THAN ASK AMERICANS TO SACRIFICE, MR. BUSH WOULD PREFER THAT UNDERDEVELOPED THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES BEAR THE ECONOMIC BRUNT OF GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTIONS...

WELL, IT MAKES SENSE!

AFTER ALL, THEIR STANDARDS OF LIVING ARE LOWER TO BEGIN WITH!

...LEAVING CITIZENS IN THIS COUNTRY FREE TO LIVE IN THE MANNER TO WHICH THEY ARE ACCUSTOMED...

I'D LIKE SOME MORE THINGS, PLEASE!

Special Issue: POPULATION & IMMIGRATION

Population Control: Environmentalism or Preservation of Inequality?
Editor's Notes

No argument is more likely to seriously injure the fragile alliance between environmentalists and communities of color — and the growing environmental justice movement which so many have worked so hard to build — than the debate over U.S. immigration policy. Already on the defensive about the white, upper-class male character of their leadership and their behind-the-scenes role in negotiating policies with which low-income communities must live, environmentalists are now accused of legitimizing an anti-immigrant movement. Their response is that people of color and social justice advocates for immigrants' rights and women's rights do not take seriously the global population explosion and its inevitable damage to the earth and its inhabitants.

This topic is especially hard for our budding movement because it leads us back to the existential values that motivate our work and thus becomes personal. For example, while researching this special issue of Race, Poverty and the Environment, we've noticed a stark and we think class-based, difference in the language that people use to discuss population and immigration. Those who want to restrict immigration and those who are in-

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Kettleman City Wins the Big One
Proceedings from the EDGE Conference

In January of 1993, EDGE—the Alliance of Ethnic and Environmental Organizations—held a two-day, statewide conference on environmental justice issues in California. The theme of the conference was “Redefining the California Dream: Growth, Justice and Sustainability.” Over 200 people attended the event, more than half of whom were people of color and bringing together a wide range of perspectives from public advocacy, ethnic and environmental groups and public institutions. Part of the conference was devoted to the issues of population and immigration. The four papers that follow were presentations that sparked such controversy and discussion that the organizers of EDGE will hold a special conference on the issues of population, immigration and consumption in the spring of 1994. For information, contact Carlos Melendrez, care of the Urban Habitat Program.

Why Communities of Color Fear the Population Debate

by Linda Wong

Whenever I have worked with mainstream environmental groups in the past, I have often been asked to address the issue of population control. The reason for these requests is pretty obvious: If mainstream white environmentalists were to deal with the issue, they would run the risk of being labeled “racist.” On the other hand, if a person of color addressed the question, the reaction would not be so controversial or extreme. Knowing that, I turned down these requests because I didn’t believe that environmentalists were genuinely open to an examination of this issue from a different perspective. However, with recent efforts to organize disenfranchised communities around environmental health hazards, I believe the time is right to begin the dialogue and, more importantly, to redefine the debate.

All of us are aware that population stabilization is one of the most divisive and polarizing issues in the environmental movement. It has driven a wedge between communities of color and those who are engaged in legitimate efforts to preserve and protect our natural resources. Too often, the issue has been framed in the context of a sum zero game: that is, as the population increases, there is an accompanying increase in the consumption of natural resources used to support that growth. Since birth rates tend to be higher in developing countries than in industrialized nations, the most commonly proposed solution will be to “fix” people of color, usually through family planning programs.

European counterparts, any serious effort to reestablish a balance in the environmental matrix will inevitably target developing nations as the source of the problem. And the most commonly proposed solution will be to “fix” people of color, usually through family planning programs.

It is therefore not surprising that communities of color feel so much fear and anger every time this question arises. There are legitimate reasons for these fears — reasons based on historical experience. In the 1960s, American agronomists and biologists working for the U.S. government in Latin America realized that population growth could seriously deplete the natural resources in this region. Their proposed solutions, however, were extreme. People like William Paddock and Garrett Hardin advocated a radical form of environmental protection — a medical triage strategy that would allow sick people to die. Paddock found this approach to be the most expedient means to facilitate the "quick
elimination" of excess population. And Garrett Hardin frequently testified in Congress against American aid to, famine ridden countries, arguing that this was the best way of reducing population growth in developing nations. Eventually, many of those ideas were popularized in books like The Population Bomb, published in 1968 by Paul Erlich.

We had people in the 1960s who advocated the most extreme form of population control — let sick people die. This was specifically targeted at individuals living in Mexico, Central America and South America.

With this kind of history behind us, it's no wonder that people of color are so sensitive to this issue. Implicit in the environmental philosophy is the view that some people are more expendable than others and that expediency takes precedence over human dignity and basic human rights. When you look at that history and understand how these policies have been played out — both in this country and in other parts of this hemisphere — the conclusion we reach, as far as communities of color are concerned, is that people of color are less than human.

These fears are real and based on fact. For example, when the birth control pill was being tested for approval by the Federal Food and Drug Administration, the subjects of the tests were mainly Puerto Rican women. In California, forced sterilization was an accepted practice in some of our publicly funded hospitals, including the Los Angeles County Medical Center.

Until the 1980s, many Latina women who were admitted into that facility were asked to sign a form as a precondition to receiving medical treatment. The forms were in English; and even though most of the women were non-English speaking immigrants, the contents were not explained to them. They knew only that they had to sign it in order to receive the surgery or treatment they needed. It was not until the surgery was done that they realized they had signed a release form allowing the doctors to sterilize them. Fortunately, the practice was stopped when public opposition was organized and litigation was initiated against the hospital.

As you can see, there is a factual basis for the fear that exists, not only in communities of color in this state, but in the developing world as well. As long as we confine ourselves to the existing framework of the debate, we will not be able to identify alternative solutions. If we want to begin the dialogue anew and set aside the history and horrendous experience we've gone through, then we must address the issue from a different perspective.

Rather than look at the issue of population growth as strictly an issue of family planning, perhaps we should examine the underlying causes that lead families to have more children, particularly in the developing world. If we focused our attention on the development of a sustainable economic support system, then low-income families could find ways of supporting themselves without the need to have more children. By expanding the scope of the issue to include economic self-sufficiency, it is only natural that we take the next logical step and address the issue of political and economic empowerment for women.

This is an important aspect which has been ignored by mainstream environmentalists. You can provide women with access to family planning services and educational opportunity, but their standing in society will never change, no matter how well educated they become, as long as they have no power to determine their future. Economic and political empowerment of women is therefore a critical dimension to the discussion we are trying to redefine.

Moreover, if we want to develop a long-term, viable strategy, then we must ask ourselves about the kinds of values we are imparting to our children. What kinds of rewards and incentives are we offering young people that will encourage them to stay in school to avoid criminal behavior and to make decisions about marriage and family at appropriate times in their lives? These questions appear to be simple and straightforward. Yet we are anything but straightforward in communicating our values to a younger generation. At best, the messages conveyed through popular media are confusing; at worst they offer no guidance at all.

In considering these other aspects to the issue, I can almost hear some environmentalists say, "Why should we take this approach? They are not legitimate environmental concerns." Having served three years as a juror for the Goldman Foundation's Environmental Prize, I am struck by comments that draw artificial lines of demarcation between environmentalism and economic development. To me, this is a false dichotomy which defeats what we are trying to accomplish. The question is not whether a person is an environmentalist or an advocate for economic development. The real issue should be: what is the most effective strategy available to us to solve the pressing environmental, social and economic issues facing our communities?

As long as we hold on to a narrow definition of environmentalism, we will always be vulnerable to the dangers inherent in single issue movements. That danger is the development of a tunnel vision, which prevents us from considering a host of options and possible solutions to the problems we are trying to solve. More importantly, this narrowness will inhibit our ability to broaden our base of support.

Reframing the issue of population control is critical at this time. As we
examine the implications of the state’s changing demography, we are slowly waking up to the realization that California will be the first state in the nation to enter a post-European, non-English speaking era. This is already disconcerting to some; but the impacts are actually far more wide-ranging; while California will be the first state to go through this fundamental change, it will not be the last.

Few of us realize that one out of four Americans is a person of color. Or that linguistic diversity is sweeping the country and touching communities we least expect. For example, over one-half of the population of Patterson, New Jersey now speaks a language other than English. And forty percent of the residents in Connecticut are multi-lingual. Add to this mix the fact that one-third of the people living in Providence, Rhode Island now speak a language other than English. And it is evident that cultural and linguistic diversity is reaching the heartland of this country.

What is the heartland? Some demographers believe it to be Garden City, Kansas. A small community of 24,000, it has seen an explosion of ethnic and cultural diversity over the past decade. Latinos have more than doubled from 3,500 in 1980 to over 9,000 in 1990, while Asians have mushroomed dramatically from only a hundred in 1980 to over 1,200 in 1990. Keep in mind that this is a small town of 24,000 people in the plains of Middle America. This is Dorothy’s home town!

So you see, the issues we are addressing will not end at the borders of California. these are questions which will fundamentally transform the character of this nation, the values that make us definitively American, as well as the direction we choose to take. If there is any incentive to change our minds about environmentalism, it should lie with the remarks that John Vasconcelos made earlier. In a period when our fiscal resources are rapidly shrinking, and we find ourselves with fewer and fewer options, we no longer have the luxury of operating in isolation, separate and apart from each other. Nor do we have the luxury of categorizing issues into neat little boxes — whether it is environmentalism, civil rights, economic development or housing. these categories are no longer viable, especially if we are looking for some long-term solutions to complex, inter-related problems.

One of the goals for this conference

Garrett Hardin frequently testified in Congress against American aid to famine-ridden countries, arguing that this was the best way of reducing population growth in developing nations. Such ideas were popularized in books like Paul Ehrlich’s The Population Bomb.

should therefore be the identification of common ground and solutions that are both holistic and comprehensive, treating the community as an organic entity; tackling the multi-dimensional problems we face. Ultimately, our interest is the same, regardless of who we are — environmentalists or people of color. We are searching for ways to create healthy, viable communities in which our children will have a future.

Linda Wong now works for Rebuild LA as one of four co-chairs in leadership, the only woman and first Asian. At the time of this talk, she was the Executive Director of the Achievement Council. Before that she worked at California Tomorrow and the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund.
Environmentalists and the Anti-Immigrant Agenda
by Cathi Tactaquin

The National Network for Immigrants Rights is a six-year-old coalition of both organizations and individuals around the country. The Network was created to help promote the development of a national movement to defend and expand the rights of all immigrants and refugees, regardless of immigration status, and in this respect, we consider ourselves part of a growing component of the civil rights movement, and also share many goals with other groups and movements aiming to improve our lives and the world in which we live.

The issues of immigration, population and the environment have come up on our agenda repeatedly over the years: First, our communities, which include recent immigrants as well as generations born in the U.S., face serious environmental problems and threats.

The call to restrict immigration in order to help the environment does not deal with the complexity of the source of immigration or environmental degradation.

What the call does promote, however, is xenophobia, racism, ignorance, and division:

Secondly, many population "control" advocates argue for severe limits to immigration and have pressed for support of repressive policies that defy the basic human rights we are seeking to protect. These calls for immigration control have had the effect of encouraging anti-immigrant harassment, abuse and fatal violence.

Since the inception of the National Network in 1986, we have been focused on the creation and implementation of immigration and refugee legislation and administrative policies. In 1982, sweeping immigration legislation was introduced in Congress, representing the first major changes in U.S. immigration policy in decades. Those proposals, known as the Simpson/Mazzoli bill, eventually passed Congress in 1986, after immigration had become a controversial and hotly debated issue framed by the recession, unemployment, and a call to "save jobs for Americans." Then-President Ronald Reagan had begun the high seas interdiction of Haitian refugees which is being repeated today. He decried the "hordes of feet people," as he called them, over-running the U.S.-Mexico border — a border "out of control."

Newspaper ads in California supporting immigration restrictions loudly claimed that immigrants were the main contributors to smog, pollution and traffic congestion and made appeals to those of us concerned about our environment to stop immigration, and in particular, to support building a wall between the U.S. and Mexico, to increase enforcement at the border, and to support employer sanctions. Employer sanctions were the key provision of the 1986 immigration act, and established penalties against employers for hiring undocumented immigrants. (You have probably heard that Attorney General nominee Zoe Baird had hired an undocumented nanny and a chauffeur.) Sanctions are not really enforceable, but have increased discrimination against non-white workers, have undermined labor organizing and have helped to destroy good jobs.

We are distressed and angry that an appeal to exclude immigrants has once more been raised in the same way that however, is xenophobia, racism, ignorance, and division:

Many of these restrictionist appeals have come directly from or been closely linked to an organization known as FAIR, the Federation for American Immigration Reform. FAIR is a player in Californians for Population Stabilization. In more recent years FAIR has also tried to appeal to the African American community, like calling a press conference during the aftermath of the Rodney King verdict in LA to say that immigrants taking away jobs from Black youth was a key source of the outrage and social upheaval, so if we stopped immigration, things would quiet down. The problems of
unemployment and underemployment, of historic racism faced by people of color, and of our own inter-ethnic relations, are complex enough to unravel without the intervention of a group like FAIR, whose leadership has been nationally exposed for its purely racist philosophy.

We are concerned with renewed efforts to bring the environmental movement into the immigration control fold by playing the controversial population control card. The call to restrict immigration in order to help the environment does not deal with the complexity of the source of immigration or environmental degradation, and distorts the relation between the two. What the call does promote however, is xenophobia, racism, ignorance, and division.

Here are some of the perspectives that we are examining that relate to these issues:

Globalization of the Economy

The question of immigration, which has become the subject of so much controversy not just in the U.S. but throughout the world, is a reflection of the globalization of the economy. U.S. immigration policy has historically been dominated by U.S. labor market needs, just as refugee policies have reflected U.S. foreign policy. Now, with the incredible political and economic changes in the world, it is not surprising that our immigration policies will, and should, also go through some changes. We hope these changes will increase human and labor rights protections for an increasingly mobile and international work force that reflects the central role the U.S. plays in the global economy. We would like to see the U.S. lead the way, internationally, in establishing rights protections that would be held as a standard in other countries as well. Although migration is as old as human-kind, we are today witnessing the migration of millions of people from less developed to more developed countries and regions throughout the world, migration that has become an inevitable part of the development of the world economy. Frankly, neither the Berlin Wall, nor the recent wall constructions between the U.S. and Mexico, nor respressive immigration laws can qualitatively alter this dynamic.

While we understand the right of sovereign nations to govern their borders, those in this era should respect the international dynamic of the movement of both capital and labor. This is obvious at the heart of some of the controversy with the North American Free Trade Agreement, NAFTA, a challenge to U.S. immigration policy, and certainly has an impact on the

Per Capita Consumption of Energy, Selected Countries, 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Energy (kilograms of coal equivalent)</th>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>6,546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Germany</td>
<td>5,377</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>4,032</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>1,689</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>958</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
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<td>Brazil</td>
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<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>274</td>
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<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>192</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>69</td>
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immigration, attention is turned away from the main and wasteful consumer of resources — the various industries that function within and outside of U.S. borders.

We are also troubled by the population control advocates' sense of what we are trying to preserve — apparently, not just our resources, but "our" way of life — the high standard of living to which we are accustomed in the United States. A standard of living and abundance of resources from which we benefit due to the extraction of resources from less developed countries and peoples. And,
an extraction that has had its cost in those countries, retardation of national
development, extraction of vital
resources, unemployment and impover-
ishment that are themselves the key
factors causing migration. Is it then fair
or just to turn around and say "keep out"?

The Environment
of Immigrants
Immigrant communities have
historically been among the most
disenfranchised and powerless of our
population and have faced and continue
to face serious environmental problems
that have not been addressed by the

FAIR has also tried
to appeal to the
African American
community, calling
a press confer-
ence during the
aftermath of the
Rodney King ver-
dict in LA to say
that immigrants
taking away jobs
from Black youth
was a key source of
the outrage and
social upheaval.

traditional environmental movement.
We believe that human, civil, and labor
rights protections should be extended to
include protection from environmental
hazards where we live and where we
work. My father was an immigrant, and
a farm worker in the Salinas Valley. To
this day, I wonder if I will develop
tumors from unknown pesticides that
were similarly developed by the
other farm workers, were the result of
the pesticides they worked with for fifty
years. Back then, it was the United.
Farm Workers union, not the environ-
mental movement, which raised the
ruckus about the use of these pesticides.
We join efforts to confront these kinds
of problems that continue to this day.

The New Immigrants
are Women
The majority of today's immigrants
are women, who have been targeted for
their high fertility rates by alarmists.
For immigrant women, there are real
needs for education, employment,
health care, access to family planning
programs — all factors that affect the
rate of birth, as well as the degree of
empowerment Immigrant women do
not need to be attacked for having
babies; they need to be supported in
their efforts to support themselves and
their families, and to participate equally
in our society. Their rights need to be
supported so that they can report
possible lead contamination in slum
housing; so that they can file complaints
about working with dangerous chemi-
cals; so that they can organize against
the maquiladoras, the factories which
are dumping toxics like xylene, which
may be contributing to the incredible
proportion of their babies being born
without brains on both sides of the
border.

We would like to see a real partner-
ship among immigrant community
groups, neighborhoods, and activists
with the environmental movement,
identifying and struggling for resolu-
tions to the serious problems
immigrant-based communities continue
to face. But to develop this partnership,
we need to grapple with the need to
have mutual education, develop
political trust, cultural sensitivity, and
racial and nationality integration.

For immigrant-based communities,
and for the immigrant and refugee
rights movement, there will be a real
problem in creating these linkages if the
scapegoating of immigrants for
over-taxing our resources and for
environmental degradation becomes a
key component of an environmental
protection strategy. Instead, I would like
to see us work, if not together, at least
in cooperation to develop and to
promote a more comprehensive
understanding of the relationship of
immigration, population and the
environment, that dispels the myths and
lies, and gets beyond the historic
scapegoating of immigrants for eco-

demic and environmental inequities and
injustices. We support education and
outreach in the immigrant communities;
we would like to see more environmen-
tal activists in the community, we
would like to see literature and videos
in different languages that address our
environmental concerns; it is not just a
question of simplifying materials. A
simple starting point is to agree that in
seeking environmental justice, the "we"
and "us" includes people of color,
includes the foreign born, includes
immigrants and refugees without
immigration documents. You'd better
believe that today's immigrants may
have a different view of population
than a group predominantly composed
of people of European heritage.

As a part of our program, nationally,
we have committed ourselves to a
policy initiative on immigrants and the
environment; this will be a consider-
ation in a national conference on
immigrants and the economy that we
are planning this next year. We hope
that we can enhance this effort through
further discussion, study and analysis
with our friends in the environmental
movement.

Cahi Tactaquin is a founder and
Director of the National Network for
Immigrant and Refugee Rights, a
National coalition of groups and
individuals working to defend and
expand the rights of all immigrants.
She has been active in immigrant
rights and Filipino issues for over 20 years.
Optimum Human Population Size

by Gretchen C. Daily, Anne H. Ehrlich and Paul R. Ehrlich

Although the tremendous size and rate of growth of the human population now influences virtually every aspect of society, rarely does the public debate, or even consider, the question of what would be an optimum number of human beings to live on Earth at any given time? While there are many possible optima depending on criteria and conditions, there is a solid scientific basis for determining the bounds of possibilities. All optima must lie between the minimum viable population size, MVP (Gilpin and Soule, 1986; Soule, 1987) and the biophysical carrying capacity of the planet (Daily and Ehrlich, 1992). At the lower end, 50 to 100 people in each of several groups, for a total of about 500, would constitute an MVP.

At the upper end, the present population of 5.5 billion, with its resource consumption patterns and technologies, has clearly exceeded the capacity of Earth to sustain it. This is evident in the continuous depletion and dispersion of a one-time inheritance of essential, non-substitutable resources that now maintains the human enterprise (e.g., Ehrlich and Ehrlich, 1991; Daily and Ehrlich 1992). Numerous claims have been made that Earth's carrying capacity is much higher than today's population size. A few years ago, for example, a group of Catholic bishops, misinterpreting a thought exercise by Roger Revelle (1976), asserted that Earth could feed 40 billion people (Ehrlich and Ehrlich, 1990): various social scientists have made estimates running as high as 150 billion (Livi-Bacci, 1989). These assertions are based on preposterous assumptions, and we do not deal further with them here.

Nonetheless, we are left with the problem of determining an optimum within wide bounds. Above the minimum viable level and within biophysical constraints, the problem becomes a matter of social preference. Community level, national, and international discussions of such social preferences are critical because achieving any target size requires establishing social policies to influence fertility rates. Human population sizes have never, and will never, automatically equilibrate at some level. There is no feedback mechanism that will lead to perfectly maintained, identical crude birth and death rates. Since prehistoric times, societies have controlled fertility and mortality rates to a substantial degree, through various cultural practices (Harris and Ross, 1987). In the future, societies will need to continue manipulating vital rates to reach desired demographic targets. Most important, societies must reach a rough consensus on what those targets should be as soon as possible because the momentum behind the growth of the present population ensures at least a doubling before any decline is possible (UNFPA 1992).

This paper is a contribution to that necessary dialogue. What follows is a brief statement of our joint personal views of the criteria by which an optimum should be determined (in no particular order).

1. An optimum population size is not the same as the maximum number of people that could be packed onto Earth at one time, nurtured, as they would have to be, by methods analogous to those used to raise battery chickens. Rather, almost everyone who puts value on human life appreciates the importance of quality of life. Obviously, many more human beings could exist if a sustainable population were maintained for thousands to millions of years than if the present population overshoot were to destroy much of Earth's capacity to support future generations.

2. An optimum population size should be small enough to make it possible to provide the minimal physical ingredients of a decent life to everyone (e.g., Ehrlich et al., 1993), given both the inequitable distribution of wealth and resources and uncertainty regarding rates of long-term, sustainable resource extraction and environmental impacts. We agree with Nathan Keyfitz (1991): "If we have one point of empirically backed knowledge, it is that bad policies are widespread and persistent. Social science has to take account of them." The grossly inequitable distribution of wealth and basic resources prevailing today is highly destabilizing and disruptive. While it is in nearly everyone's selfish best interest to narrow the rich-poor gap, we are skeptical that the incentives driving social and economic inequalities can ever be fully overcome. We therefore think a global optimum should be determined with humanity's characteristic myopia and selfishness in mind. A
further downward adjustment in the optimum should be made to insure against both natural and human-induced declines in the sustainable flow of resources from the environment into the economy and increases in anthropogenic flows of wastes, broadly defined, in the opposite direction.

3. Basic human rights in the social sphere (such as freedom from racism, sexism, religious persecution, and gross economic inequity) should be secure from problems generated by the existence of too many people. Everyone should have access to education, health care, sanitary living conditions, and economic opportunities; but these fundamental rights are difficult to assure in large populations, especially rapidly growing ones. Political rights are also related to population size, although this is seldom recognized (Parsons, 1977). Democracy seems to work best when populations are small relative to resource bases; personal freedom tends to be restricted in situations of high population density and/or scarce resources.

**The population of the United States should be small enough to permit the availability of large tracts of wilderness for hikers and hermits, yet large enough to create vibrant cities that can support complex artistic, educational, and other cultural endeavors that lift the human spirit.**

4. We think an optimum population size should be large enough to sustain viable populations in geographically dispersed parts of the world to preserve and foster cultural diversity. It is by no means obvious that the dominant and spreading "Western" culture has all the secrets of long-term survival (Ehrlich, 1980) — to say nothing of cornering the market on other values. We believe that cultural diversity is an important feature of our species in and of itself. Unfortunately, many cultures become by small groups of people in danger of being swamped by the dominant culture with its advanced technologies and seductive media, or worse, of being destroyed deliberately because of social intolerance or conflicts over resources.

5. An optimum population size would be sufficiently large to support a "critical mass" in each of a variety of densely populated areas where intellectual, artistic, and technological creativity would be stimulated. While creativity can also be sparked in sparsely populated areas, many cultural endeavors require a level of specialization, communication, and financial support that is facilitated by the social infrastructure characteristic of cities.

6. An optimum population size would also be small enough to ensure the viability of biodiversity. This criterion is motivated by both selfish and ethical considerations. Humanity derives many important direct benefits from other species, including aesthetic and recreational pleasure, many pharmaceuticals, and the basis and health of agriculture. Furthermore, the human enterprise is supported in myriad ways by the free services provided by healthy natural ecosystems, each of which has elements of biodiversity as key working parts (Erlich and Ehrlich, 1992). Morally, as the dominant species on the planet, we feel Homo sapiens should foster the continued existence of its only known living companions in the universe.

In general, we would choose a population size that maximizes very broad environmental and social options for individuals. For example, the population of the United States should be small enough to permit the availability of large tracts of wilderness for hikers and hermits, yet large enough to create vibrant cities that can support complex artistic, educational, and other cultural endeavors that lift the human spirit.

Innumerable complexities are buried in this short list of personal preferences, of course. But with the world's population size now above any conceivable optimum and (barring catastrophe) destined to get much larger still (UNFPA 1992), it appears that many decades are available in which to debate alternative optima before even stopping growth of the population, much less approaching an optimum. During that time, human technologies and goals will both change, and those changes could shift the optimum considerably.

It is nonetheless instructive to make a tentative, back-of-the-envelope calculation of an optimum on the basis of present and foreseeable consumption patterns and technologies. Since the human population is in no imminent danger of extinction due to underpopulation, we focus here on the upper bound of an optimum. We begin by using humanity's energy consumption as a rough, indirect measure of the total impact civilization inflicts on Earth's life-support systems (Ehrlich and Ehrlich 1991). Energy, especially that provided by fossil fuel and biomass combustion, directly causes or underpins most of the global environmentally damaging activities that are recognized today: air and water pollution, acid precipitation, land degradation, emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, and production of hazardous materials and wastes.

At present, world energy use amounts to about 13 terawatts (TW; 10^{12} watts), about 70 percent of which is being used to support somewhat over a billion people in rich countries and 30 percent to support more than four billion people in developing countries. This pattern is clearly unsustainable, not only because of the gross disparity between rich and poor societies, but because of the environmental damage that results. The consumption of 13 TW of energy with current technologies is leading not only to the serious environmental impacts indicated above but also to several forms of destabilizing global change, including a continuous deterio-
ration of ecosystems and the essential services they render to civilization (Ehrlich and Ehrlich, 1991; Ehrlich et al., 1993).

An examination of probable future trends leads to dismal conclusions. The world population is projected to increase from 5.5 billion in 1993 to somewhere between 10 and 14 billion within the next century. Suppose population growth halted at 14 billion and everyone were satisfied with a per-capita energy use of 7.5 kilowatts (kW), the average in rich nations and about two thirds of that in the United States in the early 1990s. A human enterprise that large would create a total impact of 105 TW, eight times that of today and a clear recipe for ecological collapse.

A scheme for avoiding such an ecocatastrophe over the next century was proposed by John Holdren of the Energy and Resources Group at the University of California, Berkeley. The Holdren scenario (Holdren, 1991) postulates expansion of the human population to only 10 billion and a reduction of average per-capita energy use by people in industrialized nations from 7.5 to 3 kilowatts (kW), while increasing that of the developing nations from 1 to 3 kW. The scenario would require, among other things, that citizens of the United States cut their average use of energy from almost 12 kW to 3 kW. That reduction could be achieved with energy efficiency technologies now in hand and with an improvement (by most people's standards) in the standard of living.

While convergence on an average consumption of 3 kW of energy by 10 billion people would close the rich-poor gap, it would still result in a total energy consumption of 30 TW, more than twice that of today. Whether the human enterprise can be sustained even temporarily on such a scale without devastating ecological consequences is unclear, as Holdren recognizes.

But the Holdren scenario says very little about the technologies involved, which will inevitably change in the future as reserves of fossil fuels, especially petroleum, are depleted. Perhaps through careful application of more benign technologies (such as various forms of solar power and biomass-derived energy), the rate of environmental deterioration could be held to that of today. We must hope so, for the Holdren scenario is perhaps the most optimistic one yet put forth by a careful, competent analyst.

Against that background, what might be said about the upper limits on an optimum population size, considering present attitudes and technologies? In view of the environmental impacts of a civilization using 13 TW today, to say nothing of the threats to the future prospects of humanity, it is difficult to visualize a sustainable population that used more than 9 TW.

One might postulate that, with careful choices of energy sources and technologies, and with a stationary population, 9 TW might be used without degrading environmental systems and dispersing non-renewable resources any more rapidly than they could be substituted for. Under similar assumptions, a 6 TW world would provide a 50 percent margin for error, something we deem essential considering the unexpected consequences that often attend even very benign-appearing technological developments (the invention and use of chlorofluorocarbons being the most instructive case to date). A more conservative optimum would be based on a 4.5 TW world, giving a 100 percent margin for error. Which upper limit one wished to choose would depend in part on some son of average social risk aversion combined with a scientific assessment of the soundness of the 9 TW maximum impact.

In the real world, the maximum sustainable population might well be determined in the course of impact reduction — by discovering the scale of the human enterprise at which ecosystems and resources seemed to be holding their own.

In the real world, the maximum sustainable population might well be determined in the course of impact reduction — by discovering the scale of the human enterprise at which ecosystems and resources seemed to be holding their own. For our thought experiment, let us consider a 6 TW world. If we assume a convergence of all societies on 3 kW per-capita consumption, that would imply an optimum population size of 2 billion people, roughly the number of human beings alive in 1930. Such a number seems at first glance to be reasonable and well above the minimum number required to take advantage of both social and technical economies of scale. In the first half of the twentieth century, there were many great cities, giant industrial operations, and thriving arts and letters. A great diversity of cultures existed, and members of many of them were not in contact with industrializing cultures. Large tracts of wilderness remained in many parts of the world. A world with 1.5 billion people using 4.5 TW of energy seems equally plausible and would carry a larger margin of safety. This is about the same number of people as existed at the turn of the century.

To summarize this brief essay, determination of an "optimum" world population size involves social decisions about the life styles to be lived and the distribution of those life styles among individuals in the population. To us it seems reasonable to assume that, until cultures and technologies change radically, the optimum size of the human population lies in the vicinity of 1.5 to 2 billion people. That number also is our approximate best guess of the continuous standing crop of people,
if achieved reasonably soon, that would permit the maximum number of *Homo sapiens* to live in the long run. But suppose we have underestimated the optimum and it actually is 4 billion? Since the present population is over 5.5 billion and growing rapidly, the initial policy implications of our conclusions are still clear.

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**References**


Gretchen C. Daily is a Post Doctoral Fellow at the Energy and Resources Group at the University of California at Berkeley and a Research Associate at the Center for Conservation Biology at Stanford University. She has a Ph.D. from Stanford. She is investigating the carrying capacity of the earth from both biophysical and economic perspectives.

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**Population Paradigms and Perception**

*by Edith Eddy*

When I was a freshman in college, I enrolled in Psychology 101, as maybe some of the rest of you did. In the course of the year, we had a chapter on "perception" and I vividly remember in that chapter a black and white drawing which looked like a picture of a young woman with a large hat on her head. The drawing, however, was also a picture of an old woman. Maybe some of you have seen this. It was an example of optical illusion. If you looked at the picture one way you saw a young woman. If you could just somehow shift your perception, however, you saw something totally different. What was particularly interesting was to somehow feel within yourself that shift, as you went from seeing one reality to another, looking at exactly the same configuration of black and white lines. I think that in this field of population and environment, we have something analogous going on.

If you happen to look at the situation we are in as a planet, from a biological point of view, and if you look at the figures that Gretchen Daily talked about and the reality that they imply, and the reports from the World Watch Institute and others about what's happening to the physical basis of life on this planet, it's easy to have one particular perspective about what's going on. And it's a terrifying view because its driven by the notion of exponential growth. We all tend to think, logically, in an arithmetic growth paradigm. Thinking about geometric growth, thinking about a population literally doubling in 40 years and then doubling again, is almost beyond our imagination. But, if you are in that paradigm and you are thinking about the world in that way, it appears to be a tidal wave that is upon us, from which we have no escape.

The demographers like to talk about population stabilization. And the word stabilization lulls us into a sense that maybe the world is going to stabilize at just ten billion people and then everything will be all right. We'll have just the same number of new babies boom every day as we will have people dying. Everything will be stable. And the only difficult point is getting from here, 5.4 billion, to there, 10 billion, when it will then be stable and we can all relax.

The problem is that this doubling is not happening in a stable context. This growth is happening in a physical context which is rapidly changing, as we all know, in terms of the
climate that we live in, the soil we have in which to grow food, the availability of fresh water, and the other plants and animals that we share the world with. All of these things are changing at an equally rapidly accelerating rate. So probably we are not looking at population stabilization. We are probably looking at population peaking and crashing. And the key question then is: what is going to be the angle of that crash? How steep is it going to be — slow and gradual and something we can accommodate? Or is it going to be similar to what happens in a petri dish when you mix a nutrient with an agar solution and then put in some bacteria and watch it grow over a 24 or 48 hour period? Once the nutrient is used up, it is a catastrophic end to that particular organism.

If you shift to the other paradigm and instead of looking at the situation from a biological, planetary point of view, you now look at the human point of view, you see a completely different picture. You see a picture of human beings who are struggling, who want to be reunited with their families, who want to have access to a fair and decent standard of living. And you see people who want to have babies, because babies are wonderful things and having a child and raising it is probably the best thing that happens to any of us in our lifetime. You see the desire and real need to provide just and fair living conditions for people. You see the reasons why we should open our borders all over the world and allow families to reunite and support people being able to go wherever they want and to have a standard of living that is decent. That image, that picture is equally strong and when that is the paradigm you are in, the other one is very threatening to entertain. And yet, the challenge before us, and not just in this state or this country, but as a species on this globe, is to try to use our intellectual ability and our compassion to hold those two paradigms at the same time and figure out what that means. If we hold both realities at the same time, what does it mean in terms of what we need to do at this critical point in the evolution of our race and our species and our world?

We have to acknowledge that there are limits to growth and we may already be exceeding them. But, the answer can not simply be to stop growing and to hold the status quo. We have to recognize that we who are on the top decks of "spaceship earth" are consuming way more than our share of the resources that are available and we are creating way more than our share of the waste. Our standard of living (in terms of our life style, not necessarily the quality of our lives), is clearly unsustainable.

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We also have to recognize that when it comes to having fewer children, access to contraceptives alone is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition. Women need to have access to appropriate health care so that they can be sure that their babies will survive and be healthy. Parents need access to education and employment so that they don’t need to rely on large numbers of children to support them. And finally, men and women alike need access to capital in order to be able to create sustainable communities. So the notion that this leads us to is fundamentally different from the older, more noblesse oblige idea that the wealthy should share their wealth because it's a good thing to do, a moral thing to do. I think we are now at the point where we are talking about a reconsideration of how wealth is distributed on this planet because it is a matter of absolute survival.

What is new in the post Earth Summit world is the dawning global realization that we are in trouble all over the world. All of our natural processes are threatened. We can list the problems, we know them all: acid rain, global warming, the loss of top soil, the contamination of fresh water, the loss of marine life, the depletion of the ozone layer that protects us, the loss of...
of forest, the extinction of species, and so on. Everyone knows this list by heart. We are indeed looking at the very real possibility of the end of life as we have known it on this planet. And we have to confront that reality with our eyes open. However, in the face of this kind of apocalyptic vision, there are some things that are happening that can give us some real hope. And we need to pay attention to them and support them in any way we can.

The first is that people are increasingly beginning to talk to each other across boundaries that have previously blocked communication. We are talking to each other across ethnic, social and economic boundaries. This was recently dramatically demonstrated in Rio in the NGO forum, where literally thousands of people came together and created treaties which were signed in turn by thousands of people from all different parts of the world and all different disciplines and from all different socio-economic levels. People are beginning to talk to each other across the academic disciplines (and it’s about time, we might say). And this conference is a good example of people in the community starting to talk to each other across what have been traditionally separate areas of focus and interest.

Secondly, the next major international conference that is going to try to deal with these issues is the 1994 U.N. International Conference on Population and Development. The good news is that the conference recognizes that the issue to talk about is not just population, it’s population and development — that these are inextricably linked issues. Efforts are underway now to try to find ways to bring the very different opinions about population and development, and the north and south perspective, together. And this is long before the conference actually takes place, so the conference is already being used in the same way the Earth Summit was used, as a focus or intervention point around which people are creating ways to work through differences and create common, shared visions.

Thirdly, the new administration in Washington offers the very real possibility of the United States reversing its so-called "Mexico City Policy" and getting on with the business of changing our attitude about what we should be providing other nations of the world in terms of sharing technology and wealth and whatever expertise we have in both the field of development and family planning.

Finally, since Rio, one of the most exciting things I have experienced was the opportunity to attend a conference last month in Manila in the Philippines, which was put together by people who had originally gotten to know each other during preparations for the Earth Summit. The focus of this conference was on creating new financing mechanisms for sustainable development. One of the things I learned about at that conference was a whole new idea about how the wealthier countries of the world might help support community-based development initiatives in the Third World, moving beyond the anachronistic mechanisms of World Bank and multilateral development bank loan programs which, we are all probably are aware; have resulted in a net flow of capital from south to north, from poor to wealthy.

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I would like to close by saying that the historical vision of the apocalypse exists in many different religions and traditions. However, real as it may seem to be, we have strengths within our own psyches and our own communities that can help us respond to that apocalyptic vision. First, we have our basic intelligence. Second, we have our willingness to learn. Third, we have our rapidly accelerating ability to communicate with each other. Finally, and perhaps most important, we have our capacity for compassion. I think we all care about justice, about the reunification of families, about welcoming new babies into the world. We also care about having a livable world into which to welcome our babies.

The challenge then, is to try to hold both visions and to work together to make the changes and the transformation necessary to try to achieve both realities.

Edith Eddy is Director of the Compton Foundation, a private foundation with an interest in population, environmental and peace issues. Before that she was with the David and Lucille Packard Foundation and the Action Research Liaison Office at Stanford University.
Why Migration?

by Saskia Sassen

Years of work and arduous debate went into the writing of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act, a vast revamping of the law aimed above all at stemming the flow of undocumented immigrants. Yet the flood of unauthorized entries continued to grow unabated. A new law signed in November, 1990 allowed increasing numbers of immigrants with a flexible cap of about 700,000. Yet 1991 entries reached over one million. What is it about immigration policy that makes it so ineffective?

U.S. policy-makers and the general public believe the causes of immigration are evident: poverty, unemployment, economic stagnation and overpopulation drive people to leave their countries. Whether to accept immigrants thus becomes a humanitarian question, unrelated to U.S. economic policy or political responsibility.

These basic assumptions — shared by conservatives and liberals, the latter typically more generous that the former — have led policy-makers to treat immigration as autonomous from other major international processes and as a domestic rather than an international issue. They focus on regulating who may cross the border legally, and on encouraging foreign investment to alleviate the conditions which supposedly spark migration in the first place.

The central role played by the United States in the emergence of a global economy over the past 30 years lies at the core of why people migrate here in ever-increasing numbers. U.S. efforts to open its own and other countries' economies to the flow of capital, goods, services and information created conditions that mobilized people for migration, and formed linkages between the United States and other countries which subsequently served as bridges for migration. Furthermore, the relatively open nature of the U.S. labor market, epitomized by the notion that government should stay out of the marketplace, provides a necessary condition for immigration to occur.

Measures commonly thought to deter emigration — foreign investment, or the promotion of export-oriented agriculture and manufacturing in poor countries — have had precisely the opposite effect. Such investment contributes to massive displacement of small-scale agricultural and manufacturing enterprises, while simultaneously deepening the economic, cultural and ideological ties between the recipient countries and the United States. These factors encourage migration. Proponents of the proposed North American Free Trade Agreement between Mexico, Canada and the United States, for example, may claim it will discourage people from leaving Mexico by providing employment opportunities there. Yet it is more likely to exacerbate the flow of people across the border.

The prevailing assumptions about why immigration occurs do not explain the new immigration from certain Asian and Caribbean Basin countries. Many countries with high population growth, vast poverty and severe economic stagnation do not experience large-scale emigration. Poverty and stagnation had long characterized most Asian and Caribbean Basin countries when large-scale migration flows started in the 1960s. And not all migrant-sending countries are poor, for example, South Korea and Taiwan.

In fact, emigration took off at a time when most countries of origin were experiencing accelerated economic growth according to conventional measures, considerably greater than countries that did not experience large-scale emigration. Annual gross national product (GNP) growth rates during the 1970s ranged from 5% to 9% for most of the leading migrant-sending countries. Even in Mexico, official GNP growth rates ranged between 4.2% and 7.5% in the early 1970s and then again late in the decade. South Korea is the most obvious example. With a growth rate of GNP among the highest in the world during the 1970s, it was also one of the countries with the fastest growing levels of migration to the United States.

This is not to say that overpopulation, poverty and economic stagnation do not create pressures for migration; by their very logic, they do. But the common identification of emigration with these conditions is overly simplistic. If these factors were a constant long before emigration commenced, what accounted for the sudden upsurge in migration to the United States?

In the case of the Dominican Republic, the answer seems to lie in linkages with the United States that were formed during the occupation of Santo Domingo by U.S. Marines in 1965. The occupation, to suppress a popular uprising against a pro-U.S. coup, resulted not only in greater political and economic ties, but in personal and family linkages due to the
settlement of middle-class political refugees in the occupying country. U.S.-Dominican ties were further consolidated through new U.S. investment in the Dominican sugar industry to replace that lost as a result of the Cuban revolution.

Dominican migration to the United States began to increase soon thereafter, rising from 4,500 between 1955 and 1959 to 58,000 between 1965 and 1969. The real take-off occurred in the early 1980s, as sugar prices fell and the United States invested heavily in tourism, offshore manufacturing and non-traditional export agriculture on the island.

Haiti has not been subjected to direct U.S. military intervention since the 1920s. But the mass emigration which began in the early 1970s occurred parallel to a surge in new U.S. direct foreign investment in export manufacturing and the large-scale development of commercial agriculture. This created a strong U.S. presence and forced, often through violent means, independent farmers into a rural proletariat.

Despite El Salvador's longstanding poverty, only in 1981, when U.S. military involvement escalated sharply, did emigration begin on a massive scale. People left out of fear for their lives and because it became impossible to eke out a living with the war raging around them. But it was the linkages created by U.S. investment during the 1970s, and its military presence after 1980, that made emigration to the United States seem like a real possibility, even though for many the United States represented the enemy. Sarah Mahler found that many Salvadorans who emigrated to the United States had first worked as migrant laborers on export-oriented coffee plantations.

Even in Mexico, where territorial continuity is routinely interpreted as a principal cause of immigration, the pattern of linkages is similar and in many ways unrelated to the existence of a shared border? This is also true for East Asians. After the Korean war, the United States actively sought to promote economic development in the region in order to stabilize it politically.

U.S. troops were stationed in Korea, the Philippines and Indonesia. Massive increases in foreign investment occurred during the same period, particularly in South Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines. Together, U.S. business and military interests created a vast array of linkages with those Asian countries that subsequently developed large migration flows to the United States.

That migrations are patterned is further reflected in the figures on the U.S. share of global immigration. Though inadequate, the available evidence compiled by the United Nations in the mid-1980s shows that the United States receives about 19% of global emigration. The United States receives 27% of total Asian emigration, but 81.5% of all Korean emigration and almost 100% of emigration from the Philippines. It receives 70% of Caribbean emigration, but almost 100% of emigration from the Dominican Republic and Jamaica, and 62% from Haiti. And it receives 19.5% of all emigration from Central America, but 52% of emigration from El Salvador, the country with the greatest U.S. involvement in the region.

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Follow the Money
One common factor in this pattern over the last two decades is direct foreign investment in production for export, especially manufacturing and assembly of components and consumer goods such as toys, apparel, textiles and footwear. While total U.S. investment abroad increased between 1965 and 1980 with large amounts continuing to go to Europe and Canada, investment in the Third World quintupled, much of it going to a few key countries in the Caribbean Basin and Southeast Asia. A large proportion of investment in nonindustrialized countries went to industries producing for export, which tend to be labor intensive, precisely one of the rationales for locating factories in low-wage countries. The result was rapid employment growth, especially in manufacturing, during the post-1965 decade. At a lower level, this was also the case in Mexico.

According to conventional explanations of why migrations occur, this combination of economic trends should have helped to deter emigration, or at least to keep it at relatively low levels. The deterrent effect should have been particularly strong in countries with high levels of export-oriented investment, since such investment is labor intensive and thus creates more jobs than other forms of investment. Yet it is precisely such countries, most notably the newly industrializing countries of East Asia, which have been major senders of new immigrants.

To understand why this occurs, we have to examine the impact of such investment on people's lives. Perhaps the single most important effect is the uprooting of people from traditional modes of existence. It has long been recognized that the development of commercial agriculture tends to displace subsistence farmers, creating a supply of rural wage laborers and mass migrations to cities. The recent large-scale development of export-oriented manufacturing in East Asia, the Caribbean Basin and Mexico's Border Industrialization Program has had a similar effect. In each case, the introduction of modern relations of production transforms people into migrant workers and potential emigrants.

In export manufacturing, the catalyst
for the breakdown of traditional work structures is the massive recruitment of young women into jobs in the new industrial zones. The mobilization of large numbers of women into wage labor disrupts village economies and rural households which traditionally depend on women's often un-waged work in food preparation, cloth-weaving, basket-making and various other types of craftwork. Today most people in these regions have been thoroughly proletarianized.

One of the most serious and ironic consequences of the feminization of the new proletariat has been the rise in male unemployment. Not only must men compete with the new supply of female workers, but the massive departure of young women from rural areas, where women are key partners in the struggle for survival, reduces the opportunities for men to make a living there.

More generally, in some poorer, less developed regions or countries, export-led production has come to replace other more diversified forms of economic activity oriented to the internal market. The impressive employment growth figures for most of the main emigration countries do not convey the severe limitations of the type of growth involved and the frequent destruction of a more diverse economy?

For men and women alike, the disruption of traditional ways makes entry into wage labor increasingly a one-way proposition. With traditional economic opportunities in rural areas shrinking, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, for workers to return home if they are laid off or unsuccessful in the job search. This is particularly serious for female workers in new industrial zones, who are often fired after a short period of employment in order to keep wages low and replace workers whose health begins to fail due to poor working conditions. Moreover, beginning in the late 1970s when tax concessions from local governments in the older zones were exhausted, many companies packed up and moved on to "new" counties where labor was even cheaper.

The Numbers

Annual legal entries of immigrants to the United States increased from 1965 on, reaching 373,000 in 1970. 531,000 in 1980, 602,000 in 1986, and over one million in 1990. As recently as 1960, more than two-thirds of all immigrants entering the United States came from Europe. By 1985, Europe's share of annual entries had shrunk to one-ninth. With the actual numbers of European immigrants declining from almost 140,000 in 1960 to 63,000 in 1985. The top ten immigrant-sending countries today are all in Latin America, the Caribbean Basin or Asia.

Latin Americans, including the native born and citizens, form the single largest foreign-language population in the United States, and probably the largest population of undocumented immigrants as well. But Asians are the fastest growing group of legally admitted immigrants, with annual entries rising to 236,000 in 1980 and to 264,000 in 1985. While these figures include Southeast Asian refugees admitted in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, refugees account for only a small proportion of the overall rise in Asian immigration. The Asian countries from which the greatest number of immigrants come are the Philippines, South Korea and Taiwan, not the refugee-sending countries of Vietnam and Cambodia. In the 1980s migration flows began from South/East Asian nations which had not previously experienced emigration to the U.S., like Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Total entries of South and Central Americans, excluding Mexicans, reached about 170,000 for the period 1965-1969, and rose to 445,000 for 1980-1985. Entries of Asians reached 258,000 for 1965-1969, and rose further to 1,612,000 for 1980-1985. Entries of West Indians reached 351,000 for 1965-1969, and rose to 445,000 for 1980-1985. Between 1972 and 1979, Mexico, with more than a half a million entries annually, was by far the largest source of legally admitted immigrants, followed by the Philippines with 290,000, South Korea with 225,000, China (defined as including both Taiwan and the People's Republic) with 160,400, India with 140,000, and Jamaica with 108,400.

With the single exception of Italy, all of the countries sending more than 100,000 immigrants each year were either in the Caribbean Basin or Asia. Other important sources of immigrants outside these regions were the United Kingdom, West Germany, and Canada sending about 90,000 each during the 1970s. By 1987, 43% of the 600,000 entries were from Asia, 35% from Latin America and the Caribbean Basin, and only 10% from Europe.

During the 1970s and early 1980s, women made up 60% of all immigrants from the Philippines, 61% of South Korean immigrants, 52% of Dominicans, 53% of Haitians, and 52% of immigrants from Hong Kong. Even in the well-established, traditionally male-dominated migration flow from Mexico, women now make up almost half of all legal immigrants. While a majority of female immigrants still enter as dependents, a small but growing number now enter classified as workers. This seems to indicate that an increasing number of women are migrating independently, in some cases leaving husbands and children behind.

In the early 1990s immigrants clustered in New York, Pennsylvania and Illinois. Today, multiple ports of entry, improved transportation and far-flung job distribution seem to facilitate the geographical scattering of immigrants. Yet California and New York receive almost a half of all new immigrants, while another quarter go to New Jersey, Illinois, Florida and Texas.

Moreover, new immigrants tend to cluster in the largest metropolitan areas New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Houston and Miami. The 1980 census found that about one-fifth of all foreign-born residents lived in New York and Los Angeles. While immigrants constitute at most 10% of the U.S. population, in 1987 the made up 30% of the population of New York City and 15% of the population of Los Angeles and Chicago.
Due to all of these trends, people fist uprooted from traditional ways of life, then left unemployed and unemployable as export firms hue younger workers or move production to other countries, may see few options but emigration - especially if export-led growth strategies have weakened the country's domestic economy.

But the role of foreign investment in encouraging large-scale emigration does not end there. In addition to eroding traditional work structures and creating a pool of wage laborers, foreign investment contributes to the development of economic, cultural, and ideological linkages with the industrialized countries. Workers employed in the export sector — whether as managers, secretaries or assemblers — are, after all, producing goods and services for people and firms in industrialized countries. For these workers, already oriented toward Western practices and modes of thought, the distance between a job in the offshore plant or office and a comparable one in the industrialized country itself is subjectively reduced. It is not hard to see how emigration comes to be regarded as a serious option.

Beyond the direct impact on workers in the export sector, the linkages created by foreign investment also have a generalized ideological effect on a receiving country or region, making the culture of industrialized countries seem less foreign and the prospect of living there more attractive. This ideological impact turns a much larger number of people into candidates for emigration.

**Immigration and U.S. Economic Policy**

No analysis of immigration would be complete without examining changes in labor demand. While the internationalization of the economy contributed to the initiation of labor migrations to the United States, their continuation at high and ever-increasing levels is directly related to the economic restructuring of this country.

Beginning in the late 1970s, the supply of low-wage jobs in the United States expanded rapidly, while the labor market became less regulated. Such tendencies facilitated the incorporation of undocumented migrants by opening up the hiring process, lifting restrictions on employers and typically lowering the cost of labor. The increase in low-wage jobs was in part a result of the same international economic processes that channeled investment and manufacturing jobs to low-wage countries. As industrial production moved overseas or to low-wage areas in the South, much of traditional U.S. manufacturing was replaced by a downgraded sector characterized by poorly paid, semi-skilled or unskilled jobs.

Three trends converged: first, the growing practice of sub-contracting, and the expansion of sweatshops and industrial homework (all of which have the effect of isolating workers and preventing them from joining together to defend their interests); second, the downgrading of skill levels required for jobs through the incorporation of machines and computers; and third, the rapid growth of high-technology industries that employ large numbers of low-wage production workers. These conditions make the United States an attractive location for foreign manufacturers and other types of firms. and, at the limit, make certain areas of the country competitive with Thud World countries as production sites.

The rapid growth of the service sector also created vast numbers of low-wage jobs, in addition to the more publicized increase in highly paid investment banking, management and professional jobs. The growth industries of the 1980s — finance, insurance, real estate, retail trade, and business services — feature large numbers of low-wage jobs, weak unions if any, and a high proportion of part and female workers. Sales clerks, waitresses, secretaries, and janitors are among the growth occupations.

The expanded service sector also creates low jobs by raising the demand for workers to serve lifestyles and consumption requirements of the income professional and managerial class. The concentration of these high-income workers in major cities has created a need for legions of low-wage service workers — residential building attendants, restaurant workers, preparers of specialty and gourmet foods, dog walkers, errand runners, apartment cleaners, childcare providers and so on. The fact that many of these jobs are "off the books" has meant the rapid expansion of an informal economy.

Immigrants are more likely than U.S. citizens to gravitate toward these jobs: they are poorly paid, offer little employment security, generally require few skills and little knowledge of English, and frequently involve undesirable evening or weekend shifts. In addition, the expansion of the informal economy facilitates the entry of undocumented immigrants into these jobs. Significantly, even immigrants who are highly educated and skilled when they arrive in the United States tend to gravitate toward the low-wage sectors of the economy.

While the transfer of manufacturing to less industrialized countries has helped promote emigration from them, the concentration of servicing and management functions in major U.S. cities has created conditions fur the absorption of the immigrant influx. The same set of processes that promoted emigration from several rapidly industrializing countries has simultaneously promoted immigration into the
The Laws

U.S. policies have consistently failed to limit or regulate immigration in the intended way. The 1965 Amendment to the Immigration and Nationalization Act contained a rather elaborate system of quotas meant to control entries and deter illegal immigration. The law's emphasis on family reunification, it was thought, would ensure that the bulk of new immigrants would come from those countries that had already sent large numbers to the United States — primarily Europe.

But the dramatic rise in immigration after 1965 consisted mostly of a new wave of migration from the Caribbean Basin and South and Southeast Asia. Furthermore, not only did Mexican undocumented immigration increase sharply but also whole series of new undocumented flows were initiated, mostly from the same countries as legal immigration.

The furor over illegal immigration led to a series of congressional proposals that culminated in the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. This law contained a limited regularization program where by undocumented aliens who could prove their continuous residence in the U.S. since before January 1, 1982 and meet certain other eligibility criteria could legalize their status. It also contained sanctions against employers who knowingly hire undocumented workers, and an extended guest worker program designed to ensure a continuing and abundant supply of low-wage workers for agriculture.

The 1986 law had mixed results. About 1.8 million undocumented immigrants applied to regularize their status, less than expected but still a significant number. In addition, 12 million applied under special legalization programs for agriculture. There is growing evidence of discrimination and abuse stemming from the employer sanctions program, while undocumented immigration continues to grow.

In November 1990 a new bill was signed into law that goes a step further in recognizing the demand of the U.S. labor market as a criterion for immigration. Past policy aimed at admitting one out of ten immigrants for labor market reasons; the new laws raise this to five. The actual weight of labor market reasons is probably even higher.

Immigrants, while only about 7% of the U.S. labor force, have accounted for 22% of the growth in the work force since 1970, and are expected to constitute 25% of that growth in the 1990s. The closer immigration policy comes to recognizing the actual dynamics of immigration, the more likely it will be to succeed in its intended aim of effective regulation.

Profit Knows No Borders

While individuals may experience their migration as the outcome of their personal decisions, the option to migrate is itself the product of larger social, economic and political processes. One could ask, for example, if there are systemic linkages underlying the current East Europe, and Soviet migrations to Germany and Austria. Rather than simply posit the push factor of poverty, unemployment and the general failure of socialism, we might look at the fact that before War II both Berlin and Vienna were major receivers of large migrations from a vast eastern region. And the aggressive campaign during the Cold War years, touring the West as a place where economic well-being is the norm and well-paying jobs are easy to get, must also have had some effect in inducing people to migrate westward.

Similarly, as Japan became the leading global economic power and the major foreign investor in Southeast Asia in the 1980s, a familiar combination of migration-facilitating processes appears to have been set in motion: the creation of linkages that eventually come to serve as bridges for potential emigrants, and the emergence of emigration to Japan as something that would-be emigrants see as a real option.

Japan is a country that never considered itself an immigrant country, has always been proud of its homogeneity, and has kept its doors closed to foreigners. Now it is experiencing a new illegal influx of workers from several Asian countries with which it maintains strong economic ties and investments in off-shore manufacturing but no shared border: Pakistan, Bangladesh, South Korea, Taiwan, Philippines and Thailand.

The impending free-trade agreement between the United States and Mexico is perhaps the best example. At the Bush Administration's insistence, immigration was kept off the negotiating table. The administration claims, however, that an agreement would stem illegal immigration from Mexico. Yet the considerable growth of export-assembly industry in northern
Mexico over the last two decades has not deterred Mexican emigration. On the contrary, it encouraged new migrations from the interior of the country to the northern border zone, which in turn served as a platform for crossing into the United States. On a broader scale, the maquila program has consolidated a transnational border economy within which trade, investment, and people move rather freely.

A free-trade agreement could substantially strengthen existing economic linkages and create new ones, from cross-border personnel transfers to the packaging and trucking of goods made in Mexico for the U.S. market. Such linkages would engender new patterns of communication, work and travel between the two countries — and would further integrate Mexican workers into the U.S. economy, intensifying Mexican contact with U.S. popular and work cultures. These conditions could spawn a generalized notion that people are entitled to free movement across the border.

Perhaps we need new ways to think about the process we call immigration. The category itself, with its strong emphasis on the concept of national borders, seems inadequate. The forging of strong economic and geopolitical relations between countries of unequal development and unequal job opportunities tends to promote labor migration from poorer to wealthier countries. Until policy-makers understand this basic fact, and abandon the notion that immigration control is a police matter, attempts to "stem the flood" will continue to fail.


1. This article uses materials from the author's recent books: The Mobility of Labor and Capital; A Study in International Investment and Labor Flow. (New York: Cambridge University Press 1988. and The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo). (Princeton University Press. 1991). 2. See Saskia Sassen, "Trade and Immigration," Hemisphere (Winter/Spring 1991). 3. El Salvador’s tradition of internal migration for the coffee, sugar, and cotton harvests meant that peasant farmers had already been mobilized into wage labor. See also, Sarah J. Mahler, "Tres Veces Mojado: Undocumented Central and South American Migration to Suburban Long Island." (Ph.D. diss., Dept. of Anthropology, Columbia University, 1992). 4. The large mass migrations of the 1800s followed the same pattern. They emerged as part of the formation of a trans-Atlantic economic system binding several nation-states through economic transactions and was that brought massive flows of capital, goods and workers. Before this period, labor movements across the Atlantic had been largely forced, notably slavery, and mostly from colonized African and Asian territories. Similarly, the migrations to England in the 1950s originated in what had once been British colonies. Finally, the migrations into Western Europe in the 1960s and 1970s occurred in a context of direct recruitment and of regional dominance over the Mediterranean and pan of Eastern Europe. There are, I would say, few if any innocent bystanders among countries receiving large labor migrations.

5. This figure is derived from data on permanent settlement, which excludes illegal migrations and unofficial refugee flows between countries. This and other figures in this paragraph are from Demographic Yearbook, (United Nations, 1985) and "World Population Prospects," (United Nations 1987). 6. Most of the manufacturing in these zones is of the sort that also employs women in developed countries. 7. In a detailed examination of the employment impact of upon-led industrialization, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) found that in general, this type of development eliminated more jobs than it created because of its disruptive effect on the national manufacturing sector, especially in the less industrialized countries of the Caribbean and Southeast Asia. World Industry Since 1960," 8. Each country is unique and each migration flow is produced by specific conditions in time and place. Yet the general dynamic in the U.S. occurs in other countries characterized by economic dominance and the formation of transnational spaces for economic activity. This type of analysis seeks to capture the impact of the internationalization of the economy on a formation of migration flows, and b) the labor market in the receiving country, particularly changes that may contribute to the absorption of immigrants. 9. Comparing 1973 and 1989 income data shows that relative incomes fell for 80% of all families and rose for 20%. The truly rich, the top 1%, gained the most. Much of the 20% at the top represents an upper middle class, rather than "the wealthy." See U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1989. Series P-60, No. 168. 10. Saskia Sassen, "The Mobility of Labor and Capital.

11. The immigration-adjusted hourly earnings of factory production workers rose by 70% from 1947 to 1973. From 1973 to 1987 they fell by 5.4%. The real value of the minimum wage fell by about 23% from 1981 to 1989. See Gary Burless, ed., "A Future of Lousy Jobs." (Washington: Brookings Institution, 1990). 12. These trends have sharpened over the last few years, bringing about growing inequality in the U.S. occupational and income structure. Inflation-adjusted average weekly wages peaked in 1973, stagnated over the next few years and fell in the decade of the 1980s. Up to 1973 there was an increase in the degree of equality in the distribution of earnings. Since 1975, the opposite has occurred. In the decade from 1963 to 1973, nine out of 10 new jobs were in the middle earnings group whereas after 1973 only one in two new jobs was in the middle-earning category. If one were to add the increase in the number of workers who are not employed full-rime and year-round, then the inequality becomes even more pronounced. Part-time workers increased from 5% in 1955 to 22% in 1977, and by 1986 were a third of the labor force. Approximately 80% of these 50 million workers earn less than $1,000 a year. Paul Blumberg, "Inequality in an Age of Decline." (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980). pp. 67-79: Robert Z. Lawrence, "Sectoral Shifts and the Size of the Middle Class." Brookings Review (Fall 1984); Bennet Harrison and Barry Bluestone, The Great U-Turn, (New York: Basic Books. 1988). A report by the House Ways and Means Committee found that from 1979 to 1987, the bottom fifth of the population experienced a decline of 8% in its personal come, while the top fifth experienced an income increase of 16%. And data from the 1990 Gssus shows that the top 20% of the income structure accounted for most of the increase in personal income growth. 13. A comparison of trends in New York, Los Angeles and other major cities can be found in Saskia Sassen, The Global City, part three. 14. Saskia Sassen, "Six Concepts for Analyzing Immigration: Do They work for Germany?" Work in progress for the Wissenschaftszentrum (Berlin, Winter 1992).
The Historical Context: 

Racism, Birth Control and Reproductive Rights

From Women, Race and Class by Angela Davis

The abortion rights activists of the early 1970s should have examined the history of their movement. Had they done so, they might have understood why so many of their Black sisters adopted a posture of suspicion toward their cause. They might have understood how important it was to undo the racist deeds of their predecessors, who had advocated birth control as well as compulsory sterilization as a means of eliminating the "unfit" sectors of the population. Consequently, the young white feminists might have been more receptive to the suggestion that their campaign for abortion rights include a vigorous condemnation of sterilization abuse, which had become more widespread than ever.

It was not until the media decided that the casual sterilization of two Black girls in Montgomery, Alabama, was a scandal worth reporting that the Pandora's box of sterilization abuse was finally flung open. But by the time the case of the Relf sisters broke, it was practically too late to influence the politics of the abortion rights movement. It was the summer of 1973 and the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortions had already been announced in January. Nevertheless, the urgent need for mass opposition to sterilization abuse became tragically clear. The facts surrounding the Relf sisters' story were horrifyingly simple. Minnie Lee, who was twelve years old, and Mary Alice, who was fourteen, had been unsuspectingly carted into an operating room, where surgeons irrevocably robbed them of their capacity to bear children. The surgery had been ordered by the HEW-funded Montgom-
cry Community Action Committee after it was discovered that Depo-Provera, a drug previously administered to the girls as a birth prevention measure, caused cancer in test animals.

After the Southern Poverty Law Center filed suit on behalf of the Relf sisters, the girls' mother revealed that she had unknowingly "consented" to the operation, having been deceived by the social workers who handled her daughters' case. They had asked Mrs. Relf, who was unable to read, to put her "X" on a document, the contents of which were not described to her. She assumed, she said, that it authorized the continued Depo-Provera injections. As she subsequently learned, she had authorized the surgical sterilization of her daughters.

In the aftermath of the publicity exposing the Relf sisters' case, similar episodes were brought to light. In Montgomery alone, eleven girls, also in their teens, had been similarly sterilized. Department of Health, Education and Welfare funded birth control clinics in other states, as it turned out, had also subjected young girls to sterilization abuse. Moreover, individual women came forth with equally outrageous stories. Nial Ruth Cox, for example, filed suit against the state of North Carolina. At the age of eighteen-eight years before the suit — officials had threatened to discontinue her family's welfare payments if she refused to submit to surgical sterilization. Before she assented to the operation, she was assured that her infertility would be temporary.

Nial Ruth Cox's lawsuit was aimed at a state which had diligently practiced the theory of eugenics. Under the auspices of the Eugenics Commission of North Carolina, 7,686 sterilizations had been widespread since 1933. Although the operations were justified as measures to prevent the reproduction of "mentally deficient persons," about 5,000 of the sterilized persons had been Black. According to Brenda Feigen Fasteste, the ACLU attorney representing Nial Ruth Cox, North Carolina's recent record was not much better.

As far as I can determine, the statistics reveal that since 1964, approximately 65% of the women sterilized in North Carolina were Black and approximately 35% were white.

The neighboring state of South Carolina had been the site of further atrocities. Eighteen women from Aiken, South Carolina, charged that they had been sterilized by a Dr. Clovis Pierce during the early 1970s. The sole obstetrician in that small town, Pierce had consistently sterilized Medicaid recipients with two or more children. According to a nurse in his office, Dr. Pierce insisted that pregnant welfare women "will have to submit (sic!) to voluntary sterilization" if they wanted him to deliver their babies. While he was "... tired of people running around and having babies and paying for them with my taxes," Dr. Pierce received some $60,000 in taxpayers' money for the sterilizations he performed. During his trial he was supported by the South Carolina Medical Association, whose members declared that doctors "have a moral and legal right to insist on sterilization permission before accepting a patient, if it is done on the initial visit."

Revelations of sterilization abuse during that time exposed the complicity of the federal government. At first the Department of Health Education and Welfare claimed that approximately 16,000 women and 8,000 men had been sterilized in the 1970s under the auspices of federal programs. Later, however, these figures underwent a drastic revision. Carl Shultz, director of HEW's Population Affairs Office, estimated that between 100,000 and 200,000 sterilizations had actually been funded that year by the federal government. During Hitler's Germany, incidentally, 250,000 sterilizations were carried out under the Nazis' Hereditary Health Law. Is it possible that the record of the Nazis, throughout the years of their reign, may have been almost equaled by U.S. government-funded sterilizations in the space of a single year?

Given the historical genocide inflicted on the native population of the United States, one would assume that Native American Indians would be exempted from the government's sterilization campaign. But according to Dr. Connie Uri's testimony in a Senate committee hearing, by 1976 some 24 percent of all Indian women of childbearing age had been sterilized. "Our blood lines are being stopped," the Choctaw physician told the Senate committee. "Our unborn will not be born...This is genocidal to our people." According to Dr. Uri, the Indian Health Services Hospital in Claremore, Oklahoma, had been sterilizing one out of every four women giving birth in that federal facility.

Native American Indians are special targets of government propaganda on sterilization. In one of the HEW pamphlets aimed at Indian people, there is a sketch of a family with ten children and one horse and another sketch of a family with one child and ten horses. The drawings are supposed to imply that more children mean more poverty and fewer children mean wealth. As if the ten horses owned by the one-child family had been magically conjured up by birth control and sterilization.

The domestic population policy of the U.S. government has an undeniably racist edge. Native American, Chicana, Puerto Rican and Black women continue to be sterilized in disproportionate numbers. According to a National Fertility Study conducted in 1970 by Princeton University's Office of Population Control, 20 percent of all married Black women have been permanently sterilized. Approximately
the same percentage of Chicana women had been rendered surgically infertile.\textsuperscript{18} Moreover, 43 percent of the women sterilized through federally subsidized programs were Black.\textsuperscript{19}

The astonishing number of Puerto Rican women who have been sterilized reflects a special government policy that can be traced back to 1939. In that year President Roosevelt's Interdepartmental Committee on Puerto Rico issued a statement attributing the island's economic problems to the phenomenon of overpopulation.\textsuperscript{20} This committee proposed that efforts be undertaken to reduce the birth rate to no more than the level of the death rate. Soon afterward an experimental sterilization campaign was undertaken in Puerto Rico. Although the Catholic Church initially opposed this experiment and forced the cessation of the program in 1946, it was converted during the early 1950s to the teachings and practice of population control.\textsuperscript{21} In this period over 150 birth control clinics were opened, resulting in a 20 percent decline in population growth by the mid-1960s.\textsuperscript{22} By the 1970s over 35 percent of all Puerto Rican women of childbearing age had been surgically sterilized.\textsuperscript{23} According to Bonnie Mass, a serious critic of the U.S. government's population policy, "... if purely mathematical projections are to be taken seriously, if the present rate of sterilization of 19,000 monthly were to continue, then the island's population of workers and peasants could be extinguished within the next 10 to 20 years... (establishing) for the first time in world history a systematic use of population control capable of eliminating an entire generation of people.\textsuperscript{24}

During the 1970s, the devastating implications of the Puerto Rican experiment began to emerge with unmistakable clarity. In Puerto Rico the presence of corporations in the highly automated metallurgical and pharmaceutical industries had exacerbated the problem of unemployment. The prospect of an ever-larger army of unemployed workers was one of the main incentives for the mass sterilization program. Inside the United States today, enormous numbers of people — and especially racially oppressed youth — have become part of a pool of permanently unemployed workers. It is hardly coincidental, considering the Puerto Rican example, that the increasing insistence of sterilization has kept pace with the high rates of unemployment. As growing numbers of white people suffer the brutal consequences of unemployment, they can also expect to become targets of the official sterilization propaganda.

Native Americans are special targets of government propaganda on sterilization. For example, the Indian Health Services Hospital in Claremore, Oklahoma, had been sterilizing one out of every four women giving birth in that federal facility.

The prevalence of sterilization abuse during the latter 1970s may have been greater than ever before. The 1977 Hyde Amendment added yet another dimension to coercive sterilization practices. As a result of this law passed by Congress, federal funds for abortion were eliminated in all cases but those involving rape and the risk of death or severe illness. According to Sandra Salazar of the California Department of Public Health, the first victim of the Hyde Amendment was a 27-year-old Chicana woman from Texas. She died as a result of an illegal abortion in Mexico shortly after Texas discontinued government-funded abortions. There have been many more victims — women for whom sterilization has become the only alternative to the abortions, which are currently beyond their reach. Sterilizations continue to be federally funded and, to poor women, on demand.

Over the last decade the struggle against sterilization abuse has been waged primarily by Puerto Rican, Black, Chicana and Native American women. While women of color are urged, at every turn, to become permanently infertile, white women enjoying prosperous economic conditions are urged, by the same forces, to reproduce themselves. They therefore sometimes consider the "waiting period" and other details of the demand for "informed consent" to sterilization as further inconveniences for white middle-class women. A fundamental reproductive right of racially oppressed and poor women is at stake. Sterilization abuse must be ended.

Notes
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid.
15. Quoted in a pamphlet issued by the Committee to End Sterilization Abuse, Box A244, Cooper Station, New York 10003.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
21. Ibid., p. 91.
22. Gordon, op. cit., p. 401. See also pamphlet issued by CES.
25. Ibid
Not Thinking Globally

The Sierra Club Immigration Policy Wars

by Hannah Creighton

Shortly before Michael Fischer resigned after ten years as Executive Director of the Sierra Club, he gave a surprising speech.

My purpose in being here on this Centennial Day is to invite a friendly takeover of the Sierra Club by people of color. ... The point is this: If people of color bear the brunt of our economy's poisons, what is that but just another form of injustice, of racism? In fact, we see in the lives of the nation's poor the final confluence of racial injustice and environmental degradation to create environmental injustice. And I believe the struggle for environmental justice in this country and around the globe must be the primary goal of the Sierra Club during its second century. (Emphasis in original.)

Environmental justice activists were heartened by these words and by decisions within the Sierra Club over the past few years to form a national Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Task Force, to increase the diversity among leaders, members and staff and to forge coalitions with community groups working on toxic threats to Native Americans and on urban environmental problems.

It's been over a year since Fischer's call for a friendly takeover, but the Club remains predominantly Anglo. In fact a step backward may be taking place. A faction in the Club is pushing the organization to adopt a "no net immigration" policy - 4 at is, immigration should equal emigration out of the country - and this has racist implications. News of this policy battle has been especially disturbing to California social justice activists who are witnessing a frightening increase in immigrant-bashing rhetoric in the press (and in general conversation), a rash of local, state and federal proposals to withhold social services from immigrants and calls to militarize the borders and hunt down and deport those without documents. To have these policies legitimated by the California-based Sierra Club, the largest grassroots environmental group in the country and the only one where the membership ultimately sets policy, would be a terrible blow. In fact, such a policy might cause the few people of color now in the Club to leave.

Some of the struggle has been revealed in the press. Last December, the New York Times ran an opinion piece by Deborah Sontag which mentioned an alliance between the Sierra Club and anti-immigration groups. Members of the San Francisco Bay Chapter's leadership, who had begun a fight to block the Club from taking any position on immigration, were deeply embarrassed. At their behest, Carl Pope, the new Executive Director, wrote a response:

... you incorrectly state that the Sierra Club is a member of the Coalition to Stabilize Population. We are not. We believe all nations, developed and developing, should act to curb their own population growth. The United States and other developed nations have a special responsibility because of our disproportionate per capita consumption of world resources. Our goal in the United States should be achieving domestic population stabilization. (December 16, 1992, emphasis added.)

In August, 1993, the San Francisco Weekly ran a story - "Sierra Club Readies Anti-Immigrant Stand" — reporting that the Club was considering a controversial policy calling for a virtual halt of all immigration. The article mentioned the Sierra Club's "strange ties to a right-wing anti-immigration organization [the Federation for American Immigration Reform or FAIR] ... critics suspect that FAIR influenced the Sierra Club's draft policy against immigration when the two groups briefly worked together in 1992."

What is the Sierra Club's position on immigration? Is it about to adopt a racist policy? Is the Club being taken over by anti-immigrant groups like FAIR? What is the new Ethnic Diversity Task Force doing about this? Knowing from experience the ultimately democratic nature of the Sierra Club's internal processes, and knowing that many members support the environmental justice movement, we determined to find out.

What we found was confusion and hopelessness that lead to racist solutions on the one hand and a valiant effort to do the right thing on the other. The confusion is about what constitutes a scientific argument and what is merely justification for one's social program. The hopelessness is about taking on the policies of transnational corporations and the U.S. government.
Those who would argue for a strict immigration policy begin with the fact of exploding fertility rates and increased migration in many less developed countries. The fact becomes, for them, the cause of the problem and they are unwilling to examine the real, hard-to-change economic and social causes of increased fertility — economic insecurity and the accompanying pressures on family and women — or the real causes of global migration — the destruction of family-based, subsistence agriculture by export farming and resource extraction. Once they’ve named the effect the “cause,” they treat as secondary the real cause of population growth, global migration and environmental degradation, which is over consumption by the affluent. And driving the engine of over-consumption is the behavior of corporations and our own government.

It is easy to feel hopeless about changing that. The confusion leads to a “preventive” solution, which feels easier to achieve — stop immigration. And with so many leaders blaming immigrants for so much of what’s wrong, what a relief it is to be on the winning side for a change!

Thankfully, many inside the Club are working to illuminate this distortion of cause and effect and to democratize this conversation by bringing the viewpoint of communities of color to the table. We in the environmental justice movement have a responsibility to help. This is not a done deal.

The Club’s Policy History

It is hard for outsiders to conceive of the complicated governance process that has been hammered out over the Club’s long history. Numerous policy conflicts have forged a dizzying decision-making process that includes special issue committees at local, regional, state and national levels. Leadership is elected by members at the local level who in turn elect the regional, state and national leadership. Policy proposals, though sometimes initiated at the national level, must move through county-based “groups” to regional “Conservation Committees” on to the state and national level, and wind their way up and down these levels of governance — sometimes taking years to be resolved. And that is the case with the immigration debate: no one in the Club expects a resolution any time soon.

Since Paul Ehrlich brought attention to growing world-wide population, the Sierra Club has called for world population stabilization, though it did little to involve itself in immigration matters. In 1980, the Club began to move toward a policy calling for “population stabilization in America.” But immigration was also on the minds of some. Judy Kunofsky, at that time a Club staffer and now a leader of the national Population Committee, testifying before a Congressional Select Committee on Immigration and Refugee Policy, echoed the stabilization policy but added:

...It should also be clear that the United States cannot accommodate all those individuals who wish to live here. In other words, the supply of deserving individuals wishing to come to this country is enormous and the impact on U.S. population growth of even (by world terms) very modest numbers of immigrants is also enormous. It is therefore an important question how many immigrants the U.S. wants to accept and the criteria we choose as the basis for answering that question. (Emphasis in original.)

Kunofsky remains convinced that the Sierra Club must work to reduce immigration to the U.S. She told us:

...The Sierra Club has a long-standing commitment to population stabilization in the U.S. The U.S. is the most overpopulated country on Earth when you take our over consumption into account. People of good will have historically refused to discuss immigration and that’s why we have given the racist immigration policy that we have.

This issue is harder than even the abortion debate, where at least you have the usual political alliances on your side. Here the left is agreeing with the right that immigration doesn’t hurt this country.

I would ask the ethnic advocacy groups what they think would be a good policy on immigration — with numbers. How many should come and why? These are hard choices, we can’t say ‘yes’ to everybody. It is estimated that one billion people live in poverty in the world. Another billion aren’t free politically. You could have two billion people making a moral claim to come to the U.S. if you used the logic of people who want a liberal immigration policy!

In 1990, various chapters of the Sierra Club began to form special issue committees on population. Their formation mirrored a growing trend among politicians to blame immigrants (especially undocumented immigrants) for the worsening fiscal crises in state and local governments. The furor over undocumented immigrants led to the growth of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), a group that emphasizes the “ecological,” as well as the “cultural” dangers of immigration. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., FAIR opened offices in Sacramento and San Diego in the early 1990s, hired Alan C. Nelson, former INS Commissioner under Reagan, and began to be a resource to the local immigrant-bashing groups forming in California.
**The Right Calls the Shots**

*by Ruth Conniff*

John *Tanton* has probably done more than any other individual to shape the current anti-immigration movement in the U.S. An opthalmologist who lives in Petoskey, Michigan, *Tanton* is a conservationist who was once president of Zero Population Growth. *Tanton* has built a network of more than a dozen organizations with overlapping aims — population control, restricting immigration and making English the official language of the United States.

In 1978, *Tanton* broke with Zero Population Growth to *pursue* his interest in the connection between population and immigration, and set out for Washington to found the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) — the most visible group in his network.

Regularly in the media as an expert source on immigration, FAIR provides statistics and data on immigration to members of Congress. The group lobbies for tighter security on the borders and a cap on annual legal immigration, and it was a driving force behind the 1986 legislation mandating employer sanctions for those who hire undocumented workers.

In July, the media watchdog group, Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting issued a report pointing out that Tanton's Federation for American Immigration Reform receives hundreds of thousands of dollars from the Pioneer Fund, a group founded in 1937 by a millionaire who advocated sending American blacks back to Africa, and who promoted the work of Nazi eugenicists in Germany. Today, the Pioneer Fund bankrolls most of the major eugenics research in North America — including a study at the University of Western Ontario of comparative cranium and gonad size in IQ distribution among blacks, whites and Asians.

Excerpted with permission from *The Progressive*, October 1993

**Sierra Club Immigration Wars**

Activists who oppose the *Club* taking a stand on immigration worry about the dual loyalties of leaders in the various population committees who belong to and get their information from FAIR. Frank *Orem*, a population activist in the Bay Chapter until he became chair of the Club's national Population Committee last year, admits that there is some overlap between activists in the Club and in various immigration groups like FAIR.

In 1989, when I got into the Sierra Club and population issues, there was only the national Population Committee and one local committee in *Los Angeles*. There are now 200. I came in to work on population, among other things. There are some people on the population committees who have been leaders on other environmental issues. Others are activists outside in groups which are concerned with population and immigration and they came into the Club to work on that.

One leader with a *foot* in both worlds is Alan *Weeden*, who serves on the national Population Committee and also the Sierra Club Foundation Board of Directors. In March 1992, *Weeden*, writing for the national Population Committee, informed the Club's President that the committee planned "to involve ourselves in certain immigration matters in the coming months," to lobby Congress and testify on the Hatch-Kennedy bill (an attempt to overturn the sanctions against employers who knowingly hire undocumented workers). *Weeden* assured the Board that the Population Committee...

...intended to treat the issue with sympathy, compassion and sensitivity to matters of race and color. *Next year*, we will want to testify before the Commission on Legal Immigration. This commission is provided for in the 1990 Immigration Act to review the first three years results. *We* expect that there will be field hearings held in conjunction with the commission review. *We* believe that with so many chapters and groups concerned about the impact of growth on the critical eco-systems in their area, there will be tremendous local interest in testifying. *We* hope to get our sister environmental groups involved in immigration so that voices are heard from the environmental community that approach the subject with sensitivity to the multi-cultural issues involved.

(Emphasis added)

Given that *Weeden* wields control over the multi-million dollar Frank *Weeden* Foundation, which grants mostly to environmental and population/immigration groups (including FAIR), he has every reason to be...

**Many inside the Sierra Club are working to illuminate the distortion of cause and effect in the immigration debate, and to bring the viewpoint of communities of color to the table.**

confident that his hopes will be realized.

In 1990, *Weeden*, acting through the Foundation, made a grant of $275,000 to the Sierra Club for its population work. In years since he has continued to make an annual grant to the Club at the $50-60,000 level. This infusion of funds means that population advocacy in Washington has become the best funded of all Sierra Club programs. This asymmetry wouldn't be so disturbing if "population" work was expanded to include efforts to stop over-consumption in the U.S. The concern is that Sierra Club staff will begin to work on immigration issues. Says Sierra Club activists Ruth Gravanis:

*Our efforts should go to the issue of global distribution. There's much that could be done to reduce consumption and the impetus for migration by changing...*
our economic policies. This is not to take away from the good things the Club has done in terms of population, working to get Dr. Elders appointed as head of Health and Human Services and to get the U.S. to increase its contribution to the U.N.'s family planning program. But in terms of immigration, these are world wide problems. To want to limit immigration just because that is where most Sierra Club members live, I find it extremely embarrassing.11

What Is the Proposed Policy?

In March 1993, the national Population Committee of the Sierra Club put forth a proposed, four-point national population and immigration policy to the Board of Directors and various chapter Population Committees:

1. Environmentally Sustainable Consumption — North Americans must make a concerted effort to decrease their overall consumption to reach a level which simultaneously provides a decent quality of life for the current generation and is environmentally sustainable for future generations.

2. North American Population Policy for Stabilization — Each level of North American government should call for a plan for a population size that peaks no later than the mid-21st century and then decreases to the optimal sustainable level as quickly as feasible. (Goals for optimal sustainable population size need to be set through democratic discussion and should consider at least environmental, economic, social and ethical issues.)

3. Fertility within North America — Fertility in North America should be at the lowest level that can be achieved without coercion. Fertility should be no more than 1.7. (This is slightly less than the average of 1.78 children per woman which was achieved in the U.S. in 1975 to 1986, but well above the level of several other developed countries. A rate of 1.7 is high enough to avoid significant generation imbalance.)

4. Immigration to North America — Net immigration to the United States and Canada (immigration minus emigration) should be reduced so that their levels are consistent with the U.S. and Canadian population policies, respectively, for the North American Population Policy for Stabilization. U.S. and Canadian immigration policy should be non-discriminatory as to race, creed, religion and national origin.12

The policy being circulated by the Population Committee is accompanied by a fifteen page background piece titled: "Towards Sustainability of Human Life on Earth: Background on Proposed Sierra Club Policies on North American Stabilization of Population and Reduction of Consumption." The essay begins with calls for universal access to family planning, empowerment of women, and a change in U.S. foreign assistance and trade policies that result in poverty. But despite the beginning and the title, the thrust of the background piece goes like this:

Population growth is a strong contributing factor to all of California's pressing environmental and resource problems from drought to waste disposal to transportation to clean air. Rising migration into California, as well as other arid states, has placed heavy new demand on overtaxed water resources. California's six years of drought have further sharpened the competition for water between people and crops on the one hand and wetlands, fisheries and wildlife refuges on the other. With water resources already over committed, if current consumption trends continue, 10 million more Californians will need five million additional acre feet of water in 10 years. Efforts to improve air quality will be negated by population growth. Local governments, already hard pressed to dispose of 19 million tons of waste a year, will see this task rise to 32 million tons a year in two decades, even if the 3.5 pounds of solid waste created daily by average Californians rises no further.13 And you thought cars and industry polluted air, lack of recycling regulations made solid waste such a problem and the water shortage was because of a water subsidy policy that makes it profitable for big growers to raise rice in arid California. You were wrong; according to the national Population Committee of the Sierra Club, it's the immigrants, who are increasing California's population with their higher fertility rate and their desire to learn our life style, who cause these problems.

Much of the background piece and the graphics that "document" the gravity and imminence of the threat posed by continuing current levels of immigration come from Leon Bouvier, whom the authors call "a respected demographer." In fact, Bouvier is the author of 50 Million Californians? the centerpiece of FAIR's propaganda. Bouvier describes three demographic scenarios for the future of California and tells us that his medium scenario is most likely and is the basis for his discussion of the effects. Charles Keely, Herzber Professor of International Migration at Georgetown University, says "If I'd used the methodology of [Bouvier's] report in 1910, I'd have predicted a U.S. inhabited exclusively by Italians and Jews."14

Bouvier's (and FAIR's) tactic is to disguise social ideology as scientific argument. While Bouvier devotes space to a litany of claims that California's environmental problems are caused by population growth,
especially from immigration and the higher fertility rates of new immigrants, his main concern is the increased diversity he’s predicting for California. Can the relative success achieved in the adaptation of previous immigrants and their descendants into a new ‘melting pot’ within the majority population be duplicated with the current and future mix of racially diverse ethnic groups? This seems unlikely given the situation in 1990-2000 as compared to that in 1890-1900. The differences in economic structure, in the possibilities of inter-ethnic marriages, in the increasing emphasis on group rights, and particularly in the level and persistence of immigration are far too great to envision a new interracial melting pot in the foreseeable future. 

... What is the mainstream of society into which they can be absorbed? The resultant society is multi-cultural. A look at south Florida and Miami offers a case study. Miami is at least as Cuban as it is Anglo. It is but a short step from this line of thinking to demanding more ethnic studies programs and less European orientation in courses and to argue strongly against any type of assimilation. However, as is so often the case when drastic transformations are expected, the demands go too far. (Emphasis added.)

Is It Racism?
Members of the Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Task Force say it is. In July of 1993, Vivian Li, national Chair of the Task Force wrote a strong letter to Frank Orem and the Population Committee insisting that any new population policy be a collaboration between the Task Force and the Population Committee. She went on to say:

I can not begin to describe the anger and rage of many Club leaders and members over the proposed policies, particularly the section on immigration. Many Club members and leaders believe that the policy is ill-conceived, insensitive and racist, and will greatly damage the Club’s ability to become a more diverse and inclusive organization.

Li’s remarks and the request to include the Task Force in the development of a policy point to the need in such situations to have a clear definition of racism. One part of racism is the failure to involve those most affected in developing the policies that will affect them. Not only has the Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Task Force not been consulted (at either the local or the national level), the population committees are predominately Anglo. While national Population Committee Chair, Frank Orem, participated in the working group on population organized by EDGE (the Alliance of Ethnic and Environmental Groups) last year, he seems to have done little to bring people of color into the Sierra Club dialogue and development of a policy. He attributes objections to the draft by people of color to anger about the past: The problem is that in our discussions we are carrying the baggage of past immigration policy in this country. People of color who look at that history find it deeply offending and rightly so. ... In discussion with the few people of color I’ve had a chance to talk to, it seems they feel the white majority is somehow still trying to keep the colored minority down. The use of FAIR propagandist, Leon Bouvier, is racist also, and not just in terms of guilt by association. The practice of elevating one’s argument to "science" to disguise a social agenda is evident in the Population Committee’s background piece as well. Li notes: The section on the history of immigration policy is heavily biased, and written in such a manner as to conveniently support the policy while glossing over other important facts. For example, the graph on population growth on page 10 is extremely distorted, leading one to believe that most people in the U.S. did not come from another country. If one was to accurately portray the "population without immigrants and their descendants", the only people that would be included would be Native Americans. One needs to remember that the history of U.S. immigration began with the arrival of the original boat people from Europe in 1492, and not some arbitrary year such as 1970.

Bay Area activist Terry Ow-Wing, who is also active in the Asian-Pacific Environmental Network, describes how those who want no net immigration think their "scientific" arguments speak to the greater good and therefore take precedence.

One such die-hard population committee member said to me: "I’m calling on you to be courageous and not worry about being politically correct." As a minority, I’m asking for equality and respect and for them to step into other people’s shoes for a moment. If they can’t give me equal footing in this debate, then why should we work together?

Ow-Wing also reminds us that this is not just a fight over words, but about actions. It’s the policy we are fighting over. They can put all the apologies they want, surround the text with reminders that consumption is a problem, that women must be
empowered to control their reproduction, etc. etc. But, if the policy says that the Sierra Club wants no net migration, they will use it to lobby. FAIR will use it to lobby and prove that mainstream environmentalists are on their side. They won't quote the qualifiers.21

Finally, there's racism in the insistence on focusing on "the other" — on individual decisions about family and jobs — rather than the community where one has influence and thus, responsibility. Members of the Sierra Club have an opportunity to use their substantial clout to impact trade and aid policy. If they focused on correcting U.S. policy toward some of the high fertility countries/high migration countries, like Haiti for example, their activism might do more to achieve global population reduction than their attempt to close the nation's borders.

The opposition

In many ways this fight begins in California and may end here. In April 1991, the San Francisco Bay Chapter Population Subcommittee, then under the leadership of Frank Orem, came up with a resolution that it brought before the Chapter's Executive Committee which said "the U.S. should maintain replacement level fertility (2.1 children per family); the U.S. should enact legislation establishing an all-inclusive legal immigration ceiling set at replacement level (i.e. immigration equals emigration); and the Sierra Club Bay Chapter should begin to strongly advocate legislation to implement such a policy."

This resolution failed for lack of a second. However, the Chapter Executive Committee decided to form a special Task Force on Immigration (immigration, not population generally). That group, made up of both fierce anti-immigration forces and longtime local Sierra Club activists like Norman La Force and Ruth Gravanis, who are strongly opposed to the Club taking any stand on immigration which doesn't look at causes, met for nearly a year.23

The Bay Chapter's Task Force on Immigration put forth a set of recommendations that were adopted by the Bay Chapter Executive Committee and sent on to the Board of Directors. The recommended policies focus on the legal discrimination and human rights issues that must be considered and speak to the importance of reunification of families and the issue of political asylum that must be part of any policy.

The document goes on to recommend:

The proposed Policy on Population Stabilization with respect to Immigration should not be adopted at this time in its present form. Instead the Board should convene a series of meetings with Sierra Club participation from all points of view on the issue of immigration in order to establish a dialogue with the goal of creating a position that all parties could agree to.24

Apparently the Club's Board of Directors got the message and that of the Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Task Force. When they met in September 1993, they told the national Population Committee to meet with the Task Force and hash it out. This is a great victory, but it puts a lot of pressure on the Task Force and social justice activists, inside and outside the Club, to strengthen their arguments and educate the general membership.

Ow-Wing and other activists hope that environmental justice groups will write to the Sierra Club's Board of Directors and make their positions on immigration known.

The Sierra Club needs to be reminded of the moral and strategic good that come from merging environmentalism with social justice. We should all learn to understand each other's viewpoint because when it comes right down to it, we all share this environment. We all breathe the same air. But what I'm asking the Sierra Club to understand is that some of us are affected differently by the historic policies and the pollution itself. And we can't work this out if people will only look at things from their own point of view. We're not just going to follow in their footsteps.*
Lessons from

Seven Successful Societies

by Frances Moore Lappe and Rachel Schurman

While average annual population growth rates in all industrial countries have been below 2 percent a year for decades, among the more than seventy poor countries only six had both reduced their population growth to less than 2 percent by the period 1980-1985 and cut total fertility rates by a third or more since 1960. They are China, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Chile, Burma, and Cuba (see table). Although not a country, and therefore not listed in the World Bank statistics, the Indian state of Kerala also meets these criteria.

Population growth in these six countries plus India's Kerala state has slowed at a much faster rate than in the current industrialized countries during their transition from high to low growth. What do these exceptions tell us? What could societies as different as those of China, Sri Lanka, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Burma, and Kerala have in common?

Is it that they have carried out the most aggressive family planning programs? In general, no. Some have and some have not.

A 1985 study rated most third world countries according to what demographers call "family planning effort," the prevalence and strength of organized family planning programs. The study included six of the countries we are focusing on here; Kerala was not included because it is not a country. It found that Chile and Burma had weak or very weak family planning efforts; Cuba showed moderate effort; and China, Sri Lanka, and Colombia showed strong effort.

Our thesis suggests, moreover, that even those three societies in which family planning effort has been strong could not have succeeded nearly as well as they have without social changes allowing people to take advantage of their birth control programs. Thus the striking parallels among these disparate societies lie in just such social changes.

First, four of the seven have assured their citizens considerable security through access to a basic diet. They have had more extensive food guarantee systems than exist in other third world societies.

China. Since the early 1950s, every rural family has had access to land and its fruits, and city dwellers were assured a minimum food allotment. At least until very recently, families unable to earn enough through their own labor were assured the "five guarantees," which included a grain ration.

Kerala. Eleven thousand government-run "Fair Price" shops keep the cost of rice and other essentials like kerosene within the reach of the poor. This subsidy accounts for as much as one-half of the total income of Kerala's poorer families.

Sri Lanka. From the postwar period to 1978, the Sri Lankan government supported the consumption of basic foods, notably rice, through a combination of free food, rationed food, and subsidized prices. Since the late 1970s, however, this elaborate food security system has begun to be dismantled.

Cuba. Rationing staple foods and setting price ceilings on them has kept basic food affordable and available to the Cuban people for nearly twenty-five years. Under Cuba's rationing system, all citizens are guaranteed enough rice, beans, oil, sugar, meat, and other food to provide them with 1,900 calories a day.

Burma we do not discuss here because its demographic data are considered unreliable and little research exists on the reasons for its slowing growth rate. We take up Colombia and Chile below, following a more detailed look at Kerala and China.

Kerala

Of these seven societies the most intriguing demographic case study—highlighting the several intertwined questions raised in this report—is that of Kerala state in India. Its...
population density is three times the average for all India, yet commonly used indicators of hunger and poverty—infant mortality, life expectancy, and death rate—are all considerably better in Kerala than in most low-income countries as well as in India as a whole. Its infant mortality is less than one-third the national average.

Other measures of welfare also reveal the relatively better position of the poor in Kerala. Besides the grain distribution system mentioned above, social security payments, pension and unemployment benefits transfer resources to the poorest groups. Expenditures on public health in Kerala, critical to any effort to reduce fertility, have historically been high. Health facilities are spread evenly throughout the state, not concentrated in the capitals as in most third world countries. While land reform left significant inequality in land ownership, it did abolish tenancy, providing greater security to many who before were only renters.

These are all descriptive measures of what makes Kerala so different. But why Kerala? From the 1950s onward, political organization among the poor led to their greater self-confidence. The poor came to see health care as their right, not a gift bestowed upon them. An Indian researcher noted how this affected the delivery of health services: In Kerala, if a Public Health Center were unmanned for a few days, there would be a massive demonstration. . . [where people] would demand to be given what they knew they were entitled to.

And among agricultural workers, grassroots political organization has also been the key to making land reform meaningful, to keeping wages relatively high, and to securing old-age pensions. Demographer John Caldwell notes that Kerala is one of the two societies in all of Asia where one finds the greatest grassroots determination and mobilization to secure such rights. The other is Sri Lanka—also among our list of countries exceptionally successful in reducing birth rates.

Centrally important to the thesis being tested here, women's status and power in Kerala are greatly enhanced compared to other Indian states. The female literacy rate in Kerala is two-and-a-half times the all-India average.

With these few facts about life in Kerala, we can begin to understand how one of a poor country's poorest states could have achieved a population growth rate not much higher than Australia's.

### Population Success: Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population Growth Rate 1980-85 (percent)</th>
<th>Total Fertility Decline 1960-85 (percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burma</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala (India)</td>
<td>1.8 (a)</td>
<td>38.0 (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>51.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>38.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>53.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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**China**

While more complex, China's recent demographic history is equally telling. From 1969 to 1979, China achieved a dramatic transition from high to low rates of fertility. Since China's population is one-fifth of the world's total and its birth rate has fallen even more rapidly than its death rate, China accounts for virtually all of the decrease in global rates of population growth in the past two decades. How was this accomplished?

Those who focus narrowly on family planning as the answer to high rates of population growth credit China's success to its aggressive family planning programs that began in the late 1960s. Through a network of "barefoot doctors" in the countryside, family planning programs reached into every village. They relied not only on making birth control freely available—including the newly developed pill—but group persuasion to change attitudes toward childbearing and family size.

Unarguably, such a concerted effort helps explain the dramatic fall in China's fertility rate in the 1970s. But viewed from the power structures perspective, one must probe deeper. How was it possible that such a far-reaching program—unique in the world—was conceived and implemented in the first place?

China's family planning program did not arise out of thin air. It reflected prior, massive political change bringing
a government to power whose ideological orientation was toward advancement for the whole society, not merely the narrow elite to whom the former government, as most governments, feel themselves accountable. We can unequivocally condemn China’s totalitarian features while also recognizing that such a shift in power, from leadership long ignoring the needs of the Chinese peasantry to one attempting to address these needs, was a prerequisite to China’s population success record. Indeed, its extensive rural health care system—a precondition for its family planning effort—would have been inconceivable without profound prior political change. Changes in Chinese society also allowed people to respond to the family planning initiatives. Far-reaching redistribution of access to land and food, along with an assurance of old-age security, allowed the Chinese people to opt for fewer children. China’s family planning motivators stressed birth planning as a way to increase prosperity for all, and, as researcher John Ratcliffe puts it, the "clearly visible redistribution of economic resources and increased opportunities for women," made that link believable.  

Despite the dramatic success in lowering fertility, the Deng Xiaoping government believed that population growth was still hindering modernization. It instituted the world’s most restrictive family planning program. Material incentives and penalties began to be offered to encourage all parents to bear only one offspring. According to Ratcliffe, "Enormous pressure—social and official—is brought to bear on those who become ‘ unofficially’ pregnant; few are able to resist such constant, heavy pressure, and most accede to having an abortion. While coercion is not officially sanctioned, this approach results in essentially the same outcome."  

At the same time, China’s post-1979 approach to economic development began to undercut both guaranteed employment, and old age and medical security. Whereas in 1978, close to 90 percent of rural people were covered by a collective medical system, by 1984 less than half were included.  

In agriculture, the "individual responsibility system replaced collective production; private entrepreneurialism is now encouraged. The erosion of social security and widening income disparities have important consequences for fertility. Thrown back on their own family’s resources, many Chinese again see children—especially boys—as beneficial, both as a substitute for lost public protections and as a means of taking maximum advantage of the new economic system."  

In part as a result of these changes, China may be defeating its own population goals. China’s birth rates have risen since 1980.  

We’re not suggesting that these economic and social changes add to pressure for higher fertility.  

Chile  

Until 1973, Chileans could proudly claim to live in the oldest political democracy in Latin America. From that system arose one of the most extensive public health and social security programs in the region—the key to explaining Chile’s exceptional decline in population growth. Not only did these social protections contribute to an early and swift decline in infant death rates, commonly viewed as a prerequisite for reduced fertility, but they also improved the financial security of the entire population, particularly in old age. Under Chile’s public health system, free or subsidized medical care, including pre- and postnatal care as well as contraceptive supplies, is made widely available through public clinics.  

Other factors, which are not so positive, also appear to have been at work in Chile’s fertility reduction, at least in recent years. First was the tremendous social upheaval of the 1970-1973 period, when the democratically elected government of Salvador Allende was destabilized and ultimately overthrown by rightist forces aided by the U.S. government. Since then the economic policies followed by the military junta led by General Augusto Pinochet have led to such economic hardship and dislocation for the Chilean working class that having children has become increasingly unaffordable. (See our earlier discussion of the role of children among the employed and unemployed poor in urban settings.)  

Colombia  

Of these seven societies, Colombia, not known for its government interventions on behalf of the poor, appears to defy the preconditions of security and opportunity. But not entirely. Colombia’s health service sends medical interns to the countryside for one year’s free service, unlike many third world countries, where medical services barely reach outside the capital city. Colombia’s infant mortality is well
below most lower-middle-income countries. It has also achieved high literacy rates, and an unusually high percentage of girls attend secondary school. According to the World Bank, over half of all Colombian women aged fifteen to forty-nine were at some point enrolled in primary school—even more than the comparable proportion for men (45 percent)!

Colombia’s record also demonstrates that shifting resources toward women, expanding their opportunities and particularly their education, has a much bigger impact on lowering birth rates than an overall rise in income—a general pattern, according to Yale University’s T. Paul Schultz. Colombia’s women appear to be achieving greater economic independence from men and therefore are becoming better able to determine their own fertility. They are entering the paid work force at a rapid pace. Income from the coffee boom of the 1970s reportedly contributed to new economic independence for many rural women.

Other Telling Examples

Thailand

Here is another country that has come very close to the achievement of those discussed above. Between 1960 and 1985, Thailand’s total fertility rate fell by 50 percent; its population growth rate is currently 2.1 percent a year.* What factors have contributed to this decline?

The changing status of Thai women appears significant. Proportionately more women work outside the home than in other third world countries. Education and wealth have been replacing motherhood and matrilineage as status markers for women, according to the University of Washington’s Majorie Muecke. At the same time, as education has become a societal norm, the cost of raising and educating children has risen substantially, reducing their potential economic contribution to the family.

Negative changes in Thailand have also no doubt affected people’s reproductive behavior. A shift from peasant to commercial agriculture, encouraged by Thailand’s integration into the world market, has increased landlessness and indebtedness in the countryside. The result is greater financial insecurity for many rural Thais.

Throughout our report we have linked insecurity with pressures keeping fertility high, but in Thailand (and now in Chile, too) a worsening situation appears to be contributing to fewer births, or at least not preventing the decline. An extensive government family planning program now doubt plays a part. It has made contraceptives free and easily available in rural and urban areas alike. But other aspects of Thai life must also contribute to this different reaction to economic distress. The elevated position of women, compared to most third world countries, suggests that they may have greater autonomy in making reproductive decisions.

Costa Rica

While Costa Rica has not reduced its overall population growth rate as much as the other countries highlighted here, including Thailand, its fertility rates have declined a striking 53 percent between 1960 and 1985. It has managed to achieve this drop with what demographers call a weak "family planning program effort."* Yet the proportion of Costa Rican women using contraception is extremely high—66 percent, or three times the rate for the rest of Central America.

Why are so many Costa Rican women practicing birth control, without the strong urging of the state? The answer again seems to lie in Costa Rica’s social structures, which have generated more democratic, responsive governments that have long promoted the health and education of the entire population. Costa Rica’s health service is free and universal, and since the 1970s, has extended out to even the most remote rural areas. As John Caldwell describes it,

Costa Ricans were already sufficiently well educated and egalitarian for these [health] facilities to be used fully as soon as they were provided; there was by the 1970s little need for a political revolution to teach them their rights, for that learning process had been underway for decades.

Social security legislation and liberal labor codes were also introduced early on in Costa Rica, with government expenditures on social welfare getting a strong boost in the 1950s. Moreover,
or the United States, Colombia is one of the few Latin American countries in which income distribution has actually become more equal over the last several decades.

An empirical investigation also suggests a positive link between fertility decline and increased income equity. While one might question the possibility of such neat precision, one World Bank study of sixty-four different countries indicated that when the poorest groups’ income goes up by one percentage point, the general fertility rate drops by almost three. Adding literacy and life expectancy to the income analysis, these three factors explained 80 percent of the variation in fertility among these countries. Higher literacy rates and longer life spans suggest societywide change toward greater opportunity and security.

Excerpted with permission from Taking Population Seriously by Frances Moore Lappé and Rachel Schurman, 1988, Food First Books, 398 60th Street, Oakland 94618, 510 1654-4400.

Notes

1. Statistically, two other countries might be included in this group: El Salvador and Mauritius. The first we excluded because its slow growth results from out migration and disruption and death from war. The second, an island whose population only recently passed a million, is so dissimilar to the other countries as to make meaningful comparisons impossible. Data on growth rates are from the World Bank’s World Development Report (1984 and 1987) and represent averages for the 1980-85 period. Total fertility rates also come from the World Bank and were provided to us by Bruce Fuller of the Bank’s Population division. We use total fertility rates instead of crude birth rates because the former should not be affected by shifts in the size of the cohort of women who are of childbearing age that could occur over a 25-year period.


5. See, for example: Elizabeth Cross, The Family Rice Bowl: Food and the Domestic Economy in China (Geneva: UN Research Institute for Social Development, 1982).


8. Ibid., C-13. Since the 1970s, the food consumption of the lowest income groups has fallen both in quantity and in quality (less dried fish and beans).


10. Ibid., 92. In 1983, in fact, the Organization of American States reported that Cuba ranked second in Latin America in per capita food availability.


17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.

The impact of increased landlessness could also stimulate fertility. While growing landlessness may lessen the need for extra farm hands, it can simultaneously increase a family’s need for income earners, since more food must now be purchased.

21. Personal communication with demography professor Alberto Pallonati at the University of Wisconsin. December 1987. Another explanation of the decline in Chile’s fertility offered by Dr. Pallonati has to do with the strong European influence which still exists in Chile today. According to Pallonati, this European influence has led to a relative openness in attitudes towards contraception.

22. Note that the Pinochet government’s economic policies were originally designed and overseen by conservative U.S. economist Milton Friedman and his "Chicago boys," as they are colloquially known. For more on these policies, see Elon Rayack, Not So Free to Choose (New York: Praeger, 1987) and Alejandro Foxley, Latin American Experiments in Neo-Conservative Economics (Berkeley: University of
California Press.


24. Interview with T. Paul Schultz, an economist and population specialist at Yale University, May 1986. Studies documenting the reduction in fertility associated with women's education abound.


27. Thailand's population growth rate during the 1960s averaged 3.1 percent per year, implying a 27 percent decline over the last two decades.


32. The population growth rate in Costa Rica averaged 1.7 percent a year for the 1980-85 period.


34. The average contraceptive prevalence rate for Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua combined is 22 percent. Also note that Costa Rica shows the highest contraceptive use of 28 countries classified as having weak family planning program efforts, and a higher rate than 16 countries with moderate family planning efforts, with the notable exception of Cuba (see Lapham and Mauldin, "Contraceptive Prevalence," 123, table 3).


36. Ibid., 199.


IN THE NEWS: Urban Habitat and RPE's own Carl Anthony (L) meets with President Clinton (R) during one of Clinton's recent visits to the San Francisco Bay Area. Anthony is directing conversion of East Bay military bases slated for closure.
A Proposal for Global Environmental Democracy

by Anil Agarwal and Sunita Narain

New Delhi-- It was the environmental movement in the North that first challenged the overarching claims to legitimacy by political systems based on representative democracy. During the 1970s and 1980s, thousands of young men and women protested against their democratically elected governments on the sitting of nuclear power stations. Simply because certain people had been elected by majority, the argued, was not enough to give them the untrammeled right to decide how the local environment could be used without the consent of the people who were worst affected by this decision. They essentially wanted a deepening of the democratic process.

Environmental problems can be divided into two categories: those that are mainly amenable to community management and those that are mainly amenable to global management. Setting up systems of community management and of global management means that the existing nationstates must give up some of their sovereignty to the "village republican" in the first case and a "global republic" in the second.

Community environmental democracy refers to a community’s right to manage its immediate environment through open and democratic institutions. All nations should take a pledge that they will develop a new tier of community level governance through open, participatory institutions with inalienable rights to care for, use and manage their immediate environment.

The problem of managing natural resources in the 21st century cannot be solved by 19th century, centralized, undemocratic bureaucracies, many of which were perfected in the developing world during an exploitative colonial period. Does anyone seriously believe that the Earth can support everybody at the consumption level of a European or a North American? Way back in 1908, India’s Mahatma Gandhi asked, "If it took Britain the exploitation of half the globe to be what it is today, how many globes would India need?"

National environmental democracy requires that all governments provide their citizens with clear legal rights to a clean and healthy environment. It is vital that every citizen in the world should have the right to challenge, in court, any decision that affects his or her immediate environment.

Global environment democracy requires a world in which all people pay the full costs of their consumption. There can be no honest and moral discussion of international environmental solidarity as long as the world remains starkly divided between the rich and the poor.

The vast numbers of the unemployed and underemployed in the developing world provide us with an extraordinary opportunity to undertake a massive global initiative for the ecological regeneration and restoration of the natural resource base on which the poor depend for their survival.
Demand for Separate Chapter on Indigenous Peoples in International Conference on Population and Development Document

The World Council of Indigenous Peoples network of indigenous groups has called for a separate chapter on indigenous peoples to be included in the Conceptual Framework of the Draft Recommendations to the upcoming UN International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo. These recommendations were made to the "NGO intervention" during an informal consultation on 18 May. Andrew Adams III, representative of the Creek (Muscogee) Nation said:

Without significant changes in trade and financial institutions, leading to a more rational distribution of world investment, production and consumption patterns, most countries will simply lack the resources to achieve sustainability in urbanizing areas. The survival of indigenous peoples cannot be isolated from the problem of achieving economic security for non-indigenous people.

The major issues which the network felt need to be addressed are protecting the integrity of traditional systems of land tenure and management of natural resources. Citing ILO Convention No. 169 where provisions exist in Articles 13 through 16 recognizing the land rights of indigenous peoples and referring to Chapter 26 of Agenda 21 and recommendation 37 of the Mexico City Conference, the group called on the Secretary General of the Conference to include "preventing inappropriate development activities and internal migration from displacing indigenous peoples."

Reference was also made to chapters 16 and 26 of Agenda 21 concerning "strengthening traditional indigenous systems of ecological and medicinal knowledge, which can contribute significantly to improving population programs at all levels."

Other important issues which they felt should be included in the draft final document included:

"Respect for the traditional forms of social organization of indigenous peoples, where this helps protect the socioeconomic status of women and the survival and upbringing of children" and

"Ensure indigenous peoples direct participation in the future work of the UNFPA and other relevant international agencies with respect to population and development"

Women's Voices '94

In September 1992, women's health advocates representing women's networks in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean, the U.S. and Western Europe, met to discuss how women's voices might best be heard during preparations for the 1994 Conference on Population and Development and in the conference itself. The group suggested that a strong positive statement from women around the world would make a unique contribution to reshaping the population agenda to better ensure reproductive health and rights. The group drafted a "Women's Declaration on Population Policies," which was reviewed, modified and finalized by over 100 women's organizations across the globe.

The Declaration is now being circulated by the initiators listed to women's health advocates, other women's groups and women health professionals, outside and inside government, for their signatures. In addition, the initiators invite other networks, organizations, governments, and individuals, including men, to endorse the Declaration.

Women's Declaration on Population Policies

(In preparation for the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development)

Preamble

Just, humane and effective development policies based on principles of social justice promote the well-being of all people. Population policies, designed and implemented under this objective, need to address a wide range of conditions that affect the reproductive health and rights of women and men. These include unequal distribution of material and social resources among individuals and groups, based on gender, age, race, religion, social class, rural-urban residence, nationality and other social criteria; changing patterns of sexual and family relationships; political and economic policies that restrict girls' and women's access to health services and methods of fertility regulation; and ideologies, laws and practices that deny women's basic human rights.

While there is considerable regional and national diversity, each of these conditions reflects not only biological differences between males and females, but also discrimination against girls and women, and power imbalances between women and men. Each of these conditions affects, and is affected by, the ability and willingness of governments to ensure health and education, to generate employment, and to protect basic human rights for all. Governments' ability and willingness are currently jeopardized by the global economic crisis, structural
adjustment programs, and trends toward privatization, among other factors.

To assure the well-being of all people, and especially of women, population policies and programs must be framed within and implemented as a part of broader development strategies that will redress the unequal distribution of resources and power between and within countries, between racial and ethnic groups, and between women and men.

Population policies and programs of most countries and international agencies have been driven more by demographic goals than by quality of life goals. Population size and growth have often been blamed inappropriately as the exclusive or primary causes of problems such as global environmental degradation and poverty. Fertility control programs have prevailed as solutions when poverty and inequity are root causes that need to be addressed. Population policies and programs have typically targeted low-income countries and groups, often reflecting racial and class biases.

Women's fertility has been the primary object of both pro-natalist and anti-natalist population policies.

Women's behavior rather than men's has been the focus of population policies. Women have been expected to carry most of the responsibility and risks of birth control, but have been largely excluded from decision-making in personal relationships as well as in public policy. Sexuality and gender-based power inequities have been largely ignored, and sometimes even strengthened, by population and family planning programs.

As women involved directly in the organization of services, research and advocacy, we focus this declaration on women's reproductive health and rights. We call for a fundamental revision in the design, structure and implementation of population policies, to foster the empowerment and well-being of all women. Women's empowerment is legitimate and critically important in its own right, not merely as a means to address population issues. Population policies that are responsive to women's needs and rights must be grounded in the following internationally accepted, but too often ignored, ethical principles.

Fundamental Ethical Principles

1. Women can and do make responsible decisions for themselves, their families, their communities, and, increasingly, for the state of the world. Women must be subjects, not objects, of any development policy, and especially of population policies.

2. Women have the right to determine when, whether, why, with whom, and how to express their sexuality. Population policies must be based on the principle of respect for the sexual and bodily integrity of girls and women.

3. Women have the individual right and the social responsibility to decide whether, how, and when to have children and how many to have; no woman can be compelled to bear a child or be prevented from doing so against her will. All women, regardless of age, marital status, or other social conditions have a right to information and services necessary to exercise their reproductive rights and responsibilities.

4. Men also have a personal and social responsibility for their own sexual behavior and fertility and for the effects of that behavior on their partners' and their children's health and well-being.

5. Sexual and social relationships between women and men must be governed by principles of equity, non-coercion, and mutual respect and responsibility. Violence against girls and women, their subjugation or exploitation, and other harmful practices such as genital mutilation or unnecessary medical procedures, violate basic human rights. Such practices also impede effective, health- and rights-oriented population programs.

6. The fundamental sexual and reproductive rights of women cannot be subordinated, against a woman's will, to the interests of partners, family members, ethnic groups, religious institutions, health providers, researchers, policy makers, the state or any other actors.

7. Women committed to promoting women's reproductive health and rights, and linked to the women to be served, must be included as policy makers and program implementors in all aspects of decision-making including definition of ethical standards, technology development and distribution, services, and information dissemination.

To assure the centrality of women's well-being, population policies and programs need to honor these principles at national and international levels.

For information or if your organization would like to endorse this effort, contact the International Women's Health Coalition, 24 East 21st Street, New York, NY 10010, tel: 212-979-8500, fax: 212-979-9099.
A Proposed Principled Policy Statement Based on Fact, not Fear

Amidst a rising tide of hostility toward immigrants, environmental groups are increasingly advancing anti-immigrant positions. Concerned that misinformation and immigrant scapegoating will continue to seduce people into the anti-immigrant environmental movement, a coalition of California immigrants' rights and environmental groups have joined efforts to redirect the debate towards solutions.

The coalition is in the process of drafting a policy paper on immigration and the environment to counter the anti-immigrant environmental movement and to reframe the issues of environmental degradation. The goal is two-fold. First, to educate the public by publishing accurate information regarding the positive effects of immigration and immigrants' minimal impact on environment. Second, to form a broad coalition of immigrant's rights and environmental groups that will sign, support, and circulate this policy paper to other groups and the media.

The National Network For Immigrant and Refugee Rights and California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation' Center on Race, Poverty, & the Environment have taken a lead on this project. Following is a preamble to the proposed paper and a sampling of some of the facts it will contain. If you are interested in supporting this educational effort by becoming a signatory, please contact Elisa Fernandez at the Center on Race, Poverty, & the Environment, 2111 Mission Street, Suite 401, San Francisco, CA 94110-1276; 415/864-3405.

IMMIGRANTS & THE ENVIRONMENT
Dispelling the Myths & Addressing the Root Problems

Preamble

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals, are concerned with the urgency of preserving and improving the physical and social environments in which we all live and work. The present tidal wave of anti-immigrant sentiment is eroding the progress that both the environmental and immigrants' rights movements have made in preserving the natural environment and in securing our civil and human rights.

Treating immigrants as scapegoats for social and environmental problems diverts attention and resources away from the root causes of environmental degradation, economic instability, and social injustice, and contributes to racial animosity, distrust, and hostility.

Environmental preservation requires serious reevaluation of consumption and production practices, and must be advanced from a global perspective. We must recognize that communities of color in general, and immigrant communities in particular, are traditionally the victims of environmental degradation, not its cause. We imperil ourselves further if we fail to recognize that any violation of the civil rights accorded to immigrants, whatever their status, threatens the rights of all.

Finally, we can not afford to overlook the historical and present contributions of immigrants to the healthy diversity and cultural, political, and economic development of the United States.

In light of the foregoing, we the undersigned declare:

Causes of Environmental Degradation

- Resource exhaustion is due overwhelmingly to over-consumption not increased population growth.
- The United States comprises only five to six percent of the world's population, but consumes thirty to forty percent of the world's resources. In addition, the United States consumes energy and other natural resources at per capita rates exceeded by few other countries, and rates more than ten times those of "underdeveloped" countries.
- The vast majority of U.S. overconsumption is directed by and benefits only a small percentage of the U.S. population, which is overwhelmingly wealthy, white, and non-immigrant.
- United States consumption patterns are sustained by a $50 billion cash flow from the Southern to the Northern hemisphere.
- In 1990 immigrants comprised only eight percent of the U.S. population, compared to the early part of the twentieth century where immigrants comprised nearly fifteen percent of the U.S. population.
- The root cause of high population growth rates is poverty, not immigration.

Causes of Global Migration

- Many immigrants are refugees of U.S. foreign policies and/or environmental refugees of U.S. corporation's business practices.
- The U.S.'s standard of living has been sustained by extracting the resources of other less developed countries.
- Residents of underdeveloped countries can easily see what wealth their resources have brought to the U.S. and thus desire to emigrate to the U.S. As long as we are extracting huge percentages of the natural resources from these countries, it only stands to reason that the people whose resources we are taking are going to follow those resources.
- U.S. businesses, not recent immigrants, have and are destroying the U.S.'s natural resources.
- International migration patterns are determined by the international flow of resources and their concentrations.
- International debt structures and development models imposed on poor countries by international, mainly U.S.-backed money lenders prevent the world's poor countries from developing sustainably.
Social and Economic Roles Immigrants Play

Immigrants contribute to the U.S. economy through tax payments, job creation, entrepreneurial activity, consumer spending and neighborhood revitalization.

- Immigrants are net contributors to the economy by taking jobs that pay too little, are too dangerous, or are too unstable to attract and retain native U.S. workers.
- Immigrants are more likely to be self-employed and start new businesses. Small businesses, 18% of which are started by immigrants, account for up to 80% of the new jobs available in the U.S. each year.
- Immigrant consumer spending represents a major part of the economy in the cities and neighborhoods where immigrants are concentrated.
- Immigrants’ economic and social contributions far outweigh what they take from the system. Each year, immigrants earn $240 billion a year and pay over $90 billion in taxes, and receive only $5 billion in social services.

Immigrants, People of Color, and the Environment

- Communities of color as compared to the general population disproportionately suffer from environmental hazards and pollution. Particularly vulnerable are immigrant communities of color.

  At the work place:
  - Immigrants labor under the most dangerous working conditions with lack of protective equipment, exposure to toxic substances, and monolingual warning signs?
  - Immigrants are concentrated in sections of the economy such as agriculture, high technology, auto body shops, and domestic positions where they are regularly exposed to toxic substances.
  - Immigrants continue to be physically and economically exploited, as evidenced by continued wage and hour violations, child labor violations, slave camps, and Immigration and Naturalization threats.
    - Immigrants at work are discouraged from reporting violations of health and safety standards, signs of environmental danger, and evidence of criminal activity by threats of dismissal or deportation. In their residential neighborhoods:
      - On the basis of color, low income, and/or national origin people remain segregated from the rest of society, thereby facilitating their constant abuse and exploitation.
      - Immigrants, people of color, and the poor are relegated to living in the dirtiest, most dangerous neighborhoods throughout the country.
      - Immigrants, people of color, and poor people are disproportionately exposed to environmental hazards such as hazardous facility siting, pesticides, and lead poisoning.

Therefore, we recommend that:

  At the international level:
  - Hold international money lenders accountable for the environmental, social, and economic impacts of their projects.
  - Eliminate international economic disparity and resource exploitation—both of which contribute to global migration.
  - The consumption patterns of government, private economic actors, and citizens must change towards reducing the use of environmentally unsound resources and technologies, and towards decreasing the production, unsafe and/or discriminatory storage, and export of toxic wastes.

  At the national level:
  - Legislatively mandate resource conservation and pollution prevention at all levels of government.
  - Require corporations to pay for the environmental and public health costs of production.
  - Hold corporations accountable to workers and communities who suffer the adverse environmental impacts caused by corporate practices.
  - Factor pollution and resource depletion costs into all economic indicators such as the gross national product and corporate profit accounting.
  - Eliminate corporate practices which result in domestic overconsumption of resources. Move U.S. national policy towards a sustainable economy.

- Strictly and uniformly enforce extended labor, health, and safety laws so that exploitation of immigrants ceases to be feasible and profitable.
- Hold corporations, farmers, manufacturers and key employers strictly liable for abuses of all labor contractors who hire immigrant laborers.
- Increase penalties for wage and hour, labor, health, and safety violations and channel those revenues into funding more investigations.
- Eliminate subsidies for environmentally destructive farming, industrial, and business practices.

  At the local level:
  - Encourage the reporting of labor and environmental violations.
  - Promote "green" consuming.
  - Incorporate local communities inputs in project development and facility siting decisions.

Sources
4. Luke Cole. “The Anti-Immigration Environmental Alliance: Divide and Conquer at the Border of Racism.” Race, Poverty and the Environment, Spring 1992. at 13 (The U.S. consumes some 30% of the globe’s resources. Many of these resources came from underdeveloped countries: $50 billion a year is moving from poor nations to rich nations.)
Freeways, Communities, and Environmental Justice

Oakland's Clean Air Alternative Coalition Fights Environmental Racism

An interview with Eco-justice Hero Chappell Hayes

Interviewed by Penn Loh

This interview was conducted before it became known that Chappell is seriously ill. We print it here with best wishes to him and his family and as a tribute to his enormous contribution to the movement for environmental justice.

Freeways. Almost everyone has driven on one. Americans spend increasing amounts of time on increasingly congested freeways. However, we rarely think about the communities that have been divided by the freeway, the homes and businesses that use to be located where we are now driving, or the health impacts of carbon monoxide, lead, and other exhaust pollutants that our cars and trucks spew into the surrounding neighborhoods. These impacts usually fall on communities of color and poorer communities. One such community is fighting back. West Oakland was the site of the Cypress section of Interstate 880 before the Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989 destroyed the double-decker freeway. Although Caltrans has decided not to rebuild the freeway in the same place, the Clean Air Alternative Coalition wants to keep the reconstruction even further away from their neighborhood.

Together with the Church of Living God Faith Tabernacle, the Coalition filed a lawsuit in March 1993 charging that the 9700 million Caltrans plan would cause "irremediable damage to the health and environment of the community." The Caltrans plan would impact about 7,000 residents in a neighborhood that is seventy-five percent African American, nine percent Asian, and eight percent Latino.

Penn Loh talked with Clean Air Alternative Coalition president Chappell Hayes about his community's struggle and organization for environmental civil rights.

Penn Loh: When did your group form? What brought people together?

Chappell Hayes: The Clean Air Alternative Coalition came together in response to the community's need for input on the decision about how or where we were going to replace the double-decker freeway that came down during the Loma Prieta earthquake.

When the old freeway came down, we didn't immediately organize; in fact, there were some other community-style organizations that started coming together to bring our voice into focus. Most of the members of the coalition attempted to work in that framework first. Then when we found that some of the politicians and some of the factional folks were willing to talk more friendly with the decision-makers than the interests of our community, and that they were basically setting us up to sell us out. We formed the coalition with the sole objective of fixing this transportation problem—not trying to fix the world.

PL: A lot of people think there is a big gap between environmental organizations and community groups. How do you perceive yourselves?

CH: You have to recognize that a coalition by definition is a group of people who come together from a broad set of circumstances and directions, people with varying focuses, and issues, people who have found a common ground.

What we all have in common is our principled stand against staging another freeway in our West Oakland community. There are people there because they hate freeways anywhere and fight freeways around the world. Then there are people who just live there and don't want to smell another smelly, funky freeway outside their window. There are others who are just informed about the effects of freeways. There are people in our group who are members of some of the mainstream environmental organizations and stand with our community because they recognize the fight against environmental racism is the order of the day.

When you say environment, it evokes images of the spotted owl and the ancient forest. I'm certainly concerned about those issues, but it doesn't usually connote the urban environmental issues that I'm usually involved in. Most people would call me a civil rights worker or community organizer. I'm all those things, but I won't relinquish my claim to a leadership role in the environmental movement because I'm part of the environment.

PL: You brought up the term "environmental racism." I understand that it is a basis for your lawsuit. Can you talk more about that?

CH: Well, it's a unique approach here, but it isn't a unique concept. The way that environmental racism plays itself out is the same way that employment racism or housing racism plays itself out. You either are very oven and are gauging how to take certain actions based on the color of the people involved, or you're using secondary and tertiary criteria that uniquely fit the target population that you're hurting.

So in this instance, when it comes to transportation planning, the bureaucrats and politicians usually look to the
path of least resistance, which means those folks who are the poorest, the least educated, and the least represented. That’s where you want to put up your freeways and toxic dumps.

When the housing goes, so goes the drug stores, the Laundromats, doctors and lawyers, the supermarkets, all the facilities and services that are needed to make a neighborhood. So in our lawsuit, in the same tradition that people of color have sought redress in the courts for discrimination in housing and employment, we are pointing to discrimination in our environment.

PL: So, Bay Area development has already taken its toll on a community like West Oakland. I’m wondering if you have a vision of how development should take place to be fair to the people in the communities who are already hard hit, to give those people a chance to be part of the process?

CH: Development should always occur according to the highest and most identifiable needs of the broadest and most inclusive community.

If you can get to that point, usually you will get a type of development that is sensitive to the need to be able to walk to work, shopping and entertainment and talking more generally about economic development. And where you want economic development, you’ve got to have an economy. That’s a big piece of where African Americans and other people of color have been significantly left out. We’re not participating in the mainstream economy.

We can’t get work, we can’t get contracts, we can’t get our education. So what tools do we have to fight with? A lawsuit, man, that’s no tool to fight with. That’s sort of a last resort. We use what we do have, which is the ability to organize and to place our demands.

PL: I’d like you to explain more about what you think organizing is and how your group goes about it. How does organizing empower you?

CH: As a Black man in America, I come from an organizing tradition. Community outreaching reached new heights in the Civil Rights Movement. I say with great pride that African Americans have established the para-

digm. The clipboard and the petition is not a brand new item, but we raised it to new heights. We use newsletters and flyers and forums. We go to the traditional gathering places, and we talk with people. I’m maybe a little rhetorical when I say organizing people is just a matter of respecting them and listening to what their ideas are and assisting them to bring those ideas into focus.

Everybody wants pretty much the same thing in basic terms, and that’s respect and consideration. If we were given that in adequate measure, organizing would be very difficult. But since we are so patently denied, we just present ourselves and give people an opportunity to weigh in what’s going on. Together, we fashion sometimes the most simple strategies — the most simple strategies like protest[ing] — that helps us focus our complaints. Or sometimes we do voter registration. We know that some politicians who represent us are very sorry. They need to be aired and replaced every once in a while, so we try to assert the community in that way. Finally, as a last resort, we recognize as many of our Constitutional rights as we can, and we assert them to the greatest extent possible.

PL: A lot of people these days — younger people — seem to be more cynical about organizing. People have so many time and resource constraints. How do you go about getting people more involved?

CH: Well, we just wait. We usually don’t lose confidence in the face of hard times. It’s not really just the youngsters that get in a hurry. Those time and resource constraints are felt pretty much across the board.

It’s difficult to convince someone that you can be effective, that you’ve got an approach that is workable. It’s a lot easier to just demonstrate it. We actually published our strategy and handed it to the opposition to let them know that we were not going to let up and that we were going to follow through to a just conclusion. They didn’t believe us, and some of us didn’t believe ourselves. That’s what organizing is all about, and the successful organizer is the one who gets a focus on the ultimate goal of the organization and keeps that focus and doesn’t let it up. Ultimately, the power of the organization carries the day.

PL: Many students at Berkeley come from outside the Bay Area. Although some become part of the local communities, most tend to isolate themselves to the campus community. How do you see students as fitting into the broader community, and how can students who read this interview support your efforts and contribute in a positive way?

CH: I think in some quarters students get real short shrift because they’re seen as very temporary participants and [as] having their loyalty and concerns distant from the issues at hand. I see it quite differently. When I was growing up, my parents used to always say, “You go out there and you remember that you are representing us.” So I’ve long seen myself as an emissary of my family and community no matter where I was. I’d like to respect students in that same light. Everyone has a contribution to make. You know that’s what organizing is all about — finding the proper use for everyone’s energy. It’s very easy to figure out what to do with a lawyer. When you get to this stage in the struggle, there’s a lot of legal work. But there are certain things that everyone can provide, such as financial support or door-to-door work.

I guess I’m a bit of an optimist. I believe that with the kind of power we have each yield, that every opportunity we have to put that together has a really explosive effect, a really growing kind of phenomenon. I thrive on that. I look for it all the time.

This interview was originally conducted for Diatribe, which is published by the People of Color News Collective at UC Berkeley. 700 Eshleman Hall, Berkeley, CA 94720; psloh@garnet.berkeley.edu. The New Liberation News Service (NLNS) is a project of the Institute for Social and Cultural Change that seeks to facilitate the sharing of news, opinion, experiences, support and solidarity among progressive grassroots media outlets. NLNS, PO Box 325, Kendall Square Branch, Cambridge, MA 02142.
tensely focused on increases in fertility talk about immigrants in terms of insect infestation. They think about the land they have fought to preserve, and like farmers they fear the "swarms" and "hordes" and the "influx" of immigrants they believe will destroy it. Or, they use water metaphors, describing the "flood" of immigrants "washing" over the border. The term "carrying capacity" which likens Earth to a boat has this same flood imagery.

People who are fighting for economic or cultural survival and those who spend their lives fighting against systemic poverty and discrimination don't imagine immigrants that way. In fact, they imagine themselves as the immigrants they or their parents recently were. They see themselves huddled in a sewer pipe waiting to sneak across the border or as refugees, running from death squads out to murder every voice of opposition. The think of twenty years of toil in an urban sweat shop or a frightened widow waiting for years to join her only child in the U.S. The women's eyes well up as they identify with the young Puerto Rican woman tricked into signing a sterilization permit she didn't understand. Overcoming this tremendous difference in perception and language will be difficult.

These stark differences were aired earlier this year at the first conference of EDGE — The Alliance of Ethnic and Environmental Groups. Over 200 people, a majority of them people of color, listened to four thoughtful presentations on population and immigration, tried hard to grapple with these issues, and discovered the enormity of the rift. The text of those speeches form the core of this special issue.

We've done a lot of talking to friends and allies in both movements to try to understand the arguments and find the boundaries of the debate. Social justice activists claim that some environmentalists find it easier to close the borders to this nation which uses many more times the energy and raw materials than any of the developing countries from which immigrants come, rather than work to change consumption patterns and industrial practices in the developed world. They claim also that such environmentalists underminded their own ends by refusing to confront the global causes of increased fertility and immigration — the loss of agricultural land by indigenous people, unemployment caused by some ripple in the world market, poverty, debt and the disempowerment of women. Confronting these causes would mean that environmentalists who had joined social justice activists in working to change U.S. foreign policy and trade relations that enforce global inequality.

Environmentalists who advocate for strict U.S. immigration policies acknowledge that the social justice community is right about the discrepancy in resource use and right about the racism and disregard for human rights that characterizes the history of U.S. immigration and population control policy. They insist, however, that social justice activists will hurt those they wish to defend, that the focus on unequal resources and coercive population policies helps to legitimize the right wing agenda of economists like Julian Simon, author of The Ultimate Resource, who advocate for unrestricted immigration in order to create a larger pool of workers and thus lower U.S. wages. Further, some environmentalists claim that there isn't time to correct the global economic structures that lead to rising fertility rates in the underdeveloped world before the United States will be completely degraded by further development and industrial growth. Last, they claim that to accuse them of racism is to cut off all debate.

Clearly, the editors of this journal come down on the side of the social justice advocates. Most of the pieces we've reprinted here try to fill out the argument that environmentalists would do much more to stop the global rise in fertility if they brought their considerable clout to the international struggle to democratize economic decision-making and control the behavior of corporations. We do agree, however, with environmentalists who say that those fighting against a strict U.S. immigration policy and immigrant bashing often fail to acknowledge that there is a serious global increase in fertility that accompanies the increased economic inequalities and that this global increase must be confronted.

We've med here to be solution-oriented and that is why we chose to publish an excerpt of Francis Moore Lappé and Rachel Schurman's Taking Population Seriously. It's five years old, but its the best thing we've found that talks in specifics about what kinds of economic and health measures can lower fertility. The piece, "Why Immigration" by Saskia Sassen fills out part of the economic information we need to understand the global pressures that now make migration the only choice for so many people. We searched in vain for a piece that would inform us about how much our own economic behavior and consumption is dependent on immigrant labor. How much would a head of lettuce, a new dress or a redwood deck cost if it weren't for the criminally cheap labor of immigrants.

The excerpt we reprint here from Angela Davis' Women Race and Class is several years old also, but for us it's the most powerful account of the racist and coercive population policies that have brought us to the place where even the phrase "family planning" is so tainted as to be almost unusable. Which brings us back to language. Our movement can and must talk this through and in doing so create a new language to use together to fight our common battle to save the Earth and its people. Some who are clearly doing that are those in the Sierra Club who are working to change the Club into one that is part of the movement for ecological justice and takes on the globalization of the economy and poverty. We are grateful for their help in investigating the policy battles in the Sierra Club. We hope they and all of our readers will find this special issue to be part of that effort.

Luke, Carl & Hannah
Environmental Justice Coalition-building in Seattle

By Hazel Wolf

The people of Greater Seattle all breathe the same polluted air, but are there more lead and other chemicals in the air of the southern industrial/residential area of the city, where the people of low income can afford the rents, than there are in the air around the homes of people of higher incomes? Are there abandoned landfills bearing toxics located in low income Georgetown and none in affluent Laurelhurst? How about the burial of chemical waste?

Do more of the electro-magnetic fields of the power lines conducting energy into the city, cross overhead south of downtown Seattle than over the University District?

If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions, then the people living in the more-at-risk areas of the city are the victims of environmental injustice. Most of them are poor, many are people of color.

To address these questions the Community Network Coalition for Environmental Justice (CNCEJ) was created over a year ago in Seattle to organize an action-filled conference scheduled for February 26, 1994. A steering committee was formed, consisting of representatives of the city's many diverse groups — racial, ethnic, youth, labor, environmental, church and women.

These groups have much in common, although not always for the same reason. For example, what to the mainstream environmental organization is an environmental issue, may to other groups be a health consideration. One group may be concerned with the natural environment; while others may be concerned with the human environment. To seek out their commonalities is the task of the steering committee in preparation for the conference.

The committee is chaired by Ticiang Diangson of the Asian Pacific Women's Caucus. Some of the others are Helena Stevens of the Rainbow Coalition; Robert Grant of the Audubon Society; Melissa Peterson of the Sierra Club; Native American, Tyler Running Deer; Lisa Price of the Black Women's Health Project; Lifan Hung, serving as an intern, Bob Zapone, representative of the King County Labor Council, Rev. Kevin Pearson, church activist, and Peter Sanborn of the Youth Conservation Association.

The long list of sponsors also reflects the diversity of the undertaking: City Council members Martha Choe, Cheryl Chow, and Deloras Sibongo (retired); Ron Judd, President of King County Labor Council; State Senator Margarita Stevens, Prints, and State Representative Velma Veloria; Bernie Whitebear, executive director of the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation; the Rev. Laverne Hall of Mt. Zion Baptist Church; Darlene Madenwald, President of the Washington Environmental Council; and many, many others.

Headed by Lisa Price, a subcommittee on research is looking into how much environmental injustice there is in Greater Seattle. What are the disproportionate health risks? What, if any, are the tax inequities and what community involvement is there in decision-making? Also, is the health of the Asian, native and other people who fish the Duwamish River threatened by eating these fish, caught in a river loaded with chemicals from industry? Is there discrimination in recreational opportunities? These, and other possible environmental injustices, are the tasks of the Research Committee. Some of the scientists in the local office of the Environmental Protection Agency have offered to assist. The research committee is taking the findings out to community groups to elicit community priority concerns and to recruit more volunteers for CNCEJ.

The environmental organizations, focused narrowly on the natural environment, have long discussed the need to recognize and address the injustices that universally beset the human condition, most of which impinge unfavorably on the natural environment. Furthermore, without inclusive and diverse community

"We intend to do our homework and present an agenda at our February conference that will not only identify the environmental injustices, but map out a program of action to do something about them."
Urban Habitat Program Update

The work of the Urban Habitat Program (UHP) has grown substantially in the past few months. We've begun a whole new project •• The Economic Conversion Project •• and hired several new staff.

1. Social and Ecological Justice & Transportation: UHP's goal here is to change the region's transportation and land-use planning to address the needs of communities of color, working people, poor people and the disenfranchised and to bring the principle of sustainability to planning debates in the Bay Area. We have begun working with activists in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood to create a transportation plan that demonstrates an integrated transportation, land-use and economic development approach. We also recently founded a coalition of transit worker unions, environmental organizations and other community-based groups to develop a regional vision based on the principles of social and ecological justice. This program is directed by Henry Holmes (who is also our new Associate Director), aided by Luz Cervantes.

2. Economic Conversion Project: This is a new project for UHP and responds to the fact that the closure of military bases in the Bay Area will strike a hard blow to a region already facing economic hardship. An especially heavy burden will fall on people of color, low-income residents and workers who have historically depended upon the military and its industrial suppliers for jobs and economic stability. Total job loss in Alameda County will reach nearly 40,000, doubling unemployment to 11.3% and San Francisco will lose 23,000 jobs, increasing its rate to 8.6%.

Without an involved and educated citizenry the choices and decisions our region faces about new investment and toxic clean up will be led by industry. Our mission is to bring our principles of sustainability and inclusion of poor communities of color to the debate and help to implement model programs for the three major sites — the San Francisco Presidio, Hunters Point Annex and the Alameda Naval Air Station and related facilities. This project builds on the leadership role played by Carl Anthony. Representative Ron Dellums recently appointed Carl to be Chair of the East Bay Re-use and Reinvestment Commission. Martha Matsuoka, a planner who previously worked for the Presidio Council of the National Park Service directs this project, aided by interns Daniel O'Connor and Birgit Neuer.

3. EDGE/The Alliance of Ethnic and Environmental Organizations: This is a separate organization which UHP was instrumental in founding and which we continue to sustain. EDGE is a formal alliance among statewide membership organizations seeking to compliment existing environmental justice efforts and provide a forum in which to bring the state's environmental and ethnic groups together to identify their common concerns. In coming months, EDGE will hold a series of forums on immigration and population under the leadership of its new director, Carlos Melendez.

4. Ecological Literacy: UHP's goal is to change educational policy to substantively address social and ecological justice issues affecting young people of color. We do this through curriculum design and dissemination, participation in various environmental education forums and through the course "Race, Poverty and the Environment" that Carl Anthony teaches at the University of California at Berkeley. This project is led by Alicia Sheppeck.

We are also co-directing the planning and development of the Southern California Marine Education Project, pursuant to terms of a settlement agreement between Earth Island Institute and Southern California Edison. This project aims to promote multicultural leadership in coastal resource management programs. It is directed by Anne Eng, an attorney who recently came to work with UHP and is also the Vice-chair of the Commission San Francisco Environment.

5. Greening and Restoration: UHP's goal is to promote urban land reclamation, community gardening and socially just land uses in order to restructure inner city neighborhoods as culturally diverse and ecologically sustainable habitats. Our project examines issues of land use and stewardship from a social, environmental, political and historical perspective in order to develop models of culturally diverse and sustainable neighborhoods and cities. This year we will continue to provide technical support and documentation to the People of Color Greening Network. We are also helping to publicize and bring communities of color to participate in the International Healthy Cities & communities conference to be held in San Francisco in December of 1993. This work is led by Arthur James III.

UHP also recently hired a new Development and Publications Director — Hannah Creighton has a strong background in the social justice and environmental movements, most recently with Citizens for a Better Environment-California. She will write our grants and act as Managing Editor for Race, Poverty and the Environment. She acts as guest editor on this issue on Population and Immigration.
Resources

Population & Immigration

Books


Articles and Journals


"Broadening the Population Debate: Views from Latin America and the Caribbean" The Panos Institute has initiated this project to help amplify southern voices on population. The project consists of four overlapping phases resulting in the production of a publication entitled: "We Speak For Ourselves: Population and Development" For more information contact Elise Storck, director of programs at Panos, 202/483-0044.


"Congress on Renewable Natural Resources: Critical Issues and Concepts for the Twenty-First Century." Renewable Natural Resources Journal Vol. 10 No. 3, Renewable Natural Resources Foundation, 5430 Grosvenor Lane, Bethesda, Maryland 20814, U.S.A.


Southwest Network. Statement on NAFTA. Albuquerque, NM. 1993. This new statement on NAFTA includes some information on the relation between the potential trade agreement and immigration from Mexico to the U.S.. To order send $5 to the Southwest Network. Box 7399, Albuquerque, NM, 87194.


Projects, Campaigns and Groups

Working on Immigration/Population

Asian Law Caucus, 468 Bush St. 3rd Floor, San Francisco. CA 94108, 415/391-1655.

Asian Pacific Island Environmental Network (APEN). 1221 Preservation Parkway #200, Oakland. CA 94612 510/834-8920.

Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services (CIRRS). 995 Market Street. San Francisco. CA 94103


Immigrant Legal Resource Center. 1663 Mission Street. San Francisco. CA 94107

Latino Issues Forum. 1535 Mission St. San Francisco. CA 94103. 415/552-3152.

National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, 310 8th Street, Suite 307. Oakland, CA 94607

Urban Habitat Program, a project of the Earth Island Institute. 300 Broadway Suite 28. San Francisco. CA 94133, 415/788-3666.
General Environmental Justice Resources

Events

Dec. 8-11, 1993 — International Healthy Cities and Communities Conference. San Francisco. Plenary sessions will address Healthy Societies, Changing Urban Patterns, Governance and Sustainability. For information call 510/540-2412.


Recent Books and Articles


Lake, Robert W., Editor. Resolving Locational Conflict. New Brunswick, NJ, Center for Urban Policy Research. 1991. Puts forth the premise that "locational conflict is the public's insistence that unresolved debates be confronted. and that policy issues should not be disguised as "objective"or technological questions.


Kettleman City residents were exuberant at the announcement, which they predicted would galvanize other, similarly, situated communities. "This victory will fill the people with power — this is not the only thing we're fighting. We're fighting all the injustices that are done to us," said community leader Ramon Mares.

community in the lawsuit. The community won its legal challenge in late 1991 when a Sacramento Superior Court judge ruled that Kings County had not adequately studied the environmental impacts of the incinerator and that the County had not included the Spanish-speaking people of Kettleman City in the environmental review process. Chem Waste appealed the decision, and the appeal was awaiting oral argument in the Court of Appeals in Sacramento when the incinerator proposal was scrapped. "Chem Waste withdrew its appeal, reaffirming the community's legal victory in the Superior Court," said Cole.

Kettleman residents thanked their supporters nationwide, but reserved special praise for Kings County Supervisor Abel Mirrelies, the first supervisor to vote against the toxic incinerator proposal in 1991. "He was the only supervisor who believed in us and cared for us along," said Maya.

Chem Waste's announcement came as the struggle against the incinerator gained momentum. There have been recent protests involving Kettleman residents at government agencies in the San Francisco Bay Area, and thousands of postcards have been written to the Kings County Board of Supervisors.

"If you work together, you can beat even the biggest companies," said Mary Lou Mares.
Early in the morning on September 7, 1993, Kettleman City community activist Mary Lou Mares was surprised to see the general manager of Chemical Waste Management's Kettleman Hills toxic waste dump coming up her front walk. Her surprise turned to elation when he handed her a press release and said, "It's over, Mary Lou, it's over." The press release announced that Chem Waste was withdrawing its proposal to build a massive toxic waste incinerator near Kettleman City.

"¡Sí se puede! (Yes we can!)" said Mares, one of the leaders of the Kettleman community group El Pueblo para el Aire y Agua Limpio (People for Clean Air and Water), which had been fighting the proposed incinerator for years. "This is a historic victory for environmental justice and against environmental racism."

The defeat of the incinerator will have national repercussions in the grassroots fight for pollution prevention, and is a serious setback to the toxic waste incineration industry nationally. The six-year David vs. Goliath fight has pitted a tiny, 95 percent Latino, farmworker community against the largest toxic waste disposal company in the world. "We're crying for joy for this — I knew in my heart that we could do it," said Espy Maya, another leader of the community group, when she heard the news.

Kettleman City residents were exuberant at the announcement, which they predicted would galvanize other, similarly situated communities. "This victory will fill the people with power — this is not the only thing we're fighting. We're fighting all the injustices that are done to us," said Ramon Mares, another community leader. Chem Waste currently operates the largest toxic waste dump west of Louisiana just 4 miles from Kettleman City; California's other two toxic dumps, run by Laidlaw at Buttonwillow and Westmorland, are in 52% and 72% Latino towns, respectively.

The community celebrated with an October 2 Fiesta del Pueblo in Kettleman City, which drew hundreds of supporters from across California as well as from Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. A special guest was Kaye Kiker of York, Alabama, who has spent the past ten years fighting Chem Waste's Emelle dumpsite, the largest toxic dump in the