Chemical Warfare: the Misery of Environmentalism

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Just because liberals are ignorant about economics (and often about natural science) does not mean they are outright stupid. In fact, they are often more clever, and certainly more cunning, than those on the right often give them credit for. Liberals are experts at deploying words that have duplicitous meanings. In Orwellian fashion, we hear about "free trade" (meaning: socialism and globalism), "fairness" (meaning: higher taxes and confiscation of wealth), "compassion" (meaning: extorting wealth from those who work to those who choose not to work), "wrong" (meaning: some frequent, otherwise "fun" and "good" behavior that turns to embarrassment after being caught), and "choice" (meaning: even killing someone who gets in the way of your preferences is OK).

Well, here is another one: "The Precautionary Principle" (PP). At first glance, one might think that phrase represents prudence and care. What it really means is "guilty until proven innocent" (for chemical compounds). Now we might at least assume that liberals are well-meaning when they go about pursuing policies that will make life more expensive, reduce consumer choices, and make the world a more dangerous place to live. But the fact is that we still suffer at the hands of these well-meaning goofs.

The PP says that if chlorine is bad in some compounds that result in PCBs and CFCs and so forth, then we must assume that it is bad in any compound. The logic runs sort of like if water is bad in a car's gas tank then it must be bad in a dishwasher too. Or if mercury is bad when circulating in a human body then it must be bad circulating in a thermometer. Don't liberals have a clue about how expensive life would be if a water purification alternative were mandated other than low-cost chlorine? Do they have any idea how many people will die, and have died, from cholera and other water-born diseases when untreated water is held out as potable? It is a shame that we have germs that make it necessary to use purifiers like chlorine. But so what? It is also a shame that we have criminals and man-eating lions. Life is not perfect, and neither are the solutions we employ to cope with life's imperfections. The PP not only precludes a few bad applications, it also wipes out the good uses of any synthetic chemical (and, remarkably, both major political parties support using the PP in public policy to some extent). Being far "ahead" of us, the PP is the environmental policy norm for Europeans already.

Of course, the PP is just one of the follies in the liberal (i.e., ideological) environmentalist's policy arsenal. They like to use lies and false science too. Take the case of DDT for example. DDT is a chemical pesticide which was widely used in the middle of the twentieth century, and is still being used in many agricultural areas of the world today. The most remarkable benefit of DDT is that it devastates mosquito populations in malaria-prone areas of the world. Indeed, DDT use has been responsible for saving many millions of people from misery and premature deaths on account of malaria. It has phenomenally improved the lives of myriads of people in the Third World.

Well, at least it *did*. Just mention to a liberal that human ingenuity has helped thwart natural population control mechanisms (like mosquitoes and disease) and he will begin to get nervous or might even have fits. After all, for the liberal, human beings are a nuisance, and the world's population is already too large. He welcomes a certain amount of death and misery—except his own death or misery—since it helps keep human population growth to a minimum. That makes helpful chemicals like DDT evil.

But just how could liberals come up with a "public interest" rationale against DDT? After all, they could hardly come right out and say, "We oppose the use of DDT because it reduces human misery". Even if they wanted to, they would have a hard time selling the public that it is in

their best interest to have more mosquitoes. Not surprisingly, their first attempt was to show that DDT, as well as chlorine-related chemicals, increase cancer (especially among children). But that effort failed to pan out. So some liberals got the clever idea of finding exotic birds, the bald eagle among them, which could be said to have been harmed by exposure to DDT. Along with the birds, they found an academic who was willing to say that these bird's eggshell thicknesses might have become thinner as a result of being exposed to DDT.

Thus, we reckon that the liberals found an egghead with a birdbrain's worth of economic sense to lay out a policy prescription. And the egghead decreed that thousands of birds would be adversely affected by DDT use. Never mind the millions of human beings that would be saved by using DDT, let's think about the birds instead. To the liberal mind, we have too many humans and too few exotic birds, so the choice was rather easy: ban DDT and save the birds. Accordingly, DDT was banned in the United States in 1972.

Later, it became evident from further research that the eggshell thesis was a sham and the whole DDT scare was based on false science. In the mean time, we had no reduction in the exotic bird population but several million human beings were killed by malaria. There were over 80 million cases of malaria in Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka in 1946 (and similar numbers in earlier years), with numerous deaths as a result, but only a handful of cases were reported in the early 1960s after DDT spraying had been implemented. The better than 99.9% decline in malaria-caused misery and death is truly amazing. After DDT spraying stopped, however, the numbers of malaria deaths again soared. Mosquito-driven malaria misery became so great in places like South Africa, that some governments began to reject liberal environmentalist arguments and resumed DDT application, once again regaining the beneficial outcome of malaria reduction.

Whether it's sophisticated language (e.g., PP), lies, or false science, liberal ideological environmentalists have hamstrung human existence and progress. Of course, that is what they want to do. They want a less sophisticated world. Just like their calls for letting the "natural" wildfires destroy Yellowstone National Park last decade, such liberals relish the idea of maintaining a "natural" quantity of human misery via diseases like malaria. Theirs is a vision of stagnation, war, poverty, and human degradation. Let our vision not be clouded by their clever wiles, euphemisms, birdbrain sophistry, and fear-mongering.