

written.

Would Shakespeare himself have been displeased at the scope of the action possible in a film—as compared to a small stage, when it comes to depicting a battle? I doubt it. I do agree with her that the musical background is an unpleasant distraction. While it does not dominate the performance, it detracts from it. Since there is a sufficient body of beautiful music composed in Shakespeare's time which could have provided a musical background accompaniment, we can certainly fault Branagh here; furthermore, Shakespeare's purpose would have been well served without relying upon any background score.

In thinking about why I would recommend this film, I was reminded of Ken Burns's recent seven-part video documentary on the Civil War, which I would also recommend. The battle scenes depicted in the video, and the descriptions of the fighting are, of course, gripping; however, what I found most notable was—from our barren standpoint today—the literacy of the average soldier, writing home to his family and friends, as he faced the rigors of battle. Just as today the "average Joe" and President Bush are both equally inarticulate, so then even the common soldier shared some of the grandeur of President Lincoln's poetic prose. These were times when Americans traveled with three books: the Bible, Shakespeare's plays, and Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

Were I competent to produce a television documentary about the Civil War, or to film *Henry V*, I would no doubt choose to emphasize more of the true subject of Shakespeare's concerns, as Mrs. Sigerson indicates them to be. Yet despite its superficiality, the Branagh production was sufficiently faithful to the original, and sufficiently well done—neither poorly acted nor overly realistic, as is the case of the BBC videos of Shakespeare—to be a useful bridge to Shakespeare's play itself.

Brave green world: Malthus refuted

by John Chambless

Sackgasse Ökostatt: Kein Platz für Menschen,

by Ralf Schauerhammer

Böttiger Verlags-GmbH, Wiesbaden, Germany, 1990
202 pages, paperbound, DM 14.80

In the approximately 30 years since the beginnings of what is called "environmentalism," that movement has gone from being the concern of cultists, cranks, and crazies to one of the dominant political and "scientific" forces in Western industrial society. Its message of impending eco-disaster and overpopulation now dominates the mass media, and its proclamations and warnings have become a part of our everyday life, as common in the classroom and popular movies as in the daily television news.

Ralf Schauerhammer, editor of the German-language science magazine *Fusion*, directs his recent book, *Sackgasse Ökostatt: Kein Platz für Menschen (The Ecostate Dead-End: No Place for Human Beings)* to those individuals who are concerned about the environment but are simultaneously bothered by arguments put forward to justify the drastic measures called for by environmentalists in order to preserve the environment, whether from the danger of toxic insecticides, the ozone hole, or the menace of "global warming." As he tells us, he makes no attempt to present a non-partisan review of all the arguments pro and con in the area of environmentalism, but rather to "scrutinize the fundamental arguments of the environmentalist movement" from the point of view of those "who intend to preserve and care for nature, above all, to preserve and develop human beings." The book "points out the conceptual errors of the environmentalist dogmas that pour out against us daily in a virtually indigestible mass from the media."

Approximately two-thirds of the book is concerned with the arguments that justify environmentalists' concerns. In this respect, Schauerhammer's work resembles that of Dixy Lee Ray, whose *Trashing the Planet*, appeared at about the same time (see *EIR*, Nov. 16, 1990). In both books, the dangers proclaimed by the environmentalist movement for human beings and the environment are carefully examined and, for the most part, the arguments are found to be totally

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inadequate. Unlike Ray, however, Schauerhammer does not shy away from asking what political forces stand behind the environmentalist movement. He devotes the last third of the book to the ideological background of the movement, the background that makes sense out of the often ludicrous attempts to justify population reduction and deindustrialization. More importantly, he presents a view of the world and mankind that contrasts sharply with the pessimistic, malthusian perspective that forms the conceptual backbone of environmentalism.

The book is written in a light, popular style, and contains an element usually lacking in discussions of the environment: humor. The book has received a warm reception in Germany. Originally expected to sell only a few thousand copies in the scholarly market, it has become a popular success, and is now in its third printing.

Scare tactics and 'evil fairy tales'

Schauerhammer covers a broad array of topics central to the environmentalist movement. The first two chapters are devoted to the most current scare campaigns, the ozone hole and the greenhouse effect. The next chapter is devoted to atmospheric pollution and arguments designed to prove that any amount of toxic chemical, no matter how small, is dangerous to human beings. Chapter 5 is devoted to acid rain and the claim current in Europe that human industry is destroying forests there, while Chapter 4 concerns the fate of tropical rain forests. Schauerhammer points out that the policy of denying advanced technology to the Third World where the tropical rain forests are located is largely responsible for the destruction of those forests, and outlines a policy for maintaining the biological productivity of former rain forest lands. Chapter 6 goes back to the origins of the U.S. environmentalist movement, and looks at "The Evil Fairy Tale of the 'Silent Spring,'" referring to Rachel Carson's book that fraudulently accused DDT of destroying bird life throughout the world. Chapter 7 is an apocryphal account of the virtual destruction of the life of a German farmer facing the "ground water" regulations imposed by the European Community.

In Chapter 8, Schauerhammer goes after the concept of "natural" as carelessly used by environmentalists. The claim that humanity is "disturbing the balance of nature" is shown to be a childish illusion, since the world of nature for the last billions of years has been constantly growing and developing, with one temporary state of equilibrium only a preparation for new growth and "disturbance." Schauerhammer shows that human technology is not an "unnatural" phenomenon, but rather a natural outgrowth of the "natural technology." What are the wings of a bird, the sonar of a bat, the stomach of a cow if not technology? "All these are technology—technology that nature itself has tested and developed in the course of evolution. Every nature park or zoo is fundamentally nothing but a museum for these 'natural technologies.'"

The next three chapters are devoted to nuclear energy and radioactivity, and demonstrate that, despite the propaganda surrounding Chernobyl and Three Mile Island, nuclear energy remains the least expensive, safest form of energy, and is the best hope for elevating the populations of the Third World to a level capable of allowing truly human life.

From Chicken Little to eco-dictatorship

In the discussion of the "ozone hole," Schauerhammer shows that the so-called hole is not a new phenomenon. In fact, the hole was first discovered in the 1950s by Gordon Dobson, who observed a fluctuation of the level of atmospheric ozone in the Antarctic region, and explained that as due to weather conditions in the region. This was long before the supposed cause of the hole, CFCs, were produced in sufficient quantities to have any possible effect. How can those chemicals be the cause?

Despite the lack of proof that there is any such thing as an "ozone hole caused by human activity," politicians are moving ahead to fight against it. As Schauerhammer says, "At this moment a network of supranational control mechanisms is being produced for the 'protection of the ozone hole.' Once this network is joined together, it will also serve to push through other limitations and prohibitions of production of other substances."

These supranational controls are also moving forward to protect the Earth against "global warming." After examining the arguments put forward to prove global warming in a long and detailed discussion, Schauerhammer concludes, "First, the existing temperature data do not prove a warming as the result of a greenhouse effect. Second, the asserted cause-effect relation between CO₂ in the atmosphere and the increase in temperature is refuted rather than proved by the existing data."

Not that that matters very much. As this review was being written, the announcement came that examination of temperature data since 1905 in the United States does not show any sign of there being any consistent warming trend. The announcer concluded, "It may take 25 or 50 more years to show the trend." That is, global warming is taking place, we know that. We do not yet have the data to prove the claim. But it must be taking place.

Many politicians are even more explicit. Schauerhammer quotes Sen. Timothy Wirth (D-Colo.), who argues that, even if the "theory of global warming is false, we must act as though global warming were reality." The background for Senator Wirth's statement is the specter of "the population explosion," one of the environmentalists' favorite theses. The idea of the population explosion can only be understood by going back to its author, Parson Thomas Malthus. Schauerhammer argues that the scientific content of Malthus's arguments, when originally formulated and today, is of no interest. What is interesting is the role that Malthus's ideas were designed to play, and have played, politically.

Originally intended to refute the American System of political-economy, established in the New World only a decade before publication of Malthus's book, the arguments function today to justify the austerity policy imposed by the international banking system on the Third World.

Ecologism and pagan idolatry

The use of fear and hysteria to control populations and to impose dictatorial rule is nothing new in human history. "Totalitarian systems have sought for thousands of years to manipulate their subject populations and make them pliable through fear and terror. Helplessly, weak man stands confronted by gigantic natural forces. . . . In antiquity, the raging gods could only be placated by sacrifice and absolute obedience toward the oligarchical priestly class. Whoever believes that the time of nature gods and idols is long past is making a serious error.

"Today, we are experiencing the rise of a new 'idol': It is the idol of 'Mother Earth,' Gaia; its secular name is 'the environment,' and its altar is called 'Environmental Protection,' on which within a few years more human beings have already been sacrificed than on the ghastly altars of all the idols of the Incas. Shrouded in the gowns of scientific inviolability, a priestly caste proselytizes worldwide for this Goddess Mother Earth."

What is science: our debt to Krafft Ehrlicke

In the last 20 years, Schauerhammer states that the worst effects of environmentalist thinking on human civilization have been on science itself. Science, rather than being the method by which humanity improves its world, has rather become "very successful in answering irrelevant questions." Schauerhammer contrasts the attitude of scientists to hunger and starvation in Africa in the late 1960s and the present. "If we can put a human being on the Moon and bring him back in a healthy condition, then we can also solve the problems on Earth," as opposed to talk about the "unsolvable problem" of "overpopulation" and even the attitude that, perhaps it's better if we let the people of the Third World starve today rather than having more of them around to starve tomorrow. If that is a new discovery, Schauerhammer says, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that in the last 30 years that we have not become more clever but merely more immoral.

Showing an indebtedness to the great German-American scientist and engineer Krafft Ehrlicke, Schauerhammer develops a view of the evolution of life and humanity on Earth that sharply contrasts with that of the malthusians. In the chapter on malthusianism, he argues that malthusians and neo-malthusians have confused mere multiplication with growth, and that the present stage of humanity should be seen in analogy with that of an embryo in the womb, whose growth is about to "continue in another world" in which "biological growth" is no longer the only concern, but rather development of labor power and creative reason. Humanity is now capable

of moving into a new world, and that lies "in the stars."

Schauerhammer argues in his last chapter that the "relevant questions" for science to deal with are, how can we provide the living standard enjoyed during the mid-1960s for the entire population of the world today? When we ask that "the actual scientific challenges appear that the zero-growth ideology today has obscured and driven out of the minds of scientists."

When these challenges are taken seriously, Schauerhammer says we will see that we have "precisely the questions to answer that will arise in connection with a project for the settlement of Mars. We need a great goal, an orientation through which that will pull thinking out of the morass of zero-growth ideology and elevate it into true responsibility for future generations. . . . We need a Mars project to accelerate that which must be done in any case for the development of the Earth. . . . Either we gain Mars and the Earth, or we lose the Earth."

Books Received

Vietnam Today, Assessing the New Trends, edited by Thai Quang Trung, Crane Russak, Bristol, Pa., 1990, 126 pages, hardbound

America and Soviet Intervention: Effects on World Stability, edited by Karen A. Feste, Crane Russak, Bristol, Pa., 1990, 162 pages, paperback

Challenges of Leadership in African Development, edited by Olusegun Obasanjo and Hans d'Orville, Crane Russak, Bristol, Pa., 1990, 258 pages, paperback

Communist Systems and Challenges, by Amos Yoder, Crane Russak, Bristol, Pa., 1990, 274 pages, paperback

Voices of Freedom, An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement from the 1950s through the 1980s, by Henry Hampton and Steven Fayer, with Sarah Flynn, Bantam Books, New York, 1990, 692 pages, paperback, \$19.95

We Are Not Afraid: The Story of Goodman, Schwerner and Chaney and the Civil Rights Campaign for Mississippi, by Seth Cagin and Philip Dray, Bantam Books, New York, 1990, 512 pages, paperback, \$14.95

A Testament of Hope, The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr., edited by James M. Washington, HarperCollins, New York, 1991, 702 pages, paperback, \$16.95