

Beware of terrorists dressed in Rio green

Nigel Hastilow

Jun 4, 1992

The day of the eco-terrorist may be about to dawn. After Red Brigades, the IRA and the ALF, brace yourselves for the Planet Earth Liberation Front or some such nonsensical name.

The environment in all shades of green is already its news and big business. But when the Rio Earth Summit ends, as it is beginning, in bitterness and recriminations, have little doubt that some of lunatics will say the time has come for what is known as "direct action".

They will hysterically argue that the crisis facing the planet needs an urgent response from the self-satisfied and greedy governments of the materialistic North.

And to make their point, they will doubtless carry out terrorist attacks while their spokespeople bleat on about how the planet is dying and the complacent world must sit up and take notice.

Not a decade ago, we were being warned that the world was on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe. They had a clock, if you recall, and every year the minute hand was moved a little closer towards midnight, when, it was alleged, mankind's mad arms race would explode in his face and the planet would be no more.

Today, though the proliferation of nuclear weapons among unstable Third World countries continues, those warnings are not repeated because the implosion of the Soviet empire is supposed to have put paid to the threat.

So instead, it is the environment which is allegedly approaching midnight.

The hysteria will grow as the decade approaches its end and apocalyptic visions mount towards the millennium.

Do not underestimate the symbolic power that the year 2000 can convey to those who wish to terrify, browbeat and coerce the Western world into abandoning a prosperous future in favour of an ecologically-sound, utterly impractical, green nirvana.

There are vital environmental issues which world governments really must tackle. But we can't possibly expect them all to be solved during a fortnight in Rio, especially when overpopulation is not even on the agenda.

Nor should we be taken in by the moral blackmail of allegedly poor Third World countries which demand our billions while spending their own developing sophisticated conventional (and nuclear if they can get away with it) arms programmes.

Now should we wring our hands over our own politicians' apparent lack of will when those in Third World countries happily go about their daily business of ignoring human rights and destroying their own environments.

I do not underestimate the importance of environmental issues. But as we do not know whether global warming is even taking place, still less what its effects will actually be, there is no reason to assume the planet is about to give up the ghost.

It will take years before we develop ways of living which are both practical and environmentally sound but we are aware of the problems and we are making a start.

It may be fashionably politically correct to be green — greenery is today's Marxism. That does not mean we should let it make us feel guilty about the reasonable exploitation of the earth's natural resources for the good of mankind.



NIGEL HASTILOW

Beware of terrorists dressed in Rio green

The day of the eco-terrorist may be about to dawn. After Red Bridges, the IRA and others have given themselves for the Planet Earth Liberation Front or some such nonsensical name.

The environment in all its shades of green is already big news and big business. But who knows what it all ends, as it is beginning, in bitterness and recriminations. I have little doubt that some hand-wringing, doleful, gloomy lunatics will say the time has come for what is known as "dinner time".

They will hysterically argue that the crisis facing the planet needs an urgent response from the self-satisfied and greedy governments of the materialistic North.

And to make their point, they will doubtless carry out terrorist attacks while their spokespeople bleat on about how the planet is dying and the rest of the world must sit up and take notice.

Not a decade ago, we were being warned that the world was on the brink of ecological catastrophe. They had a clock, if you recall, and every year the minute hand would move a little closer towards midnight, when, it was alleged, mankind's mad arms race would explode in his face and the planet would be no more.

Today, though the pronunciation of that word is among the unstable Third World countries concerned, those warnings are not repeated. Instead, the implosion of the Soviet empire is supposed to have put paid to the threat.

So instead, it is the environment which is allegedly approaching midnight.

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Do not underestimate the symbolic power that the year 2000 has for those who wish to terrify, browbeat and coerce the Western world into abandoning a prosperous future in favour of a meagre, ecologically-sound, utterly impractical, green nirvana.

The vital environmental issues which world governments really must tackle. But we can't possibly expect them to be solved during a fortnight in Rio, especially when overpopulation is not even on the agenda.

Nor should we be taken in by the moral blackmail of allegedly poor Third World countries which are polluting the planet while spending their own developing sophisticated conventional (and nuclear) energy programmes.

Now should we wring our hands over our own politicians' apparent lack of concern than those in Third World countries happily go about their daily business of destroying man's right to destroy their own environments.

I do not underestimate the importance of environmental issues. But as we do not know whether global warming is even taking place, and if it is, its effects will actually be, there is no reason to assume the planet is about to give up the ghost.

It is time, therefore, we develop ways of living which are both practical and environmentally sound but we are aware of the problems and we are making a start.

It may be fashionable political correctness to be green — greenery is today's Marxism. That does not mean we should let it get in the way of any about the reasonable exploitation of the earth's natural resources for the good of mankind.

The Ted K Archive

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The Birmingham Post, Jun 4, 1992, page 7.
<www.newspapers.com/image/812977439>

This is the earliest mention I can find of the 'Earth Liberation Front' in any newspaper. It's amusing to consider whether the author even knew of ELF's first communique around this time or whether he had simply accurately predicted it's arrival.

www.thetedkarchive.com