

*F*rcing Change

Earth Day: A Radical Religious Agenda

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“Earth Day, April 22, is the largest secular holiday in the world, celebrated by more than a *half billion* people every year.” — Earth-DayNetwork.¹ [*italics added*].

“More than 6 million Canadians join 500 million people in over 180 countries in staging events and projects to address local environmental issues. *Nearly every school child in Canada takes part in an Earth Day activity.*” — Earth Day Canada² [*italics added*].

“Earth is more than just a spaceship. She is our Mother. She gave us life. There is nowhere else to go but to stay and love her.” — Reader’s comment regarding John Kerry’s Earth Day blog.³

It seems that everybody has embraced Earth Day.

Corporate sponsorships pay for community Earth Day events, federal and state/provincial agencies spend tax dollars in promotion of April 22, and a myriad of “grassroots” organizations add energy to the planetary cause. It’s an event that captures the attention of local and national media outlets, politicians of every stripe, and fuels the imagination of school children everywhere. From Toyota to the City of Denver, from the United Nations to the National Council of Churches, from elementary schools to major university campuses – Earth Day is more than just a single annual event; it’s a platform for “global citizenship.”

Articles to Watch for in Upcoming Issues of *Forcing Change*

- ▶ Utopian Politics: International Socialism and the Rise of Global Governance
- ▶ Cult of Green: The UN Earth Sabbath
- ▶ Fundamental Fears: Biblical Christianity as a Factor in Global Instability
- ▶ Toward a Single International Currency
- ▶ Education for the Future: UNESCO and Seven Complex Lessons

The idea for Earth Day goes back to 1962 and Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin. Convinced that environmental issues needed greater national exposure, Nelson suggested to President Kennedy that he embark on a “national conservation tour.” The following year Kennedy went on a five-day tour promoting natural conservation, but the event never generated the political interest Nelson was hoping for. However, according to the Senator, “it was the germ of the idea that ultimately flowered into Earth Day.”⁴

Six years later during the height of the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations, Senator Nelson hit on the idea of creating a “national environmental teach-in” – styled after the protest movement. As

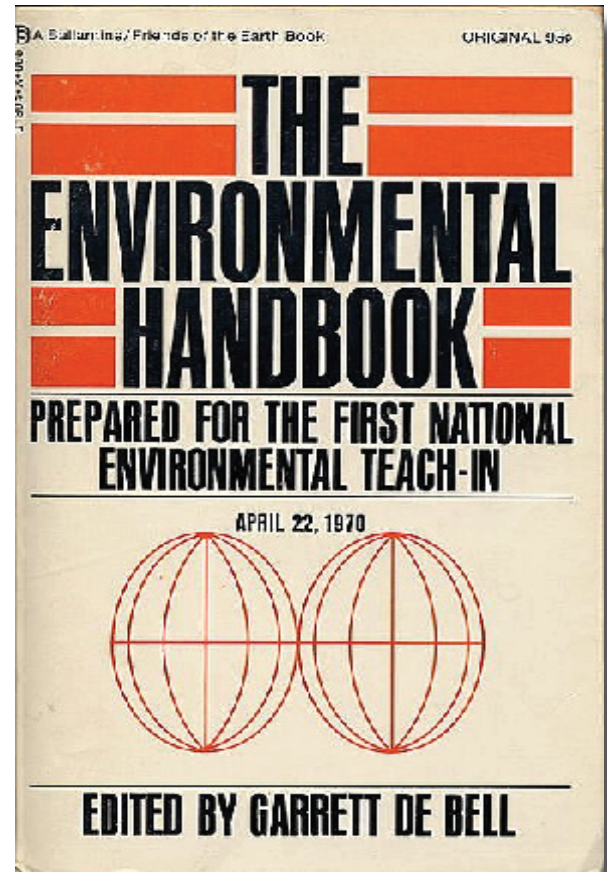
Nelson explained in a brief article on the history of Earth Day,

“At a conference in Seattle in September 1969, I announced that in the spring of 1970 there would be a nationwide grassroots demonstration on behalf of the environment...The wire services carried the story from coast to coast. The response was electric. It took off like gangbusters. Telegrams, letters, and telephone inquiries poured in from all across the country. The American people finally had a forum to express its concern about what was happening to the land, rivers, lakes, and air – and they did so with exuberance. For the next four months, two members of my staff, Linda Billings and John Heritage, managed Earth Day affairs out of my Senate office.”⁵

Students and educators were recognized as a specific target group ideal for maintaining long-term momentum, and a national teach-in event was planned for April 22, 1970. Helping to make this first Earth Day a success, a special book was compiled through Friends of the Earth and distributed nation-wide to teachers and professors.

Titled, *The Environmental Handbook: Prepared for the First National Environmental Teach-In, April 22, 1970*, this volume bared all in the quest for a new social and environmental contract. The book wasn't written by a single author, rather, it was a compilation of essays and articles written by a number of environmental activists, and received its final editing under Garrett De Bell. When it was published, *The Environmental Handbook* was placed into thousands of young hands. Indeed, the first Earth Day witnessed 20 million participants across the US.

The following quotes are taken from *The Environmental Handbook*. Each author, and the page number of the text are sourced after each excerpt. Keep in mind that what you are reading is the foundational teaching material used in launching the modern Earth Day celebration. [Note: incorrect spelling in the original]



On Religion:

“Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia’s religions...not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God’s will that man exploit nature for his proper ends.

At the level of the common people this worked out in an interesting way. In antiquity every tree, every spring, every stream, every hill had its own genius loci, its guardian spirit. These spirits were accessible to men... Before one cut a tree, mined a mountain, or dammed a brook, it was important to placate the spirit in charge of that particular situation, and to keep it placated. By destroying pagan animism, Christianity made it possible to exploit nature in a mood of indifference to the feelings of natural objects.” (p.20-21, Lynn White Jr.).



“We would seem to be heading toward conclusions unpalatable to many Christians...modern technology is at least partly to be explained as an occidental, voluntarist realization of the Christian dogma of man’s transcendence of, and rightful mastery over, nature. But, as we now recognize, somewhat over a century ago science and technology – hitherto quite separate activities – joined to give mankind powers which, to judge by many of the ecologic effects, are out of control. If so, Christianity bears a huge burden of guilt.” (p.23, Lynn White Jr.).

“What we do about ecology depends on our ideas of the man-nature relationship. More science and more technology are not going to get us out of our present ecological crisis until we find a new religion, or rethink our old one...” (p.24, Lynn White Jr.).

“No new set of basic values has been accepted in our society to displace those of Christianity. Hence we shall continue to have a worsening ecologic crisis until we reject the Christian axiom that nature has no reason for existence save to serve man.” (p.25, Lynn White Jr.).

“Both our present science and our present technology are so tainted with orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature that no solution for our ecologic crisis can be expected from them alone. Since the roots of our trouble are so largely religious, the remedy must also be essentially religious, whether we call it that or not. We must rethink and refeel our nature and destiny.” (p.26, Lynn White Jr.).

“What was it that enabled Eskimo shamen, their minds a product of the taiga, tundra, and sea ice, to travel on spirit journeys under the ocean and to talk with the fishes and the potent beings who lived on the bottom? How did the shamen develop the hypnotic power they employed in their séances? What can we learn from the shamen who survive about thought transference and ESP? The answers are in the arctic wilderness still left to us.

Wilderness is a bench mark, a touchstone... New perspectives come out of the wilderness. Jesus Zoroaster, Moses, and Mohammed went to the wilderness and came back with messages... This handbook, and the teach-in it serves, have their beginnings in wilderness.” (p. 148, Kenneth Brower).

On Population:

“Freedom to breed is intolerable.” (p.41, Garrett Hardin).

“No technical solution can rescue us from the misery of overpopulation. Freedom to breed will bring ruin to all... The only way we can preserve and nature other and more precious freedoms is by relinquishing the freedom to breed.” (p.49, Garrett Hardin).

“We can control our population and thus decrease our per capita use of power. Population may be stabilized, and use of power reduced to what is necessary for a high quality of life. But population control will take time.” (p.67, Garrett De Bell).

“...it is sinful for anybody to have more than two children. It has long since become glaringly evident that unless the earth’s cancerous growth of population can be halted, all other problems – poverty, war, racial strife, uninhabitable cities, and the rest – are beyond solution.” (p.139, John Fischer).

“Stabilizing the U.S. population should be declared a national policy. Immediate steps should be taken to: 1. Legalize voluntary abortion and sterilization and provide these services free. 2. Remove all restrictions on the provision of birth control information and devices; provide these services free to all, including minors. 3. Make sex education available to all appropriate levels, stressing birth control practices and the need to stabilize the population...” (pp.317-318, Keith Murray).

“Explore other social structures and marriage forms, such as group marriage and polyandrous marriage, which provide family life but may produce less children. Share the pleasure

of raising children widely, so that all need not directly reproduce to enter into this basic human experience. We must hope that no one woman would give birth to more than one child.” (p.324, *Four Changes* section)

On Government:

“Looking beyond our borders, our students will be encouraged to ask even harder questions. Are nation-states actually feasible, now that they have the power to destroy each other in a single afternoon? Can we agree on something else to take their place, before the balance of terror becomes unstable? What price would most people be willing to pay for a more durable kind of human organization – more taxes, giving up national flags, perhaps the sacrifice of some of our hard-won liberties?” (p. 145, John Fisher)

On Global Transformation:

“Nothing short of total transformation will do much good. What we envision is a planet on which the human population lives harmoniously and dynamically by employing a sophisticated and unobtrusive technology in a world environment which is ‘left natural’... Cultural and individual pluralism, unified by a type of world tribal council.” (p.330, *Four Changes* section)

“It seems evident that there are throughout the world certain social and religious forces which have worked through history toward an ecologically and culturally enlightened state of affairs. Let these be encouraged: Gnostics, hip Marxists, Teilhard de Chardin Catholics, Druids, Taoists, Biologists, Witches, Yogins, Bhikkus, Quakers, Sufis, Tibetans, Zens, Shamans, Bushmen, American Indians, Polynesians, Anarchists, Alchemists...the list

is long. All primitive cultures, all communal and ashram movements. Since it doesn't seem practical or even desirable to think that direct bloody force will achieve much, it would be best to consider this a continuing 'revolution of consciousness' which will be won not by guns but by seizing the key images, myths, archetypes, eschatologies, and ecstasies so that life won't seem worth living unless one's on the transforming energy's side." (p.331, *Four Changes*)

The messages emanating from *The Environmental Handbook* are clear. In order to save the world, we need to drastically change our present religious, political, and social structures. We need to re-shape society towards a New Age world-view where nature supersedes all, where political structures morph into a type of ecological communism, where the cancer of human growth undergoes radical surgery, and where education and religion are indelibly altered to serve Mother Earth.

But are all Earth Day programs this radical? Granted, many Earth Day activities are simply conservation measures: collecting litter from roadsides, planting trees, and cleaning streams. And there's nothing inherently wrong with these works. It's the philosophical roots and the deeper ideological aspects, however, which are a cause for concern. With this in mind, it's not surprising that many of our modern E-Day practices aim to shift our social consciousness away from Western/Christian foundations. As the original April 22 *Environmental Handbook* demonstrated, neo-pagan and nebulous pluralistic approaches are the spiritual substitutes needed to replace the "orthodox Christian arrogance toward nature"

Today, a variety of spiritually earth-centric and interfaith approaches to serving Earth are proclaimed. From Mother Earth rituals to multi-faith Sunrise services, from interfaith Earth gatherings to Spring meditations and "Earth Prayers" – such as the one suggested below,

"Mother, Father, God, Universal Power

Remind us daily of the sanctity of all life.

Touch our hearts with the glorious oneness of all creation

As we strive to respect all the living beings on this planet.

Penetrate our souls with the beauty of this earth,

As we attune ourselves to the rhythm and flow of the seasons.

Awaken our minds with the knowledge to achieve a world in perfect harmony

And grant us the wisdom to realize that we can have heaven on earth."⁶

Unfortunately, many Christian congregations across North America have jumped on the bandwagon of E-Day religious transformation – some out of naivety, others with full consent and complicity. One example is San Francisco's Grace Cathedral. During the 2001 Earth Day, Grace held an interfaith song-celebration for the planet.

"The music will be an eclectic blend of the world's musical traditions. Tibetan temple bells will blend with the Cathedral Organ. Vocal performances will range from Native American and Muslim Chants to Spirituals and Choral canticles. Representatives from a diverse range of religious paths will participate in the festivities, including Native American, Islamic, Hindu, Jewish, Pagan, and Christian."⁷

Over the years Grace Cathedral has been a beacon for radical religious transformation, and has done much work to promote a new global-spiritual model, such as helping to birth the United Reli-

gions Initiative [Note: watch upcoming issues of Forcing Change for more on the URI and Grace].

While this San Francisco church is one example of Earth Day collusion at the most fundamental level, many other congregations are engaged in E-Day activities without understanding the actual motive behind this Earth holiday. Below is a small sampling of congregational involvement for 2007. Note: the purpose of this short list is not to make a judgment call on the churches mentioned – as the author of this report does not know the individual motives underscoring each congregation – but it is meant to draw attention to the fact that Christian churches are actively participating in an event that ultimately seeks to reject and replace “the Christian axiom.”

- Bloomingdale Mennonite Church, Kitchener-Waterloo, Ontario: Celebrate Earth Day. “Refreshments at 12:15 p.m., followed by a showing of *An Inconvenient Truth* at 1 p.m. Freewill offering to support Mennonite Central Committee sand dam projects in Kenya.”

- Prince of Peace (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), Saratogo, CA: Earth Day Festival – “Let it Begin with Me.” With a showing of Al Gore’s global warming video *An Inconvenient Truth* and Bill Moyer’s film, *Is God Green?*

- St. Luke Lutheran Church, Beckley, WV: “Our worship on Sunday, April 22nd will focus on Awakening to God’s call to Earthkeeping, with prayers, sermon and hymns celebrating God’s creation.”

- Culver Palms United Methodist Church, Culver City, CA: Earth Day service and a wide range of environmental activities for the month of April, including Al Gore’s *An Inconvenient Truth*.

- Seattle First Baptist, Seattle, WA: “Earth Day; How the Spirit is weaving new compassion for the earth and its care; learning perhaps

from the Duwamish and the harmony they once had with our environs. Over the past three years, we’ve signed the Earth Charter and joined Greening Congregations, sponsored a section of Broadway and Thornton Creek and urged members to sponsor bus stop litter cans, all evidences of the Spirit weaving a new earth through us.”

Without doubt the popularity and influence of Earth Day has permeated our social systems – from schools to governments, from corporations to community functions.

Ironically, what originally started as a movement meant to radically shift school children and youth away from foundational Christian positions has now been embraced by churches far-and-wide. Moreover, by hosting and supporting Earth-centric interfaith services, churches actually contribute to the degeneration of the fundamental tenets of Biblical Christianity – primarily in countering Jesus’ exclusive salvation statement; “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6).

This firm position doesn’t bode well in our globally oriented culture. Marcus Braybrooke, president of the World Congress of Faiths tells us,



“The pluralist interfaith vision....assumes the possibility of those of different faiths respecting each other and affirming together certain basic moral values. It open out also the possibility of theology becoming an inter-religious discipline and also the possibility of people of one faith absorbing into their spiritual life practices from another faith.

In my view, the interfaith vision is in tune with the character of the emerging post-modern global society. Indeed it offers the hope of a world civilization based on spiritual values, whereas the fundamentalist approach is likely only to lead to confrontation and conflict.”⁸

This remark by Braybrooke dovetails with the first Earth Day *Environmental Handbook*: we need a new set of global values – a new religious system for the planet.

All of this should certainly give Christians reason to pause and reflect. Yes, Christians too must wisely use our natural resources, as should all others. But in pursuing Earth Day activities under a spiritually pluralistic banner, we run the real risk of supporting the heart and soul of the Earth Day program: a re-forging of religion into a globally accepted faith – one where the “Christian axiom” is considered a cancer that must be removed.

“For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served created things rather than the Creator-who is forever praised.” —

Romans 1:21-25 **FC**

Endnotes:

¹ EarthDayNetwork [the global coordinating organization for Earth Day], “About Earth Day Network,” www.earthday.org/about/default.aspx Accessed April 11, 2007.

² Earth Day Canada FAQ, www.earthday.ca/pub/resources/faqs.php. Economic support for the Earth Day Canada organization comes from a wide array of sponsors, such as Environment Canada (government), The Discovery Channel, Panasonic Canada, Sony, and a host of other groups, including Canada’s largest banking institutions.

³ John Kerry’s blog site and responses, http://blog.johnkerry.com/2007/04/please_take_care_of_spaceship.html.

⁴ Senator Gaylord Nelson, “How the First Earth Day Came About,” *EnviroLink*, [<http://earthday.envirolink.org/history.html>]. Accessed April 11, 2007.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Jo Poore, Earth Prayer, *Celebrations of Spring*, Electronic Newsletter, April 15, 2004, www.faith-commongood.net/news/letter.asp?ID=1

⁷ Grace Cathedral news release, “A Song of Creation: An Interfaith Earth Day Celebration at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco,” www.ewire.com/display.cfm/Wire_ID/175

⁸ Marcus Braybrooke, *Faith and Interfaith in a Global Age* (CoNexus, 1998), p.51.



America's Stonehenge: Monument for a New World

By Carl Teichrib

On the highest point in Elbert county in north-eastern Georgia stands an unusual monument. Tucked into the heart of America's granite country, the "Georgia Guidestones" are located approximately 9 miles north of the town of Elberton. Considered by many as America's "Stonehenge," this intimidating monument stands over nineteen feet high and contains 951 cubic feet of granite. The Guidestones are comprised of four upright slabs, one center stone resembling a squared pillar (called the Gnomon stone), a flat capstone, and five base pieces. Each of the four upright stones weighs 42,437 lbs., and the combined weight of the monument is approximately 119 tons.

Overwhelming in size, its stated purpose is more blatant yet. Inscribed within the stones are ten new commandments for humanity – a vision of earth servitude and New Age philosophy. Chiselled within the edges of the upper capstone is a single message written in four languages – Sanskrit, Egyptian Hieroglyphics, Babylonian Cuneiform, and Classical Greek: "Let these be Guidestones to an Age of Reason." And on the eight sides of the four monolithic upright stones, eight languages – English, Russian, Hebrew, Arabic, Hindi, Chinese, Spanish, and Swahili – proclaim the new ten commandments.

1. Maintain humanity under 500,000,000 in perpetual balance with nature.
2. Guide reproduction wisely – improving fitness and diversity.
3. Unite humanity with a living new language.

4. Rule Passion – Faith – Tradition – and all things with tempered reason.

5. Protect people and nations with fair laws and just courts.

6. Let all nations rule internally resolving external disputes in a world court.

7. Avoid petty laws and useless officials.

8. Balance personal rights with social duties.

9. Prize truth – beauty – love – seeking harmony with the infinite.

10. Be not a cancer on the earth – Leave room for nature – Leave room for nature.

The meaning of the commandments is simple to understand,

1. We must massively reduce the earth's population in harmony with Mother Earth.

2. We must manage the remaining people's ability to reproduce, creating a pseudo-evolutionary system of "survival of the fittest." It's a call for global eugenics.

3. The destruction of cultures and identities to obtain a new planetary loyalty. This is reminiscent of the Biblical account of the Tower of Babel. Remember what happened? Mankind, united under a single language, sought to build a monument celebrating humanity's pride – a type of Temple to Man.

4. Tolerance must rule, even over truth.

5. All humanity must come under a system of international law. International law means world management via a supranational authority.

6. Each nation is accountable to the dictates of a world-law authority. Sovereignty, in its presently understood form, would no longer exist.

7. ...one small ray of common sense!

8. Mankind will be subject to the planetary ideal of social responsibility; this is the actual outcome of what it means to be a “global citizen.”

9. Those alive in this new order are to see deity in all things – plants, rocks, animals, space, water, fire, air, and people. The idea is simple: God is in all because God is all – therefore you too are God.

10. Humanity must recognize its secondary place in “creation.” Nature, embodied as the foundational deity, must come first.

Even the positions of the stones play a role in displaying this mystical/political message. According to a Georgia Guidestones fact sheet distributed in Elberton, the four upright blocks are “oriented to the limits of the migration of the moon during the course of the year.” Drilled through the center pillar is an eye-level, oblique hole going north to south through the Gnomon stone “so that the North Star is always visible, symbolizing constancy and orientation with the forces of nature.” A slot is also cut through the Gnomon stone, aligning with the rising sun at the Winter and Summer Solstices. More astronomical features are built into the monument.

The history of the monument is shrouded in mystery. Unveiled on March 22, 1980, the modern day Stonehenge was financed by a “small group of loyal Americans living outside Georgia.”¹ This group, through a spokesman calling himself “Mr. Christian” (apparently because he was a Christian), contacted Wyatt C. Martin, President of

the Granite City Bank. Through Martin, Elberton Granite Finishing Company, with their “Pyramid Blue Granite” was contracted to do the work. President of the company, Joe H. Fendley, took a personal interest in the project.

According to a fact sheet from the Elberton Granite Association, Martin contacted Joe Fendley and told him the funds were in an escrow account and that he could begin building. Martin also promised “that when the project was completed, he would deliver his file on the affair to the anonymous sponsors and that the secret would never be known.”

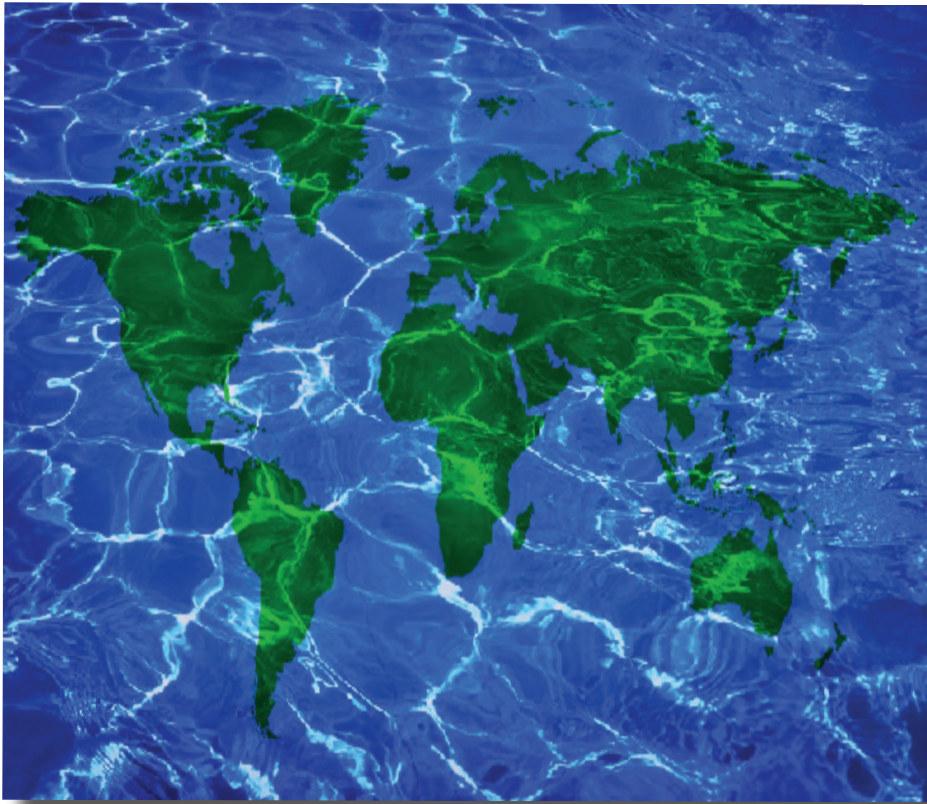
Today, from Elberton, Georgia, you can drive the short trip up Highway 77 and view the monument for yourself. If you do go, don’t be surprised to find that you’re not the only one at the site. Since its establishment the monument has become a gathering place for New Agers, occultist, and those who are simply curious. People go to meditate, contemplate its message, and align themselves with the forces of nature – America’s Stonehenge has become a sacred site in this era of alternative spiritual experiences.

All of this should remind the discerning Christian of Romans 1:21. “Although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”



Endnotes:

¹ *The Georgia Guidestones: Elberton’s Most Unusual Granite Monument – Message and Mystery for Mankind*, fact sheet. No date. Obtained while in Elberton, Georgia. A copy of this document, in PDF, is available in the membership section of forcingchange.org. **FC**



Quotes From the Environmental Movement

The following quotes demonstrate some of the more radical approaches in the environmental movement. Those making the statements, however, are not on the fringes of the movement. Rather, they constitute some of the core individuals who have promoted deep ecology.

Note: all quotes are sourced immediately after the excerpt.

1. "It's time to get angry, to cry, to let rage flow at what the human cancer is doing to Mother Earth, to be uncompromising." — David Foreman [founder of Earth First!], "Earth First!," *Earth Ethics: Introductory Readings on Animal Rights and Environmental Ethics* (Prentice Hall, 2000, edited James P. Sterba), p.349.
2. "I got the impression that instead of going out to shoot birds, I should go out and shoot the kids who shoot birds." — Paul Watson [founder of Greenpeace], as quoted by Dixy Lee Ray in *Trashing the Planet* (Regnery Gateway, 1990), p.166.
3. "We have become a plague upon ourselves and upon the Earth... Until such time as Homo Sapiens should decide to rejoin nature, some of us can only hope for the right virus to come along." David Graber [research biologist], as quoted by Dr. Michael S. Coffman in *Saviors of the Earth?* (Northfield Publishing, 1994), p.92.

4. "If I could be reincarnated, I would return as a killer virus to lower human population levels." Prince Phillip, as quoted in *FrontPage Magazine*, November 15, 2001.

5. "We, in the Green movement, aspire to a cultural model in which the killing of a forest will be considered more contemptible and more criminal than the sale of 6-year-old children to Asian brothels." — Carl Amery [West German Green Party], as quoted by Dixy Lee Ray in *Trashing the Planet* (Regnery Gateway, 1990), p.169.

6. "We have to completely revise our western understanding of what it is to be an inhabitant of the planet Earth, our human story and the western story... We must pass from a human-centred to an earth-centred sense of reality and value." — Budd Hall and Edmond Sullivan, contributing authors to the International Institute for Sustainable Development, "Transformative Education and Environmental Action in the Ecozoic Era," *Empowerment for Sustainable Development: Toward Operational Strategies* (Zed Books/IISD, 1995), p.102.

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