

Jeremy Rifkin: How the Club of Rome is penetrating evangelical Christianity

by Kathleen Klenetsky

Does God want millions of people to die? Does He want man, whom He created in his image, to be reduced to living at the level of a beast of burden? Did He create a limited universe, only to let it run down, and ultimately self-destruct, with no hope of salvation?

To any true adherent of the Judeo-Christian tradition, the answer to these questions would be a resounding no. But these blatantly pagan ideas are spreading like the plague through much of the evangelical Christian movement in the United States, thanks in large part to the work of Jeremy Rifkin.

Rifkin is a radical Malthusian and ultra-leftist who has worked closely with the Institute for Policy Studies, the Club of Rome, and many other Establishment institutions which the Christian movement rightly despises.

Educated at the Wharton School—one of the centers for depopulation, deurbanization, and other genocidal schemes, Rifkin persistently opposes industrialism, capitalism, and modern agriculture. He claims that science is the cause of cancer, and praises those who revolt against reason and rationality. He has led the fight against genetic engineering, denying to millions the medical and other benefits it offers.

His 1980 book, *Entropy*, has been lauded by “Aquarian Conspiracy” architect Willis Harman, who called its thesis “the most important issue before industrial society today.”

His hatred of the United States is as palpable as any KGB agent's: He helped mastermind the anti-Vietnam War movement of the 1960s, organizing a major anti-war rally in New York in 1967, and later staged a mock war-crimes trial against the United States, modeled on those sponsored by one of his idols, Bertrand Russell. He opposes the MX, and the Strategic Defense Initiative, and claims that “the energy drained from society by the military causes tremendous social dislocation. . . . Every dollar spent on national defense only generates greater global tension.” Earlier this year, he filed a law suit which stopped the U.S. Army from constructing a new chemical-biological warfare facility at Dugway, Utah, thus impeding U.S. attempts to catch-up with Soviet capabilities in this area.

Yet, despite this record, Rifkin has been able to penetrate conservative Christian circles with his vision of a “new age” based on a dramatic drop in the standard of living; a shift from industrialism to the most primitive, back-breaking kinds

of labor; the destruction of U.S. defenses; and the elimination of the nation-state.

Rifkin has operated primarily through the left-wing fringes of the Christian evangelical movement, through such groups as the Sojourners, led by ex-SDS member Jim Wallis, and Rev. John Bernbaum's Christian College Consortium. But his influence isn't limited to these layers. Pat Robertson, a leading, allegedly conservative television evangelist, who operates the multi-million dollar Christian Broadcasting Network, has featured Rifkin as a guest on his “700 Club” talk show, and has publicly endorsed Rifkin's economic thinking, as expressed in *Entropy*—the same book Aquarian Conspirator Willis Harman praised. Indeed, Robertson has parroted Rifkin's line on key issues, insisting that U.S. basic industry is a “dinosaur,” and shouldn't be saved. Robertson's announcement that he may run for the Republican presidential nomination raises serious questions about how much of Rifkin's world view he has actually adopted.

In 1983, Rifkin made his growing influence in religious circles felt when he got over 60 American religious leaders—ranging from Moral Majority head Rev. Jerry Falwell to Trilateral Commission member Fr. Theodore Hesburgh—to endorse a “Germline Resolution,” calling for a ban on genetic engineering.

Rifkin's penetration of the evangelical community is an integral element of a longer-term gameplan, devised by such high-level oligarchical institutions as Venice's Cini Foundation and Stanford Research Institute, to use religion to induce a cultural paradigm shift in the American people. Well aware that the deepening economic and moral crisis would increasingly push people toward irrational religious beliefs out of frustration and despair, Rifkin and his deployers decided to manipulate this heightened sense of hopelessness and loss of faith in existing institutions, into a revolt against Western civilization—similar to the way Khomeini was used to return Iran to barbarism:

The goal of this operation is to replace the Augustinian basis of Western civilization—the notion that man is made in God's image, and must participate in God's continuing creation—with the obscene and culturally pessimistic conception of man as no better than a tree or a rock. Once the citizenry assimilates this degraded self-conception, imposing a New Dark Ages becomes much easier.

Rifkin isn't coy about his goals. In one book after another, he boasts about his commitment to abolishing the fundamental theological and cultural tenets which have enabled the Western world to uplift its citizens to unparalleled levels of cultural and economic well-being.

In his latest publication, *Declaration of a Heretic*, Rifkin lavishes praise on the "conspirators" in the movement to construct a "new world view." These "modern heretics"—he clearly considers himself one—are "preparing to do battle against what is certainly a formidable foe. Their enemy is the consciousness of contemporary Western civilization. . . . Their effort is truly monumental redirect the very consciousness of the human species. . . . Their mission is to redefine our approach to knowledge, redirect our relationship to technology, reformulate our ideas about the nature of economic activity and re-establish a new framework for achieving security. Their goal, in short, is to disarm the world view that has given rise to the nuclear bomb and genetic engineering, and to lead the species back to the gates of Paradise by way of a new and largely unexplored route."

In his 1979 book, *The Emerging Order: God in the Age of Scarcity*, Rifkin details exactly how the evangelical movement could be used to usher in this new age: "At this very moment a spectacular change in Christian theology is taking place. The ramifications are extraordinary. . . . The Protestant work ethic that has dominated the past 600 years of the age of growth could well be replaced by a new Protestant conservation ethic, ready-made for the new age of scarcity the world is moving into."

Rifkin expresses great optimism that, were the new evangelicals to unite with the Charismatic movement, America "could experience a third great awakening," which could shift the entire population away from "material values," and make it more open to accepting a New Dark Age.

Rifkin euphemistically refers to this descent into hell as a "steady-state society," although he does accurately describe at least some of its consequences. "The low-entropy age we are moving into will require a great reduction in world population," he writes. "In the pre-industrial solar age, the carrying capacity of the world, in terms of human beings, was only 1 billion. Even at that, the world's resources were being severely strained. . . . As we have seen, the finite limit of our planet's resources makes it impossible that the energy flow of the past 200 years can long continue. It is essential that the world begin with renewed vigor a serious program aimed at reducing the earth's population in the decades to come. The world must once again move back toward a sustainable, Solar Age population."

This will be achieved through "a full internalization of the entropy paradigm, so that we voluntarily limit our population by exercising restraint in our individual desires to have children. Once we fully comprehend that each child we bring into the world places a burden on succeeding generations by

denying them their own share of resources to sustain their own lives, then we can develop a set of values that will lead to a humane program of population control."

This differs not one whit from the central tenet of the Gnostic heresy, which claimed that since the material world was evil, having children simply created more evil.

Rifkin writes elsewhere: "The Solar Age will require a greater conformity to the ancient rhythms of life. While small, appropriate technology relying on very limited stocks of non-renewable energy will still be used where absolutely essential, the bulk of the transforming work will revert back to human and animal labor as it has in every other period of history before the Industrial Age."

Putting limits on God

Rifkin premises his call for a "steady-state" society on the totally incompetent notion that the second law of thermodynamics is the "supreme law" of the universe. This "Entropy Law," writes Rifkin, "tells us that every time available energy is used up, it creates greater disorder somewhere in the surrounding environment. The massive flow-through of energy in modern industrial society is creating massive disorder in the world we live in. The faster we streamline our technology, the faster we speed up the transforming process, the faster available energy is dissipated, the more the disorder mounts."

Man's refusal to accept this, his insistence on trying to improve nature and to introduce new technology, violate this "supreme law," Rifkin contends.

To sell this wretched anti-science to conservative and fundamentalist Christians, Rifkin attempts to invoke God's authority: "Finally, what God has created is fixed," he writes in *The Emerging Order*. "The Lord created the world and everything in it. . . . Anything that undermines the 'fixed' purpose and order that God has given to the natural world is also sinful and an act of rebellion. . . ."

This claptrap is not only blasphemous—just who does Rifkin think he is to tell the infinitely creative God that His world is "fixed"—it is also a direct violation of natural law, as expressed most eloquently in God's injunction to man, in the *Book of Genesis*, to "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing. . . ."

It is no surprise that Rifkin and his friends in the Club of Rome have launched a campaign to "reinterpret" this pivotal Biblical passage. Claiming that the traditional interpretation of *Genesis*, which places man above the rest of creation, is "a mistake in Christian doctrine," Rifkin contends that it must be replaced by the notion of "stewardship." This, he gloats, would allow man to forge a new "conservation covenant" with God, which would remove the last vestiges of resistance to the return to pagan barbarism which is the real meaning of Rifkin's New Age.