

exist." The organizers are seeking signatures widely in the world scientific community.

As the campaigns of Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, and the World Wide Fund for Nature help to make clear, the countries that represent the biggest threat to Eco-92 are Asian countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia, and of course the giants India and China. Malaysia is coordinating plans for an alternate summit of more than 40 countries. The Group of 77 developing sector countries are also planning a coordination effort, as is the six-nation grouping ASEAN to which Indonesia and Malaysia belong.

'Common Strategy' for UNCED

South Center report means slow suicide

by Dana S. Scanlon

The Geneva-based South Center, headed by the former President of Tanzania, Dr. Julius Nyerere, has issued a special report on the upcoming United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) which is intended to provide the framework for a common strategy among developing sector nations for that conference, commonly known as Eco-92, which is set to take place in June in Rio de Janeiro. But while the intentions of many of those participating in the South Center's working group on UNCED are beyond reproach, its end product unfortunately is not.

The report, which resulted from the South Center's September 1991 working group, is entitled "Environment and Development: Towards a Common Strategy for the South in the UNCED Negotiations and Beyond." From the very first few paragraphs, it is clear that the South Center accepts the parameters, most of the agenda and the language of the original Brundtland Commission, whose book-length report *Our Common Future* has laid the foundation for UNCED. At the UNCED conference, a host of unscientific and unfounded disaster theories are to be used to force nations—from the North as well as the South—to give up their national sovereignty, to agree to put limitations on their economic development, to accede to the notion that population growth is an evil to be combatted in the name of preserving the environment, and to agree to the creation of some (presumably green-helmeted) police force deployed by the United Nations to ensure respect for those agreements. *There is absolutely nothing to be gained, for any nation, but particularly those of the developing sector, in participating in or giving any*

credibility to these plans.

To follow the path laid out in the "Common Strategy" document would be to choose slow death, versus the quick death proposed by some environmental extremists and financial institutions. And since it would be self-imposed, it would be to choose suicide.

Attack on sovereignty, the nation-state

Before examining the South Center's report in some detail, it is useful to say a few words about the Brundtland Commission, the predecessor group that led to UNCED. Headed by former Norwegian Prime Minister Mrs. Gro Harlem Brundtland, the World Commission on Environment and Development *also* proposed a link between environment and development. What the Brundtland Commission had in mind is perhaps best ascertained by looking at what organizations with the avowed purpose of implementing the commission's recommendations had to say about their goals.

One such organization is the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (usually known as IUCN), based in Gland, Switzerland. According to the IUCN: "The present global interdependence between states requires recognizing international law as a system within which states and other actors conduct their affairs, rather than as a mediating technique between sovereign entities, each one an island in itself. This 'system approach' regards states as participators in a system, one of whose objectives is the sustainable management of the Earth's resources. This new perspective has immense consequences, not least in the areas of sovereignty."

The same themes have been developed by Sir Shridath "Sonny" Ramphal, former secretary general of the British Commonwealth, also a member of the Brundtland Commission. In a Cambridge, U.K. speech on Jan. 24, 1989, Ramphal called for the abolition of the modern nation-state, and the creation of a one-world "green" police agency.¹

According to Ramphal: "Underlying the Brundtland Commission's message of a 'common future' was the premise that we must think of our planet not only as a world of many states, but also as the state of our one world. That we must be ready to nurture tomorrow's concepts of global governance, not have them stifled at birth by yesterday's notions of national sovereignty; that human survival may not be secured save by the reach of enforceable law across environmentally invisible frontiers."

Keeping those words in mind, let us turn to the South Center's recommendations.

Bad politics and bad science

The South Center's report proposes that UNCED "could yield results that the developing countries have been seeking for some time. . . . The North is seeking environmental concessions from the South, and . . . the South can make such concessions in return for firm commitments by the North to

restructure global economic relations." Among the measures the South is seeking is urgently needed debt relief.

There is another name for this "give and take": It is called exchanging debt for nature. Already, several agreements have been made in which heavily indebted nations buy back a small part of their foreign debts by granting international environmentalist agencies the right to "protect the environment" in part of their national territories. So far, the amount of debt and land "swapped" in these arrangements, has been relatively small. But, the political impact of these pilot projects has contributed to a climate for the reshaping of international relations. Brazil, with its vast Amazon forest and mineral reserves, has been a favorite target of these schemes.

Among the "fundamental strategic objectives" for the South at the Eco-92 conference, the South Center suggests ensuring "that the South has adequate 'environmental space' for its future development." All well and good, but it is difficult to see why this has to be negotiated when that "environmental space" already exists in the form of national borders.

Under this heading of "environmental space" we are told that "the Earth's capacity to absorb and render harmless the various gases and other substances that are generated by modern society . . . is being exceeded." Despite "unavoidable scientific uncertainties . . . it is coming to be generally realized that urgent measures need to be taken to counter harmful trends."

Further, the South "must stand firm on the principle that the development of the South can in no way be compromised by the North's preemption of the global environment space. . . . The accumulation of gases in the atmosphere has been almost entirely due to past activities in the North. Hence it is the North, and not the South, that must assume the burden of global environmental adjustment."

This is bad politics and bad science. Bad politics because the surest way to completely destroy the economies of the developing sector nations is to halt development on the rest of the planet. Bad science because it rests on the unscientific hoax that men and industry, which they are uniquely capable of creating, are bad and dirty, and that nature is good and clean.

All the important "greenhouse gases" are produced in nature, as well as by humans. Perhaps the largest source of greenhouse gas might be termites, whose digestive activity is responsible for about 50 billion tons of CO₂ annually. This is ten times more than the present world production of CO₂ from burning fossil fuel.

As for the need to implement "urgent measures" to counter "harmful trends," the much-touted global warming trend that this refers to doesn't exist.²

According to Dr. Hugh W. Ellsaesser, an atmospheric scientist with Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the mean global temperature has been warming since roughly 1750, and has warmed about 0.5° Celsius since 1881, a year



United Nations/Ray Writin

The South Center falsely claims that "the accumulation of gases in the atmosphere has been almost entirely due to past activities in the North," and the center advocates a redistribution of the "right to pollute." Shown here is the collection of cow dung in India. Inset: Maurice Strong, organizer for Eco-92.



United Nations/Y. Nagata

in which the temperature was below normal. Most of the warming occurred before the bulk of man-made CO₂ was added to the atmosphere.³ There have been at least three cyclic warmings and coolings in the past 10,000 years. This very slight warming of 0.5°C is actually part of the recovery from the so-called Little Ice Age that ended 350 years ago. Until recently—perhaps pre-dating the invention of the environmentalist—periods warmer than usual were called climatic optima, not climatic catastrophes.

Transferable emissions rights

The dangerous direction this acceptance of the global warming hoax can take shows up when the South Center report delves into the proposed Convention on Climate Change. Nowhere are the dangers of a one-world policing agency more apparent than when the South Center states that this convention "should seek to regulate the use of the atmosphere on an equitable basis." Further on we read: "The North's use of this global resource—the atmosphere—is far above its 'per capita entitlement.' "

The report calls for "acceptance of the principle of per

country emission entitlements or quotas based on an equal distribution of emission rights among the world's inhabitants; reduction of emissions, over an agreed period of time, in line with a country's entitlement; creation of global institutional arrangements providing for possible inter-country trade in emission rights. . . ."

It is almost impossible to describe the Orwellian scenario that acceptance of such malthusian principles would create. Will we need to ask permission from some global institution to breathe the air around us? And what if this global institution decides that the developing sector is producing too many people, thus presenting a danger to the atmosphere? Is it really in the interests of the starving people of Africa and other parts of the world, that Americans change their "lifestyle" and stop driving cars?

The malthusian movement has always taken up the demand for "redistribution" of existing wealth, instead of the creation of new and more wealth. But this nightmare goes one step further: We are now to have a redistribution of the right to "pollute."

The only ones who gain from this scenario are the New Age environmentalists, and the keepers of the flame of the Big Lie they have jointly propagated.

The Climate Convention should simply be voted down—not negotiated, or in any way taken as a proposition that has anything positive to offer. So should the equally absurd Convention on Biodiversity.

On the latter proposal, the South Center seems to have a healthy skepticism about what is planned, since it warns that this biodiversity convention would "turn national resources of the South into a global commons." It correctly points out that "tropical and other forests which contain large numbers of plant and animal species are national resources over which the sovereignty of nation-states has been expressly acknowledged."

The 'peace dividend'

The report correctly argues that poverty and lack of development is one of the principal causes of environmental degradation. A United Nations study has documented that 83% of trees cut down are used as firewood. Many Central African nations, for example, obtain more than 90% of their energy from burning firewood. Another sizeable amount of deforestation is the result of slash-and-burn primitive agriculture. Logging, a favorite target of the environmentalists, accounts for only 18% of deforestation. The solution to deforestation lies clearly in advanced energy production, including nuclear energy, and in modern agricultural production methods—exactly the opposite of the "sustainable development" proposals of the environmentalists.

Although the South Center report makes repeated references to the South's need to have access to technology on concessional terms, nowhere does the report attempt to define a program for economic development that would serve the

needs of the billions of people who inhabit its nations. One could have hoped for more on that score, especially with the participation in the Center's working group of nuclear energy pioneers as Brazil's Paulo Nogueira Batista. Putting developing sector access to nuclear energy, which is clean, cheap and safe, on the agenda would be one way to blow up the UNCED process and create a litmus test that would quickly separate those who are serious about economic development from those who are simply paying lip service to it in the form of promoting what they like to call "sustainable development."

"Common Strategy" also takes up a favorite theory promoted by genocidalists and misguided pacifists alike: That, especially with the breakup of the Soviet Union, massive disarmament can take place, developing sector armies can be dismantled, and the funds re-channeled into "peaceful" projects. Former World Bank chairman Robert McNamara has been championing this effort, particularly targeting the developing sector nations.

If the high-technology military sectors were to be dismantled, as these fellows propose, it would bring down the entire world's level of scientific and technological capability at a time when they are most desperately needed. Certain functions can and should be converted, for example, for the high-technology end of infrastructure development such as high-speed rails and magnetic levitation transportation.

The developing sector countries should unilaterally reject the idea of negotiating on issues that are non-negotiable. It matters not whether some portion of "public opinion" in the North, as shaped by the American and European news media, will see this as a lack of "concern" by developing countries about the Earth.

What is truly in the interests of the developing sector nations is to fight for a global economic recovery program. Instead of offering to exchange debt for environmental protection measures, the developing sector's leaders must state the obvious: The debt cannot be paid by sucking the lifeblood out of their people. Then, in exchange for debt moratorium, reorganizing the international financial and credit system, and building infrastructure and industry in the developing sector, the South can "offer" the unemployed workers of the North skilled jobs producing many of the things that are going to be required to sustain the worldwide economic boom.⁴

Notes

1. *EIR Special Report* "The 'Greenhouse Effect' Hoax: A World Federalist Plot," 1989.
2. "Global Warming, The Rest of the Story," by Gerd R. Weber, *EIR*, Jan. 10, 17, and 24, 1992.
3. "Setting the 10,000-Year Climate Record Straight," by Dr. Hugh W. Ellsaesser, *21st Century Science & Technology*, Winter 1991.
4. "For a True Fourth U.N. Development Decade, A Concrete Solution to the World Economic Breakdown Crisis," Schiller Institute Discussion Paper for the 46th Regular Session of the U.N. General Assembly, September-October 1991.