

Methyl bromide ban defeated at Copenhagen conference

by Rogelio A. Maduro

The ecological-fascist drive to ban more chemicals necessary to human life suffered a setback in Copenhagen, Denmark as representatives of 87 countries met Nov. 17-25 to update the regulations promulgated by the 1987 Montreal Protocol which set phase-out dates for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other allegedly ozone-depleting substances. Although the eco-fascists did achieve a large portion of their agenda during the meeting, they failed to implement a sought-for ban against the important pesticide and fumigant methyl bromide, and against hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), which serve as substitute refrigerant gases, among other uses.

The delegates refused to implement a ban on all production of methyl bromide by 1995, which was the major plank of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator William K. Reilly. Because of fierce opposition, Reilly had to settle for an agreement to freeze production at 1991 levels by 1995. The plan to ban all HCFCs by the year 2000 also fell through, and the greenies had to settle for a ban by 2020. Though neither delayed ban is in any way sane, it does show that resistance is mounting.

Two major developments at the conference helped to derail the plans of the eco-fascists. The first was the release of a resolution drafted by world-famous volcanologist and former minister of France Haroun Tazieff, which was signed by more than 100 scientists from 12 nations. The resolution, entitled "Seven Good Reasons to Reverse the Montreal Protocol," exposed the pseudo-science fraud of the ozone depletion theory. Shortly before the meeting began, a folder with the resolution and other materials was put at the place setting of each delegation, and was the first item opened by the delegates. Denmark's leading daily, *Berlingske Tidende*, covered the Tazieff resolution in a front-page story, as did the Paris daily *Le Figaro*.

The second intervention occurred during the conference when Israel and several southern European nations joined with Third World agricultural producers to oppose the ban on methyl bromide. The proposed ban on this chemical was fought fiercely by Israel and Kenya, with backing by other users, including France, Italy, Spain, and Greece. Observers noted that there was a clear "North-South" fight being waged at the conference. There was no consensus on any replacements for CFCs, and most Third World countries were opposed to this ban as well.

The eco-fascists drafted the rules of the protocol in such a way that it only requires the signature of 20 countries to impose a ban enforceable on all countries. It was not surprising, therefore, that the timetable for banning some chemicals, determined at earlier conferences, was moved up to an earlier date. It should be emphasized that 25 countries, out of a total of 87, voted against each and every single item in the agenda. But as the eco-fascists hoped, the new protocol calls for:

- a ban on CFCs by the end of 1995 instead of the year 2000;
- the fire-extinguishing halons to be banned by the end of 1993;
- methyl chloroform, used in dry cleaning, to be banned by 1996 instead of 2005;
- carbon tetrachloride to be banned by 1995 instead of 2000.

To the surprise of most delegations, one more family of chemicals, the hydrobromofluorocarbons (HBFCs), was banned at the conference. This latest ban, to go into effect by the end of 1995, demonstrates what kind of a sham the Montreal Protocol is. HBFCs, a very promising family of chemicals which has demonstrated tremendous capabilities as fire extinguishers, were not even included in the conference agenda until two weeks before the conference. In essence, the eco-fascists decided to ban HBFCs on the spur of the moment. HBFCs were banned despite the fact that no research whatsoever has been conducted to determine whether they represent any danger to the ozone layer, or whether HBFCs can survive long enough to rise to the stratosphere. Scientific evidence is clearly deemed irrelevant to this whole process.

As many as 20-40 million deaths per year

The Copenhagen conference almost fell apart over the issue of an international fund to help developing countries bear some of the enormous costs of the ban on these chemicals. Although this fund had been established during a conference in London in 1992, the advanced-sector nations had failed to deliver on even the pittance they had promised Third World countries. After a last-minute deal, advanced-sector countries agreed to provide the so-called Montreal Multilateral Fund with \$113 million in 1993 and \$113 million in 1994. This money will supposedly go toward helping devel-

oping countries pay for CFCs recycling equipment and manufacturing alterations, and to meet other costs resulting from a conversion from cheaper CFCs to the much more expensive replacements (if any replacements even exist).

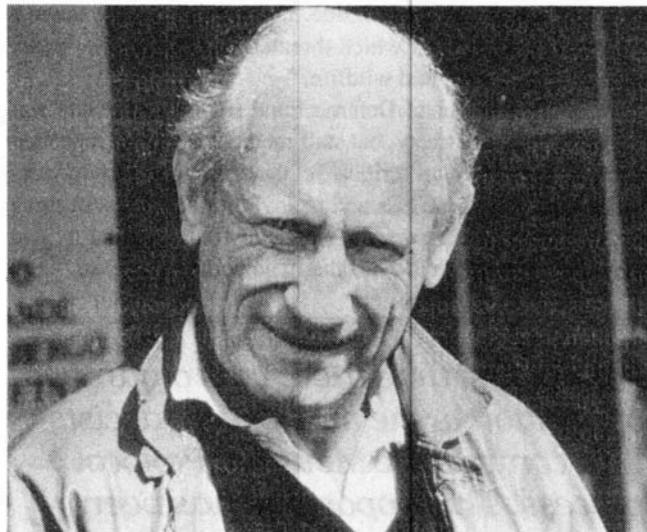
In reality, this fund is a cruel joke. Experts now estimate that the cost of banning these man-made chemicals may be as high as \$5 trillion by the year 2000. On top of that, it is expected that the collapse of the international cold chain, through which perishable foods are stored and transported, will result in an increase in the death toll from hunger, starvation, and related food-borne and other diseases of 20-40 million persons per year, and these figures do not include the consequences if methyl bromide were banned (see *EIR*, Dec. 4, p. 22).

This death toll should be compared to the alleged threat from ozone depletion. According to Reilly, the ban on all these chemicals will prevent 20,000 deaths from skin cancer in the United States over the next 75 years. Setting aside the severe scientific criticisms that this claim has received from the medical community, Reilly's threat boils down to 267 hypothetical skin cancer deaths per year (many medical experts estimate the death toll to be zero). But this is still lower than the number of estimated deaths from fires as a result of the ban on fire-fighting halons!

The tragedy of this conference is that so much money and effort is being spent on dealing with the non-existent threat of ozone depletion when there are real catastrophes occurring in the world today. On the same day that the Copenhagen conference was ending, another conference was taking place in Dakar, Senegal. This conference, sponsored by the Organization of African Unity (OAU), was convoked to examine the desperate situation of African children today. The tragedy is horrifying. Drought, famine, gastrointestinal diseases, AIDS infections of the parents, and poverty have reduced the life expectancy of African children dramatically. At present, one out of every four African children will die by the age of five. In 1990, some 4.5 million African children died because of malnutrition or lack of medical treatment.

The data, collected by the OAU and the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (Unicef), show that the threats besieging African adults are not much better: Nearly every second African citizen suffers from malnutrition, lack of clean water, or HIV infection. AIDS was a major item of discussion at the Dakar conference, since more people are sick with AIDS in Africa already than in the entire rest of the world. The ban on CFCs-based refrigerants will have a direct impact upon the health and well-being of these AIDS victims.

Even in conferences that deal with ozone depletion, there is sometimes room for entertainment. This conference was no exception. The free entertainment was provided by the Australian delegation. It was quite apparent to observers at the conference that the role the Australians had been assigned by the Anglo-Saxon bloc was to scare attendees over the dangers of skin cancer from increases in ultraviolet (UV)



Haroun Tazieff, a French volcanologist and former government minister, drafted a resolution, signed by more than 100 scientists from 12 nations, calling for overturning the Montreal Protocol. The unscientific and unnecessary ban on CFCs and other useful chemicals will lead to 20-40 million deaths every year if not revoked.

radiation. The Australian delegates were everywhere hysterically warning all the delegates they came across about the dangers of sunbathing and UV. One wag commented that their tags should have read "Australian Skin Cancer Scare Bikini Team." Of course, these white-skinned Anglo-Saxons did not explain to their audience that cases of skin cancer are almost non-existent among Australian natives. In the end, however, the ploy backfired, as the Australian delegation became the laughingstock of the conference.

Greenies cry 'foul'

Although previous meetings of the Montreal Protocol signatories have commanded extensive press coverage, this one was barely mentioned by the news media. The eco-fascists were not too happy, either.

Mostafa Tolba, who has overseen the negotiations to ban CFCs as director of the U.N. Environment Program (UNEP), said that "tens of countries expressed different views, at least 25 countries created difficulties at every step; nonetheless, this meeting was definitely a step forward," noting that despite fierce opposition, "the measures agreed here are the strongest package of global environmental law ever enacted." Tolba emphasized that stronger action was needed: "The question remains, however, is this enough? We know the answer is no. I am scared that ozone depletion will accelerate. We cannot rest until the ozone layer is safe."

Greenpeace condemned the results of the conference. Spokesman Bill Hare told IPS wire service, "While we acknowledge the major progress on CFCs and halons, the benefits have been swamped by the agreement to continue the use

of HCFCs and methyl bromide. Governments have taken a vast and pointless risk which threatens human health, ocean ecosystems, crops, and wildlife.”

The Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) said that it was “pleased” with the treaty, but staff member Michael Oppenheimer said the group was “critical” of the decision to allow continued production of HCFCs and methyl bromide. Oppenheimer told the *New York Times*, “It’s basically half a loaf. I’m glad they did what they did with the major ozone depleters.” But

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regarding the opposition to a methyl bromide ban, Oppenheimer said, “They left an important part of the problem unfinished and they’re going to have to revisit it soon.”

According to EDF international counsel Scott Hajost, “governments have done their duty by speeding the elimination of CFCs in industrialized countries, but their actions on HCFCs and methyl bromide are not commensurate with the magnitude of the problem.” Hajost told IPS that “even when CFCs levels begin to decrease in the atmosphere, continued use of HCFCs and methyl bromide could significantly extend the period of ozone depletion.”

Gameplan temporarily blocked

There are two fundamental reasons why the eco-fascists and their promoters in the news media are demonstrating such rage at the result of the conference: This is the first defeat they have suffered at such a U.N.-sponsored international gathering. And second, they were ready to launch the fourth phase of their ozone depletion scare strategy, which has now been derailed.

As detailed in the book by this author and Ralf Schauerhammer, *The Holes in the Ozone Scare: The Scientific Evidence that the Sky Isn't Falling* (Washington, D.C.: 21st Century Science Associates, 1992), over the past 20 years

there have been more than 20 theories claiming that man’s activities were going to deplete the ozone layer. The theory that CFCs would deplete the ozone layer is just one of those theories debated during the 1970s in what became known as the “Ozone Wars.” All of these theories were discredited by the end of the decade, and the debate subsided. The debate was not restarted until 1985, as part of a deliberate strategy.

The first phase of the eco-fascist strategy was to seek a treaty laying the groundwork for a phaseout of and eventual ban on CFCs. That treaty would serve as the basis for further international treaties banning all kinds of activities conducted by man. This first phase was achieved by the signing of the Montreal Protocol in 1987. The second phase was to add HCFCs, methyl chloride, and carbon tetrachloride to the treaty. The third phase, launched in November 1991, was to add methyl bromide to the list. The fourth phase, which the eco-fascists were about to launch, was to revive the claims that fertilizers and solid booster rockets were a threat to the ozone layer. The rejection of a ban on methyl bromide at the Copenhagen conference has temporarily derailed this schedule.

The immediate plans of the eco-fascists are to ensure that Reilly launches a campaign in the United States to ban methyl bromide. They are also counting on the full support of Vice President-elect Albert Gore, the great champion of environmental causes in the U.S. Senate. They expect to parlay a U.S. ban on methyl bromide into an international ban.

Derailling the eco-fascist juggernaut

The most significant event of the conference was that for the first time there was organized opposition to the mob of eco-fascists that controls the Montreal Protocol process. This opposition has been slowly building over the past several years, as more and more scientists and experts have decided to expose the ozone depletion theory and the ban on CFCs as a sham. The publication of *The Holes in the Ozone Scare* has played a major role in catalyzing this opposition. Having sold more than 30,000 copies in its English, German, and French editions over the past five months, the book provided the scientific community and the public a full picture of the deceit and lies involved in the ozone scare.

The opposition’s intervention at the conference, however, was prepared in less than three weeks. In this time, the Tazieff resolution was circulated to several hundred scientists, and more than 100 of them endorsed it. Although the conference is now over, dozens of endorsements of the resolution continue to arrive.

As the conference date approached, a team of French, German, Danish, and American opponents of the treaty traveled to Copenhagen to distribute the resolution to all the delegates and to ensure that the truth was told.

At the same time, in France, Tazieff, a legend among the scientific community for his exploits as a volcanologist willing to risk his life in taking samples of flowing lava during volcanic eruptions, went on the offensive. In interviews with

leading European press, Tazieff detailed the contents of the resolution and his opposition to the destruction of modern society through the ban on CFCs.

French television reported Tazieff's statements throughout the first day of the Copenhagen conference. Television network M6 made the story the lead item on its evening news program, and included an interview with Tazieff.

Le Figaro newspaper covered the story in a front-page article. A large box proclaimed "Ozone Layer: The Scientific Controversy," followed by a half-page article in the Science section, reprinting the seven points of the resolution. In Copenhagen, *Berlingske Tidende*, the most important newspaper in Denmark, covered the Tazieff appeal and identified some of the most prominent signers.

At the conference itself, a team of pro-life and pro-science organizers, including a reporter from *EIR*, carried out a series of interventions. Early on the first day, an organizer placed a folder with the resolution and other materials debunking the ozone-depletion fraud on the desk of every delegation attending the conference. Its impact was compounded by the fact that any attendee who had picked up a Danish newspaper that morning could read front-page articles on the same resolution they had on their desks.

A few hours later, the delegates received photocopies of the article that had appeared in *Le Figaro*. Throughout the afternoon, the truth squad continued leafletting and shaking up the conference. They also intervened at press conferences given by several delegations.

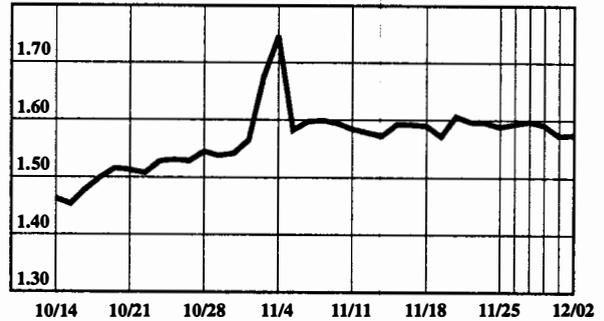
One of the most interesting press conferences was that of the new head of the U.N. Environment Program, Indian Minister of Environment and Forestry Kamal Nath, who pointed out that he was there as an Indian minister, not as head of a U.N. chapter. *EIR* reporter Geoff Steinherz presented Nath in the question period with the facts of U.S. National Security Study Memorandum 200, which said that reduction of world population was an issue of national security for the United States (see *EIR*, May 3, 1991), and also referenced the Anglo-Americans' policy of technological apartheid, and asked if there had been discussions on that in the Indian government. He thanked the reporter for the question and said that the Indian government was aware of the issues raised. He added that India had experienced being able to import technology but not to export it. After the press conference, he asked for a copy of NSSM-200, which was delivered to his table later that afternoon.

EPA head Reilly was also confronted by *EIR* on the fact that following the EPA ban on DDT, several hundred million people had died in the Third World as a result of malaria, and was asked whether a similar result would not occur from the ban on CFCs. Reilly nervously responded that although he had read the points objecting to the ban on CFCs, he said he believed that there had already been enough discussion regarding the scientific issues and that it was sound to ban ozone-depleting chemicals.

Currency Rates

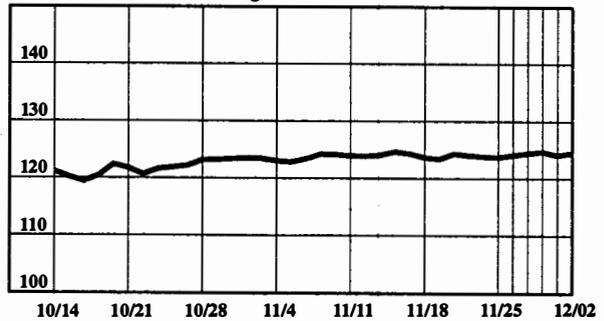
The dollar in deutschmarks

New York late afternoon fixing



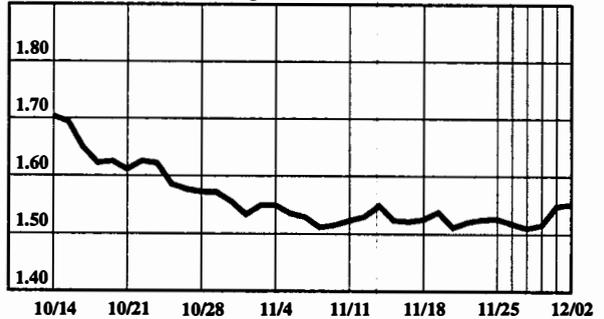
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

