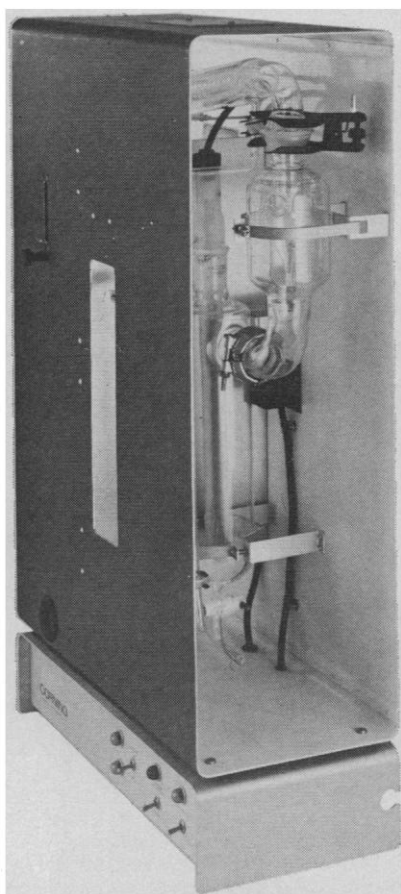


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taining a livable environment, and thus would increase the value of $F(P)$ in Ehrlich and Holdren's relation

$$I = P \cdot F(P)$$

$F(P)$ is thus a function of age structure as well as population size. The resulting extra cost subsumes not only fewer human resources to attack environmental problems but also the diversion of income, and ultimately energy, for the increased demands of health and public education that such age structure implies.

The further augmentation of the dependency load in Puerto Rico which has occurred as a result of the hasty industrialization of the island might serve as an illustration of the authors' theorems 2, 4, and 5 concerning the necessity for joint and thorough consideration of population and the total environment on a global basis. The fact that agriculture and conservation were long stepchildren to industrialization in Puerto Rico helped to induce many people to leave their homes in the deteriorating rural areas. These people, ill-educated for modern urban living, left the island (and thus its work force) in great numbers, settling largely in the urban ghettos of the United States (2).

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References and Note

1. *Anuario Demográfico* (United Nations, New York, 1964). Preliminary estimates of these statistics for the 1970 census, from the Bureau of Labor Force Statistics, Puerto Rico Department of Labor, indicate slight changes.
2. J. V. Calzada, *El Desbalance entre Recursos y Población en Puerto Rico* (Sección de Estudios Demográficos, Departamento de Medicina Preventiva y Salud Pública, Escuela de Medicina, Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1966).

Funding the National Research Council

Critics of the National Research Council suggest (News and Comment, 16 Apr., p. 242) that the reports of the council may be biased in favor of the viewpoint of the agencies that request that studies be made. It would seem that the present organization and method of financing practically guarantee such a bias. Well over two-thirds of the professionals involved in these studies are permanent NRC employees; less than one-third are brought in for specific assignments. NRC must therefore do a great deal of selling to obtain funds to support this permanent staff.

Salesmen are not noted for their objectivity.

In order to remove this source of bias, the proportion of permanent professional staff should be greatly reduced, or the \$25 million that NRC now receives annually from 20 or more separate agencies should come directly from the Executive Office of the President in one chunk, or both.

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Environment and Emotionalism

The editorial "Changing attitudes toward environmental problems" (7 May, p. 517) in general was quite realistic, particularly in emphasizing that all of us are going to have to pay for any improvements. But the statement that "benefits will be weighed against costs" constrains me to ask how "benefits" affecting the conditions in which we are to live, and even whether we are to continue to live, can be given a dollar value to arrive at any comparison with the "costs."

The "benefit-cost ratio" governing governmental spending in various areas of natural resource "development" has been the root of a good deal of evil. It has taken many years for the reality to be accepted that intangible values make benefit-cost comparisons impossible. Some things must be accepted as essential; they defy dollar evaluation.

I would like to comment also on the somewhat disparaging allusions to emotionalism about environmental matters. As a long-time professional observer of the legislative process, I have found that the screamers, who quote out of context and cite only selected facts, make a real contribution. It is their emotionalism which makes legislative bodies welcome the testimony of rational pleaders who follow. It makes the legislators listen, when otherwise they probably (judging by the record) would not. Rachel Carson was a screamer.

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I cannot challenge Abelson's remark that "[by 1970] most of the important components of pollution had leveled off" with any scientific instruments other than my memory and my eyes. As a lifelong resident of the Washing-