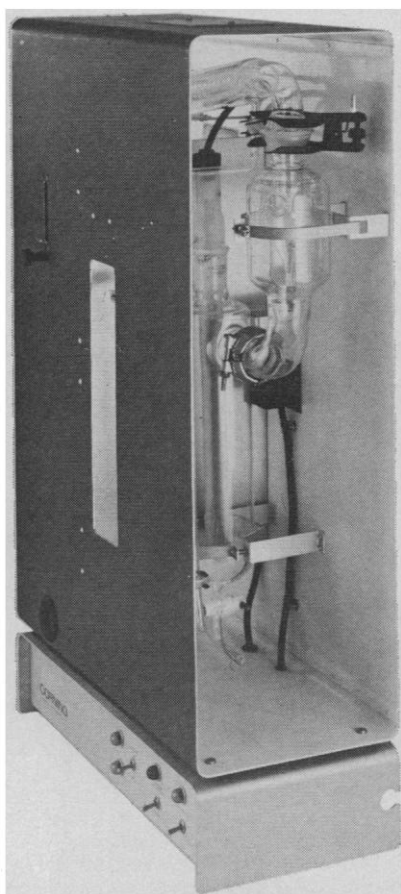


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taining a livable environment, and thus would increase the value of $F(P)$ in Ehrlich and Holdren's relation

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

$F(P)$ 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).

DAVID L. BRUCK

*Department of Biology,
University of Puerto Rico,
Rio Piedras 00931*

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.

ROBERT N. ANTHONY

*Harvard Business School,
Boston, Massachusetts 02163*

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.

RUSSELL G. LYNCH

*8121 Stickney Avenue,
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin 53213*

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-

ton, D.C., area I have vivid memories of swimming in the Potomac River and even drinking it; to do so now would be dangerous, perhaps fatal. For the last decade I have been able to observe our smog blanket; each year it seems to persist longer and get larger.

My particular environmental concern has been solid waste. Transporting trash is commonly the third largest item in municipal budgets, ranking only behind schools and public safety. I have been in four hearings at various levels of government trying to solve a tiny part of this problem, and the net result of my activity has been five lawsuits from various groups who prefer business as usual.

I grant that there has been great emotionalism about pollution and that in the course of it some extreme statements have been made. However, one may question how much progress would have been made in slowing down the degradation of the planet as a habitat for man—if in fact any has been made—had there not been an emotional outburst. Possibly it is not good to be either too sanguine or too strident, but if there is a hell it is populated by people who kept silent when they should have spoken out.

ELLIS L. YOCHELSON
12303 Stafford Lane,
Bowie, Maryland 20715

Self-Defense

Bryce Nelson's report (12 Feb., p. 556) on the Hiroshima symposium at the AAAS meeting describes attitudes that puzzle millions. It is puzzling that an M.I.T. political scientist can state that "the arms race has generally gotten worse in the last 25 years" and not relate this to Soviet expansionism and militarism. Rathjens is disturbed that a bomb 200 times as powerful as the Hiroshima one is targeted for a Soviet city the size of Hiroshima. Others of us are disturbed that bombs 2000 times as powerful are targeted for American cities.

The blindness of the symposium is evidenced by Alperovitz's answer to the spectator's question: "Why haven't scientists been more successful in helping control the arms race?" According to Alperovitz, the lack of success is a product of scientists' keeping "their lives compartmentalized between their work and politics." This misrepresentation of scientists who faced the impli-

cations of their work and decided in favor of the defense of their country is repeated by Yale's Lifton, who slanders Edward Teller as a man who "embraced this weapon as a nuclear deity."

What is disregarded by these polemicists is the fact that nuclear weapons exist independently of American politics and scientists. Even the never-stated implication of their attitude—American surrender—would not protect against the use of nuclear weapons. Whereas we might protect ourselves from a Soviet nuclear attack by surrendering to the Soviet Union, we cannot simultaneously surrender to China (to say nothing of countries that may develop nuclear weapons in the future). Therefore, we cannot be assured that we would not be victims in a Russian-Chinese war or even that the Soviets would not decide that such a large and populous country as the United States would be more easily controlled if part were destroyed. Attitudes expressed at the symposium imply that we can trust the Russian and Chinese governments better than our own.

As long as there is a single expansionist or aggressive force, the choice is between surrender and defense. To pretend, as do the Hiroshima symposiasts, that "the arms race" is a product of American politics and scientists is to obscure the choice.

The West has long lost the will and self-belief that are necessary to any expansionist or aggressive power. It is rapidly losing the will necessary for self-defense. Let us really be hard-boiled scientists and stop fooling ourselves. If we choose surrender, let it be a rational product of a recognition of a lack of will to resist and not the product of a self-denunciatory emotionalism or utopian hopes.

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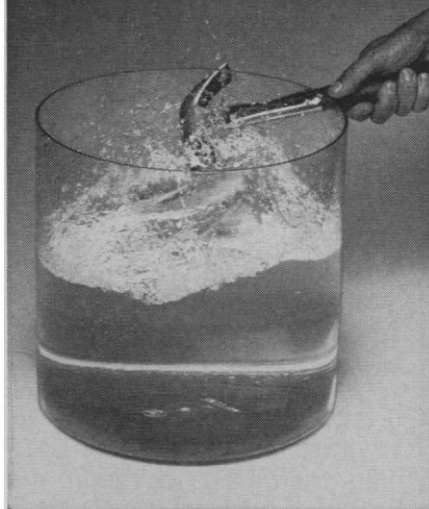
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*Departments of Economics, History
and Mechanical Engineering, University
of New Mexico, Albuquerque*

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