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EDITORIAL

Paradise Gained

Science. Dr. Noitall, you are the great protector of the environment, the man who invented the ozone layer, the man who lobbies for the no emission—no omission—no submission—no commission car, the man who is against all chlorine-containing chemicals, even the NaCl in the ocean.

Noitall. A vast understatement of my true worth.

Science. Have you come up with any new ideas to save the environment?

Noitall. I am always brimming with new ideas. This one, in all modesty, I must admit is great: chocolate chip cookies.

Science. What do chocolate chip cookies have to do with the environment?

Noitall. It hit me in a flash when I read that the pigeons in New York were being given corn kernels loaded with birth control compounds. Since overpopulation is the key environmental problem, it is obvious we can use the same strategy with humans. We will just offer chocolate chip cookies with birth control chemicals all over the world as part of our foreign and domestic policy.

Science. Will these cookies be accepted happily?

Noitall. In the United States, birth control and chocolate chip cookies are well established, so I see no problems. In foreign countries, it will be termed "the sweetest foreign policy gesture of the USA."

Science. What about informed consent?

Noitall. We will print all the chemical formulas and the scientific names of the chemicals on the labels in plain English. What more can you ask?

Science. And if that policy doesn't work, what else?

Noitall. We have discovered that humans are actually exhaling CO₂.

Science. But humans inhale O₂ and exhale CO₂ as part of normal metabolism. What can you do?

Noitall. Four billion humans all exhaling CO₂! We will need a treaty to stop it on a global basis, but the United States can take the lead. Congress can pass a law regulating the amount each individual can exhale.

Science. That's unconstitutional.

Noitall. The Constitution says nothing about exhaling. There are allusions to breathing the air of freedom, but that's inhaling. We are not against inhaling. We are all for it. It is up to humans to figure out a method of inhaling that doesn't require exhaling.

Science. But the Constitution says something about "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." What if you have to exhale to live?

Noitall. Congress can make 1996 the effective date of the law and let the researchers figure a way out by then.

Science. But that's scientifically ridiculous. If you know any biochemistry, you know there must be some waste products.

Noitall. Who ever said regulatory laws have to be based on any science? That kind of restriction would cripple the Environmental Protection Agency.

Science. And if this plan fails?

Noitall. Then I guess we must go to nuclear warfare, the ultimate population decreaser.

Science. But nuclear war will also destroy buildings, bridges, and homes.

Noitall. True. That's why I'm for further research on the neutron bomb. It targets people, not structures. Can you imagine a world with just a few people, nonclogged freeways, available hotel rooms, luxuriant Amazonian forests, pure Rhine water, non-acid rain? Nuclear war has had a bad press.

Science. Well, we admit that would solve the CO₂ problem, but what about radiation?

Noitall. Lead suits and dresses will become the fashion.

Science. But what will become of life as we know it? We'll go back to the wilderness.

Noitall. An issue of *Science* underneath the Bough,

A Jug of Wine, a Chocolate Chip Cookie—and Thou

Beside me singing in the Wilderness—

Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!*

Daniel E. Koshland Jr.

*Adapted from *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, translated by Edward Fitzgerald.