

## Children's Crusade

The BBC asked young people from various countries to say **how they would do things differently** to “tackle the environmental problems we are creating today” and change the world. All eight answers that the BBC saw fit to publish had a common theme: government control. Institute even more **propaganda campaigns** in schools and elsewhere; take up ever more of the population's time and effort in religious rituals such as ‘recycling’ their garbage or avoiding their cars; rein in production; ban trade; and generally **smash capitalism**:

The problem with free trade is that there is nothing in it for the environment – the bottom line is entirely monetary...

I think this a job for the government – it shouldn't let free market run wild.

One of the young people, who despite being only 14 is under the impression that she can **feel the change in temperature due to global warming**, said:

More people have to try to save the environment – but not a lot of people know about it.

This, despite the fact that virtually everyone her age (and most older people too) would already reply to the question exactly as she does. One of the most impressive achievements of the existing environmental ‘education’ campaign is to have caused this universal, ritual denial of its own tremendous success, and even its own existence.

The young people's objection to the free market is extremely common, but it is nonsense. Money is a means for people to express their preferences, which they arrive at for a combination of reasons of their own choosing. They are free not to buy a product if they think it is sub-standard or manufactured in an unsafe or harmful or immoral way. So it doesn't make much sense to say that the bottom line is money. Money is just a tool for expressing and criticising values.

**Aparna Bhasin** advocated:

Population control is also something we should look into -

it will make everything else much easier to tackle.

In real life, population control policies, like those practiced by China, are code for **brutal repression** that includes infanticide and forced abortions. So in real life, governmental population control is a terrible evil. It is not a solution to environmental problems. By contrast, in free countries, there is no government population control and no population problem either.

None of the quoted respondents managed to identify the single biggest environmental problem in the world today – socialism. The free market allows people to make choices among different policies according to their best judgement about the issue in question. In a socialist society state functionaries control part of the economy and impose their own favoured policies while someone else is forced to bear the whole cost, no matter what effect those policies have. Thus socialism stifles the criticism that would help to create the knowledge necessary to improve the environment. As a result governments consistently **abuse** the **environment** though **corruption** and **ignorance**. So to protect the environment we must argue against government interference in the economy.

Sat, 02/26/2005 - 14:24 | [digg](#) | [del.icio.us](#) | [permalink](#)

## Your Socialist Governments are Ruining the World

The problem is not free trade. The problem is not capitalism. The problem is rampant personal consumption with government socialism saying that no one needs to take direct responsibility for cleaning up their own left over mess. The dirty dishes are literally left in the sink waiting for the next government program to make the dirty dishes disappear. Each individual needs to wash their own dishes at the point of consumption. The role of government is not to be chief cook and bottle washer and diaper changer nor is it a proper role of government to take out the trash.

Never trust any government official that calls paper or plastic disposables an environmental choice. Recycling laws which are promoted as public panaceas are a sure sign of creeping socialism. Environmental pollution and degradation has nothing to do with free trade or capitalism and everything to do with individuals generating mountains of trash that someone else other than the consumer, read government program, is supposed to take to the landfill out of sight and down wind.

Turn that into a slogan.

by a reader on Sun, 02/27/2005 - 02:20 | [reply](#)

## Go out and buy a dishwasher.

Personal consumption is a good thing, self-denial is bad. Any issue would lie with what is consumed, and if any harm is done, not with consumption per se.

You're right about one thing, the government does want to change

our **diapers**.

But where are these mountains of trash?

by **Tom Robinson** on Sun, 02/27/2005 - 18:57 | [reply](#)

## Environment and wealth

What the leftist environmental protection advocates fail to recognise is that environmental protection is itself a product of the wealth generating power of free trade. It is a highly expensive luxury which relies on vast sums of money being poured into it and offers very little economic return. Left to its own devices environmental protection makes people poorer and this cost must be offset by a corresponding increase in wealth generation. No wonder that those that shout the loudest about it tend to live in affluent societies. Odd, however, that they tend not to spot this.

by **Leigh** on Thu, 03/03/2005 - 18:13 | [reply](#)

## I'm not sure you neocons/libe

I'm not sure you neocons/libertarians/whatever you call yourselves actually know what socialism means. You use it as a catch-all term for any situation whatsoever in which some kind of authority (whether elected or not, whether buying public services or not, whether redistributing wealth or not) collects taxes and then Does Stuff with the money. (Often leading to the barf-inducingly hilarious claim that the United States is itself a socialist nation).

Anyway, if one insists on using the word socialism in this way, then I claim that socialism is *necessary* in order to prevent environmental problems getting out of control. *What alternative is there?*

The answer forces itself upon us: If the freedom of private individuals and corporations to spend 100% of their money in whatever way they wish (subject to law (i.e. without causing direct harm to others, unless they freely choose to be harmed)), then the only way for us (in the Western world) to stop contributing to an impending environmental catastrophe is for individuals and corporations to (a) adequately educate themselves about the nature of the catastrophe, and figure out what changes in their own daily lives would have any bearing on it and (b) have the moral scruples to make those changes, even if it means forgoing many of the conveniences that have long been taken for granted, and even others are refusing to change (and possibly enjoying competitive advantages as a direct result).

If you really think private individuals/corporations behave like that (and it looks as if you really do: "*They are free not to buy a product if they think it is ... manufactured in an unsafe or harmful or immoral way.*") then you're blinded by an ideological delusion nearly as huge as the communist belief that people will work hard out of brotherly love for humanity, even if they personally receive no reward. (In both cases, the ideology claims that peoples'

consciences will make them choose X even if their personal interests prefer Y).

(Of course, the usual "Protective Belt" that right-wingers construct against environmental issues is simply to claim that there isn't really a problem. I'm glad to see that, at least in this instance, you haven't taken that route.)

What governments (together with their committees of advisors) have over private individuals/corporations, that makes them better equipped to handle environmental issues, are the following:

(1) They're able to bring about changes on scales sufficiently large to have a real impact (unlike an individual thinking to themselves e.g. "I only have one car, what difference does it make whether it has a catalytic converter?")

(2) Environmental issues tend to involve widely separated causes and effects, such that the people causing the problem may have no awareness of the problem they're causing, and those on the receiving end may have no idea where it's coming from, and even if they did, it would be wholly outside of their power to change things. Example: The widespread use of antibiotics in agriculture leading to antibiotic resistant 'superbugs', causing humans to die from infections that in the past would have been treatable. The following have the power to curtail the use of antibiotics: (a) Farmers (b) Government. Who is better informed? Who has the smaller conflict of interest? Who is more likely to resolve the issue in a such a way as to achieve greater benefit for society as a whole?

OK, rant over.

by Neil Fitzgerald on Thu, 03/17/2005 - 04:34 | [reply](#)