

Agriculture by Marcia Merry

The fraud of 'Earth Day'

It's 20 years since the ecologists launched their campaign, and advocates now include groups like Catholic Rural Life.

On April 22 begins a week-long hoopla for "Earth Day" and its 20th anniversary. Those backing the original Earth Day include such agencies as the Washington, D.C.-based Conservation Foundation, part of the World Wildlife Fund, whose elitist point of view is that wilderness and wildlife are preferable to a world of happy, prosperous people. Over the years, these agencies have promoted pseudo-scientific arguments for why the Earth cannot sustain a growing population, and why agriculture, industry, and technology pollute.

In 1970, these arguments were not widely accepted. But today, after decades of brainwashing from radical environmentalist propaganda, millions of people tolerate the decline of agriculture, industry, and the spread of misery and starvation of the world's population as "proof" that the zero-growth agencies were right all along.

In terms of agriculture, Earth Day activities will stress practices considered "sustainable"—low-mechanization, low-input farming, and low-technology water and sanitation. This implies lowering population potential, though its advocates demur from specifying who should die.

The Earth Day 1990 Committee (operating at Stanford University in California) plans to launch a "decade of the environment" committee to promote "regenerative agriculture," among other environmentalist concerns. The advisers to this group include Paul Ehrlich, Texas Agriculture Commissioner Jim Hightower, and Wes Jackson (Land Institute, Kansas).

This view of Earth Day is the rosy side. The black side is the outright pagan, satanic rites-of-spring aspects of the commemoration.

You would hope that the bulwark of opposition to this evil operation would be the churches. However, there are individuals and agencies operating through the hierarchy of many religious denominations to further the Earth Day goals.

Such a leading agency in the farm-belt is the National Catholic Rural Life Conference in Des Moines, Iowa. At the local parish level, many farmers and rural residents respect the group, out of respect for the Church. But this trust is betrayed almost daily.

Rural Life uses the concept of "stewardship" over soils and other natural resources to oppose the idea of man's responsibility to develop and use technology to enhance God's Earth and to improve the lot of mankind. This stewardship concept was presented in the 1980 Midwest Catholic Bishops' statement called "Strangers and Guests."

The underlying theme is that, as a Christian, you should be satisfied to use only low-cost, low-input farming methods, and even if you end up with your farm foreclosed, at least you'll be spiritually happy.

This has served as a rationalization for the low prices that the food cartels (Cargill, Continental, Louis Dreyfus, ADM, Bunge) are paying to farmers, who are being forced off the land.

Joe Fitzgerald, director of Catholic Rural Life, is on the board of direc-

tors of the Land Stewardship Project, a Minnesota-based group set up in the 1980s to promote neo-feudal farming. The project holds meetings, coordinates demonstrations, promotes pagan propaganda dramas, circulates a newsletter, and facilitates grants for "sustainable agriculture."

Their mystical perspective is summed up in a recent newsletter feature quotation from the Soviet geologist Sergei Tsvetko: "I think that ecology is first of all a spiritual movement. . . . Ecology to me is the contemporary religion. It's only on the basis of ecology that spiritual integration of the whole global community is possible."

Rural Life promotes speakers such as Wes Jackson, whose 1980 book, *New Roots for Agriculture*, is dedicated to "Mother Earth," and to Ceres, the Roman goddess of agriculture.

A pagan puppet show, "A Song for the Earth," featuring Gaia, "Mother Earth," has been featured at dozens of Catholic schools.

When a Minnesota congregation objected to this kind of teaching, its church was shut down last year by Archbishop John Roach of Minneapolis.

Bishop Raymond Lucker of New Ulm, Minnesota, ordered the cancellation of the use of a Hutchinson parish school for a Food for Peace meeting on the need for high-technology output of more food, because, according to the local priest, the Church disagrees with the advocacy of chemical pesticides, fertilizers, and other farm inputs, which Food for Peace may condone. He said that the state's spotted owl population would be harmed.

Bishop Lucker is now in the national news for attacking the new catechism proposed by the Vatican last year, for using anti-feminist, "sexist" language.