

## EIRBooks

# Yale historian yearns for malthusian millennium

by Mark Burdman

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### **Preparing for the Twenty-First Century**

by Paul Kennedy

Random House, New York, 1993

428 pages, hardbound, \$25

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That Paul Kennedy's *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* has rapidly become the most talked-about book of this year, moving close to the top of the bestseller list in Germany within weeks of its translation from the English and prominently hyped in much of the British and American media, tells more about the perverse state of mind and priorities of the predominant factions within the transatlantic liberal establishment which are promoting Kennedy's theses, than it does about the merits of the book. Admittedly, the British-born, Yale University historian has compiled an impressive array of data and has taken up some provocative and challenging themes. But, for the most part, his work is a mixture of monumental incompetence combined with disinformation and fraud. Rather than being the sober historical and social analysis that one might expect from the much-touted historian and author, whose *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* produced considerable controversy after its publication in 1987, *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century* is ideology and special pleading under the cover of objective academic research.

Kennedy is really pleading for a specific agenda and cultural-historical paradigm, and this explains why the book has

gotten so much attention in the liberal media and within transatlantic policy institutions like the influential Davos, Switzerland, World Economic Policy forum, to which Kennedy was invited to speak earlier this year. He is arguing, in the trendy vocabulary of the last decade's globalist *Zeitgeist*, for a new geopolitical cult rooted primarily in demographics, an updated version of the world view of Parson Thomas Malthus. The driving force, and central threat, in Kennedy's world, as in the late 18th-century of Malthus, is demographic growth. Rapid demographic growth is a determining factor in causing wars and political instability, with the added twist today that it also damages the "global environment." Combatting the threat of "overpopulation," in Kennedy's view, justifies, or necessitates, an imperial world order ruled by rentier-financier interests. Just as Britain came out on top of the world of the 19th century, so today, a British-modeled world order must prevail, he believes.

The book is mainly designed to catalyze and shape a policy debate within the transatlantic elites, with various malthusians speculating about whether Kennedy has gone a bit too far, or not far enough. The Feb. 14 *New York Times* book review, for example, welcomed Kennedy as a latter-day Malthus, but complained that he lacked the "degree of intellectual fearlessness equal to that which emboldened Malthus himself, a God-fearing clergyman, to argue against charity because it was a cause of population growth and thus of human misery." The *Times* insisted that "more pointed" questions must supplement Kennedy's arguments, if a truly draconian world order is to be formed that can enforce depopulation: "What form of political leadership will suffice to halt

the juggernauts of demographic, economic and ecological change? Can demographic explosions be halted without recourse to severe, even repressive population policies? . . . Can an allocation of carbon emission rights be instituted or enforced without military force?"

The book's release coincides with an escalation of malthusian propaganda, as the date approaches for the United Nations Third International Conference on Population in Cairo in September 1994, and as the abject refusal of the West to stop genocide in former Yugoslavia accommodates growing segments of the western public to murder on a mass scale. Kennedy is a spokesman for that transatlantic group which has appeased the Serbs, and his facile characterization of the Balkan war as a "civil war" is symptomatic of his world view.

As we will show, the 21st century that Kennedy projects, is one from which essential technological and scientific breakthroughs have been axiomatically excluded. It is not that these processes have no future from a scientific standpoint—quite the opposite—but rather that Kennedy and his co-thinkers believe, with the arrogance of would-be gods of Olympus, that they can deny the existence of whatever they would prefer did not exist, and then prevent it from coming into existence by their control over financial processes, the media, scientific institutions, and so on.

That apparent strength, however, is also their Achilles' heel. The 21st century of Paul Kennedy will never actually transpire; if the axioms and postulates that Kennedy espouses determine policy, the world will descend into a profound breakdown crisis, and perhaps generalized world war, well before we reach the year 2000. Wherever there exist human beings desiring development and progress, in such locations there will be points of resistance to Kennedy and his promoters, and it is out of that resistance that a counter-vision of the future, one that can give hope to humanity, can be built.

### **'Winners and losers' in a malthusian world**

Kennedy's concept of history, and the vision of reality that flows from it, is, at best, a reductionist's cultist quackery, and at worst, a kind of science-fiction fantasy projected into the past, present, and future.

According to him, "we should see the demographic and economic conditions of the late 18th century as a metaphor for the challenges facing our present global society, two centuries after Malthus's ponderings." Then, France's instability and ensuing territorial expansionism under Napoleon Bonaparte, were driven by the underlying problem of "overpopulation": "In France, popular discontents smashed an *ancien régime* that was less well structured than Britain in agriculture, industry, and commerce, and in its social framework and attitudes, to sustain rapid demographic growth. By the time the French Revolution's early hopes had been destroyed by terror, reaction, and then Bonapartism, an enormous number of young, energetic, and frustrated Frenchmen were be-

ing deployed in armies of occupation *outside* France, where many if not most of them died from combat or disease. Territorial conquest thus played its traditional role as a vent for overpopulation, social tensions, and political frustrations" (emphasis in original).

What France supposedly was for that period, much of the developing sector is for today. Previewing the 21st century, Kennedy defines the "important implication of population change upon international security" as "the prospect of demographically driven social unrest, political instability and regional wars. . . ." He writes: "Behind many well-known historical upheavals—the outward thrust of the Vikings, the expansion of Elizabethan England, the French Revolution, Wilhelmine *Weltpolitik*, the turbulences that rack Central America and the Middle East today—the societies involved were experiencing population explosions, and often having difficulty in absorbing increasing numbers of energetic young men."

In today's world, as seen by Paul Kennedy and those who think like him, the problem is vastly worsened by the alleged "damage to the ecology" caused by growing populations devouring scarce resources, which has "greatly increased . . . the *speed* of the human assault upon nature." Kennedy is a fanatical promoter of the greenhouse effect, global warming, and ozone hole hoaxes, to the extent that he not only never bothers to present any proof for these ostensible phenomena, but also dismisses out of hand anything that challenges the prevailing inquisitorial orthodoxy: "Given the nature of American politics, it is difficult at present to imagine much leadership in Washington on global-warming issues. Instead, there is a tendency to point to the differing scientific opinions in this matter, to suggest that fears about the greenhouse effect have been exaggerated, and to indicate that it would be unwise to devote funds and alter life-styles to meet circumstances that might not actually occur; and . . . those arguments are supported by skeptical scientists and economists."

As if, somehow, it is a matter of venal opportunism that leading scientists and economists don't believe it is necessary to "devote funds and alter life-styles" to accommodate ecologists' fantasies!

Technology, such as it exists in Paul Kennedy's future universe, will predominantly help those who are at present better off, primarily the Japanese and several European nations, and hurt the worst-off, the Africans being at the bottom of the heap. The only two frontier technological developments that he grants real significance to are biotechnology and robotics. His argument concerning these is, in summary form: Biotechnology will certainly increase food production, but it will be dominated by powerful multinational corporations of the U. S. and other advanced sector countries, and will be effectively denied the developing sector (which has come to be known as "technological apartheid"). Biotechnology will also progressively eliminate the species of farmer, by "de-materializing" the production of food. Robotics, meanwhile, will



*Astronauts training to effect repairs on the future Space Telescope in 1979 in the Neutral Buoyancy Simulator, a huge water tank used to simulate zero gravity, at Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama. Space exploration for the new malthusians like Paul Kennedy is anathema: His ilk think it's bad enough for the Earth to be so populated with mankind, who is in the image of God; they can't bear the thought that a new Renaissance would lead people to colonize and expand on other planets as well.*

mainly work to the benefit of Japan and a handful of other countries, but will progressively undermine manufacturing labor, thereby further hurting countries with large populations, which require "labor-intensive" approaches.

What this combination of demographically determined history and selectively developed technology adds up to, in Kennedy's view, is that the world inevitably has "winners and losers," as in a sports match: "History is, once again, producing its lists of winners and losers. Economic change and technological development, like wars or sporting tournaments, are usually not beneficial to all. Progress, welcomed by optimistic voices from the Enlightenment to our present age, benefits those groups or nations that are able to take advantage of the newer methods and science, just as it damages others that are less prepared technologically, culturally, and politically to respond to change."

Kennedy dedicates his book to a boys' soccer team in New Haven, Connecticut that he coaches, and his biography on the back book-jacket concludes, "He also coaches soccer." Sports competition, of the type that one undoubtedly experiences in the British school system, very much defines the way Kennedy defines the world. Sports competition verbiage, of

course, is also effective in manipulating a readership, in the United States and elsewhere, that has increasingly been brainwashed, to view the world as if it were a sports match.

Consistent with this, is Kennedy's view that "Malthus's England" is an example of a "winner" in history. Of course, "Malthus's England" is a term synonymous with "the British Empire," which "won" only because it conquered and devastated other peoples. Kennedy is less than frank, employing British diplomatic euphemism instead, as when he attempts to contrast how "the British escaped their malthusian trap" with the case of India, which is "much closer to Malthus's model." India's population, he writes, "also doubled and redoubled in the 19th century, but on a much less productive base. Furthermore, because the Indian states had been unable to resist Britain's East India Company militarily, their subjects could do little when British machine-made textiles—not only cheaper but of better quality than native cloth—poured into the country, driving out traditional domestic producers in the process."

His convoluted formulation, "unable to resist Britain's East India Company militarily" is a typical semantic trick, to cover up for the fact that British colonialists reduced the Indian population by about half in the first decades of colonial rule. He also never mentions, by the way, that Malthus was the paid scribe of the British East India Company.

Kennedy elsewhere triumphs in what the British accomplished in the 19th century by their "greater manufacturing efficiency" and "laissez-faire economics," quoting "the great English economist" William Stanley Jevons, writing in 1865:

"The plains of North America and Russia are our cornfields; Chicago and Odessa our granaries; Canada our sheep farms, and in Argentina and on the western prairies of North America are our herds of oxen; Peru send her silver, and the gold of South Africa and Australia flows to London; the Hindus and the Chinese grow tea for us, and our coffee, sugar and spice plantations are all in the Indies. Spain and France are our vineyards and the Mediterranean our fruit garden, and our cotton grounds, which for long have occupied the Southern United States, are now being extended everywhere in the warm regions of the earth."

Kennedy is obviously nostalgic for an imperial system now, one that could wage war against "overpopulated" non-white nations. What this means for the victims, the "losers," in Africa and elsewhere today, is clear: "Civil or external wars—with their heavy casualties—were, like famine and disease, among the malthusian antidotes to a population explosion, and perhaps the most effective of all because they killed people in the prime of life." After wading through the euphemisms, we see Kennedy expressing alarm about population growth in Islamic countries: "Politics intrudes; many regimes are deliberately encouraging women to have large families, arguing that this adds to the country's military strength. 'Bear a child,' posters in Iraq proclaim, 'and you pierce an arrow in the enemy's eye.'" Well, it is obvious how population growth

is now being “controlled” in Iraq, through the brutal combination of war and sanctions. Is that Kennedy’s preferred solution for the developing world as a whole?

### **If you don’t like it, kill it**

At the risk of using British-style understatement ourselves, we can call Kennedy’s a most selective view of history, one that is defined as much by what is omitted as what is said. The alert reader will note, for instance, an historical amnesia about the American Revolution. Since the American Revolution was the international rallying point in the late 18th century against British malthusianism, Kennedy evidently feels it is better to ignore the subject.

While Kennedy is not so stupid as to deny that the original malthusian argument, that population growth would outpace food production, was overturned by “the power of technology—the capacity of the human mind to find new ways of doing things, to invent new devices, to organize production in improved forms, to quicken the pace of moving goods and ideas from one place to another, to stimulate fresh approaches to old problems.” Yet his treatment of fundamental scientific-technological issues is such that one would have to include that he is either functionally illiterate, or is so ideologically committed to the liberal ecologists’ world view that he refuses to acknowledge the existence of technological phenomena that get in the way of his construct; perhaps he is or both. The other possibility, is that the policy grouping for which Kennedy speaks, is committed to phasing out certain of the most important frontier technologies, and therefore wants to stop any public dialogue about certain subjects.

This may backfire, however, since the curious reader might wonder why Kennedy appears to be paralyzed with fear that the mere mentioning of, say, “space exploration” would undermine his entire complex of neo-malthusian arguments. As well he might: Space exploration—or better, space colonization—can only be a function of the kind of Renaissance that launched the Columbian colonization of America, under which the populations of Europe and the Americas enjoyed increases in both size and standards of living.

Kennedy’s 21st century thereby shapes up as a linear extension of the most entropic (“ecologist”) features of the present into an indefinite future. It is a 21st century without nuclear energy, without frontier technologies such as those based on plasmas and directed energy, without exploration of space. As already noted, this is a 21st century that will never exist in the form he pontificates about, since a world premised on such indefinitely extended entropic trends will be a world that will undergo profound physical-economic, cultural, and social breakdown long before the year 2000.

Let us now present various examples, and contrast Kennedy’s treatment or non-treatment, with the truth.

Take the matter of nuclear fission. Kennedy makes occasional brief references to the subject, but only negative ones. He speaks of the problem of nuclear waste, or of the Chernobyl

disaster, and elsewhere holds up Sweden as a model, because of national policy to phase out nuclear energy. Nuclear fission is simply written out of the 21st-century equation. Even from the standpoint of Kennedy’s twisted belief in the “greenhouse effect” and his argument for what he calls a “non-carbon” path toward industrialization” for the developing world based on “modern techniques,” it is remarkable that he excludes the nuclear option, without any explanation. His list of “alternative energy sources” includes “wind, photovoltaic, geothermal, biomass-sourced.”

An antidote to this appears in the Spring 1993 issue of the quarterly *21st Century Science & Technology*. The cover story, “The Danger Is *Not* Going Nuclear,” contains the assessments of scientists who pioneered in developing nuclear energy, about the future prospects for this energy source. This speaks for itself as a refutation to Kennedy.

With nuclear fusion, the author goes one step further: He never bothers to mention it, either in its thermonuclear form, or the new “cold” or “solid-state” breakthrough. This Olympian arrogance of dismissing whatever doesn’t correspond to his construct, makes even some of Kennedy’s most fervent admirers uncomfortable. In an otherwise fawning review, Princeton University Prof. Alan Ryan, writing in the May 13 *New York Review of Books*, concludes with the warning: “Optimists will say, quite rightly, that Professor Kennedy is guilty of unsophisticated extrapolation—that he takes present trends and tells us how ghastly things will be if they continue; but they never do continue. . . . The development of cheap and pollution-free energy from nuclear fusion could upset projections about the costs of development.”

Ryan is undoubtedly referring to “hot” fusion. Vis-à-vis “cold” fusion, Kennedy simply adopts the party line of the leading Anglo-American scientific and political institutions, for which it is a non-subject. Since the spring of 1989, discussion of cold fusion has been virtually taboo in the Anglo-American realm, and the two electrochemists who first discovered the phenomenon, Martin Fleischmann from Britain and Stanley Pons were hounded into exile from the United States, and now conduct their research, with Japanese funding, in southern France.

But here again, there is a remarkable counter-trend. As *Preparing for the 21st Century* was soaring to the bestseller charts in Germany, articles were appearing in the press in neighboring France, portraying cold fusion as an option that might be able to solve the energy problems of humanity in the next century.

Perhaps the most egregious example of this inquisition-by-omission against scientific-technological progress, is Kennedy’s blacking out of space exploration. He obviously is not a latter-day Rip Van Winkle, and has lived to see the remarkable effects of John F. Kennedy’s space program, Russian space developments.

In this respect, perhaps the most astonishing chapter in his book is that on the former Soviet Union. Presuming to

profile Russian scientific capacities, he never mentions Russian space efforts. This is analogous to a doctor presuming to do a comprehensive check-up on a patient and “forgetting” that the patient has a heart or brain. Here yet again, the contrasting image has been projected in the western media, for example, with a German television broadcast May 18, portraying the combined Russian space and military programs as bringing together “the largest reservoir of untapped scientific concepts for future technologies . . . a treasure house of scientific know-how,” that could massively benefit

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the entire world if judiciously nurtured and helped.

One can only draw the conclusion that Kennedy is in a panic, over the effects of recent decades’ developments in space exploration on his premises. Indeed, what would prospects for the next millennium look like, if a number of governments were to seriously commit themselves to exploration and eventual colonization of Mars, which was taken up by scientists at a meeting in Wiesbaden, Germany, during May? In Russian scientific circles, the view is frequently expressed that man’s ability to survive is one and the same with a commitment to space exploration and eventual colonization. In the United States, we have the legacy of German scientists such as the late Krafft Ehricke, who dedicated his life to an “extraterrestrial imperative,” that man’s future necessarily depended on the colonization and development of outer space.

Of course, Kennedy never even mentions various “directed energy” technologies involved in both the Strategic Defense Initiative program, and in the Russian version SDI—which military-related technologies have also been researched in France, Israel, and others recently.

So, we see quite concretely that Kennedy has built his case on fraud. Those wishing to survive and prosper in the next century need only draw strength from, and fight for the realization of, the technological breakthroughs indicated in the previous few paragraphs, to construct a counter-vision of the coming millennium.

## Who will inherit the earth?

Kennedy’s problem is compounded by the fact that he is a committed backer of the “global financial system,” and his 21st-century options are all defined by the preservation of that system. For him, the International Monetary Fund is the hero of the international trading and financial system. If Africa and Ibero-America are being strangled by debt, it’s essentially their own fault. Those who don’t master the ways of “the market” will be “losers”: “The reality nowadays is that any government which offends international finance’s demand for unrestricted gain—by increasing personal taxes, for example, or by raising fees on financial transactions—will find its capital has fled and its currency weakened. . . . The message is clear: if you do not follow the rules of the market, your economy will suffer.” Certain categories of human beings, like the aged, could become obsolete, under the financial regime of the future: “In countries where more and more expensive techniques are being used to prolong the lives of those *over 75*, the question is whether these resources might be better invested elsewhere, such as in preventive medicine for the very young or improved educational facilities” (emphasis in original).

Options for Africa’s salvation are excluded for the simple reason that Africa “cannot pay.” “Poorer countries simply can’t pay for large irrigation schemes,” he writes. Notably for the case of Africa and other parts of the developing world, there have been proposals devised by Lyndon LaRouche and his collaborators, and in previous years by such interests as the Mitsubishi Research group in Japan, for a series of “great projects” such as river management and agro-industrial development. In Kennedy’s universe, this potential is axiomatically excluded, both on financial and on “ecological” grounds. Were China and India to really develop, he insists, this would have “appalling consequences for their environments” and would “also threaten the earth’s overall atmosphere.” He quotes one expert: “China’s industrial ambitions . . . pose a threat to the planet.”

Ultimately, Kennedy’s is a pagan world of the usurer. At this year’s Davos seminar, he argued that the West was threatened by the fact that populations in North Africa, with access to television, have been watching the U.S. shows such as “Dallas” and “Dynasty,” and so badly desire what they see there, that they will do everything, including migrating northwards, to acquire such benefits.

The fact is, the last thing desired by those in the developing world seeking progress and a better life, is to emulate a greed-driven North American degenerate. From the standpoint of Christianity—and the other great faiths—Paul Kennedy, and those who think like him, might do well to ponder what Jesus Christ meant, in the Sermon on the Mount, when He said, “The meek shall inherit the earth.” If the human race survives this extremely grave period, the “winners” will not be those who think like the author of *Preparing for the Twenty-First Century*.