

# Russian farm crisis proves that Worldwatch Institute is lying

by Paul Gallagher

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## State of the World 1994: A Worldwatch Institute Report on Progress Toward a Sustainable Society

by Lester R. Brown et al.

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An unprecedented attack on the populations of the Third World is taking place in 1994, centered upon the United Nations World Population Conference to be held in September in Cairo, Egypt. The new barrage of malthusian propaganda about a population explosion comes at a time when the populations of all the advanced industrial nations are actually declining or about to fall, and their work forces are becoming too small to support the elderly.

This attack is being opposed from the Third World by the African Academy of Sciences (see *EIR*, Jan. 7 and Jan. 28, 1994), and worldwide by political forces collaborating with Lyndon LaRouche and his movement.

The drive to coerce Third World nations to enter formal agreements now, to stop their population growth at a predetermined limit within less than 40 years, is being led by a powerful non-governmental organization, the Worldwatch Institute. Worldwatch is effectively part of the U.N. apparatus, but its activities are funded by half a dozen oligarchical foundations—including the Mellon, Dodge, and MacArthur trusts—and its new report, *State of the World 1994*, is funded and circulated by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. Worldwatch has been run since its founding in 1974 by former U.S. Department of Agriculture official Lester Brown.

This assault is based upon the most terrific frauds. The grossest one is the claim that *world production of grain, fish, meat, and milk products has reached its natural limits*, and that further increases of even insignificant size, can only be wrung out of nature with great difficulty and destructiveness.

Worldwatch calls this supposed natural limit “carrying capacity,” and is setting the following agenda for the Cairo

conference: All nations must agree to conform to “national carrying capacity studies” financed by the World Bank and enforced by World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) “conditionality” of credit; they must stop population growth within a ceiling determined by “national carrying capacity.”

As Lester Brown states it with particular brutality, “If people know that large families will bring more hunger, and even mass starvation, they may well decide to shift to smaller families.” Brown continues that the “national carrying capacity” projections will give governments “the trade-off between family size and consumption levels.”

As we shall show, the potential *increases in food production in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus alone*, dwarf the “natural upper limits” of food production which Worldwatch claims to have determined, and which have been lent “scientific” prestige in recent statements by the British Royal Society and the U.S. National Academy of Science.

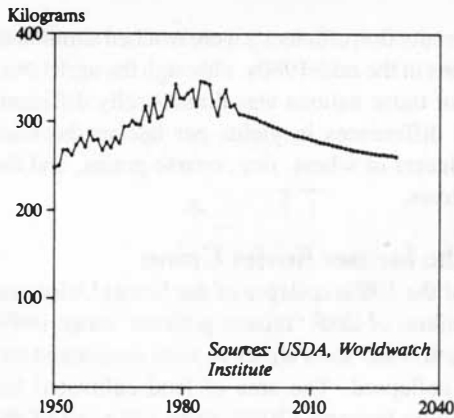
## An act of God?

Worldwatch’s claim could be paraphrased as, “God doesn’t want us to grow any more food.” The report even attempts to pinpoint 1984 as the year when “God” made his decision clear, since world food production has grown very little since then. To which the appropriate question is: “Which god are you worshipping?”

To establish the context: Total worldwide grain production, which also underlies production of animal protein, is stagnating at about 1.7 billion tons per year. *EIR* estimates that about 3 billion tons of grain per year is needed to allow an adequate diet for the entire human population.

Since the early 1980s, as farmers’ real incomes have been cut in the world’s major producing nations, the use of irrigation has not risen since 1984; total land in cultivation has fallen; government and trade treaty rules have taken about 20 million acres out of cultivation to reduce non-existent “surpluses”; and total fertilizer use has not risen since 1989. Since 1990, worldwide grain production per person has dropped by 11%.

About 10% of world grain is produced in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, although their production has fallen



**Figure 10-6. World Grain Output Per Person, 1950-93, With Projections to 2030**

Worldwatch Director Lester Brown has set an agenda for the upcoming Cairo Conference on world population: He wants the Third World to accept his unscientific claptrap about the “natural carrying capacity” of the planet, and agree to curb the growth of their populations. The Worldwatch Institute’s calculation (see inset) of world grain output per person, 1950-93, with projection to 2030. The potential for increased food production in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus alone demolishes the institute’s fraudulent projections.



by 15% under “shock therapy” since 1989. In these countries alone, large increases (7-8%) in world grain and food production could be realized. These increases would contribute to reducing the danger of war and civil war among and within the nations of the former Soviet Union.

### The ‘carrying capacity’ fraud

Lester Brown states in the introduction to *State of the World* that Worldwatch is moving to set the agenda for the Cairo conference. This agenda, “carrying capacity,” is the direct application of *management of animal populations* in a game park, to populations of human beings endowed with reason, science, and art. The report’s first chapter says, “A telling example of carrying capacity involved the introduction of 29 reindeer to St. Matthew Island in the Bering Sea . . . the herd expanded to 6,000 by 1963. The following winter, however, the population crashed.”

The claim then follows, that human interaction with the environment is only “a more complicated example,” that “we have surpassed the planet’s carrying capacity” already! This is supposedly determined by the human population’s consumption of “earth’s net primary productivity (NPP),” a function of global photosynthesis by plants. Such quackery does not even account for the existence of fossil fuels, which release the energy of millions of years of photosynthesis

(including through fertilizer applied to crops).

The concept of “carrying capacity” is not only racist, but also represents extraordinary ignorance of human physical economy, in which technology of food production is a crucial measure of human progress to higher population densities. “Carrying capacity” is the diametric opposite of Lyndon LaRouche’s breakthrough in physical economy, which measures economies by *potential relative population density*, a function of human scientific discovery and technology of production, which is merely served by consumption. This breakthrough is now being recognized by scientific societies in Russia and China as well as the Third World.

### The population growth fraud

The Worldwatch report wants to make the malthusian claim that human population is growing geometrically, and food production arithmetically or not at all. It claims that world population will double “before 2050,” growing at 90 million per year and rising. It also *overstates* many nations’ actual populations: Brazil’s is claimed to be 153 million, for example; the actual 1990 census figure was 134 million. In fact, Bureau of Census figures show that the annual world population increase reached 80 million per year already in 1970; grew slowly to 85 million per year; and since the late 1980s has been falling back toward 80 million per year.

Human population has been growing *arithmetically* for more than 20 years, while *potential* food production has expanded *geometrically*.

The arithmetic rate of population growth itself is now falling in worldwide depression. Worldwatch reports that per capita income has been falling since the 1980s, along with food prices, even though per capita food production is falling. In western Europe and Japan, populations are stagnating or falling. In other major Asian countries, growth rates are falling toward 1% per year. Relatively rapid growth, but at a declining rate, remains only in some parts of the Mideast, Africa, and South America, none of which has yet reached the European population density of 1840. In the Balkans, Russia, and other nations of the former Soviet Union, population and life expectancy are falling. The human race is not far removed from zero population growth, after 30 years of “post-industrial” policies and International Monetary Fund (IMF) suppression of economic growth.

Does smaller family size mean more household consumption (Worldwatch’s most basic claim)? Look at the United States since 1960 (see *EIR*, Jan. 18, 1994). Average U.S. household size, nearly 4 persons in 1960, has now fallen to 2.6 persons—an average household so small it can hardly be called a family anymore. But per-capita consumption, far from benefitting from shrinking family size, has fallen since 1970 in most major categories of the family “market basket.” The post-industrial economic depression has caused *both* the falling family size and the shrinking family market baskets.

This is emphasized implicitly in the African Academy of Sciences’ January 1994 opposition to the Cairo conference. The Academy stated that *inadequate* fertility and *insufficient* population growth were threatening Africa’s potential to resume growth at any time in the future.

### **Outrageous claims about food**

The most outrageous Worldwatch claims are their calculations of world food production’s supposed “natural limits.” These consist of saying that since production of grain has grown at only 10 million tons per year since 1989, it can *never* grow by more than 10-12 million tons per year. This, despite the fact that from 1950-85 world grain production grew nearly 5% per year, much faster than population growth, until the drop in farmers’ income hit. The claim is an updated version of the infamous 1972 *Limits to Growth* book of the Club of Rome. That report is today acknowledged to be fraudulent even by Club of Rome members (see *EIR*, Dec. 17, 1993, p. 16).

On the basis of claiming that grain production cannot increase, Worldwatch further claims that fish farming cannot be expanded and that meat production can only fall worldwide. Their claim is illustrated in graph on page 31. Obviously, under such assumptions, the population density of nations would fall dramatically.

Furthermore, the report fraudulently claims that “natural

limits” of food production efficiency were reached simultaneously in all nations in the mid-1980s, although the agricultural productivity of those nations was dramatically different, with 100-300% differences in yields per hectare between the leading producers of wheat, rice, coarse grains, and the backward producers.

### **The case of the former Soviet Union**

In the case of the 1980s collapse of the Soviet Union and the disastrous failure of IMF “reform policies” since 1989, both land cultivation and such inputs as farm equipment and fertilizers have collapsed. The area of land cultivated has fallen by 25 million hectares (20%) since 1981, all of the drop occurring in Russia itself. The use of fertilizer has dropped 60% since 1988 in Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan taken together. All other inputs (gasoline, trucks, machinery) have shrunk by 15-30% since 1989. Roads and rails for moving agricultural produce have decayed without maintenance.

The Worldwatch report refers to this *policy-made* agricultural collapse only once in its book-length report, and attributes it to—soil erosion! Is God particularly determined that Russians not grow any more food?

Russia and the world have lost 30 million tons of annual grain production since 1988, in this collapse brought on by combined catastrophic economic failures of both communism and “free trade” policies. This is 15% of the average 1980s crop level, which was never consistent or reliable. All livestock production has fallen dramatically; meat, milk, and egg production have all fallen by 20%; milling of flour and bread production are down by more than 10%.

The magnitude and speed of the economic crisis deepened by free trade renders ridiculous any claim that “natural limits” or “carrying capacity” have robbed the human race of this food.

The average yield of grain per hectare in Russia is now about 1.7 tons—it has fallen only 5%. In Ukraine the average yield is more than 3 tons, and has not dropped, but in Belarus and Kazakhstan the figure is lower than that of Russia. The worldwide average grain yield, however, is 2.6 tons per hectare, approximately the productivity level of India, or slightly higher. Russian farming is historically below this level due to lack of transport and water infrastructure, very low effective fertilizer use, scarce and poorly maintained machinery, collective farming, and slowness to introduce new technology. Ukrainian farming is above the world average, a fact which in itself demolishes the Worldwatch frauds.

If agricultural yields in Russia, Ukraine, and Kazakhstan were merely at the world level, that would increase grain production by about 100 million tons annually. If land cultivation were only returned to early 1980s levels, the increase would be 120 million tons per year. If these three nations reached an average productivity in grain equal to that of Ukraine, the increase would be almost 150 million tons of

grain per year.

If this improvement were to take place over 10 years of agricultural investment, the *yearly average* increase would be 12-15 million tons per year. This alone is larger than the total *maximum* yearly increase in grain production Worldwatch will allow *might* be possible.

Moreover, this is just the minimum practicable increase in grain yields. There are far greater possibilities for increasing grain output, even without large-scale irrigation. Consider the scale of increase in wheat and coarse grains output from the former Soviet Union (FSU) if average per hectare yields were raised to those obtaining for rainfed grain cultivation in western Europe.

Western European wheat yields are 276% higher than the FSU (5.14 tons per hectare compared to 1.86 tons per hectare). Coarse grain yields in western Europe are likewise 276% higher than the FSU (4.92 tons per hectare compared to 1.78). If the total FSU 1980 wheat and coarse grain cultivated area, 119.4 million hectares, could be brought up to levels of western European per hectare yields, then another 383.7 million tons (201.7 million tons of wheat and 182.0 million tons of coarse grains) could be produced in the FSU, as compared to 1993 levels.

This grain harvest increase in the former Soviet Union alone would increase total world wheat production 36%, and world coarse grain production 23% above 1993 levels.

### Lies about new farm technologies

There is more to the fraud of the Worldwatch agenda for the Cairo population conference. Worldwatch also claims that "the backlog of unused agricultural technology is shrinking in industrial and developing countries alike, slowing the rise of cropland productivity . . . with many of the world's farmers already using advanced yield-raising technologies." This claim is truly incredible with regard to farmers in Africa, South America, and many populous nations of Asia, especially China.

The most important of these broad technological advances are those of irrigation and water management. Worldwatch acknowledges that these still account for only 17% of farming worldwide, and have not increased since the early 1980s. Worldwatch director Brown also admits that increased yields from fertilizer use are heavily dependent on irrigation. But he claims that "lack of suitable sites for irrigation dams" constrains further expansion of irrigation, and that desalinating seawater is not considered a likely development by the British Royal Society or the National Academy of Sciences.

Here, truly, Mr. Brown's "God" has become very heavy-handed indeed (the Invisible Hand).

In fact, the best estimate from veteran agronomic researchers into both extensive farming and "protected agriculture" (hydroponics, aeroponics, and other forms of controlled environment, high-yield farming) is that two-thirds of

the off-the-shelf technologies for increasing surface area, or cubic area, yields of fruits, vegetables, fish, as well as field grains and livestock output, are, in effect, *not in use*.

The magazine *21st Century Science & Technology* published an analysis, "Advanced Technologies Can Feed Billions" (Fall 1993), taking apart Brown's assertion in 1993 that "most known means of raising food output are already in wide use." Three examples of developed, ready-to-go technologies given by the *21st Century* survey are: 1) "space travel"-style controlled environment food production; 2) combined fish and hydroponic production; 3) farming "by the foot."

The "space travel" category of farm methods refers to any of the greenhouse, hydroponics, "plasticulture," or similar methods of protecting and "babying" crops with custom-designed nutrients and growing conditions so that yields can be as much as 30-50 times greater than those from extensive farming. Japan, the Netherlands, and California specialize in this. Applied widely, the techniques could "make the deserts bloom" around the world.

Second, controlled environment fish tank production has reached the state of development, where even the fish effluent can be cycled back into hydroponics, for a "balanced meal" high cubic meter output of both vegetable biomass and fish tonnage per facility.

For high-yield extensive farming, tractors can be equipped with computerized tracking equipment, to take signals from satellite data, so that customized fertilizer and tailor-made seeds can be applied "by the square foot" in the field, based on previous soil surveys.

If farming the world over were improved by more energy and water, and upgraded to include more and more modern technologies, the world would easily produce delectable foods for billions more people.

### Worshipping God, or Gaia?

The entire basis of the Cairo world population conference, then, is a falsehood and willfully intended to force down already-falling human fertility levels to zero growth; notwithstanding, it is backed by the U.S. State Department and various scientific academies herded by those of Britain and the United States.

If Lester Brown's "God of natural limits" does not wish the nations of the Earth to produce any more food, we may find Brown's sin in the Book of Deuteronomy, Chapter 7: "And He will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: He will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine. . . . There shall not be male or female barren among you. . . . Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the Lord thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude." But if man worship a false, pagan god instead, reminds Deuteronomy, "the Lord shall scatter you, and ye shall be left few in number."