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매일 하루 10분 기사를 보면서 원어민의 방송을 들어보세요.

04-21-2010 17:24



Happy Earth Day! And Please, Live,

By Casey Lartigue Jr.

The annual Earth Day celebration (marking its 40th anniversary today) makes one point clear about the issue of overpopulation: There are too many people who think there are too many people.

Doomsayers have long warned that Earth would soon be overburdened with too many mouths to feed. Despite a continuous rise in living standards and continued success in feeding more people with less land and labor, alarmists continue to bombard us with deadlines and dire warnings.

"Our numbers are burdensome to the world, which can hardly support us," warned the theologian Tertullian of Carthage. The keynote speaker at an Earth Day rally? No. He was talking in the second century about the 190 million people he believed were rapidly depleting the Earth's resources.

When British economist-cum-clergyman Thomas Malthus warned against overpopulation in 1798, there were fewer than one billion people on the planet. There were 3.5 billion people on the planet in 1968 when Paul Ehrlich hysterically warned in "The Population Bomb" that "hundreds of millions" would starve in the 1970s and 1980s.

No such thing happened. Widespread famines now occur in areas that are not very populated, are in the midst of war or where dictators reign. Could Tertullian, Malthus or Ehrlich have ever imagined Earth today with almost seven billion humans inhabiting it? There you have the crux of the population control arguments. How many is too many — and who decides what is too many?

Rather than seeing the increased population as human ingenuity delaying death, doomsayers present charts and graphs highlighting potential catastrophe. Like cult leaders predicting that the world will end on a particular date, doomsayers look to the future with fear. You can extrapolate just about any trend into disaster, if you ignore reality.

For example, has anyone else noticed that the average temperature in Seoul has gone up since January? At this rate we are sure to burn up by December 2011. Extrapolating like this about population and resources without considering that humans will always create and adapt is similar to not realizing that the Earth will spin us back into a different season.

As economist Julian Simon argued: The ultimate resource is people. The "natural" resources to create the modern conveniences we enjoy today have existed since the beginning of time. They were useless resources until people — often motivated by greed — used ingenuity to turn those raw materials into life-improving conveniences and life-saving technologies. Even those inventions that have helped us push back death are seen as a threat because they allegedly cause "global cooling," "global warming" or "climate change."

Despite the numerous advancements, some continue to insist that doom is just around the corner. "Population Outgrows Food, Scientists Warn the World." This could have been the latest report from an environmental group faxed in to the New York Times. It was actually a New York Times front-page headline on Sept. 15, 1948. The American Society for the Advancement of Science (ASAS) warned in 1994 that domestic oil wells would go dry in twenty years and that America would no longer be able to export food by the year 2025. In reality, we are constantly warned about the future threat of starvation from overpopulation, even as overweight people join health clubs and drink diet shakes. Some governments pay farmers to destroy produce or not to farm at all to keep prices high and just about all governments impose duties and taxes on agricultural imports.

So we've reached another Earth Day, with life for the poor surpassing that of the



수술없이 몰래 [돌.출.입 비밀교정]



80kg 주부 48kg 쪽~ 뺐어요. 비법은??

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affluent from yesteryear. Yet the dire warnings and demands continue. The unofficial kick off for Earth Day is Earth Hour, held in March, when people demonstrate their commitment to the environment by turning off their lights for one hour. Don Boudreaux of George Mason University suggests that Earth Hour's founders (the World Wildlife Fund) should ``create a special Lifetime Achievement Award for North Korea's Dear Leader, Kim Jong-il."

Why? North Korea celebrates ``Earth Hour" year around.

We can only speculate what that one light on in North Korea may be. Kim Jong-il watching his dancing girls perform?

Whatever the case may be, the photo is striking. Those of us in Seoul may sometimes regret the bustling activity. Cars everywhere. People everywhere. Bright lights on 24 hours a day. Seoul is crowded, not overpopulated. If things had gone differently in the 1950s, then we might be using candles as they still do in North Korea, wishing one day that we could have Neon Light Hour.

The writer, a former policy analyst with the Cato Institute and formerly host of the Casey Lartigue Show on XM 169 in Lanham, Md., is now a freelance education consultant based in South Korea. He can be reached at www.caseylartigue.blogspot.com.

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