

SAVE \$60 AND NO HOME PHONE REQUIRED
FiOS® TV + INTERNET

\$74⁹⁹ /month for first 6 mos.
 \$84.99/mo. for mos. 7-24.
 2-yr agmt req'd. Plus taxes and fees.

HOME MEDIA DVR FREE FOR 3 MONTHS

ASTRO BOY ON FIOS ON DEMAND

verizon

Get FIOS

[home](#) > this article

Search this site Search WWW

Randall O'Toole misses the fine print

By Tom DeWeese
web posted May 10, 2010

At a recent property rights conference in Bozeman, Montana, anti-Smart Growth spokesman Randall O'Toole was taking part in a panel discussion when he was asked a question concerning my opposition to Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development. Said the questioner, "DeWeese calls the sustainability doctrine 'a complete agenda of control,' that has been largely embraced by most aspects of the government." O'Toole was asked to comment on that.

O'Toole responded by downplaying the significance of the UN and Agenda 21. Whether it is true or not, he said, it is not relevant in the process of addressing the issues, and in fact, will most likely diminish credibility because it starts sounding like a "black helicopter" conspiracy. Instead, O'Toole said, the focus should be that "they are taking away our rights." He then said, "it really isn't the UN. It is our own urban planning profession and the American Planning Association."

O'Toole's comments have actually enlightened me to an issue that has been a puzzle for years. Why do so many in the Washington, D.C. conservative/libertarian movement ignore Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development? I've witnessed their passion to oppose the combined scams dealing with global warming and Cap and Trade. Sustainable Development is totally based on the premise that global warming is destroying the earth and that reducing green house gases through sustainable policy is the only way to prevent it.

Of course, O'Toole, with his ties to the CATO Institute and the Reason Foundation, aggressively opposes Smart Growth policy, which is one-fourth of Sustainable Development policy – yet he never mentions it. How can he be so involved in parts of the puzzle and yet leave out the major pieces? Now he tells us – to do otherwise would make him and his cohorts seem "silly" to the powers in government. We wouldn't want that. O'Toole wants to be taken "seriously!" So, he will just deal with the immediate policy in front of him and ignore its roots. Got it.

Well, I beg to disagree with Randall O'Toole on so many levels. Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development are about much more than planning commissions and development. It is an entire philosophy that encompasses every aspect of our lives.

[Home](#)

[Site Map](#)

[E-mail ESR](#)

[ESR's blog](#)



Send a link to this story

Get weekly updates about new issues of ESR!

e-mail:

- Subscribe**
- Unsubscribe**

verizon

SAVE \$60 AND NO HOME PHONE REQUIRED
FiOS® TV + INTERNET

\$74⁹⁹ /month for first 6 mos.
 \$84.99/mo. for mos. 7-24.
 2-yr agmt req'd. Plus taxes and fees.

HOME MEDIA DVR FREE FOR 3 MONTHS

To ignore Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development is to disregard the *reasons* behind and the *effects* of the policy in our daily lives. For example, O'Toole says we should just "focus on explaining the importance of our property rights."

Here's one problem with that "simple" approach. Today's public school education curriculum no longer teaches the importance and virtues of property rights. So chances are we will find ourselves dealing with planning commissions, city councils and even congressmen who have absolutely no concept of property rights. So simply arguing property rights in a council meeting will label you as a "tin hat" just as fast as bringing up the UN – in fact, I've seen it happen.

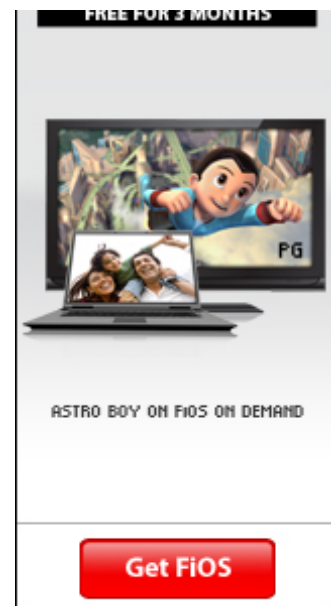
To simply focus on development policy without the reasons behind it leaves one puzzled as to why government would want to implement policy that makes no economic sense. In deed O'Toole's remarks reveal his failure to grasp the root of such policy. In a recent interview, O'Toole said, "The big problem is political. We've had this huge anti-automobile, anti-sprawl movement for the past several decades, and it has just been building up. The Obama Administration has bought into it."

Those comments show a complete lack of understanding by O'Toole about where such dangerous policies come from. What is this anti-sprawl "movement" that has been building up? Ignore the UN and you miss the thousands of non-governmental organizations (NGO's) that operate within its structure that are the root of that "movement." That is where the policies are conceived and written. It isn't just some magical ignorance on the part of planners. The NGO's don't think the UN is a far-out conspiracy – it's their bread and butter to enforce this outrageous policy.

Further, ignore the UN and its Agenda 21 policy and you miss events like the UN's 2005 World Environment Day in San Francisco, where Mayors from around the world were hosted and recruited to impose Sustainable Development in their communities. The Mayors were asked to sign two documents to pledge their commitment to sustainable policies, to be implemented on a specific time table. These Mayors didn't think this was some kind of black-helicopter conspiracy – they signed the documents and are now implementing the policies.

Right behind them was the U.S. Conference of Mayors, which met in Chicago just one week after the UN San Francisco meeting, focusing on the same Agenda 21/Sustainable Development policies. Unlike Randall O'Toole, the largest and most official organization in the nation representing Mayors had no trouble supporting the "conspiracy" of the UN.

And then there is ICLEI – the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives. ICLEI helped write Agenda 21 and now works to implement the policy on the local level. At least 544 American cities now pay dues to ICLEI for it to help implement Agenda 21 in their cities. ICLEI is quite proud of its UN connection and to Agenda 21 and says so clearly on its website at www.iclei.org. If you want to fight Smart Growth in those 544 American cities then it is quite necessary to take on ICLEI and that means exposing its ties to the UN. How, then, Mr. O'Toole is it helpful to just tell them they are violating property rights?



Finally, the full concept of Sustainable Development is rooted in what we call the three E's – Social Equity, Economic Prosperity, and Ecological Integrity. To simply focus on the planning aspects of Sustainable Development is to miss the entire social aspect of it.

Another term for social equity is the "Third Way." The term is used to explain Sustainable Development as an economic scheme different from Capitalism and Socialism. In the comparison, Sustainable Development is defined in near utopian terms as Capitalism is dismissed as ownership by the wealthy elite which care nothing for protecting the environment; and Socialism, according to the Sustainablists, is inefficient and run by a political elite.

Instead, say the Sustainablists, the third approach is "anticipatory," which controls problems today to avoid them tomorrow. That, they say, is accomplished through strict environmental regulations, financing "green" industries, and planning for future generations. And that doesn't simply entail local development, but a comprehensive plan to control every aspect of our lives, from population control to food intake, to health care.

Sustainable Development's Social Equity plank is based on a demand for something called "social justice," a phrase first coined by Karl Marx. Social Equity means that individuals must give up selfish wants for the needs of the common good or the "community." Through such a policy, everyone has the right to a job with a good wage, a right to health care and a right to housing. To assure those rights, wealth must be redistributed. Property ownership is a social injustice which brings wealth to some. Business and property are to be controlled by all of society. How can a self-proclaimed property rights advocate like Randall O'Toole simply dismiss or ignore such policy, especially when it is now entrenched in every government planning decision?

The third plank of Sustainable Development is Economic Prosperity – implemented through the creation of Public/Private Partnerships (PPPs). I call PPPs government-sanctioned monopolies because they create an elite of specially chosen businesses that are granted "non-compete" clauses and Comprehensive Development Agreements to guarantee profits. That is not free enterprise. Incidentally, two of the most powerful forces in the nation working to implement PPPs are Randal O'Toole's CATO Institute and the Reason Foundation, both heavily funded by corporations which are the direct beneficiaries of PPPs. Could that be the reason he refuses to use the term Sustainable Development in a derogatory way?

All of these issues are equal parts of the UN's Agenda 21 and its policy called Sustainable Development. Leave out one part and you cause confusion and lack of understanding. Yet, O'Toole says discussing Agenda 21 and Sustainable Development "is not relevant." And that is why we are losing the fight against top-down government control - lack of understanding of where the policy is coming from. If O'Toole and his partners at CATO and Reason would join our forces to expose Agenda 21 and the evils that come out of the UN, local civic officials

would stop laughing about black-helicopter conspiracies and unite to stop it.

If you don't know who or what you are fighting, you are already at a disadvantage. Mr. O'Toole, you said you don't care if you are right – jut that you win. Well, I don't want to just win a skirmish; I want to completely defeat them.

ESR

Tom DeWeese is the President of the [American Policy Center](#) and the Editor of [The DeWeese Report](#). [The DeWeese Report](#) is now available online, for more information [click here](#).



Send a link to this story

[Home](#)

© 1996-2010, Enter Stage Right and/or its creators. All rights reserved.

