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To: list@theobjectivestandard.com
Subject: Exploit-the-Earth Day
Date: Wednesday, April 21, 2010 11:29:26 AM

The Objective Standard

A Journal of Culture and Politics

Op-ed from *The Objective Standard*

On April 22, Celebrate Exploit-the-Earth Day
by Craig Biddle

Because Earth Day is intended to further the cause of environmentalism—and because environmentalism is an anti-human ideology—on April 22, those who care about human life should not celebrate Earth Day; they should celebrate Exploit-the-Earth Day.

Exploiting the Earth—using the raw materials of nature for one’s life-serving purposes—is a basic requirement of human life. Either man takes the Earth’s raw materials—such as trees, petroleum, aluminum, and atoms—and transforms them into the requirements of his life, or he dies. To live, man must produce the goods on which his life depends; he must produce homes, automobiles, computers, electricity, and the like; he must seize nature and use it to his advantage. There is no escaping this fact. Even the allegedly “noble” savage must pick or perish. Indeed, even if a person produces nothing, insofar as he remains alive he indirectly exploits the Earth by parasitically surviving off the exploitative efforts of others.

According to environmentalism, however, man should not use nature for his needs; he should keep his hands off “the goods”; he should leave nature alone, come what may. Environmentalism is not concerned with human health and wellbeing—neither ours nor that of generations to come. If it were, it would advocate the one social system that ensures that the Earth and its elements are used in the most productive, life-serving manner possible: capitalism.

Capitalism is the only social system that recognizes and protects each individual’s right to life, liberty, property, and the pursuit of happiness. Under capitalism, people are fully free to choose their goals, to identify the means of attaining them, and to act on their best judgment. Accordingly, those who recognize that in order to live well they and their loved ones need abundant energy, clean air, clean water, and the like tend to use the available resources *rationaly*, with an eye to the distant future. Further, under capitalism, if a person (or corporation) spews toxins onto someone’s land, or poisons his water supply, or in any other way violates his property rights, the offender is held accountable in a court of law. But, so long as a person does not violate anyone’s rights, he is free to act in accordance with his basic means of living: the judgment of his mind.

Environmentalism, of course, does not and cannot advocate capitalism, because if people are free to act on their judgment, they will strive to produce and prosper; they will transform the raw materials of nature into the requirements of human life; they will exploit the Earth and live.

Environmentalism rejects the basic moral premise of capitalism—the idea that people should be free to act on their judgment—because it rejects a more fundamental idea on which capitalism rests: the idea that the requirements of human life constitute the standard of moral value. While the standard of value underlying capitalism is human life (meaning, that which is necessary for human beings to live and prosper), the standard of value underlying environmentalism is nature untouched by man.

The basic principle of environmentalism is that nature (i.e., “the environment”) has *intrinsic* value—value in and of itself, value apart from and irrespective of the requirements of human life—and that this value must be protected from its only adversary: man. Rivers must be left free to flow unimpeded by human dams, which divert natural flows, alter natural landscapes, and disrupt wildlife habitats. Glaciers must be left free to grow or shrink according to natural causes, but any human activity that might affect their size must be prohibited. Naturally generated carbon dioxide (such as that emitted by oceans and volcanoes) and naturally generated methane (such as that emitted by swamps and termites) may contribute to the greenhouse effect, but such gasses must not be produced by man. The globe may warm or cool naturally (e.g., via increases or decreases in sunspot activity), but man must not do anything to affect its temperature.

In short, according to environmentalism, if *nature* affects nature, the effect is *good*; if *man* affects nature, the effect is *evil*.

Stating the essence of environmentalism in such stark terms raises some illuminating questions: If the good is nature untouched by man, how is man to live? What is he to eat? What is he to wear? Where is he to reside? How can man do *anything* his life requires without altering, harming, or destroying some aspect of nature? In order to nourish himself, man must consume meats, fruits, and vegetables. In order to make clothing, he must skin animals, pick cotton, manufacture polyester, and the like. In order to build a house—or even a hut—he must cut down trees, dig up clay, make fires, bake bricks, and so forth. Each and every action man takes to support or sustain his life entails the exploitation of nature. Thus, on the premise of environmentalism, man has no right to exist.

It comes down to this: Each of us has a choice to make. Will I recognize that man’s life is the standard of moral value—that the good is that which sustains and furthers human life—and thus that people have a moral right to use the Earth and its elements for their life-serving needs? Or will I accept that nature has “intrinsic” value—value in and of itself, value apart from and irrespective of human needs—and thus that people have no right to exist?

There is no middle ground here. Either human life is the standard of moral value, or it is not. Either nature has intrinsic value, or it does not.

On April 22, make clear where you stand. Don't celebrate Earth Day; celebrate Exploit-the-Earth Day—and let your friends, family, and associates know why.

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Craig Biddle is the editor of [The Objective Standard](#) and the author of *Loving Life: The Morality of Self-Interest and the Facts that Support It*. He can be contacted at cbiddle@theobjectivestandard.com.

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