

productive African Americans, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, and others who proudly exalt their citizenship over their race and ethnicity. They genuflect before America's traditional civic culture. But the national motto of *e pluribus unum* is apparently Greek to Brimelow.

Where the author scores a bull's eye is in noting that contemporary immigration is helping feed a multiculturalism that at times seems to augur outright Balkanization. Something *is* undermining assimilation today. If race and culture aren't the culprit, what is? Policymakers should consider the issue of numbers and basic historical differences.

While Brimelow criticizes the family reunification provision in the landmark 1965 immigration act that gave rise, unintentionally, to unforeseen Latin and Asian chain migration, I believe the real shortcomings of our current system lie in its indifference to the numbers and preparedness of today's immigrants. After a great lull in immigration from the late-1920s through the mid-1960s, the 1965 act re-introduced mass immigration—to a society much different from the one that accepted immigrant waves around the turn of the century.

During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, America was industrializing. Today's immigration is the first wave to occur in the post-industrial era. To be sure, some scholars have exaggerated the comparatively low skills and educational levels of today's newcomers, because they mistakenly compare them to relatively high-skilled refugees who entered during the immigration lull. When current Fourth Wave immigrants are compared to Third Wave immigrants, the skills and educational levels of the two cohorts are broadly comparable. This is anything but reassuring, however. The economy today demands far higher skills and educational levels of workers than it did before World War I.

While some influential Republicans in the Senate and House appear to understand the need to dovetail immigrant numbers with their skills and educational preparedness, others may not. As recently as a May 9, 1995 speech to the Cato Institute, Dick Armey, the majority leader of the U.S. House of Representatives and a former economics professor, supported still higher levels of legal immigration to

the United States without any reference to improving our selection criteria.

Four major options are arrayed before policymakers today. One is immigration reform that would limit automatic family-member entries to spouses, children, and parents only, while putting greater weight on needed skills and educational qualities in selecting merit-based immigrants. Or, reform could tinker on the margins of the status quo. A third option would be to increase emphasis on race and culture when selecting immigrants. This may or may not include a moratorium on new arrivals. And a final choice would be to pursue the libertarian philosophy and allow a dramatic expansion of immigrant numbers.

Those who wish to use Brimelow's book as a guide to understanding the immigration issue should do so carefully. He is at his best in skewering a truly outdated system that rewards fraud and mendacity, while punishing capable applicants who obey the law. Readers will want to weigh carefully, however, the wisdom of Brimelow's focus on race, while keeping in mind that concerns about immigration are not necessarily racist or xenophobic.

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## GREEN WHINE

by Jesse Walker

*The War Against the Greens*  
By David Helvarg  
(Sierra Club Books: San Francisco)  
502 pages, \$25

David Helvarg's *The War Against the Greens* offers environmentalists a conspiracy theory to account for the populist backlash against their movement. Like many conspiracy theories, it contains some grains of truth. Many corporations do lobby for ecologically unsound policies. The Wise Use movement does sometimes front for these interests. There have indeed been several ugly violent attacks on environmental activists in the last few years.

But from these facts, Helvarg draws conclusions that are simply untenable. He never manages to demonstrate that the



## GOD AND LIBERTY

Allan Carlson

A tragedy of modern American environmentalism is its absorption of a mystic paganism, which has led to philosophical war against the whole of Christian civilization and Western humanism. A slender book entitled *The Holy Earth*, first published in 1915, offered a very different spiritualization of ecology, one bearing an authentic American accent. It deserves a fresh look.

The author, Liberty Hyde Bailey, was among the last of his countrymen claiming both a name and character that were authentically Yankee. Born in 1858 on an apple farm in western Michigan, Bailey was the son of a Vermont-reared father and a mother from the prominent Harrison family of Virginia. By the early 1890s, he had already emerged as the country's most important botanist and horticulturalist. His compendia on *The Plant Life of North America* and *The Cyclopedia of American Horticulture* remain classics in their fields. Offered the Chair of Practical and Experimental Horticulture at Cornell University in 1888, he moved to Ithaca, New York. Bailey eventually became Dean of Cornell's College of Agriculture, and a kind of legend.

He had the quirks once affectionately associated with the nation's professoriate. For years, Bailey maintained a weed garden next to his home, arguing that weeds were "nature's agents of conservation and reclamation" and "fellow-rovers in the pathways of life." He wrote essays in praise of the potato, criticizing European-trained chefs who despoiled

the tuber's clean taste with "imported and fabricated condiments and trivialities."

It was a time, one need remember, when half of all Americans still worked small farms, or lived in hamlets serving agricultural families. Depressions marked by plunging grain prices and credit squeezes had shaken this domain in the 1870s and 1890s. But country news was still national news, and Bailey's became a household name.

Between 1905 and 1928, he devoted much of his energy to encouraging the "Rural Civilization" that he believed was taking shape in the greater Mississippi Valley. Appointed in 1908 by President Theodore Roosevelt to chair the National Commission on Country Life, Bailey's subsequent report led to creation of the U.S. Extension Service, including its youth (or 4-H) and Homemakers components. He served as chief theorist of the Country Life Movement, organized a series of nature study centers to teach country children to know and love "the common things and experiences in [their] environment," and compiled large annual directories of rural leaders, called The Rural Uplook Service.

A lifelong pacifist and a foe of the League of Nations ("A superstate might grow into a supertyranny"), Bailey eschewed direct politics. "I am no radical," he explained. "I stand instead for the conservation of native values."

In the summer of 1914, Bailey embarked on a lecture trip to New Zealand. Aboard ship, "in the sweltering heat of the tropics," he drafted *The Holy Earth*, a questioning of humankind's fundamental relationship to the planet, and of the individual's bonds to community.

Bailey celebrated "the mothership of the earth," and acknowledged evolution as truth. But he denied that these conflicted with Christian revelation. Evolution, he insisted, was "the philosophy of the oneness in nature and the unity in living things," a system guided by God the Father:

Verily, then, the earth is divine, because man did not make it. We are here, part in the creation. We cannot escape. We are under obligation to take part and do our best living with each other and with all the creatures. We may not know the full plan, but that does not alter the relation.

It was also wrong, he said, to understand the evolutionary process as driven by ruthless competition. Rather, the primary qualities were cooperation and procreation: "The dependence of one being on another, success in leaving progeny—how accurate and how farseeing was Darwin!"

The farmer was the human side to the modern bond with the earth. The Creation was "biocentric," with forms of life proceeding upwardly and onwardly in a mighty plan of sequence. The true husbandman understood this process. He had a strong moral regard for his land, animals, and crops. He was the agent of society in guarding and subduing the surface of the earth. And he was the agent of God who made it. Man and nature, Bailey insisted, were not at odds: "The contest with nature is wholesome, particularly when pursued with sympathy and for mastery. It is worthy a being created in God's image."

Independent farmers were also critical to the preservation of democracy and liberty, forming "a natural corrective... against organization men, habitual reformers, and extremists." Like the writers gathered around Belloc and Chesterton, Bailey stressed "the very real importance of making it possible for an increasing proportion of the people to have close touch with the earth in their own rights and in their own names." But he grew hazy on the details.

Indeed, the contemporary reader is struck by Bailey's haphazard efforts at economics. He both celebrated technological advances in agriculture and lamented falling commodity prices, refusing to acknowledge their connection. When he finally did, the consequence was his withdrawal back into pure science, becoming by his death in 1954 a leading authority on the palms.

The importance of *The Holy Earth*, though, lay in its positive reconciliation of Christianity with Nature, of spirituality with science, and of ecology with civilization, within a moral vocabulary bearing native Yankee roots. In his last years, Bailey walked the Cornell campus as a kind of ghost, the eccentric legacy of an Agrarian Republic buried by the New Deal and World War II. He did leave, though, a vision of humankind and the natural world authentically bound to America, one still more suited to our place and time than the Gaea worship of the new pagans.

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Wise Use movement organized any of the violence he documents, though he does his best to make up for this with innuendo. He barely distinguishes between the Wise Use and property-rights movements. And sometimes he spins theories that are a little—well—odd. Take this explanation of Korean religious leader Sun Myung Moon's financial support for anti-enviro causes: "A Japanese-owned pulpmill in Sitka, Alaska had been the main beneficiary of below-cost

logging in the Tongass National Forest until late 1993.... Also, the Mitsubishi corporation has been the main purchaser of raw logs from Weyerhaeuser, which now finds itself losing market share to finished paper products from Japan. The Japanese are also grazing beef cattle on public lands in Montana and are the main purchasers of Alaskan fish, including haddock and other species facing commercial extinction owing to overharvesting." Thus, "the Moonies' efforts

to help get Wise Use off the ground... seem designed to advance the economic cause of Moon's 'true nation' of Korea/Japan."

Mitsubishi...Moon...what's the difference? They've all got slanty eyes, right?

Despite this burst of Yellow Peril paranoia, the author's main target is the domestic corporate community. Helvarg argues that the Wise Use and property-rights movements are not grassroots uprisings but "Astroturf" movements created by big busi-