



Written by [Robert W. Lee](#) on October 22, 2021

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From Megatons to Microbes: Scaring Us Into the New World Order

This article originally appeared in the November 24, 1997 issue of The New American — 24 years ago this month. The article warned, “Where once we were menaced by megatons, the danger now supposedly comes from microbes — and familiar voices are insisting anew that only world government can save humanity from destruction.”

An abridged version of that article appears below. The graphics and photo captions are newly added, but the text of the article itself is the same as in the 1997 original printing except as indicated in a couple spots with graphics.



US Department of energy
US Department of energy

In the world of COVID-19, readers might be forgiven for viewing our 1997 warning as prophetic or clairvoyant. After all, freedom-eroding regulations from lockdowns to vaccine mandates are being imposed worldwide for the stated purpose of fighting COVID-19. And the threat of global governance for the ostensible purpose of imposing these and other controls (e.g., environmental) internationally is looming larger and larger.

In reality, of course, the late Robert W. Lee, longtime contributor to The New American and its predecessor publications who wrote this article, was able to project the lines because of his (and this magazine’s) understanding that a powerful cabal — in recent years often referred to as the Deep State — has worked for generations to scare us into global governance. That insidious strategy is now much further along than it was in 1997. Yet, today as then, the scheme can be exposed and stopped.

— The editors

For more than five decades, foreboding fear of death and destruction has been exploited to further the drive for world government. The principle is simple enough: Individuals become more inclined, sometimes even eager, to surrender freedom, resources, and national sovereignty once they have been persuaded that the alternative is suffering or annihilation.

From the bombing of Hiroshima at the end of World War II through the end of the “Cold War” — during which the “free” West and the communist East were portrayed as nuclear-armed antagonists prepared to unleash an apocalyptic nuclear conflict — the false alternatives offered by internationalists were world government or nuclear destruction. Unless the United States and other nations divested themselves of nuclear weapons and submitted to a centralized “peacekeeping” authority, the nuclear “arms race” would inevitably lead to the destruction of humanity.

In the late 1980s, as former adversaries were morphed virtually overnight into cooperative compatriots,



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the nuclear arms race lost much of its urgency. Accordingly, a new verse was added to the alarmist song book: “World government or environmental destruction!” In 1990, Earth Day suddenly became the holiest of political holidays. Buzzwords like “greenhouse effect,” “ozone depletion,” and “acid rain” became part of the popular vernacular. Similarly, pop entertainment reflected the new trend toward environmental alarmism, as green themes were injected into television programs, cartoons, and movies. The “crisis” may have changed, but the “solution” remained the same: World government, as foreshadowed at the 1992 UN “Earth Summit” in Rio de Janeiro.



Post-apocalyptic world: According to globalist fearmongers, failure to tackle “crises” that transcend national borders on the international level will lead to catastrophe. (*Photo credit: Bulgac/E+/GettyImagesPlus*)

In recent years, yet another alarmist refrain has been heard: “World government or pestilence!” This latest crisis requiring global management is the threat presented by supposedly new infectious diseases. Where once we were menaced by megatons, the danger now supposedly comes from microbes — and familiar voices are insisting anew that only world government can save humanity from destruction.

As a tool for manipulating public opinion, the threat of pestilence actually has an advantage over the earlier scare scenarios: Nuclear annihilation of humanity, while a horrifying prospect, is simply too abstract to have a visceral impact. The same is true of environmental collapse. But everybody has been sick and can individualize the horror of succumbing to an incurable disease. Thus, the pestilence scenario may have far more potential as a tool for selling the public on globalist “solutions.”

One illustration of the willingness of public policy elites to play off of media-generated public fears of infectious disease is provided by the Committee on International Science, Engineering, and Technology Policy (CISETP) of President Clinton’s National Science and Technology Council. A recent CISETP report noted that “the past few years have been marked by a recognition of renewed vulnerability to infectious diseases. Bestselling books and Hollywood thrillers have triggered public fascination with ‘new,’ deadly, and unpredictable microorganisms.” The report noted that protecting the health of the “global village” demands “a worldwide response,” and “recently, public discussion has been further focused on the global issue of emerging diseases by ... popular movies such as ‘Outbreak,’ starring Dustin Hoffman.”



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In *Outbreak*, an airborne virus that originated with an infected African monkey migrates to the U.S. and starts killing Americans at an epidemic rate. Hoffman plays Colonel Sam Daniels, head of the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Diseases and the Centers for Disease Control, who strives to contain and conquer the virus. Should he fail, the military is prepared to liquidate infected populations — a subplot intended to illustrate the supposed necessity of extreme measures in dealing with a crisis.

Outbreak is but one example of the recent epidemic of entertainment products peddling pestilence propaganda. In the television miniseries *Robin Cook's Invasion*, a latent virus that had lain dormant within humans for millennia is activated by a meteor shower. In the miniseries *Pandora's Clock*, an airliner bound for JFK Airport in New York has the misfortune to be carrying a passenger infected with a doomsday virus. The plane is not allowed to land, lest the virus be loosed, and the government plans to shoot the plane down instead — another effective pitch for the idea that crises must be dealt with through extreme measures.

CISETP's eagerness to cite *Outbreak* and similar entertainment products typifies a distressing willingness on the part of some public health officials to focus on lurid scenarios at some expense to sound science. The average American is largely at the mercy of domestic and international public health bureaucracies for information about infectious disease. This trust has been abused by public health authorities in recent decades.

More than any other recent public health issue, the AIDS "epidemic" has created a great deal of politically useful public alarm. The HIV virus, which has been identified as the sole cause of AIDS, has served as a microbial heavyweight for instilling fear, generating federal research funding, and promoting the homosexual political agenda.

In the mid-1980s, government officials estimated that 1.5 million Americans were infected with HIV. The figure was later revised downward to around 450,000. In early 1987, both the UN's World Health Organization (WHO) and then-Surgeon General C. Everett Koop predicted that 100 million persons worldwide would be infected with the virus by the early 1990s.

In 1988, a videotape entitled *The Strecker Memorandum*, produced by Los Angeles internist Dr. Robert Strecker and associates, claimed that the government was underestimating the problem. Strecker asserted that within "three to four years the entire continent of Africa may well be infected [with HIV], and in five to ten years the entire continent of Africa could be expected to expire, if in fact the AIDS virus has 100 percent mortality, which we believe that it does." However, not only has Africa survived, but its population increased by more than 17 percent between 1988 and 1996.



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Hot Earth: Without adopting a global environmental regime to radically reduce our carbon footprint, climate alarmists claim, the temperature on our planet will heat up to the point where life becomes unsustainable. (*Photo credit: sandsun/iStock/GettyImagesPlus*)

Strecker's projections for the U.S. proved to be similarly unreliable. Strecker calculated that, assuming an estimated 50,000 diagnosed AIDS cases at the time, some five million persons would have been infected with HIV, and that within six years "the entire country could be infected" with the virus. Needless to say, this dire prediction did not come true.

To sustain the politically useful idea that AIDS is an expanding crisis, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has employed an ever-broadening definition of the disease; by adding new diseases every few years, statistics were inflated to create the appearance of an expanding "epidemic" which had in fact peaked in the late 1980s. A change in the definition in 1985 led to an increase in diagnosed AIDS cases of about two percent over 1984. Another redefinition in 1987 resulted in a 30 to 40 percent jump in new cases. The most recent definition, which went into effect on January 1, 1993, led to another huge increase in the reported AIDS cases attributable to the new definition alone.

It is politics, more than science, that has provoked the redefinitions, as special-interest lobbies seek access to AIDS-related funding. The Associated Press reported in June 1991 that "AIDS activists have been clamoring for a more inclusive definition. That would enable more HIV-infected women to get Social Security disability and other benefits, eligibility for which is linked to whether they have AIDS." Compliantly, the 1993 redefinition of AIDS incorporated three previously excluded diseases, including invasive cervical cancer. Soon, reports of a burgeoning AIDS epidemic among women began circulating.

Between January and September 1992, 60,656 people were diagnosed with AIDS. Between January and September 1993, in the wake of the new definition, 85,526 new cases were reported to the CDC — a huge 41 percent increase compared to the equivalent period the previous year. It was on the basis of these definition-driven figures that the CDC was able to announce in October 1993 that AIDS had become the top killer of U.S. males between ages 25 to 44, a claim only recently abandoned. Yet even Dr. John Ward, chief of the CDC's AIDS surveillance branch, candidly acknowledged at the time that the expanded definition had "dumped into the system" many people who did not truly qualify as new AIDS cases.

Dr. Robert Root-Bernstein, associate professor of physiology at Michigan State University and author of



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Rethinking AIDS: The Tragic Cost of Premature Consensus, noted in the *Wall Street Journal* for December 2, 1993 that “the CDC itself admits that over half of the new cases reported this year are due to the new definition: 48,915 of the 85,526. In other words, only 36,511 of the AIDS cases reported so far this year would have qualified as AIDS cases according to the old definition.”

The CDC correctly anticipated that as the impact of its misleading definition diminished, the number of new AIDS cases would also fall. With public concern about the issue subsiding rather than bolstering the “epidemic” with yet another redefinition, the CDC now claims that for the first time since AIDS reared its ugly head in 1981 both new cases and AIDS-related deaths fell during 1996. The agency also states that AIDS is no longer the number one killer of men in the age group 25 to 44.



Exaggerated epidemic: AIDS quilt is displayed on the Mall in Washington, D.C., in 1992 in remembrance of those who died from AIDS. Though the death toll was tragic, 1980s projections of infections and deaths from AIDS were incredibly overblown. (*Photo credit: AP Images*)

The upshot of all of this is that whether the politically defined malady known as AIDS is expanding or contracting, the reaction of the AIDS lobby remains consistent: It demands more power, more money, and more intrusive government management of public health issues. AIDS also figures prominently in the effort to craft global mechanisms of social control in the name of fighting disease. The threat posed by infectious diseases such as AIDS was on the “global issues” agenda of the June [1997] Summit of Eight in Denver. That confab’s final communiqué affirmed: “In the coming year, our governments will promote more effective coordination of international responses to outbreaks; promote development of a global surveillance network, building upon existing national and regional surveillance systems; and help to build public health capacity to prevent, detect and control infectious diseases globally.” Central to the effort, the communiqué continued, “will be strengthening and linking existing activities in and among each of our countries, with developing countries, and in other fora, especially the World Health Organization.” In fact, empowering WHO is a crucial element of the incremental strategy to create a world government.

In spite of the best efforts of professional alarmists, public concern over AIDS has begun to subside, much to the dismay of global-minded medicrats. A booklet promoting World Health Day entitled *Emerging Infectious Diseases: Reduce the Risk*, produced by the American Association for World Health (AAWH), lamented that “attention to and resources for sustaining an active community defense against



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infectious diseases are waning.... [We] have let public health spending spiral downward and essential surveillance systems and laboratory services fall into disrepair. Cutbacks in prevention programs, lack of trained staff, and neglect of outbreak detection systems allowed infectious diseases to gain a strong foothold in the United States and abroad.”

A similarly alarmist note was struck by Dr. Jonathan M. Mann, professor of epidemiology and international health at the Harvard School of Public Health, in his preface to *The Coming Plague: Newly Emerging Diseases in a World out of Balance*, a 1994 best-seller by liberal *Newsday* health and science writer Laurie Garrett. Dr. Mann portrayed the “globalization of disease” as justification for a “worldwide ‘early-warning system’” operating “at a truly global level,” lest we remain “essentially defenseless” against disease. Garrett reinforced that conviction by citing Nobel laureate Dr. Joshua Lederberg’s observation that the world is “one village,” and “our tolerance of disease in any place in the world is at our own peril.” According to Garrett, microbes “are our predators and they will be victorious if we, Homo sapiens, do not learn how to live in a rational global village that affords the microbes few opportunities.” From her perspective, either we embrace the “global village,” or “we brace ourselves for the coming plague” — in short, world government or pestilence.

Dr. Lederberg, whom Garrett cites as an authority, has long agitated on behalf of world governance as a means to combat infectious disease. In 1988, Lederberg published a paper entitled “Medical Science, Infectious Disease, and the Unity of Humankind,” which argued his case for globalism in the pages of the prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*. This year, Lederberg was selected to serve as co-editor of the special August 6th issue of *JAMA*, which was devoted to biological warfare (BW) in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the 1972 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. In a signed editorial, he stated that the theme of biological warfare “touches on a set of timely concerns that unite national security and public health, concerns that cry out for well-articulated convergence of the human community worldwide.” The task, he continued, is to build an international “moral consensus” regarding biological weaponry that will “give it sustainability and priority over more transient aspects of perceived national interest....”

Noting that several of the *JAMA* articles “point to recent progress, and a long way still to go, in the coordination of resources among a host of U.S. governmental agencies — federal, state, and local” — to fight disease outbreaks, Lederberg urged: “In view of the rapid dispersal of people via jet aircraft, that coordination needs to be extended to a global venue....”

In November 1996, *Newsday* revealed that Dr. Lederberg had from 1990 to 1996 been a director of a Maryland-based firm, American Type Culture Collection (ATCC), which, according to congressional sources, made some 70 government-approved shipments of anthrax and other pathogens to Iraqi scientists between 1985 and 1989. In his *JAMA* editorial, Lederberg noted that “Iraq was proven to have developed and militarized a repertoire of BW [biological weapons] agents, notably anthrax spores.” But he did not mention the apparent role which the company on whose board he served played in facilitating the creation of that threat. Lederberg claims that he did not know about the shipments until news reports about them were brought to his attention in 1994.

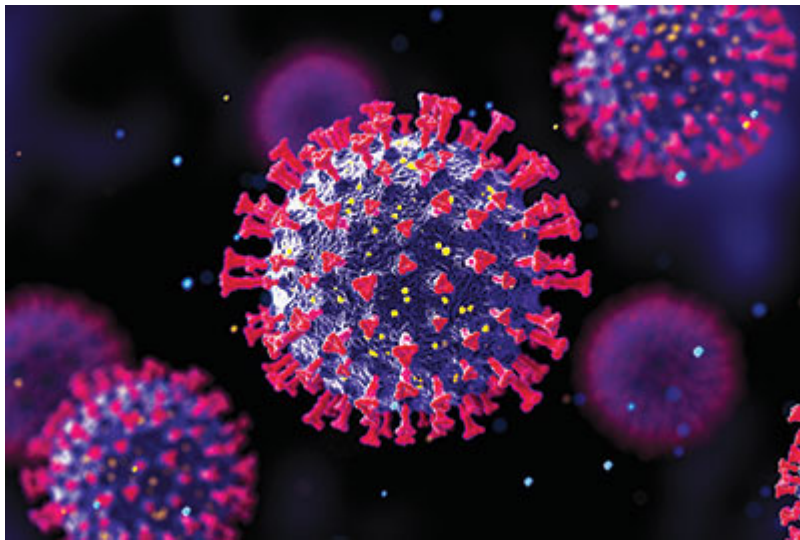
Lederberg’s case becomes even more curious. In 1993, he was selected by President Clinton to chair the Defense Science Task Force on Persian Gulf War Health Effects. In its final report, the Lederberg team claimed that “there is no scientific and medical evidence that either chemical or biological warfare



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was deployed at any level against us, or that there were any exposures of U.S. service members to chemical or biological warfare agents in Kuwait or Saudi Arabia.” That appears to be the case for biological weaponry, since even the United Nations Special Commission on Iraq (UNSCOM) has yet to find credible evidence that Iraq was able to develop the pathogens into usable battlefield weapons. Our government has since admitted, however, that some of our troops may have been exposed to small amounts of nerve gas after Iraqi chemical weapons were blown up by the U.S. after the war. Nonetheless, in 1995 President Clinton appointed Lederberg to serve on the Presidential Advisory Commission on Gulf War Veterans’ Illnesses, which, despite more than 30 public hearings, remains seriously divided over the possible causes of the veterans’ complaints. Its final report is pending as we write [in November 1997].



From megatons to microbes: Decades after this article first appeared, fear of getting COVID-19 is being used to stampede people throughout the world into a tyrannical new world order. (*Photo credit: BlackJack3D/iStock/GettyImagesPlus*)

Global disease control mechanisms provide some of the bricks being used to build what Professor Richard N. Gardner, a onetime Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, referred to as the “house of world order.” In his infamous essay “The Hard Road to World Order” in the April 1974 issue of *Foreign Affairs* (the flagship journal of the Council on Foreign Relations), Gardner advised that “an end run around national sovereignty, eroding it piece by piece, will accomplish much more than the old-fashioned frontal assault.”

Gardner elaborated on that incremental strategy in the Spring 1988 issue of *Foreign Affairs* in an essay entitled “The Case for Practical Internationalism,” specifically citing the “AIDS Challenge” as one of the “crucial global problems that can only be dealt with effectively through multilateral agencies.”

According to Gardner, “The World Health Organization’s system of global health cooperation led years ago to the elimination of smallpox and dramatic progress toward eradicating malaria. This system is now mobilized to deal with the spread of AIDS.... There should be a national constituency in the United States to support WHO ... as it helps member countries to establish national AIDS programs and sponsors research and exchange of information on prevention, control, immunology, international travel, safety of blood supplies and other urgent AIDS issues.”

Foreign Affairs proudly — and plausibly — refers to itself as the most influential journal in print, and the



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recommendations published by Gardner in its pages have been embraced by policy makers. The 1995 CISETP report, for example, speculated that “AIDS might have been identified before it became established in the United States” if only a “global surveillance system with the capacity to identify new diseases had been in place in the 1970s.” In a letter issued on WHO’s World Health Day 1997, President Clinton asserted that “no place on earth is invulnerable to infectious disease, as the HIV/AIDS pandemic has so tragically proved.” As previously illustrated, AIDS hardly qualifies as a “pandemic” by any rational definition; nevertheless, the notion of an AIDS “pandemic” is helping to bring about the empowerment of WHO and the creation of a “global surveillance” system, just as Gardner predicted.

Empowerment of WHO is an ominous development. The UN agency is guided by a constitution that facilitates virtually unlimited meddling in the health affairs of supposedly sovereign nations. The document defines health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” It is difficult to envision any area of human thought or activity, public or private, individual or collective, which that definition cannot be stretched to fit. And lest there be any doubt that government is to be the moving force behind WHO-type global health policies, the ninth plank of the agency’s constitution states: “Governments have a responsibility for the health of their people which can be fulfilled only by the provision of adequate health and social measures.”

April 7th (the anniversary of the formal adoption of the WHO constitution in 1948) is designated each year as World Health Day. This year’s theme was “Emerging Infectious Diseases — Global Alert, Global Response.” WHO Director General Hiroshi Nakajima of Japan urged governments to pour more money into the fight against infectious disease, stating that since such maladies “respect no frontiers” we “must work together globally to control them.” A sample World Health Day Proclamation which was urged upon state and local officials was larded with such globalist rhetoric as “the health of Americans is linked to the health of people throughout the world,” and “global collaboration is essential to counteracting the constant threat of emerging infectious diseases....”



Shutting down: The loss of freedom and livelihoods in the era of COVID is a result of governmental responses to COVID, not the disease itself. (*Photo credit: Maridav/iStock/GettyImagesPlus*)

David Heymann, a medical doctor at WHO’s emergency disease unit, claimed that “man has now become a vector [carrier] of disease from one continent to another, just like insects.” The implications of that ominous observation are indeed spooky, since disease-carrying insects are usually dealt with by



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a process of eradication (the supposed “explosion” of human population has often been cited by new world orderlies as a factor contributing to the outbreak of infectious diseases). Dr. Heymann further claimed that Western medical advances had helped to create a world fit for microbes rather than humans, since such developments as cancer treatments and organ transplants had increased the number of elderly and sick people with poor immune systems who serve as ideal breeding grounds for disease. That observation undoubtedly lifted the spirits of “Doctor” Jack Kevorkian. After all, if global health gurus now view man as a disease vector, and the sick and elderly as breeders of disease microbes, can WHO-sanctioned euthanasia under the “humanitarian” guise of suppressing pestilence be far behind?

President Clinton has eagerly enlisted in the UN/WHO global anti-microbe campaign. The President has asserted that “no place on earth is invulnerable to infectious disease,” and because a “global threat requires a global response,” his Administration “has made a profound commitment to detect, combat, and prevent infectious diseases around the world.” He did not cite a constitutional provision that authorizes such a transnational anti-bug war, since there is none. Given Mr. Clinton’s appetite for authoritarian measures in such matters as civilian disarmament and counter-terrorism, he must be enchanted with WHO’s guidelines for combating contagion. A 1986 WHO document entitled *Public Health Action in Emergencies Caused by Epidemics: A Practical Guide* listed “Quarantine,” “Emergency mass immunizations,” “Restrictions on mass gatherings,” and “Restrictions on travel” as potential weapons in its global anti-disease arsenal.

The threat posed by contagious disease can be a potent weapon in the hands of elites who seek to terrify the masses into submitting to authoritarian controls. Among the cautionary lessons to be drawn from the tragedy of Germany’s National Socialist regime is the danger posed by the political manipulation of medical and public health policies bolstered by bogus “scientific” studies and statistics. Infectious diseases exist today, as they have throughout history, and need to be confronted intelligently and effectively. We must, however, avoid traps set by those who, under the guise of combating pestilence, may be pursuing a sinister political agenda potentially more deadly than a plague.



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