

Publishers of  
**ONE-SENTENCE ECONOMICS**  
**AND WORLD LEPROSY**  
- Howard W. L'Hommedieu

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### THE DEADLY FEAST OF LIFE

— Donald E. Carr

About three-fourths of this book is a fascinating story of the various ways in which forms of life find their food, and keep from being the food of others. The remainder is concerned with ecology, and discusses matters requiring our urgent attention, if we are not to ruin ourselves and the earth.

The chapter, "Man as a Poisonous Skunk," makes a plea for safe methods of destroying pests, such as the use of natural predators, simple poisons, artificial sterilization, chemical lures to death, or away from the opposite sex, rather than for pesticides which destroy plant, animal and human life wholesale.

"Chemical and Biological Warfare" shows that we could wipe out all life on earth. It should be banned, as too dangerous to life and health, even for limited use.

"The Deadly Seven" —chlorinated-hydrocarbon types, such as DDT and dieldrin, are new to the planet, and exceptionally stable. They cause tumors of the liver and lungs in mice, and could cause a delayed epidemic of cancer in humans. Human meat and milk could not be shipped interstate, as food, because of DDT content. A large percentage of our fish are too poisoned to eat, some requiring special cooking to eliminate their poisons. In undernourished people the poison, with no fat for storage, causes liver or brain damage.

"Other Poisons, Other Fates" discusses unstable, destructible pesticides, which poison and kill animal life and humans very quickly. In 1968 thirteen airplane pilots were killed while spraying them. In June, 1969, a pesticide, leaked from a plant on the Rhine, killed forty million fish in a day or so. A large number of migratory workers have died, and many more have become gravely ill, especially in California, but also in Mexico, Columbia and elsewhere, from such pesticides.

"Adventures with Pesticides" states that agricultural pests have built up resistance to both stable and unstable pesticides, while natural predators of pests have been killed off, as have an enormous number of birds and fish. Pesticides have been classed as "economic poisons," exempted from coverage under the Federal Hazardous Materials Act, with their ingredients protected as "trade secrets." 350,000 Arkansas turkeys were shipped, containing excess heptachlor epoxide (5 times as potent as DDT). One shipment measured 34 times the limit. In 1969, 630,000 laying hens were suspected of containing excess levels of dieldrin, and were traced before being eaten. The 2.3 billion turkeys and chickens killed for Thanksgiving and Christmas can hardly be checked. From July 1, 1964 to June 30, 1969 the Pesticide Regulation Division of Agriculture rejected some 1600 objections raised by H. E. W. to registrations and reregistrations of cancer-producing pesticides. It has also ignored findings on teratogenic qualities (deformed births) in certain compounds. In thirteen years the Agricultural Research Service had not reported a single violation for prosecution.

"Killing Weeds and Deforming Babies." The subcommittee on teratogenicity, of the Mrak Commission recommended the immediate barring of some widely used herbicides, such as "2,4-D," "2,4,5-T" and "PCNB." They cause hideous birth defects in mice and rats, and are used in greater tonnages than insecticides: on 80 to 85 % of European croplands, and as defoliants in large areas of Vietnam (all populated), with greatly

increased deformed-baby birth rate, and an expected lower brain capacity. They are also used here as weed killers on crop lands and home lawns.

"More on Systematic Biological Control." About 110 pests have been biologically controlled in over 40 countries. About 1200 different insects plague agriculture, and 400 viruses are already known to be fatal to from 1 to 6 insects. Although most, if not all insects are susceptible to virus attacks, no viral pesticides are in commercial production, awaiting FDA registration, presumably because the National Agricultural Chemicals Ass'n. doesn't want to lose business to biologists. Large scale use of parasites has been effective in many countries. Microbe control, with sterilized males, is also used, ridding entire areas completely of certain pests. Male rats can be rendered permanently sterile, without affecting other animals, which should save an enormous amount of grain in storage-half being eaten by rats in shipments from the U. S. to ultimate consumers in India.

"Food Additives" are used for many reasons, such as: anti-caking agents, preservatives, emulsifying agents, sequestrants, colorings, 80 or more flavorings. A large percentage, even for baby foods, are dangerously poisonous. Even sucrose (sugar) is dangerous, causing atherosclerosis, and perhaps various cancers; also ischemic heart disease.

"The Plants Themselves May Kill You." All smoked foods contain some cancer-forming compounds, as does "charcoal-broiled steak," and probably crisp bacon. Many common foods should be cooked in a certain way to minimize or destroy poisons they contain. Some interfere with the assimilation of others, while some inactivate certain vitamins.

"Legacies for the Future." Teratogenic and mutagenic effects of radiation and various chemicals are here discussed, as highly controversial matters, with few conclusions, because of the numerous factors involved. Tritium (superheavy hydrogen) in the form of  $T_2O$ , or "superheavy water," may be the chief current danger from nuclear power plants, if it becomes imbedded in the DNA double helix of young children or fetuses. One tritium atom, at the right spot, at the right time, can produce a mutation which might last indefinitely. There may be serious delayed effects from numerous commonly used drinks and chemicals, and the safest thing would be to forego their use, if found dangerous to small laboratory animals, even if not yet proved dangerous to man. The DNA molecules of a microbe have the same constituents as those of man, although much smaller. Chemical reactions should be the same; it is only a question of the accessibility of the germ cells of larger creatures. It has been theorized that caffeine may not be a mutagen in any mammal, but "may generally inhibit the natural repair of DNA damaged by radiation or by other chemicals."

"Man as a Chemical Adventurer." The author states that we have created great quantities of unnatural compounds which have destroyed numerous forms of life, and that we should feel "a dreadful pang such as that which does-or should-accompany our recollection of having radiantly roasted babies and housewives and shoemakers and 100,000 other little people going about their business of living. ... If we treat a sea bird as a dispensable piece of sponge for oil, sooner or later we will treat a Chinese or a Russian peasant as a cockroach and will find ourselves in return treated as malevolent insects."

(Dr. John Gofman, author of "Poisoned Power," says that nuclear power plants, located near large cities, could have failures resulting in disasters unparalleled in U. S. peacetime history. No one can estimate the chances of failure. Wastes must be converted, transported, and stored in leakproof containers for 500 years-delicate operations, inevitably resulting in accidents. Although cancer and leukemia cannot be traced directly to present plants, there is a direct relationship between the development of nuclear power and the increase in leukemia. Fusion power, almost pollution free, could be available in 20 to 30 years. Solar power is feasible and ideal-clean, safe and cheap. Present nuclear plants should be abandoned, as a menace to society. Coke can satisfy foreseeable needs. We need control by a non-political board of expert ecologists.)