

Has Greenpeace Lost its Moral Compass?

by Dr. Patrick Moore

As a young PhD student in ecology, recently radicalized by the Vietnam War, the Cold War and the threat of all-out nuclear war, I joined a small group in the basement of the Unitarian Church in Vancouver to plan a protest voyage against US hydrogen bomb testing in Alaska. In the Fall of 1971 I sailed on that boat, beginning a 15-year period in my life as a director and leader of Greenpeace. The two senior



Patrick Moore is under the 'P' on the first Greenpeace voyage to stop nuclear testing

founders of Greenpeace, Jim Bohlen and Irving Stowe, were Quakers, a faith that emphasizes peace and humanitarian goals. Greenpeace's first campaign to prevent nuclear war was indeed a humanitarian campaign, an effort to prevent untold suffering among people, as well as to prevent the destruction and contamination of the environment.

As time went on Greenpeace evolved to take on many other campaigns; save the whales, stop the baby seal slaughter, end the dumping of toxic waste into the air and water, making Antarctica into a World Park. During my 15-year tenure a change occurred, from concern for the welfare of people to a belief that humans were the enemy of the earth. For me, the culmination of that campaign came when my fellow directors of Greenpeace International adopted a campaign to Ban Chlorine Worldwide. For them the logic was simple. Chlorine is toxic and many chlorine compounds such as dioxins are toxic so therefore ban chlorine altogether. When I reminded my colleagues that adding chlorine to drinking water was the biggest advance in the history of public health and that the majority of our medicines are based on chlorine chemistry they behaved as if that didn't matter a bit. I realized that the humanitarian side of Greenpeace had vanished and that I had to leave.

I left Greenpeace determined to build an environmental policy that balanced environmental, social, and economic needs, the definition of sustainability. A sensible environmentalist bases their policies on science and logic as opposed to sensationalism, misinformation and fear. And a sensible environmentalist recognizes the needs of over 7 billion people for food, energy, and materials to build our civilization.

It was 10 years after I left Greenpeace when the first genetically modified crops were introduced. Almost immediately Greenpeace came out in opposition to this scientific breakthrough, stating that they would rip the new crops out of the ground if anyone dared plant them. Today there are more than 17 million farmers in 28 countries growing GM crops on 170 million hectares (420

million acres) of land, an area greater than the total farmland of the United States. But Golden Rice is not one of these crops and Greenpeace and their allies are largely if not entirely to blame.

On August 8, 2013 activists supported by Greenpeace destroyed a field test of Golden Rice in the Philippines. Greenpeace routinely complains that there has not been enough "testing" of GM crops for their impact on the environment and human health. Yet when scientists conduct field trials to test the environmental effects, or feed Golden Rice to animals and people to see if it works, Greenpeace destroys the tests and discredits the scientists.

When Dr. Guangwen Tang and colleagues published their positive results of feeding Golden Rice to vitamin A deficient children in the *Journal of Clinical Nutrition* in 2009, Greenpeace accused the scientists of using children as guinea pigs for potentially toxic rice. There is nothing remotely toxic about vitamin A, it is an essential nutrient, yet Greenpeace's condemnation resulted in news stories around the world that reflected their misinformation campaign to millions of people.

Greenpeace is using its \$300 million-plus income to stifle one of the most important advances in human nutrition and disease prevention. They claim that there are better ways to cure vitamin A deficiency but they have no program to deliver these supposedly better cures. Greenpeace refuses to listen to the scientists and humanitarians working in the field of nutrient deficiency, who know that Golden Rice is the best way to deal with this affliction. Instead, Greenpeace fundraises against Golden Rice and as far as I am concerned they have the blood of these millions of children on their hands. In my opinion Greenpeace has lost its moral compass.