



Written by [Walter E. Williams](#) on March 6, 2019

Our Planet Is Not Fragile

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez claims that “the world is going to end in 12 years if we don’t address climate change.” The people at the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change agree, saying that to avoid some of the most devastating impacts of climate change, the world must slash carbon emissions by 45 percent by 2030 and completely decarbonize by 2050.



Such dire warnings are not new. In 1970, Harvard University biology professor George Wald, a Nobel laureate, predicted, “Civilization will end within 15 or 30 years unless immediate action is taken against problems facing mankind.” Also in 1970, Paul Ehrlich, a Stanford University biologist, predicted in an article for *The Progressive*, “The death rate will increase until at least 100-200 million people per year will be starving to death during the next ten years.” The year before, he had warned, “If I were a gambler, I would take even money that England will not exist in the year 2000.” Despite such harebrained predictions, Ehrlich has won no fewer than 16 awards, including the 1990 Crafoord Prize, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences’ highest award.

Leftists constantly preach such nonsense as “The world that we live in is beautiful but fragile.” “The 3rd rock from the sun is a fragile oasis.” “Remember that Earth needs to be saved every single day.” These and many other statements, along with apocalyptic predictions, are stock in trade for environmentalists. Worse yet, this fragile-earth indoctrination is fed to the nation’s youth from kindergarten through college. That’s why many millennials support Rep. Ocasio-Cortez.

Let’s examine just a few cataclysmic events that exceed any destructive power of mankind and then ask how our purportedly fragile planet could survive. The 1883 eruption of the Krakatoa volcano, in present-day Indonesia, had the force of 200 megatons of TNT. That’s the equivalent of 13,300 15-kiloton atomic bombs, the kind that destroyed Hiroshima in World War II. Before that was the 1815 Tambora eruption, the largest known volcanic eruption. It spewed so much debris into the atmosphere that 1816 became known as the “Year Without a Summer.” It led to crop failures and livestock death in the Northern Hemisphere, producing the worst famine of the 19th century. The A.D. 535 Krakatoa eruption had such force that it blotted out much of the light and heat of the sun for 18 months and is said to have



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led to the Dark Ages. Geophysicists estimate that just three volcanic eruptions — Indonesia (1883), Alaska (1912) and Iceland (1947) — spewed more carbon dioxide and sulfur dioxide into the atmosphere than all of mankind's activities during our entire history.

Our so-called fragile earth survived other catastrophic events, such as the floods in China in 1887, which took an estimated 1 million to 2 million lives, followed by floods there in 1931, which took an estimated 1 million to 4 million lives. What about the impact of earthquakes on our fragile earth? Chile's 1960 Valdivia earthquake was 9.5 on the Richter scale. It created a force equivalent to 1,000 atomic bombs going off at the same time. The deadly 1556 earthquake in China's Shaanxi province devastated an area of 520 miles.

Our so-called fragile earth faces outer space terror. Two billion years ago, an asteroid hit earth, creating the Vredefort crater in South Africa, which has a diameter of 190 miles. In Ontario, there's the Sudbury Basin, resulting from a meteor strike 1.8 billion years ago. At 39 miles long, 19 miles wide and 9 miles deep, it's the second-largest impact structure on earth. Virginia's Chesapeake Bay crater is a bit smaller, about 53 miles wide. Then there's the famous but puny Meteor Crater in Arizona, which is not even a mile wide.

My question is: Which of these powers of nature could be duplicated by mankind? For example, could mankind even come close to duplicating the polluting effects of the 1815 Tambora volcanic eruption? It is the height of arrogance to think that mankind can make significant parametric changes in the earth or can match nature's destructive forces. Our planet is not fragile.

Occasionally, environmentalists spill the beans and reveal their true agenda. Barry Commoner said, "Capitalism is the earth's number one enemy." Amherst College professor Leo Marx said, "On ecological grounds, the case for world government is beyond argument."

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