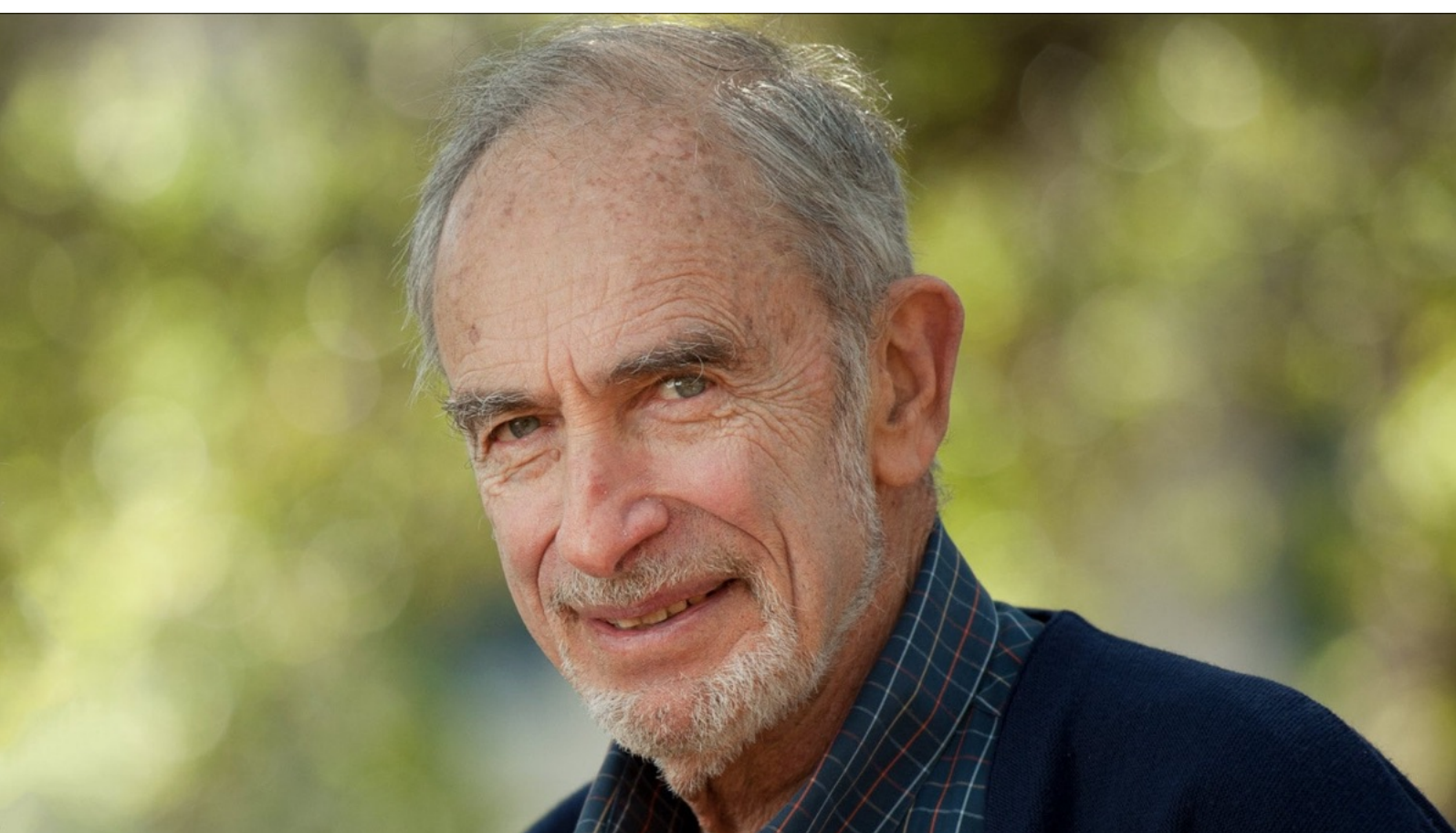


HumanProgress



On January 1st, CBS started the new year with a *60 Minutes* segment on overpopulation, featuring none other than the Stanford University biologist Paul Ehrlich, who wrote in 1968:

“The battle to feed all of humanity is over. In the 1970s hundreds of millions of people will starve to death in spite of any crash programs embarked upon now. At this late date nothing can prevent a substantial increase in the world death rate...”

Of course, Ehrlich was completely wrong. Death rates fell, famines vanished outside of war zones, and resources became more abundant, all while the population grew to 8 billion.

And, despite what CBS might want you to believe, he's still wrong today.

[Read more.](#)



Also on January 1st, the New York Times published an op-ed with a similar, yet stranger, anti-human message. Rather than reducing the population numerically, as Ehrlich advocates, the author Mara Altman suggests we should shrink it vertically:

"Short people don't just save resources; as resources become scarcer owing to overpopulation and global warming, they may also be best suited for long-term survival... When you mate with shorter people, you're potentially saving the planet by shrinking the needs of subsequent generations. Lowering the height minimum for prospective partners on your dating profile is a step toward a greener planet."

That's a bizarre recommendation, especially considering that increasing height has been a side effect of growing global prosperity. Moreover, it is completely unnecessary. Tall or short, humans make resources more, not less, abundant.

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Back in the 1800s, millions of people starved to death every decade.

Famines peaked in the 1870s with more than 20 million deaths. In the 1880s, the least hungry decade in the 19th century, close to 3 million people starved to death worldwide.

A smaller number of people died in the troubled 2000s, the hungriest decade in recent memory. The difference is even more stark after accounting for population growth in the past two centuries.

The average annual rate of famine deaths per 100,000 people dropped from 19.5 in the 1880s to 4.3 in the 2000s. Between 2010 and 2016, it was only 0.5, which amounts to a 40-fold decline from the 1880s.



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