

Letters to the Editor

Overpopulation is top global issue

Global warming is a topic being discussed everywhere, and being portrayed as a major problem. In reality, it is not a problem, but rather a symptom of a problem. Other related symptoms caused by humans include global destruction of the oceans, global deforestation, global soil erosion, global poverty and global terrorism. The truth is that all of these "problems" are really symptoms of too many people trying to live off a nongrowing piece of real estate, called planet earth.

Having just returned from China, I have seen how a growing population can outgrow the carrying capacity of a nation. Carrying capacity is a term defined by biologists as the maximum population that an area can support at a certain standard of living for a long time, like forever.

An increasing number of cattle can be supported by a pasture up to a point. However, if the number increases above that point, the health of the individuals will decrease and eventually death rates will soar. The same is true of every species, including humans.

Even if we slow down global

warming by slowing economic growth and energy consumption, we still shall have other global symptoms that must be solved, and these symptoms are not receiving the publicity that global warming receives. The fact is that human population continues to increase while the earth's ability to support it decreases. That will lead to catastrophe, as Jared Diamond demonstrated in his book, "Collapse."

The only way to stop the increasing global warming, deforestation, over fishing, soil erosion, poverty and terrorism is to stop the growth of the human population. This is especially true in rich nations where people use many more resources and cause much more pollution per capita than do the third world's peoples.

So, the bottom line is that every couple worldwide should have only one child in order to stabilize world population ASAP. Until we stabilize world Population we have no hope of controlling global warming or any other symptoms of population growth.

David B. Van Vleck
Middlebury