

Triumph of Davos Man

“The following is an excerpt from Michael Walsh’s forthcoming book, [Against the Great Reset: Eighteen Theses Contra the New World Order](#), which will be published by [Bombardier Books](#) and be available October 18, 2022. Walsh has gathered a series of essays from among eighteen of the most eminent thinkers, writers, and journalists—including the American Mind’s own James Poulos, as well as Claremont Senior Fellows Michael Anton and the late Angelo Codevilla—to provide the first major salvo in the intellectual resistance to the sweeping restructuring of the western world by globalist elites.”



by Conrad Black

As other contributors have mentioned, if any place could be identified as the birthplace of the Great Reset, it must be the small, drab, German-Swiss Alpine town of Davos, a center of contemporary anticapitalism, or at least radically altered and almost deracinated capitalism, and site of an ever-expanding international conference. (It grew exponentially and

has spawned regional versions.)

I attended there for many years by invitation in order to ascertain what my analogues in the media business around the world were doing. The hotels are spartan and the town is very inaccessible. When I first attended nearly forty years ago, the Davos founder, the earnest and amiable Klaus Schwab, had ingeniously roped in a number of contemporary heads of government and captains of industry and leaders in some other fields and had sold huge numbers of admissions to well-to-do courtiers and groupies from all over the world, attracted by the merits of "networking."

Davos, and its regional outgrowths across the world, gradually came to express a collective opinion of the virtues of universal supranationalism (the Davos variety of globalism): social democracy; environmental alarmism; the desirability of having a nonpolitical international bureaucracy; a public sector-reflected image of the Davos hierarchy itself (and in fact, in many cases, preferably the very same individuals); and gently enforcing a soft Orwellian conformity on everybody. It must be said that many of the sessions were interesting, and it was a unique experience being amid so many people capable in their fields, and this certainly includes almost all of those who were revenue-producing, "networking" spectators and not really participants.

Davos is for democracy, as long as everyone votes for increased public sector authority in pursuit of green egalitarianism and the homogenization of all peoples in a conformist world. It was the unfolding default page of the European view: capitalism was to be overborne by economic redistribution; all concepts of public policy were to be divorced from any sense of nationality, history, spirituality, or spontaneity and redirected to defined goals of imposed uniformity under the escutcheon of ecological survival and the reduction of abrasive distinctions between groups of people—such obsolescent concepts as nationality or

sectarianism. (My hotel concierge stared at me as if I had two heads when I inquired where the nearest Roman Catholic Church was and was even more astonished when I trod two miles through the snow there and back to receive its moral succour; the parishioners appeared a sturdy group.)

The Covid-19 pandemic caused Davos Man to break out of his Alpine closet and reveal the secret but suspected plan: the whole world is to become a giant Davos—humorless, style-less, unspontaneous, unrelievedly materialistic, as long as the accumulation and application of capital is directed by the little Alpine gnomes of Davos and their underlings and disciples. This is a slight overstatement, and Klaus Schwab would earnestly dispute that the purpose of Davos is so comprehensive, anesthetizing, and uniform. His dissent would be sincere, but unjustified: the Great Reset, a Davos expression, is massively ambitious and is largely based on the seizure and hijacking of recognizable capitalism, in fact and in theory.

There has indeed in the last thirty years been a war on capitalism conducted from the commanding heights of the academy and very broadly assisted by the Western media that has been gathering strength as part of the great comeback of the Left following their bone-crushing defeat in the Cold War. As international communism collapsed and the Soviet Union disintegrated, it was difficult to imagine that the Left could mount any sort of comeback anytime soon. We underestimated both the Left's imperishability and its gift for improvisation, a talent that their many decades of predictable and robotic repetitiveness entirely concealed.

By some combination of intuition and tactical cunning, the hard Left crowded aboard the environmental bandwagon. Until the nineties, the environment was the concern of authentic, if sometimes tedious, conservationists such as the Sierra Club and Greenpeace, and despite their harassment of nuclear testing by the French around Tahiti and their demonstrations

against goodwill visits of American aircraft carriers, they were sincere people making an arguable case.

Suddenly they were overwhelmed by the hard Left imposing a new agenda of strangulation of capitalism by coming through the rear windows and attacking practically every industry as a threat to human survival for ecological reasons. We can only salute their ingenuity and persistence as they co-opted susceptible members of the scientific community to produce asinine arguments like Dr. Michael E. Mann's infamous conjuration of the "hockey stick," which held that global warming proceeded horizontally for a long time and then suddenly shot upwards at a forty-five-degree angle as a hockey stick does when the stem reaches the blade. This and spurious calculations based on reading the rings on the trunks of trees and other superstitious opinions won the approval of a huge gallery of gullible, faddish, and cynical people. They made an unlikely coalition: Al Gore became a centimillionaire on this issue; the Prince of Wales mounted a great hobby horse that he still rides, and the most vocal airheads of Hollywood have been howling like banshees on the issue for decades.

Aggressive green parties arose in many countries and harvested the naiveté and narcissistic ambition for attention of large numbers of people championing antipollution causes that in the abstract no reasonable person could oppose. They were allied or infested with the old left and skulked forward, ideological wolves in paradisiacal lambs' clothing. Germany has no petroleum resources but had built an extensive and absolutely safe nuclear power capacity, but the aggressive German Green Party came snorting out of the Teutonic forests like a Wagnerian monster and bullied Angela Merkel's government into abandoning the entire nuclear program. Germany in effect became an energy vassal state of Russia through the Nord Stream pipeline, the completion of which the Biden administration facilitated in withdrawing the Trump administration's intervention to prevent the pipeline's

completion. With the Ukraine war, it is again suspended. Thus the second most important country in the Western Alliance is almost detached from it, all by the apparently innocuous and meliorist actions of Germany's peppiest environmentalists, and with the ultimate complicity of the current U.S. president.

Even the outgoing prime minister, Boris Johnson, an authentic if idiosyncratic Tory, has bought into the global warming danger, though to those who know him, it is hard to imagine that he believes a word of it. The objective evidence is that to the extent that it can be measured at all, the overall temperature of the world has risen by one degree centigrade in the last hundred years and will rise by another centigrade degree this century. This is not in itself harmful, and it is not outside normal historic climate cycles. There has been no rise in the world's temperature in this century, and the whole task of gauging the world's temperature including thermometers at various depths of the oceans and all over the surface of the earth is quite imprecise.

In the future, historians will look with astonishment on the speed and zeal with which the post-Cold War world burdened itself with bone-cracking expenses and severe social costs radically altering its economy to avoid a rise in the world's temperature that we have no reason to believe will occur on anything like the scale the alarmists have been wailing about. And if it does occur in any measure, we still have no scientifically serious evidence that it is anthropogenically caused. It will be seen as something like the alleged seventeenth-century Dutch tulip hysteria, which had people paying the equivalent of \$25,000 for a single potted bulb.

Rarely in the Cold War did capitalism's Marxist enemies do anything that earned the respect one gives a gallant or brilliant adversary. In these initiatives, our enemies leapt from the jaws of bitter and total defeat, hijacked the careening gadfly of esoteric conservationism, and transformed it surreptitiously into a well-camouflaged battering ram that

has inflicted immense costs and opprobrium on the corporate world and great sadness and inconvenience on the laboring proletariat on whose behalf the Marxist Left has supposedly been crusading these past 150 years.

A companion unpleasant surprise to the ingenuity and resilience of the international Far Left in its environmental assault upon capitalism has been the venality, cowardice, and invertebrate tactical stupidity of much of the corporate world. We find oil companies putting up slick television advertising praising and purporting to be part of the heroic march to a fossil fuel-free world. As corporations fell over themselves agreeing that the U.S. state of Georgia's eminently sensible voting reform statute, passed in the wake of the disputed presidential election of 2020, was a reversion to Jim Crow if not slavery itself and demanded that Georgia be punished by moving the Major League Baseball All-Star Game from Atlanta to Denver (where restrictions to ensure verifiable voting are more severe than in Georgia), the leadership of corporate America was largely revealed, once again, at least in public policy terms, as contemptibly enfeebled and morally bankrupt...

First published in the [*American Mind*](#).