

Washing away the climate lunatics

By Conrad Black

I have written here and elsewhere countless times before of the dangers of responding prematurely to alarmist concerns about climate change. Dr. Benny Peiser of the British Global Warming Policy Foundation spoke to the Friends of Science Society in Calgary earlier this month, warning that Europe's extremist net zero carbon emission policies may get to Canada even though they are now running into extreme problems in Europe. The North American media has not much reported on the widespread and often violent farmer protests in Europe, which has caused every government that has been put to the test to scale back their aggressive climate change policies.

For a long time, it was a political free lunch: everybody loves the environment, and the climate change issue was very skillfully transformed by the left into an assault on the capitalist system from a new angle in the name of saving the planet. As long as the heavy costs of displacing fossil fuels by so-called renewable energy were carefully disguised and diffused, everybody could wallow in collective self-praise for doing the healthy and environmentally responsible thing.

The burden of subsidized wind and solar farms didn't appear on peoples' energy bills, though eventually they were placed on the back of the taxpayer. Now, however, net zero policies are directly eating into the earnings and savings of the public and in most of Europe, the taxpayer rebellion is exploding, and the advantages of democracy are being reaffirmed as elected governments scamper to the rear, explaining that there has been a misunderstanding. When the German government tried to compel the people of that country to change their gas boilers for heat pumps at a cost of thousands of dollars per home, what critics called "boilergeddon," it produced a so-called green-lash.



An electric vehicle charging station in Corte Madera, California. PHOTO BY JUSTIN SULLIVAN/GETTY IMAGES FILES

Another political disaster has befallen the western European governments that had rolled over like poodles in front of the climate change

alarmists: once they had fully committed themselves to the boondoggle of electric vehicles (EV's), and forced the powerful automobile industries of Germany, France, and Italy into conversion of gas powered vehicles to EV's, sales of EV's plummeted after the customary faddish start, just as much cheaper Chinese EV's flooded into Europe. Germany and Italy forced the European Union into delaying its ill-considered ban on internal combustion engine vehicles past 2035. Those who jubilantly imagined that Europe would commit industrial suicide by destroying its own automobile industry, will have to revise their plans. There are now thousands of cheap Chinese EV's parked at the main ports of Europe with no buyers in sight. As Dr. Peiser pointed out in Calgary, "If this was really about climate change, wouldn't you want the cheapest EV's, the cheapest wind, and solar, all from China?"

It is now clear in Europe, as it long has been in the private sector of the United States, that with whole industries and millions of jobs at stake, implementation of net zero policies in the West would make China the dominant economic and industrial power of the world. Even our most naïve and insipid global warming crusaders are unenthused by that bone-chilling

prospect. Although Germany has finally acted to protect its auto industry, it is not yet doing the same for the public. It is still officially planning to ban weekend driving to meet climate targets. If the federal German government proceeds with such an insane plan, it will sink without a ripple at the next election.

There have even been some murmurings of emulation of this course in Canada; on Sept. 14, 2021, Journal Metro of Quebec proposed pre-emptively moving against a climate crisis by lockdown measures, an emulation of the Covid lockdown then ending, but including rations and limitations on personal travel. This proposal comes from the same sort of thinking that seeks to eliminate meat by a war on bovine flatulence. Placid and docile toward virtue-posturing though Canadians are, insane measures like these to mitigate climate change would surely prove to be the funeral pyre of the coercive climate change terrorists.

For notorious historic reasons, Europe is always vulnerable to the madresses and outrages of the left. The senior human rights court in Europe ruled three weeks ago in a lawsuit brought by 2000 elderly Swiss women against the Swiss government that it had violated the human rights of the plaintiffs by insufficiently mitigating climate change. Switzerland is a very small country but is responsible for between two and three per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions, while Canada, a huge country with a much larger population, emits only 1.5 per cent of global emissions, compared to 27 percent for China. The European Court of Human Rights crossed the jurisdictional Rubicon by overruling the voters of a democratic country. The rationale for hurling millions of auto workers into unemployment and shutting down Europe's greatest industry in order to profit the Chinese is a case that even the most ardent climate-zealots will find challenging.

At the same time that the climate fanatics are encountering

irresistible political headwinds, the intellectual arguments of the climate skeptics are becoming steadily more unanswerable. A brief filed with the court of appeals in The Hague in November by three eminent, American climate-related academics, Richard Lindzen of MIT, William Happer of Princeton, and Steven Koonin of New York University, the Hoover Institute, and former climate adviser to President Obama, challenged the finding of a lower court and held that scientific analysis, as opposed to an aggregation of "government opinion, consensus, peer review, and cherry-picked or falsified data," shows that "Fossil fuels and CO2 will not cause dangerous climate change, there will be disastrous consequences for people worldwide if fossil fuels in CO2 emissions are reduced to net zero, including mass starvation." They assert that the poor, future generations, and the entire West will suffer profoundly from any such policy. which "will undermine human rights and cripple the realization of the first three UN sustainable development goals-no poverty, zero hunger, and good health and well-being."

The three experts warn against equating "the state of climate science with the reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change," which "have no value as science, because the IPCC is government-controlled and represents only government opinions, not science." It also denounced the lower court verdict that "dangerous climate change and extreme weather are caused by CO2 emissions from fossil fuels... We demonstrate that these conclusions are contradicted by the scientific method, and only supported by the unscientific methods mentioned. Hundreds of research papers confirm the highly beneficial effects of the increased concentration of atmospheric CO2, especially in dry farming areas."

They go on to represent the CO2 as essential to food, and thus to life on earth, and that the more there is of CO2, the more food there will be, especially in drought-stricken areas. They also make the case that greenhouse gases prevent us from

freezing to death, that there are “enormous social benefits to fossil fuels and that net zero will expand human starvation by eliminating nitrogen fertilizer.”

This highly recondite and meticulously documented paper states that “600 million years of carbon dioxide in temperature data contradict the theory of catastrophic global warming being caused by high levels of CO₂, and that the atmospheric CO₂ is now heavily saturated, which means that more will have little warming effect.” Up until recently, the zealots pretended that such opinions are held only by the uninformed, or the paid lobbyists of the oil industry, but they are not going to be able to get away with this much longer. The ranks of the critics are swelling every week with aggrieved members of the voting public distressed by completely unnecessary skyrocketing costs generated by the fear-mongering climate zealots.

With any luck, the tide of logical evidence will wash away the climate lunatics of this country before the damage becomes irreparable.

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