

Climate Change “Morality”

By Paul Dreissen
June 2009

Introduction

These three essays below were written by Paul Dreissen, a senior policy advisor for the [Congress of Racial Equality](#) and [Committee For A Constructive Tomorrow](#), and author of *Eco-Imperialism: Green power – Black death*.

I have met Paul last March in New York City during the 2nd International Conference on Climate Change (ICCC) sponsored by the Heartland Institute. Here, Paul is talking about the threats of drastic environmental policies and the rent-seeking behavior by many sectors in the US, as a result of climate alarmism being hyped by the UN, many governments, huge international NGOs, and big business interests in carbon trading.

-- Nonoy Oplas
June 18, 2009

President Obama’s red sea

Irresponsible federal spending, energy and climate change policies will bankrupt America

April 14, 2009

America is diving into a Marianas Trench of red ink. There is barely a digit of black anywhere on the balance sheet, and spendthrift lawmakers are closing off numerous sources of positive revenue.

On the spending side of the ledger, the White House and Congress enacted a \$700-billion financial bailout, followed by an earmark-laden \$787-billion “stimulus” law and plans to ladle out \$1.6 billion in federal government bonuses in 2009. Then came a \$3.5 trillion “red sea” FY 2010 budget, and the prospect of \$9.3 trillion in total indebtedness over the coming decade.

A March 31 Bloomberg study found that the Treasury Department, Federal Reserve, FDIC and HUD have thus far obligated generations of Americans to \$12.8 TRILLION in debt. That's 90% of our nation's entire 2008 Gross Domestic Product, notes columnist Deroy Murdock!

It's more accrued debt than 43 previous administrations combined, and it doesn't include the cost of servicing this debt – or the US share of the \$1.1 trillion “global stimulus” devised by the Group of 20, to be administered by professional spenders at the International Monetary Fund.

Taxes will soar, to pay off these debts – and cover new levies on everything we do. As 2,600 delegates flew greenhouse-gas-spewing jetliners to Bonn for another five-star-hotel UN climate change confab, envoy Todd Stern announced that the White House is “seized with the urgency” of tackling runaway global warming. Looming on the horizon is a hulking 648-page House climate change bill. Equally monstrous Senate and EPA versions wait in the wings.

President Obama wants energy prices to “skyrocket,” to coerce Americans to slash carbon dioxide emissions 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 – to levels last seen in 1905! He says cap-and-trade will “raise” \$656 billion between 2012 and 2019, to fund green energy, green job and other government programs. The National Economic Council and other analysts put the tax bite at \$1.3 to \$3.0 trillion.

This is not monetary manna. It is a massive wealth transfer – extracted from every hydrocarbon-using business, motorist and family, and doled out by Congress and bureaucrats to politically favored constituencies. These all-intrusive energy taxes will hit poorest households hardest.

Cap-and-tax will also clobber manufacturing and heavy-industry jobs. Twenty states get 60-98% of their electricity from coal. They form our manufacturing heartland, and every increase in electricity prices will result in more businesses laying off workers or closing their doors, more jobs sent overseas, more homes forced into foreclosure, more families into welfare, and more school districts, hospitals and churches into whirlpools of red ink.

Soaring gasoline and natural gas prices will do likewise.

And for what? Hundreds of climate scientists say CO2 plays little or no substantive role in climate change. They point out that even total elimination of US carbon dioxide emissions would quickly be offset by emissions from China, India and other rapidly developing nations.

Thankfully, sensible Republicans and Democrats are raising red flags about these economy-killing proposals. But a White House/EPA rulemaking would require no congressional vote – and they're reportedly going to drop that bombshell this month. On the revenue side, the situation is equally irresponsible. Lock up the best and tax the rest, is the motto. Whether it's oil and natural gas (onshore or off), coal or coal-to-gas, shale oil or uranium, Congress and the White House are making America's best

prospects off limits. They are imposing punitive taxes and regulations on prospects that aren't in no-access categories, to curtail development.

That means rejecting trillions in potential bonus, rent, royalty and tax revenues that could help pay for this spending binge.

Developing just our off-limits oil and gas resources in the ANWR, OCS and Rockies could generate over \$1.7 trillion in government revenue and create 114,000 new jobs, a recent ICF International study concluded. The petroleum would eliminate one-fifth of the nation's \$350-700 billion annual oil imports bill. Developing all US oil and natural gas resources on federal lands could generate \$4 trillion.

The American Energy Alliance and other experts say the benefits would be even greater. And this is just conventional oil and gas revenue. It does not include trillions more in revenues from oil shale, tar sands, methane hydrates, coal, uranium and other deposits that Congress, bureaucrats, judges and green activists have conspired to put off limits to the American taxpayers and consumers who own them.

It does not consider the regulatory stranglehold on coal and nuclear power plant construction – and thus on jobs and revenues that those projects and their energy would provide.

This is Real Energy, Real Revenue, Real Employment. Hydrocarbons and nuclear generate 93% of all the energy that safeguards our jobs, health, living standards and national security. With 90% reliability, they keep the lights on and make America work and prosper.

But they are being closed down – to be “replaced” by pixie dust energy from wind turbines and solar panels that now meet barely 1% of our total energy requirements. Wind turbines actually generate electricity only 2-6 hours a day, on average. They are built and operated only because of billions in taxpayer subsidies. And they require large swaths of land and prodigious amounts of concrete, steel, copper and fiberglass: 700 tons for each 1.5 MW turbine – plus enormous additional quantities for natural-gas-fired electrical generators that kick in every time the wind dies down.

Solar doesn't even make a perceptible contribution to our energy needs.

Two-thirds of Americans want our petroleum and nuclear energy developed. They want jobs, security, economic recovery, power that works 24/7. They don't want to see America file for bankruptcy.

But their rights are being trampled on, by partisan totalitarians whose decrees violate America's sacred traditions of open, robust debate, sound science and economics, accountability, and majority opinion on critical issues. Whatever happened to the bipartisanship and responsible government that voters thought they were electing last fall?

It's time to say, enough!

Back to the “good old days”

US energy and climate plans would drag us back to 1905 – or 1862

May 1, 2009

Think back to 1905.

The Wright brothers had just made history. Coal and wood heated homes. Few had telephones or electricity. AC units were handheld fans. Ice blocks cooled ice boxes. New York City collected 900,000 tons of vehicle emissions – horse manure – annually, and dumped it into local rivers. Lung and intestinal diseases were rampant. Life expectancy was 47.

Today, President Obama wants to prevent “runaway global warming,” by slashing US carbon dioxide emissions to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. According to Oak Ridge National Laboratory data, this reduction would return the United States to emission levels last seen in those halcyon days of 1905!

But America’s 1905 population was 84 million, versus 308 million today. We didn’t drive or fly, or generate electricity for offices, factories, schools or hospitals. To account for those differences, we’d have to send CO2 emissions back to 1862 levels.

The Civil War was raging. Nine of ten Americans were farmers (versus 2% today). The industrial revolution was in its infancy. Malaria halted construction on the Washington, DC aqueduct. Typhus and cholera killed thousands more every year. Life expectancy was 40 – half of what affordable hydrocarbon, hydroelectric and nuclear power helped make it today.

None of this seems to matter to the Obama Administration or liberal Democrats. The 648-page Waxman-Markey climate bill would compel an 80% CO2 reduction, by imposing punitive cap-and-tax restrictions on virtually every hydrocarbon-using business, motorist and family.

That’s making some legislators nervous, as they ponder the health, economic and employment effects of restricting energy supplies and driving up the cost of everything we eat, drink, make and do – especially in 20 states that get 60-98% of their electricity from coal.

So to prod Congress into action, or achieve the 80% target via regulatory edict, the Obama Environmental Protection Agency has decreed that natural, plant-enhancing, life-sustaining carbon dioxide “endangers human health and welfare.” The authoritarian actions it is contemplating would regulate cars, trains, boats and planes; pave the way for regulating farms and factories, hospitals, schools, malls and apartment buildings, computer servers and lawn mowers; and send energy prices skyrocketing.

It is astonishing how casually activists, bureaucrats, politicians and even some corporate executives advocate arbitrary CO2 reduction targets and timetables – as though they were possible, desirable or necessary.

The targets reflect worst-case scenarios generated by computer models. But the models assume human CO2 now drives climate changes that have been occurring for eons. They ignore many natural forces, and inadequately analyze incomplete data, based on our still limited grasp of complex climate processes.

They cannot accurately replicate last year's regional climate shifts or predict changes even one year in the future. They ignore Earth's history of repeated climate changes, and failed to anticipate the slowly declining global temperatures of 1995-2008.

Thousands of climate and other scientist say there is no climate crisis, and CO2 plays little or no substantive role in climate change. A new Rasmussen poll finds that 48% of registered American voters now believe climate change is caused by planetary and other natural forces. Only a third still believe it's due mostly to humans.

Climate realists also recognize that, even if America eliminated all of its greenhouse gas emissions, increasing Chinese and Indian carbon dioxide emissions would promptly offset our draconian cuts.

This alarms Climate Armageddonites. They fear it's now or never to wrest control over energy and the economic, manufacturing and transportation activities it fuels. Now or never to profit from cap-and-tax laws, renewable energy mandates, and a forced shift away from hydrocarbons that now provide 85% of US energy.

“Socially responsible” corporate groups like the Carbon Offset Providers Coalition are banking on passage of Waxman-Markey or similar legislation. They want to ensure that any CO2 regime is “rigorous and efficient,” to foster high carbon prices, maximum subsidies and strong profits.

President Obama says cap-and-trade will “raise” \$656 billion over the next decade. The National Economic Council and other analysts put the tax bite at \$1.3 to \$3.0 trillion.

This is not monetary manna. The wealth will be extracted from every hydrocarbon-using business, motorist and family.

The intrusive energy rules and taxes will clobber households, manufacturers, farmers, truckers and airlines. The poorest families will get energy welfare, to offset part of their \$500-3,000 increase in annual heating, cooling, transportation and food expenses. Everyone else will have to trim health, vacation, charity, college and retirement budgets to pay for energy.

Every increase in energy prices will result in more businesses laying off workers or closing their doors, more jobs sent overseas, more families forced into welfare, more school districts, hospitals and churches into whirlpools of red ink.

Exactly how will they, your family, your business eliminate 80% of CO2 emissions by 2050? Exactly how will you pay those skyrocketing fuel bills?

The Nature Conservancy predicts that, by 2030, “eco-friendly” wind, solar and biofuel projects will require extra land equivalent to Minnesota, to produce the energy we now get from oil, gas and coal. Interior Secretary Salazar’s proposal to have offshore wind turbines replace gas, coal and nuclear electricity generators would mean 336,000 3.25MW behemoths off our coasts – if they operate 24/7/365. Far more if they don’t. Where exactly will we site those turbines – and get the billions of tons of concrete, steel, copper and fiberglass it will take to build and install the expensive, unreliable, subsidized monsters?

My grandmother used to say, The only good thing about the “good old days” is that they’re gone.

Few Americans will be enthralled by the prospect of returning to that era. Fewer will relish the hefty price tag – and damage to their freedoms, budgets, jobs and living standards.

The White House, EPA and Congress need a serious reality check.

Climate change “morality”

The duplicitous politics of money, power, control and corporate rent-seeking

June 1, 2009

The climate “crisis” is a “moral issue that requires serious debate,” Al Gore proclaimed in an April 27 AlGore.com blog post.

His conversion to the Anglo-American tradition of robust debate came a mere three days after the ex-VP refused to participate in a congressional hearing with Lord Christopher Monckton, former science advisor to Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Republicans had invited Monckton to counter Gore’s testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

But Gore froze like a terrified deer in headlights, and Chairman Henry Waxman told the UK climate expert he was uninvited.

Their hypocritical cowardice simply reflects a recognition that their entire energy rationing crusade would collapse if they ever allowed real debate.

Monckton would have focused on the science. But it is morality that truly requires serious debate. Climate Armageddon claims are being used to justify malignant policies that have no rational basis.

Global average temperatures peaked in 1998 and since have cooled slightly, despite steadily rising CO2 levels. Except in its Western Peninsula, Antarctica is gaining ice, and Antarctic sea ice reached an all-time high in 2007. Arctic ice is seasonably normal, and in 2008 the Northern Hemisphere was covered by more snow than ever before recorded.

Scientists are hard-pressed to point to long-term state or country climate trends that differ from historic experience and can reasonably be linked to anthropogenic warming crises. Merely asserting that obesity causes warming or increased malaria and house cat populations are due to [warming](#) does not make it so.

Even more devastating to alarmist claims, long-held assumptions about the deep Atlantic counter-current or “conveyor belt” below the Gulf Stream have been undermined by [recent studies](#). Those assumptions underlie many climate models and their scary worst-case scenarios about alleged planetary crises. The models and GIGO scenarios are now even more questionable.

Yet, model results are constantly portrayed as “evidence” – “proof” that immediate, drastic action is required to avert disaster. Nonsense. Climate changes and their causes are complex, our knowledge is still limited, and the inputs and assumptions are deficient.

Climate models are no more reliable than computer predictions of future Super Bowl winners and scores.

Their Frankenstein scenarios are no more valid as a basis for law and policy than the special effects in *The Day After Tomorrow* or *Jurassic Park*.

Worse, even the 942-page Waxman-Markey climate bill's absurd target – a 17% reduction in US carbon dioxide emissions by 2020 and 83% by 2050 – would have no detectable benefits, even if CO2 does cause climate change. Research climatologist Paul “Chip” Knappenberger calculates that even these draconian measures would result in global temperatures rising a mere [0.1 degrees F](#) less by 2050 than doing nothing, mostly because Chinese and Indian emissions would quickly dwarf America's job-killing reductions.

Meanwhile, China and South Africa want developed nations to slash carbon emissions 40% by 2020 – and give poor countries \$200 billion annually, to help them cope with global warming's imagined disasters. Bolivia wants \$700 billion a year. Our children will get the bill for that, too.

None of this apparently matters to congressional leaders, Climate Action Partnership members or other professional alarmists and rent seekers. If anything, it has spurred them into even hastier action, to transform America's energy and economic system, regardless of the consequences. Waxman-Markey was approved by the E&C Committee May 21 on a mostly party-line vote.

Above all, they want to replace vile hydrocarbons with wind power. That would require \$\$\$ billions in taxpayer subsidies; hundreds of thousands of turbines, across millions of acres of scenic land, habitats and sea lanes; thousands of miles of new transmission lines and towers; and billions of tons of concrete, steel, copper and fiberglass – plus raw materials and natural gas for backup generators.

Spain's experience should be cautionary, but probably won't be. According to a [study](#) by Dr. Gabriel Calzada, Spanish taxpayers spent \$754,000 for each new job in the wind turbine industry (mostly installing towering turbines) – and destroyed 2.2 regular jobs for each “green” job, primarily because pricey “renewable” electricity forced companies to lay off workers, to stay in business.

A recent Lauer Johnson Research poll found 78% of respondents saying even a \$600 per year increase in utility bills would be a “hardship.” They should be so lucky.

Compared to no cap-and-tax regime, Waxman-Markey would cost the United States a cumulative \$9.6 trillion in real GDP losses by 2035, according to an updated [study](#) by the Heritage Foundation's Center for Data Analysis. The bill would also cost an additional 1.1 million jobs each year, raise electricity rates 90% after adjusting for inflation, cause a 74% hike in inflation-adjusted gasoline prices, and add \$1,500 to the average family's annual energy bill, says Heritage.

The Congressional Budget Office says the poorest one-fifth of families could see annual energy costs rise \$700 – while high income families could see their costs rise \$2,200 a year. Harvard economist Martin Feldstein estimates that the average person could pay an extra \$1,500 per year for energy. MIT says household energy costs could climb \$3,000 per year.

Where will families find that extra cash? “What do I tell a single mom, making \$8 an hour?” asked North Carolina congressman (and Congressional Black Caucus member) G. K. Butterfield.

That was a few days before he and his Democrat colleagues voted *against* amendments to Waxman-Markey that would have suspended the punitive law if electricity prices go up more than 10% after inflation, unemployment reaches 15% or gasoline prices hit \$5. What *will* he tell that single mom?

Eco-activists gleefully predict that oil, gas and coal companies, utilities, vehicles and investors are destined for extinction. No wonder lobbyists have descended on Washington – over 2,300 of them just on climate change: 4.4 per member of Congress.

Some are getting \$400-\$850 an hour for their skill in promoting mandates, subsidies, legal measures to hobble competitors, and cap-tax-and-trade versions of the mortgage derivatives market. Al Gore alone boasts of having received \$300 million (from unnamed sources) to trumpet alarmism and draconian legislation.

Colleges, scientists, activists, unions and companies receive billions in taxpayer money, to hype climate chaos claims, intimidate skeptics and lobby Congress. African bureaucrats get millions from the UN (and thus US taxpayers) to hype climate disaster claims that [keep millions of Africans](#) impoverished and deprived of the life-enhancing benefits of reliable, affordable electricity.

President Obama says the Bush Administration “made decisions based upon fear, rather than foresight, and all too often trimmed facts and evidence to fit ideological predispositions.” He and his Democrat allies in Congress should take that critique to heart on global warming.

As it stands, this Congress is rapidly shaping up to be the most unethical, immoral and dictatorial in history. When the people finally rebel, it won’t be a pretty sight.
