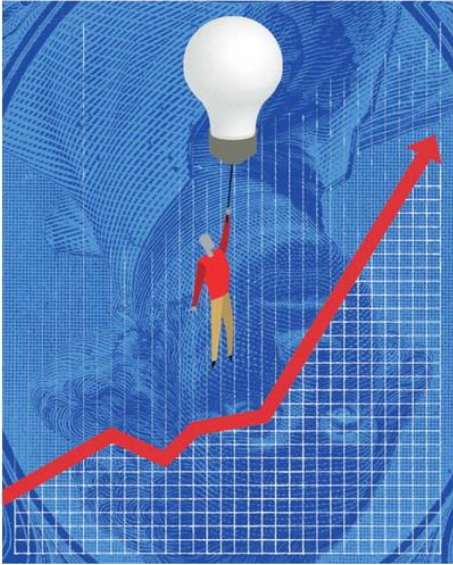


Those who are trying to make us poorer



Energy price increases have caused much deprivation

[Washington Times](#), By Richard W. Rahn, June 1, 2022

Do you like wilderness camping? That is, real wilderness camping where you have nothing more than a little tent, a blanket and six days of food, but no cell phone or even a flashlight? Few people do that type of camping because they are too young, old, fat or out of shape, or they lack basic survival skills — or prefer five-star hotels. The reason most people now live far above basic survival is our cheap and abundant energy, and yet many in the political class are doing everything they can to destroy the modern energy miracle.

Before the invention of the steam engine, about 300 years ago, and then the electric motor and electric lighting, most people had to rely on their own physical strength to make anything they used or the physical strength of animals like horses or oxen. There were a few water and windmills but not so many as to really make a difference.

The reason we have inexpensive and abundant food is that most fertilizer is made from oil and gas. These same fuels power the farm machinery and the trucks to distribute what is produced. Much of what people wear are petroleum-based fibers, and also most plastics that are used in everything are made of petroleum.

When people relied on wood and coal rather than natural gas to heat their homes, cities like London had so much air pollution that many died each winter. Yet, policymakers in the Biden administration are openly praising the increase in oil and gas prices — in the spurious claim that this helps the planet. Every time oil and gas prices go up by 1%, some people no longer have the money to pay their heating and cooling bills, or buy the necessary quantity or quality of healthy foods. In the U.S., most people live farther from the margin of existence than many who live elsewhere, but even so, the energy price increases have caused much deprivation.

If Mr. Biden's energy czar John Kerry siphoned half of the gas out of your car's gas tank, or if Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm raided your pantry and took 20% of the food, they would correctly be viewed as thieves. The fact is both of them are part of the Biden administration's cabal that deliberately promulgated policies to increase your gas and food prices. Unlike Robin Hood, they have not given their ill-gotten gains to the poor, but to the "green lobby," which is primarily made up of well-off white people.

There was an infamous Soviet scientist, Trofim Lysenko, (a favorite of Stalin) who, among other things, rejected modern genetics and the use of fertilizers and pesticides, leading to crop

failures and millions of excess deaths. Those who disagreed with Mr. Lysenko received various punishments from Stalin, enforcing a destructive orthodoxy. The modern version is known as “Energy Lysenkoism,” which is forcing a “degrowth ideology” on public policy officials.

The Lysenkoists, of course, demand the end to coal, oil, gas and nuclear energy. Many of them have problems with wind farms (because they are ugly and kill millions of birds). Solar presents a problem because most of the panels are made in China (which has gulags), and they use rare metals (some of which violate good mining and labor practices). Hydro causes rivers to be dammed, which annoys the fish.

The editor-in-chief of the Grid Brief, Emmet Penney, who has written much about the advocates of this so-called “elegant frugality,” actually believes in minimal energy, even though it makes everyone poorer. The “greens” frequently demand that the existing energy production and distribution system be torn down before replacements are created. The greens pressured New York officials to shut down a major nuclear plant servicing New York City. The loss of electricity was supposed to be made up by a new transmission line from Quebec Hydro—which has not been done. Not surprisingly, the same environmental groups that demanded the closure of the nuclear plant are lobbying against the new power line. Every society can expect to have groups of kooks, who come up with stupid or impossible demands. But the U.S. and some of the European Countries now have people in power who endorse many parts of the green agenda, even though it will impoverish millions — particularly in poorer countries. What kind of person thinks it is okay to have policies that make people poorer with shorter life spans — to, in theory, save the lives of millions who may be born a hundred years in the future?

In all likelihood, there will be many types of nuclear generators that will produce much safer and zero-emission electricity within the next few decades — given the rapid progress being made. Devices have already been developed to extract excess carbon dioxide from the air — and it is most likely such devices will soon be scaled up and made operational.

A century ago, people were not making deliberate sacrifices to make life better for the current generation (us); yet, by any measure, most people are far better off than their ancestors. There is every reason to expect that the environmental problems of current concern will be solved in the next century without the current body of humanity having to make itself poor and miserable.

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