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## TCC POLICY BRIEFING

# UNAFFORDABLE, UNRELIABLE ENERGY: THEY WARNED US THEY WERE GOING TO DO IT, AND THEY DID IT

BY DR. STEVEN J. ALLEN

*Energy poverty isn't a side effect. It's the plan.*

As Joe Biden and the Democratic Party push America toward endemic shortages of energy – toward high gasoline prices, shortages of heating oil, blackouts and brownouts, dependence on foreign adversaries, and military conflict – they're not just blundering into disaster.

They are doing what they said they would do.

In September 2019, Biden was confronted publicly by a New Hampshire environmental activist who accused Biden of accepting donations from the co-founder of a liquified natural gas firm. As the Associated Press reported: "Biden denied the donor's association to the fossil fuel industry before calling the young woman 'kiddo' and taking her hand. He said, 'I want you to look at my eyes. I guarantee you. I guarantee you. We're going to end fossil fuel.'"

In a March 2020 debate with Bernie Sanders, Biden promised "No more drilling on federal lands. No more drilling, including offshore. No ability for the oil industry to continue to drill, period, ends, number one. . . . No more, no new fracking. . . . [N]ot another new coal plant will be built."

Unfortunately, Biden kept his promises to cripple American energy production. On his first day in office, he cancelled the Keystone XL pipeline that would have provided 830,000 barrels of oil a day and created 180,000 jobs. Instead, that oil will end up in the hands of the Chinese Communists, whose environmental standards are not as strict as ours, so the result will be more pollution.

Next, Biden issued an Executive Order requiring all government agencies to follow science-rejectionist policies on "climate change" and to apply principles of racial profiling and discrimination to those policies. The Washington, D.C. law firm WilmerHale explained that "For example, the Order instructs the Secretary of Homeland Security to consider the implications of climate change in the Arctic and calls on the Secretary of Defense to analyze the 'security implications of climate change,' And, the Order establishes several new federal entities charged with implementation of key climate objectives, including the White House Office of Domestic Climate Policy, the National Climate Task Force, and the Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities and Economic Revitalization." Got that?

Then Biden announced goals of reducing so-called greenhouse gas emissions by half by 2030 – yes, 2030 – and of zero net emissions by 2050 – goals that can be attained only by creating mass poverty. He ordered the Environmental Protection Agency to fight a war on carbon-based fuels, reinstalling regulations killed by Trump, including WOTUS (Waters of the United States) rules that limit how

farmers and ranchers can use their land – on the moronic theory that every creek and stream in the country is a “navigable waterway” subject to federal regulation. He imposed a moratorium on oil and gas leases offshore and on federal lands, suspending leases in New Mexico and in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. He announced the withdrawal of tax incentives for oil and gas exploration and drilling. Biden pushed through his “Build Back Better” scheme, which forces electric utilities to use expensive ways of generating electricity, costs that are, and will be, passed along to ratepayers and consumers.

Biden nominated, as Comptroller of the Currency overseeing the banks, a woman who, a few months earlier, declared that banks should deny credit to companies creating carbon-based energy – that “the way we basically get rid of those carbon financiers is we starve them of their sources of capital.” Her nomination was eventually withdrawn, but the principles were put into effect anyway through an effort called ESG, so that (for example) big banks in Alaska refused to finance carbon-based energy projects in the Arctic, including in Alaska’s North Slope region, home to the Prudhoe Bay oil field and other large oil and gas prospects. [More on ESG in a later column.]

Biden put the U.S. back in the Paris Climate Treaty, an illegal treaty because it was never ratified by the Senate. (The one time the Senate voted on the principles in the treaty, in 1995, the vote against it was 95-0.) This is the treaty that originally went into effect because President Obama simply declared it ratified, thus establishing the principle that a president can make a treaty without going through the Senate ratification procedure required by the Constitution. It’s a treaty designed to allow politicians to put in disastrous “green” policies and then declaim responsibility by blaming it on the treaty (as in “Sorry I ruined everything, but my hands are tied because of the Paris treaty”). It’s a treaty designed to trap billions of people around the world in poverty while enriching the dictators and kleptocrats who make them poor, a process that has now led to unrest in Ghana, Sri Lanka, Holland, and other countries. Trump took us out of the Paris treaty, and Biden put us back in.

Donald Trump supported fracking, the technological revolution in acquiring oil and gas that made America energy-rich, and which was poised to create 19 million jobs in 2021-25. Trump’s policies made the U.S. a net producer of energy for the first time in my lifetime. With the prospect of energy independence, the U.S. was in a good position to negotiate peace deals in the Middle East, on which we would no longer be reliant – and we got the Abraham Accords (peace between Israel and UAE, and between Israel and Bahrain) and the prospect of an alignment between Israel and Saudi Arabia against the common enemy of Iran. Trump imposed sanctions on the Nord Stream 2 Russia-to-Germany pipeline and put the U.S. in position to supply Europe with liquefied natural gas, so that the region would not be dependent on Russia.

Fracking is Putin’s kryptonite, so Putin’s Russia has, for years, funneled money to “green” groups opposing fracking. RT (Russia Today), the Russian propaganda organization, has repeatedly attacked the idea of gas from fracking with terms like “another Ponzi fraud” and “a bubble about to burst” whose “days are numbered.” Opposition to fracking and U.S. pipelines like Keystone XL was the subject of many of the Facebook ads in 2016 that supposedly represented the Russians interfering in our election.

Astonishingly, even Hillary Clinton acknowledged that Russia has been behind the anti-fracking/anti-pipeline campaign. In remarks to a private group in 2014, she noted: “We were up against Russia pushing oligarchs and others to buy media. We were even up against phony environmental groups, and I’m a big environmentalist, but these were funded by the Russians to stand against any effort, ‘Oh that pipeline, that fracking, that whatever will be a problem for you,’ and a lot of the money supporting that message was coming from Russia,” Clinton said.

Biden, who presents himself as Putin’s adversary, took positions on energy that enabled Putin.

Helping Putin, Biden lifted the Nord Stream 2 sanctions. Helping Putin, Biden pursued many policies that made America energy-poor, dramatically increasing energy prices to the benefit of the oil-and-

gas-rich Russian autocrat – putting perhaps a billion dollars a day in his pockets, helping finance his war in Ukraine. Putin’s invasion didn’t cause the price hikes, which started a year before the invasion. Rather, the price hikes helped cause Putin’s invasion.

“We’re going to keep at it to ensure that the American people are paying their fair share for gas,” Biden said in December. What’s a “fair share”? Biden, in an Executive Order on his first day in office, set forth the “social cost of carbon,” “estimates of the monetized damages associated with incremental increases in greenhouse gas emissions.” That means that, to be fair, the price of carbon-based fuels such as gasoline must be based on the cost to society of the climate change that Biden thinks is caused by those fuels.

So, by Biden’s own formulation, the price of motor-vehicle fuel must be increased dramatically, so that users of gasoline and diesel pay for the damage they’ve supposedly done to the planet, the “social cost” of carbon.

“Users of gasoline and diesel” means you, and truckers and train workers who transport everything you buy at the store, and farmers who produce your food, and manufacturers, and countless others who make it possible for us to live life as we have come to enjoy it in this country. In November, Energy Secretary Jennifer Granholm, on a Bloomberg News program, was asked, “What is the Granholm Plan to increase oil production in America?” She replied thoughtfully: “Ha ha ha ha ha ha ho ho ’m kay heh heh, that’s hilarious! Would that I had the magic wand on this!”

There’s a silver lining, though. At a congressional hearing in July, Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg declared that “The more pain that we are all experiencing from the high price of gas, the more benefit there is for those who can access electric vehicles,” his tone suggesting approval. Seeming to realize the let-them-eat-cake implication of his remark, Buttigieg then called for “the reduction of EV upfront prices with tax credits. . . . [W]hat we’re saying is that we could have no pain at all by making EVs cheaper for everybody” by having taxpayers subsidize them.

Representative Carlos Gimenez (R-Florida) noted to Buttigieg that “That doesn’t make them cheaper.” Buttigieg replied, “Well, actually, it does.” – which is true, if you ignore the cost to taxpayers and, in the form of inflation, to consumers.

They didn’t start warning us in 2020. They’ve been warning us for many years.

In 1992, Al Gore declared that “The task of saving the earth’s environment is going to become the central organizing principle in the post-Cold War world.” Just before the 2008 election, Barack Obama declared that “We are five days away from fundamentally transforming the United States of America,” and, on election night, celebrating his victory, he proclaimed that “This was the moment when the rise of the oceans began to slow and the planet began to heal.” He was going to fix things, you see.

What would it take to fix things? Earlier, in January 2008, Barack Obama told the *San Francisco Chronicle* that under his energy plan, “If somebody wants to build a coal-fired power plant, they can. It’s just that it will bankrupt them.” He noted that, “Under my plan electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket.”

Upon becoming president, Obama recruited to his administration others who shared his desire for expensive energy. Physicist/activist Steven Chu talked in September 2008 about the need to figure out “how to boost the price of gasoline to the levels in Europe.” The European price of gas at that time was roughly \$8 a gallon. After Obama’s election, Chu became the U.S. Secretary of Energy. Regarding a program such as that proposed by Obama, economist Peter Orszag told Congress in 2008 that “Those price increases are essential to the success of a cap-and-trade program.” The next year, Orszag became Obama’s budget director.

Van Jones, the Obama administration's first "green jobs czar" and now a CNN personality, was one of those who saw the energy agenda as a means for radical societal transformation. He declared in February 2009: "We want to move from suicidal gray capitalism to something eco-capitalism [sic] where at least we're not fast-tracking the destruction of the whole planet. Will that be enough? No, it won't be enough. We want to go beyond the systems of exploitation and oppression altogether . . . [T]he green economy will start off as a small subset, and we are going to push it and push it and push it until it becomes the engine for transforming the whole society." By the way, Jones's "social justice accelerator" Dream Corps got more than \$18 million from the NFL in the football league's 2018 payoff to racist groups.

David Foster, the director of the union/environmentalist group known as the Blue-Green Alliance, described the Obama administration's plan for limits on carbon-based energy as "an economic restructuring bill for the global economy. We should not pretend that it isn't."

Hillary Clinton, at a CNN town hall in March 2016, declared that, under her policies, "we're going to put a lot of coal miners and coal companies out of business." (Clinton claimed that that quote was taken out of context, so here's the context: "I'm the only candidate which [sic] has a policy about how to bring economic opportunity using clean renewable energy as the key into coal country, because we're going to put a lot of coal miners and coal companies out of business, right, Tim?" (apparently addressing Representative Tim Ryan (D-Ohio), who was in the audience). So the context was that she was replacing real jobs going back generations with imaginary jobs. Or, I suppose, out-of-work miners could follow the advice given blue-collar workers by leftists: "Learn to code!"

Around the world, politicians have spent years telling us that they were resetting the world, creating a new order, based on limiting access to energy. Margot Wallstrom, who served as the environmental minister of the European Union, said that the Kyoto protocol, the foundation of the supposed anti-Global Warming campaign adopted in 1995, was "about [the] economy, about leveling the playing field for big businesses worldwide." Jacques Chirac, when he was president of France, called Kyoto "the first component of an authentic global governance." During a visit to Japan to discuss Global Warming, German Chancellor Angela Merkel said, "The question is . . . what kind of measure do we use to create a just world?"

Christiana Figueres, then the executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, declared at a press conference in 2015: "This is probably the most difficult task we have ever given ourselves, which is to intentionally transform the economic development model, for the first time in human history."

Figueres, whose father and brother, both socialists, were presidents of Costa Rica, added, "This is the first time in the history of mankind that we are setting ourselves the task of intentionally, within a defined period of time, [attempting] to change the economic development model that has been reigning for at least 150 years, since the Industrial Revolution." The completion of this task "will not happen overnight and it will not happen at a single conference on climate change. . . . It is a process, because of the depth of the transformation."

Poverty and hunger, from the collapse of an economy that had been built on cheap, abundant, reliable energy.

That's not an accident. It's deliberate. It's not a bug. It's a feature.

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