Doomed Planet

"Today's debate about global warming is essentially a debate about freedom. The environmentalists would like to mastermind each and every possible (and impossible) aspect of our lives."
Vaclav Klaus – 'Blue Planet in Green Shackles'

Address given by Dr Jay Lehr, Science Director of the *Heartland Institute*, on August 7, 2009, at the *Institute for Private Enterprise* in conjunction with the *Australian Climate Science Coalition*.

Global Warming – Why Carbon Dioxide Plays No Role

My primary concern with climate control legislation is the disaster it will have for the less advantaged. If we are going to see poor people throughout the world, particularly in Africa, advance and improve their standard of living it can only be by supplying them inexpensive energy. But with climate control legislation our energy will increase in value and their chances of improving their plight is going to diminish.

I am a strong believer in capitalism. There has never been a better economic system that can advance economic well-being. Socialism cannot work unless by force: you can't level the playing field for all people unless you hold a gun to their head, so capitalism is a better system than socialism.

But capitalists do not have any ethical advantages over socialists and part of our problem today is the greed of capitalist organisations that are at every turn trying to figure out how they can game the system and make money on global warming. So we are really not much talking about science, we're talking about money and political power. There are so many vested interests that are going to make money on carbon trading, which will become the number one traded commodity in the world. It will dwarf energy and oil and whatever grains we use as a traded commodity. The volatility of carbon trading will upset the market forever. We have about two hundred billion trading contracts today, and it will grow rapidly to a trillion or more by 2020. People think they can make a great deal of money, unfortunately at the expense of less advantaged people.

Prince Charles supports a non-profit organisation that pays people in Africa not to develop anything, to stay poor; essentially it pays them not to advance. This for reasons that I don't fully understand other than he might feel a little daffy: he feels any human progress is negative.

At the same time, we can think of a green party, a green world, a religion that our kids have now been taught in their schools for a full generation. As standard religion seems to decline, the secular green religion comes on and climate change is just a major example of the green religion and it's very difficult to fight. I'm going to tell you how in basically three stages.

One, I will explain as simply as I can that carbon dioxide plays essentially no role in determining the temperature of the planet. Secondly, that carbon dioxide is not a pollutant, and that without the carbon dioxide we have on the planet we could not exist because vegetation would not exist. Hundreds of millions of years ago when the dinosaurs roamed the world we had five times more carbon than we have today.

We have indeed increased the carbon capacity of our atmosphere from 270 parts a million up to 380 today, and I have no doubt whatsoever that it will rise to 500, hopefully in my lifetime. I say hopefully in my lifetime, not that I hope it will rise fast but that I will live

long. To add to my optimism (and you may wish to take everything I say with a grain of salt) at 73 I consider myself at the peak of my career.

When I point out in a couple of different ways that we're not responsible for the warming, and that carbon dioxide is a good thing, not a bad thing, you will obviously recognise the pointlessness of having any legislation. However it isn't pointless for people that are going to make money out of it or gain power out of it. But I hope to give you a package of simple information that each day you can share with people at your dinner table, that you can share in social gatherings like this if you get together and chat, not in a particularly strong science way, but in a manner where you share with people who respect your judgment that you are convinced that man is not responsible for the either ups or downs of the planet. You don't have to teach science, you plant a seed of doubt in the mind of somebody who respects you and they will rethink the whole thing. So slowly and exponentially, if all of you talk to three dozen people in the course of a year, and some of them talk to three dozen people in turn, very slowly we can turn around public opinion.

I was asked at a conference in New York last March where public opinion has to be before we can turn government away from climate change. My answer was 70 per cent, and I believe that's the objective. We need 70 per cent of the public recognising this scam before the government will respond. In the United States we have risen in the past five years from 32-34 per cent recognising that global warming was not man-caused to right now around 54 per cent, so we've turned the corner, we have a slight majority, but not significant in terms of changing the politics of it because they're still not seeing the critical truth.

Let's start at the beginning now, technically. My career in science goes back 55 years but my career in climatology doesn't go back as far, it only goes back to December 3, 1973. Why do I say that? Because on December 3, 1973 a magazine I no longer read, *Time* magazine in the United States, published this magazine with the cover *"The Big Freeze"* because it was the beginning of the 70s and global cooling was the issue. But global cooling did not catch the fancy of enough people, did not scare enough people. Sometime in the early 1980s they moved to global warming. I have been studying the issue very seriously ever since.

I kind of like to think that you in Australia might be interested to know that in the United States the opinion of Australia is absolutely amazingly positive. I think I've never heard a negative word said in my country about your country. People in the United States hate France, and the French hate us. And we have mixed emotions about the Canadians; generally positive, but mixed emotions. I've never heard a negative word about Australia so we do think of Australia as an island of sanity.

So let me give you the information. First of all: the numbers. We have a television show in the United States called: *"Are you as smart as a fifth grader?"* I don't know if it's gotten over here. Well, I'm not going to push you that far, I'm only going to fourth grade arithmetic and here are the numbers that are not arguable. That of all the greenhouse gasses, 90 per cent is water vapour, 4 per cent is carbon dioxide, 4 per cent is methane and 2 per cent are nitrous oxide and a number of fluoride compounds. (NOTE: these numbers reflect the estimated relative contributions of the gases to greenhouse warming.) So of all the greenhouse gasses that make this earth habitable - because without them all the thermal energy that comes from the sun to the earth would return back into space if this greenhouse envelope didn't hold enough heat for us to have a planet to survive - only 4 per cent is carbon dioxide.

The shocking number is that, of that 4 per cent, man only contributes 3 per cent. That's our power plants, our automobiles, our own breathing; everything we do on the planet contributes 3 per cent. 97 per cent of the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere comes from the ocean and from plants.

Probably most of you are aware that Albert Gore, whose house is 20 times larger than any of ours here, uses 20 times more energy. It's okay because he buys dispensation from a company that plants trees somewhere. Nobody knows where but somewhere. It turns out that he owns the company.

But planting trees is a very interesting idea for the papal dispensation. It takes a tree about 10 years to get up to speed to absorb carbon dioxide. There are some aeroplane companies that will sell you a carbon credit so you don't feel so badly about flying. That's never stopped Al: he flies in a private jet everywhere. But it takes 10 years for that tree to grow up to where sufficient trees will equal your cross country in the jet. What happens when the tree dies? And what happens to the carbon dioxide? Right back into the atmosphere! There's no net change at all, it's all a joke that the public is not aware of.

If we take the 4 per cent of this carbon dioxide, and the 3 per cent of the 4 per cent that's man-caused - our cars and our factories - and you multiply them together, you will get a number that is 0.12 per cent of a per cent, or just over a tenth of a per cent. So our contribution to the carbon dioxide in the greenhouse gas envelope is just over a tenth of a per cent.

Now let's talk about Australia. Your country's total contribution to the amount of greenhouse gases that are put into the atmosphere by man is around 1 per cent. If you want to reduce it, we start from 0.12, now multiply that by 1 per cent; we're now I think at twelve thousandth of a per cent. And what is the new legislation? How much reduction is it you're aiming for? 5 per cent! So now 4 per cent, times 3 per cent, times 1 per cent, times 5 per cent. There's so many decimal places out there it's ridiculous.

I came here with Peter and he was saying: well, don't you think maybe there is some little impact of man here on the temperature? I said: no, there is none. We don't have instruments that can measure as many zeros out there with regard to what the carbon is. So whatever you do here in Australia will have absolutely no impact whatsoever on the temperature of the earth and you're asked to sacrifice your economic wellbeing in order to do it.

That's a story that has to be told to the public because I know that Kevin Rudd looks in the eyes of a few children and says *"we want to have our national parks survive and if you do, you want to pass this, we need this legislation"*. It's scare mongering at its worst. But if you want your parks to survive why wouldn't you want more carbon dioxide in your atmosphere? Everything on this planet is growing better than it has in our lifetime because we have added 110 parts per million of carbon to the atmosphere in the last 50 or so years. The yield of all growing vegetation on this planet has improved. Food is easier to grow.

When is the last time you saw a scary headline about loss of rain forest vegetation? Anyone has seen a headline lately? Really, what did it say? Brazil! Well, it's always in Brazil but the whole thing is dying down.

The fact of the matter is we are growing about two million tonnes of additional vegetation on the equator as a result of the increased greenhouse gases, and now the increased growth in the rain forest along the equator has far outweighed whatever amount of vegetation that was cut down by peasants in order to scratch some food out of the land. There

was a loss of rain forests and now there's a very significant advancement of green energy in rain forest.

They're saying that carbon dioxide is a pollutant, then why do you drink Coca-Cola? Why do you drink champagne? Or why do you drink any sparkling beverage? Why would you go up to your loved one and kiss them? You're breathing carbon dioxide in their face. Why would you want to spread a contaminant? It's utterly absurd. The planet would not be lovable without it and it's better for having more. Everything is so upside down. The increase in carbon is all good, it's not bad. The increase in heat was all good – and we're not heating anymore.

Do you know, I don't know anybody in Canada who vacations in Norway? I don't know anybody in the United States that would not love to have the average temperature of their town get two degrees Fahrenheit warmer, and I don't know any old people who would rather live in a cold climate. Cold kills prematurely at five times the rate. Five times the rate. Life expectancy, as a matter of fact, in Norway is lower than most comparable countries. Cold is tougher. Diseases do not generally increase with heat so the whole thesis that carbon dioxide is a bad thing is absolutely false.

Science is done by observation. We measure things, we do experiments, we have hypotheses and we come up with proof, or we come up with no proof. Let me give you some proof of the relationship between carbon dioxide and temperature. Let's start with what you know for sure.

We have been keeping temperature records since 1880. From 1880 to 1940 we had a slight increase in the earth's temperature. From 1940 to 1978 the temperature was very flat. From 1978 to 1998 the temperature went up. From 1998 to the present we have been cooling. What has carbon dioxide done throughout this entire time?

From around the turn of the century when Henry Ford invented his car and all the inventions starting coming on, the first industrial evolution, and then the second industrial evolution following World War II, carbon increases have just gone up in a straight line but the temperature went up, went sideways, went up, went down. There is no relationship at all.

And when we look at ice cores we have 900,000 years of dated ice cores. It's not rocket science. We can date ice when we drill into various glaciers, such as we have in the Antarctic and Greenland. Now, two chemicals are always found in different ice cores. One is carbon, and it will be carbon 14 and carbon 12. The ratio of carbon 14 to carbon 12 tells us how long it's been since that gas bubble was in the atmosphere. We can actually date an ice core to within 50 years. Similarly in the ice bubble there's an oxygen isotope, oxygen 18, which along with oxygen 16 which is the oxygen we breathe. That ratio of 18 to 16 tells us the temperature when the air was frozen. 900,000 years of records to tell us what the temperature was in the earth all the way back then. And we also can measure the carbon in the bubble, the carbon dioxide itself in the bubble, and know how much carbon dioxide. So we now have this 900,000 year record and what we found is that throughout those 900,000 years it revealed two things.

One, there's been a 1500 year cycle that's gone on forever - while the temperature is going up 57 degrees Fahrenheit and down, up and down over 1500 years, and then we have tree rings to support that. But more interesting, we find that the temperature rise always precedes the carbon dioxide rise. It is temperature that causes an increase in carbon dioxide,

not carbon dioxide that causes an increase in temperature. This is so logical, this is so obvious. Why is it obvious?

A temperature increase will drive carbon dioxide out of solution in the ocean. The ocean is the primary source of carbon. Well, water contains more carbon dioxide when it's cold than when it's warm. So when the ocean is warm the carbon dioxide comes out.

What happens? Why are you not drinking old, warm Coca-Cola or old, warm champagne? There's no carbon left in it. You keep it cold to keep the carbon in it. Maybe you didn't realise it, maybe you just like it cold. It's not the only reason. If you want to keep the carbonation in, whether it's wine or soft drink, you keep it cold. This is not rocket science. You can teach this to the third or fifth grade science, but the public does not understand.

So this is the observational data that we have.

Now let's see what the other side says. They have mathematical models. I said science is observation, empirical study of the universe. There is not one shred of empirical study, not one shred of evidence, to show that man is increasing the temperature of the atmosphere. What do they have? Why is this so perverse? Here is why.

In our country, we are funding climate models, mathematical model on climate to the tune now, believe it or not, in excess of five billion dollars a year. The climate modellers are mathematicians. Some of you may not be familiar with mathematical models. Well, if you don't understand the physical system you can write an equation that you think simulates how the physics of the universe works. You can write an equation with a number for cloud cover, cloud height, ocean circulation, topography, various movements of air and ocean water, incoming solar radiation, dust in the air, volcanic eruptions. You can write equations for anything.

I can write an equation to determine if and when a plant out there may change colour at the end of summer by knowing how much foliage is on the plant, the nature of the soil that it's growing out of, the moisture content of the soil and maybe I will be right. But if I write that equation about when that plant is going to change colour, and let's say you're judging me, can I go on telling you when it's going to change colour forever? You just watch the plant and see if I'm right. It's a mathematical model that can be proved right or wrong. But the climate modellers can't be proved right or wrong because with these models they're projecting decades; in fact 100 years out in the future. It's nuts!

How accurate is your weather report here in Melbourne for a week from tomorrow? How much money would you place on an event that you're going to do a week from tomorrow based on what the weather report tells you? In fact, we measure weather report accuracy, they're about 56 per cent accurate seven days out; they're really good at telling you what things are going to be like tonight and tomorrow and pretty good the day after tomorrow but their accuracy drops off with days and after seven days. And yet we are asked to believe an equation that cannot be tested. There is no date certain.

If I ask you: what was the last major scare that gripped society - and I will say that it happened in the last 20 years - what was the last major scare that turned out to have no bearing? Y2K! There's always a fear that grips society because fear sells. News loves fear, we know that fear sells. We are genetically predisposed to be fearful. The reason is our ancestors lived in caves - at least the fearful ancestors lived in caves. The ones who are not our ancestors didn't fear going out of the cave - they didn't survive to have us. So only the scaredy cats in the caves survived and they had children who were scared, who had

children who were scared, and they had us. We are genetically predisposed to be fearful. The news media knows that, the politicians know that. Scare people.

But Y2K had a major problem that global warming doesn't have. It had a date, just like my foliage on the tree out there. When it's time to change colour, if it doesn't change colour you know I was wrong. We all woke up on January 1 2000 laughing at how we had been duped. But we had an industry that was developed, an industry of people doing research on computers to protect us from self destructing planes falling down, trains falling off the rails when all the computers were unable to go from 1999 to 2000. As evidence against global warming keeps coming forward they just say: uh, huh, we forgot in our equation to put enough weight on particular matter coming out of smokestacks so we're a little bit wrong and we're going to warm a little further out. Now, happily, it's becoming a comedians' joke; it doesn't matter what happens, it's global warming. And they're overdoing it a little bit and I think the joke about everything being global warming is why in the United States we've shifted from 32-34 per cent who don't believe in global warming up to just over 50 per cent.

Of course, I have heard people say that cooling is a result of warming: if it wasn't for us warming, it would be cooler. I mean, talk about how many people want it both ways. If I ask myself, how many more years of cooling do we need to change public opinion, I don't know that I know the answer to.

I can tell you I'm a sunspot guy. Right now we have less sunspots than we have had in many, many decades and sunspots are more or less atomic explosions that create more heat on the sun than normal and therefore the radiation coming from the sun is reduced and the sun is just very inactive and into a cooling period. This affects the oceanic current, it affects clouds, it is very complicated and it clearly starts with the sun but, based on all the atmospheric physicists I have spoken to, it foreshadows cooling.

You need to know more about models. I told you about mathematical model, but it's absolutely amazingly ridiculous because the only grid resolution they can use in a model is about three degrees latitude and this means we're talking about hundreds of kilometres. The atmosphere changes in tens of metres to hundreds of metres, they have to average everything and ignore hundreds of variables because in fact if we were to list all of the variables and their interaction in a real climate model, there isn't a computer on the planet that can handle it so it's all about guesstimating and making stuff up to come up with an answer.

One of the interesting things about modelling is that 10 years ago all the models had 7-9 degrees Fahrenheit warmer at the end of the century. Now they all say 2 to 4 per cent. How do they change so dramatically? They get together and they say: what do you want the answer to be? They change the equation to make them a little less scary and a little more reasonable.

I'll give you an example of stuff we know. The arrogance is breathtaking and it's actually all there. I do some work in biochemistry. Our minds have about 25,000 proteins and a protein you can think of as a machine in your body that does a function for you. DNA is a blueprint for all the proteins; basically that's what genes are. So the DNA tells the cell to produce a protein and a protein is an assembly of amino acids - there are 20 amino acids that are required for life.

[Are there] any vegetarians here? Very difficult to get healthy vegetarians! I maintain that to be a healthy vegetarian you need a PhD in nutrition because you have to combine

non-meat foods to obtain the protein from the animal meat that has all the required amino acids. I talk about that a lot in lectures. A guy one day ran up to me and he says: you're absolutely wrong, I know three healthy vegetarians.

The proteins are very complex molecules made up of a number of amino acids. In order for them to do what they do, whether it's making your hair brown or making your toenails hard or whatever, what they do relates to their shape because after your body forms the protein, the protein folds itself into a shape, a very complex structure. If you took a piece of paper and you just squashed it like that, a lot of proteins look like that, folded in a weird way. No biochemist has ever been able to predict what a particular protein would fold itself into after it formed this chemical shape. Not one. And they see the protein in an electro microscope so they can have 1000 predictions and check 1000 end points and they've never done it. And yet the climate modellers project, with endless variables that no computer can handle, what the temperature will be.

So it's totally crazy. That's all they have. But it's about politics, it's about money, it's about power, and I have become an anti-capitalist. In the United States we have the Fortune 500, the 500 biggest corporations. There is not one of them that haven't bought into global warming. There is not one of them that haven't turned themselves green.

I will end with a few comments on energy. Clearly we have enough fossil fuel, if they allow us to drill for it, for 200 years. The world will get nuclear energy you have probably the best supply in the world. It might take 50 or 100 years. Obviously France is already nuclear, China is building three new nuclear plants, and the United States probably will over the next 10 or 15 years. But wind and solar is what you're telling Australian businesses is their source of energy usage - and they're impossible.

The average coal fired power plant produces 1000 megawatts of energy (a mega is a million, a thousand million is a billion so your average billion watts). In order to duplicate that with wind requires 7500 windmills spaced out over 300 square miles: they can't be close together. And their capacity is limited because no windmill can produce more than a third, or 35 per cent of capacity. It can only produce 35 per cent because they only operate when the wind is over five miles an hour and below 25 miles an hour, they fall apart above 25 and then don't keep turning below five. And that doesn't account for the fact that the maintenance on them is terrible and they're down a huge percentage of the time.

So is solar a kind of saviour? You know, people talk about these fields of mirrors. Where does the sun shine most, the best place to put a field or mirrors? The desert! Ma'am, would you like the job of dusting those mirrors?

This is what we're saying: It's about money, it's about politics, [and] we're losing. Now I hope the vote goes down on 13 August but it will come back three months later. I hope we vote it down in our Senate, but if we do it will come back. Ultimately, all of our countries, all the world is going to have to suffer economically. The real negative people say we'll never put it back together, we'll never undo it. I don't believe that. People tend to change their views when they're going down for the second time and we can turn the world around. So I have the sense I'm asking you to prepare to turn the world around. I mean, keep working trying to keep the legislation down over the next three months. If we win you do everything you can for the rest of your life, talking about the issue calmly and not striking it with people who respect you, ask them to spread the word and in some number of years I have little doubt that we will win the battle.

Note: Text has been edited for publication to remove asides and repetitions.

Jay Lehr has a degree in Geological Engineering from Princeton University and has written 19 books and over 900 journal articles on agricultural economics, agronomy, and environmental science. He has testified on 36 occasions to Congressional committees.