

THIS WEEK:

By Ken Haapala, President, Science and Environmental Policy Project (SEPP)

Challenging Green: On October 9, former prime minister of Australia Tony Abbott gave a noteworthy speech at the annual lecture of the Global Warming Policy Forum. Abbott is the former leader of the Liberal Party of Australia, classical liberal. In his speech, Abbott challenged the false “climate consensus” and false belief accompanying it that solar and wind power can replace fossil fuels for reliable electrical power generation. Abbott’s speech indicates he now understands the delicate balance required to keep the grid operating.

[As explained in previous TWTWs, the electrical grid can be looked upon as an energized system serving all on it, but owned by no one. Utilities may own lines, poles, etc.; but, not the energized system. To function, the grid requires stability, consumers require reliability on demand, and it is the responsibility of the grid operator to balance electrical generation with demand, within a narrow range of error.]

In his speech, Abbott brings up many of the weaknesses of the global warming “consensus” and states:

“The growing evidence that records have been adjusted, that the impact of urban heat islands has been downplayed, and that data sets have been slanted in order to fit the theory of dangerous anthropogenic global warming does not make it false; but it should produce much caution about basing drastic action upon it.

“Then there’s the evidence that higher concentrations of carbon dioxide (which is a plant food after all) are actually greening the planet and helping to lift agricultural yields. In most countries, far more people die in cold snaps than in heat waves, so a gradual lift in global temperatures, especially if it’s accompanied by more prosperity and more capacity to adapt to change, might even be beneficial.

“In what might be described as Ridley’s paradox, after the distinguished British commentator: at least so far, it’s climate change policy that’s doing harm; climate change itself is probably doing good; or at least, more good than harm.

“Australia, for instance, has the world’s largest readily available supplies of coal, gas and uranium, yet thanks to a decade of policy based more on green ideology than common sense, we can’t be sure of keeping the lights on this summer; and, in the policy-induced shift from having

the world's lowest power prices to amongst the highest, our manufacturing industry has lost its one, big comparative economic advantage."

In discussing energy, he brings out how green thinking of limiting carbon dioxide emission gradually became a goal of public policy and his role of not opposing green demands without sufficient rigor. He states:

"Inevitably, our Paris agreement to a 26 to 28 per cent emissions reduction was a compromise based on the advice that we could achieve it largely through efficiencies, without additional environmental imposts, using the highly successful emissions reduction fund; because, as I said at the time, 'the last thing we want to do is strengthen the environment (but) damage our economy.'"

He no longer campaigned on power prices and lost. Also, the effort to replace fossil fuels with renewables is failing in the state of South Australia, and elsewhere.

"Throughout last summer, there were further blackouts and brownouts across eastern Australia requiring hundreds of millions in repairs to the plant of energy-intensive industries. Despite this, in a display of virtue signalling, to flaunt its environmental credentials (and to boost prices for its other coal-fired plants), last March the French-government part-owned multinational, Engie, closed down the giant Hazelwood coal-fired station that had supplied a quarter of Victoria's power.

"The Australian Energy Market Operator is now sufficiently alarmed to have just issued an official warning of further blackouts this summer in Victoria and South Australia and severe medium term power shortfalls. But in yet more virtue-signaling, energy giant AGL is still threatening to close the massive Liddell coal-fired power station in NSW and replace it with a subsidised solar farm and a much smaller gas-fired power station relying on gas supplies that don't currently exist.

"Were it not rational behaviour based on irrational government policy, this deliberate elimination of an essential service could only be described as a form of economic self-harm."

After energy issues in more detail, Abbott concludes:

"A tendency to fear catastrophe is ingrained in the human psyche. Looking at the climate record over millions of years, one day it will probably come; whatever we do today won't stop it, and when it comes, it will have little to do with the carbon dioxide emissions of mankind."

Challenging the Orthodoxy – Abbott

Daring to Doubt

By Tony Abbott, Former Prime Minister of Australia, 2017 Annual GWPF Lecture, Oct 9, 2017
<https://www.thegwpf.com/tony-abbott-daring-to-doubt/>

Dangerous Abbott unleashed, speaks the truth, critics froth and flounder

By Jo Nova, Her Blog, Oct 11, 2017

<http://joannenova.com.au/2017/10/dangerous-abbott-unleashed-speaks-the-truth-critics-froth-and-flounder/>

Tony Abbott Draws a Line in the Energy Sand

By Terry McCranne, Herald Sun, AU, Via GWPF, Oct 11, 2017

<https://www.thegwpf.com/tony-abbott-draws-a-line-in-the-energy-sand/>