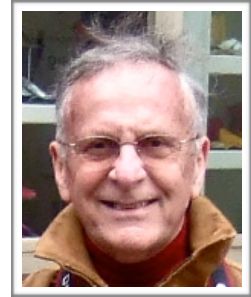


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## Economy Vs Humanity

A ‘Tragedy of the Commons,’ *Writ Large...?*

As the many and various nations around the globe tentatively emerge from the scourge of COVID-19, they profess their intent of reducing greenhouse gas emissions so as to limit global warming—*eventually*. The UK promises to be carbon neutral by 2030AD, while China proposes to be carbon neutral by 2060AD. The United States has set a goal to reach 100% carbon pollution-free electricity by 2035, which begs the question about national carbon neutrality. And China and the USA are the biggest polluters on the world stage.

At the same time, however, the nations are all ‘ultra-keen to get their economies moving again,’ post pandemic. That, of course, means renewed manufacture, further and faster industrialisation, increasing international trade, renewed shipping and air freight, more ‘foreign travel’ for leisure as well as business, *und so weite*. In the meantime, then, we might—not unreasonably in the circumstances—anticipate an outburst of *increased* carbon emissions, while the industrialised economies rack up their suppressed businesses and resume/expand their international trade. After all, the name of the game is to outdo the competition, right? And the devil takes the hinder-most...which he well might!

It would be naïve and wrong to mock. Liberal democracies in particular will not re-elect leaders who preside over failing economic recovery... while ‘people’s democracies’ will face mounting internal opposition, despite regularly winning elections with ‘comfortable margins.’

So, recovering nations of any and all persuasions find themselves between the proverbial rock and hard place: they are damned if they don't meet their targets, and they are damned if they do.

**B**ut, in any event, those targets may be too late. Even if, China say, were to meet its 2060AD target, who's to say that global warming won't have gone beyond recoverable limits, or—worse—have lead to thermal runaway.

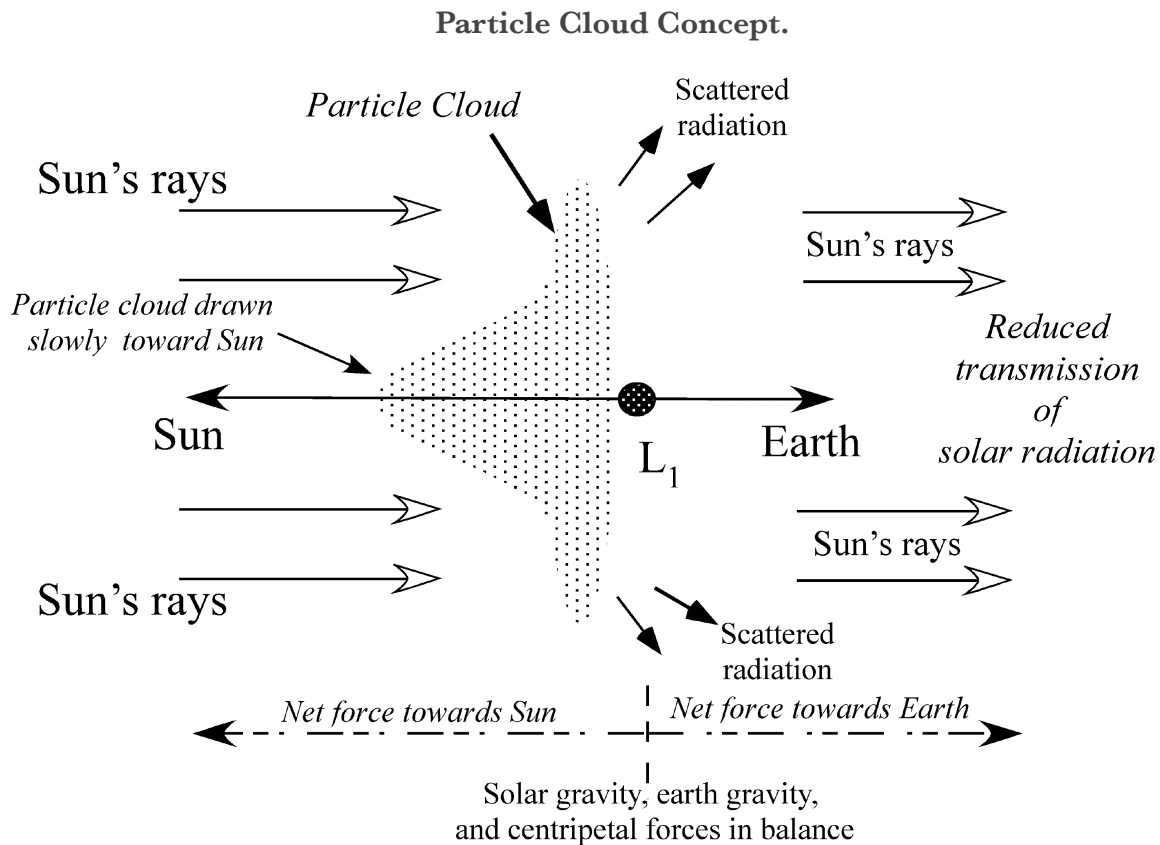
Not a nice thought. Venus is thought by some scientists to have experienced thermal runaway in its past. The surface temperature on Venus would melt lead. It rains sulphuric acid. Not, as they say, 'conducive...' To life. Of any sort. Not even extremophiles. Nada. As far as we know... couldn't happen here, of course.

You think not? Over exaggeration, surely? Well, perhaps. But, we really don't know. If we could suddenly wave a magic wand and turn the world carbon neutral *right now*, we don't know if global temperatures would stop rising straight away, or would continue to rise, levelling off sometime in the future—a natural, to-be-expected, hysteresis... Or might even just *continue on rising*...

Large parts of the world, especially up toward the N.Pole, are covered in permafrost. Permafrost harbours methane, a greenhouse gas many times more potent than CO<sub>2</sub>. So, as the mean global temperature rises, permafrost will start to melt, releasing methane stored within many millennia ago, which will serve as positive feedback, making the temperature rise exponentially. Or so some scientists predict. That could well be an irretrievable oops!

So, what's to be done? Well, humanity at some levels is obsessed with technology, and there are hopes that we may be able somehow to bank greenhouse gases in some sort of carbon deposit, to be buried or, perhaps, shot into space. And, I have mentioned on these pages previously the notion of creating an artificial dust cloud at the L<sub>1</sub> Lagrangian Point, between Earth and

the Sun, designed to scatter some of its infrared radiation. Such clouds, natural ones in the spiral arms of our Milky Way Galaxy, are thought to have been responsible for our various Ice Ages, as the Solar System passed through them. A temporary, artificial disc-shaped particle cloud, about the same diameter as the Earth, would moderate the solar constant, as shown below.



A disc-shaped, self-dispersing particle cloud, placed on the Sun-side of, but near, Lagrangian Point  $L_1$ , orthogonal to the Sun-Earth axis, scattering solar IR radiation only, so temporarily reducing the solar constant, but without affecting photosynthesis. See Reference A.

Will we find a suitable Carbon Banking technology? Will we create a self-dispersing particle cloud at the Lagrangian Point,  $L_1$ ? Quién sabe? But it would be unwise to bet on it...

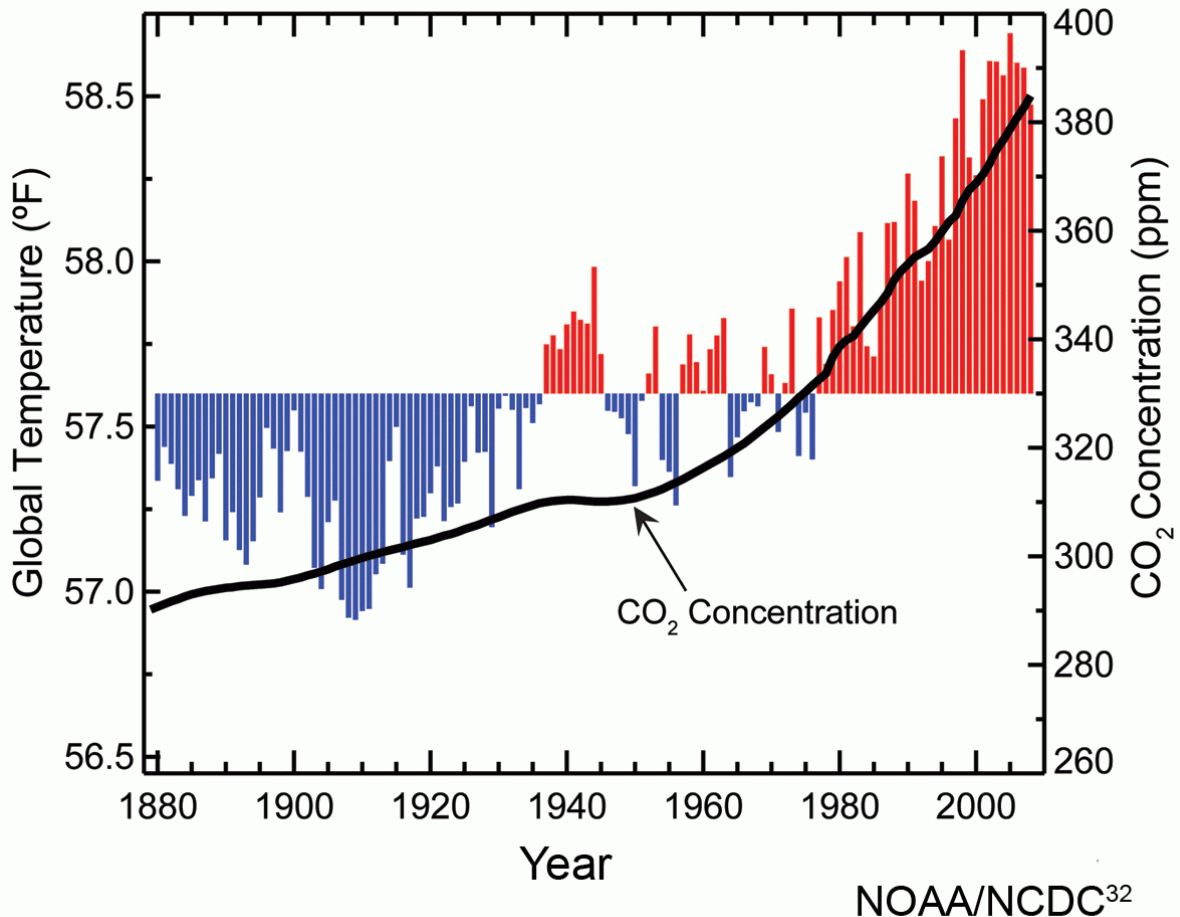
In the meantime, what is to become of us—humanity, over 7 billion of us and rising. Well, it seems that we are heading towards a separation of the ways, with the haves going in one direction, while the bulk of us - the have nots - go in the other. (Which seems pretty standard, looking at history...)

A recent clue reinforcing this notion is the global shortage of chips, the essential core of the digital economy. And digital technology, as we are aware, fuels our technological advance into a bright-if-hazy future with space, advanced robotics, etc., plus artificial intelligence (AI), to obviate any need for creative thought, and to place the wisdom and experience of decades in the hands of novices. All of which costs money, so will inevitably become the province of the haves, who will be able to afford the dwindling supply of chips, plus the few brains who know how to make them and use them...

So, an advanced technological-based supra-human culture will develop (is developing), which will no longer consider humans as animal, so perhaps, *homo sapiens superiensis*? Not so much a new species, as a new classification, above and beyond animal, *per se*. *Ref B.*

And the rest of us? Some 7 billion? Well, we would be left without digital technology. That need not be so bad. First Man on the Moon and first flight of Concorde, both in 1969, both products of the *Analogue Age*, (i.e., before digital). You can do most anything with analogue technology: analogue radars, analogue computers, analogue t.v., analogue remote controllers, analogue transport, analogue typewriters, analogue communication systems, analogue hospitals, medical electronics, etc., etc. The thing of it is, though, going digital made everything go faster, more reliably, etc., so if you look at the industrial pollution on a timescale basis, you will find that it really took off when we all went digital, in the 1970s...

ECONOMY VS HUMANITY  
Global Temperature Vs. CO<sub>2</sub> Concentration (Ref C.)



The chart shows CO<sub>2</sub> concentration over the years since 1880. The concentration climbed steadily, until WWII, when it appeared to level off or even reduce (I *really* wonder why...), before climbing again, this time broadly *exponentially*, but with bumps and wobbles corresponding, seemingly, with the variable red global temperature histogram. Note that the concentration line crossed the nominal mean global temperature line, set at c.57.6°F /14.3°C over that period, during c.1975. Successive red histogram bars appear pretty consistently higher from 1975 onwards... Could that be, in part at least, down to the digital revolution? Who knows, *really*...but it's a thought.

**S**o, leaving the bulk of humanity with analogue technology might not be so bad in principle...except that, the CO<sub>2</sub> concentration line shown above was still rising—albeit not so rapidly—during what-we-might-call the Analogue Period, prior to the 1970s. If the bulk of humanity is to avoid

contributing to its eventual downfall through excessive global warming, then it seems that we may have to eschew analogue technology, too. And, since we know that transport of food and goods by air and sea expends an unreasonable amount of energy and CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere, we may need to consider living off our own land, without significant imports of food. Without any modern technology. Without fossil fuel power units. Good heavens, we may have to grow our own!

Which would be challenging for most nations, impossible for some, such as, say, the small-but-beautiful island nation of Singapore. However, the UK experienced food shortages during WWII, and the then-isolated nation sprang into action with a veritable army of household allotments throughout the land, growing all kinds of fruits and vegetables. Enough to feed the nation? Not really, but enough to keep the wolf from the door... For the future, that might imply a return to the land, perhaps with self-sufficient communes spread across the country. Such communes exist in England at present, and they are largely self-sufficient. But, to be fair, that's a long way from a self-sufficient nation devoid of any modern technology. And there are a lot more of us now...

**H**appily, or unhappily according to your perspective, the bulk of humanity—we, the have nots—are already adapting to this efficient society notion. As outlined in a previous essay, we already appear to be in a pro-eusocial society. (See: Post Pandemic, Post-Human Monoculture, Reference D.) At present this is most visible in cities, where everyone has a specific job, and where no-one knows how to do every job needed to support them: build/maintain a house; supply utilities; grow and supply food; sanitation, water supply, undertaking, etc. These are some of the marks of an efficient pro-eusocial society.

So, we could be heading towards a society not entirely unlike that of the honeybee. Bees, as we know, live in hives of their own construction (in the

wild, at least) and have a very efficient organization, without currency, or technology (unless you count honeycomb), and the whole may be said to be an efficient and effective economy. Some bees collect food for everyone in the hive. Some bees maintain an even temperature in the hive for everyone. Some bees act as undertakers, disposing of dead bees. Worker bees are effectively sexless: workers are nominally female, but neither mate nor lay eggs. Only the queen does that. Some worker bees tend the eggs and the larvae. Every bee has a job, serving their community. None is without.

If you compare that with what happens in a contemporary town or city, you will observe a similar distribution of jobs being done by some for all. None of us does every job, as we would have done as early modern man, hunter-gatherer...Then, there was a simple division of labour between man and woman, who were mutually complementary. Not equal, of course: woman has always had a unique rôle as child bearer. And man protected his treasured woman and their joint offspring, while bringing home the spoils from the hunt...

**A**s we transition into eusociality, we may expect more of our generations to be effectively non-reproducing. Eusociality, the highest level of organisation of sociality, is defined by the following characteristics:

1. Cooperative brood care (including care of offspring from other individuals),
2. Overlapping generations within a colony of adults, and
3. A division of labour into reproductive and non-reproductive groups.

Consider, for humans as potential eusocial organisms in transition, the following ‘indicators,’ or signposts if you will (*transcribed from Ref.D*):

- Both male and female human fertility have been dropping, with the rate of female fertility drop being described as ‘alarming.’  
Could this be the visible signs of a transition to eusociality,

where most workers do not breed?

- Is female demand for equality, and to adopt male rôles, a transition towards all humans being workers and away from females bearing and nurturing?
- Is rising homosexuality, similarly, a transitional state in the move towards a non-breeding condition?
- Similarly, is sexual dysphoria symptomatic of the same transition, but presenting in a different manner?
- Generation Z reaches adulthood in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Statistically, and worldwide, 'Gen Z' appears markedly different from previous generations: it tends to drink less, be more risk-averse compared to millennials...and has been characterised as "anxious and depressed."
- Many more mothers than previously both work and give their babies and youngsters to nurseries and schools to look after. Boarding schools, residential colleges and universities have been popular for many years. Are we seeing a transitional state towards the development of a social 'caste' of brood carers, *in loco parentis*.
- It might seem unlikely that human society will evolve a single 'queen;' but, could we be moving towards a caste of women child bearers?
- We have overlapping generations within our monocultures, largely due to our longevity and early adulthood. Since humans typically live into their eighties, there is plenty of opportunity for overlapping generations to function alongside each other—as required by the definitions of eusociality above.

**I** posit that these changes to the human condition arise through social crowding, catalysed by social media. Similar behavioural changes were observed by Desmond Morris, who ascribed them to people confining themselves in a monocultural city, a "Human Zoo."

*"The modern human being is no longer living under conditions natural to his species. Trapped, not by a zoo collector, but by his own brainy brilliance, he has set himself up in a huge, restless*



*menagerie, where he is in constant danger of cracking under the strain”*

Society appears unconcerned by such observations, surely another signpost that we are post human, pro-eusocial. In effect, then, we may consider ourselves, we-the have nots, as in a post-human, pro-eusocial society where it is OK for same-sex marriage. Even if that is anthropological, biological, psychological, conventional, traditional, and reproductive nonsense. Because a man and a woman are equal, with equal rights, equal opportunities. Which, of course, makes sense *only* in a eusocial society where all are workers, all are effectively of the same asexual sex.

**S**o, it seems that we humans are in a race, a human race-against-time. We are intent on reviving and enhancing our various national economies, which have been faltering during the pandemic. For most, this is an important, even desperate, need, if they are not to lose out against their rivals.

Meanwhile, the most powerful nations continue rattling sabres in their never-ending, undeclared cold war. China is expanding her territory in the South China Seas, Russia has annexed the Crimean Peninsula, and both countries stand accused of international espionage, cyber-crimes, which they simply deny, regardless of evidence. Russia is building another oil pipeline to the West, fossil fuel issues notwithstanding. The USA, under Trump, withdrew from the Climate Change accord, and has just returned under Biden. These do not appear to be the behaviours of nations focused on the welfare of the whole planet...

The threat of nuclear war is never far away, prevented so far by the proliferation of nuclear weapons on all sides which, if released, would potentially solve the human overpopulation issue at a stroke. That Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) might also incur a “nuclear winter,” putting the Earth into deep freeze while clouds of debris and radiation encircle the globe,

shutting out solar radiation for eons. One possible solution to global warming...

Against this background, how much can we expect from the impending Climate Change Summit in Glasgow? There will be words, there will be promises, but how can there be timely action on the global scale that the world needs? Perhaps injecting a Particle Cloud at the L1 is not such a daft idea after all...

On a more positive note, the advent of *homo sapiens gregaria* (the eusocial version of 'us'?) may save the planet—if not for humanity as we know it, then at least for the rest of life on this oasis Earth, this floating, blue island paradise...

### Darwin's Mistake



How could they have gone so terribly wrong?

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