

CLIMATE CHANGE DISASTER HAS STRUCK

Extreme weather is now commonplace, thanks to global warming.

Terrorists
May worry you;
But our big foe
Is CO₂.

Rats. I'd been counting on climate change. By some genetic quirk, my Scandinavian-bred body has always suffered badly from the cold. It's a good thing that my grandfather settled near New York City rather than boarding the "Swede train" for Minnesota. Connecticut's winters are bad enough.

Salvation loomed in the form of global warming. Hallelujah! Palm trees would soon fringe Long Island Sound. Snow shovels would disappear from the hardware store, which would have to stock rubber rafts year-round.



Increased snowfall: a surprising consequence of global warming.

Hah. Instead, that vaunted warming has focused itself on the Arctic, melting endless stretches of ice and tundra. All that evaporated water filled our latitude's skies with gloomy clouds and pelted us poor Yankees with record levels of rain and snow. Connecticut's hardware stores now make a killing on snow blowers. It's not fair.

Worse yet, Republican lawmakers, channeling oil and coal executives, like to point outdoors after our increasingly frequent huge snowfalls and ask, "What global warming?"

Meanwhile, world glaciers retreat, Texas burns, Pakistan drowns, Somalia starves, the Mississippi River overflows, tornadoes swirl, and the low-lying Pacific island nation of Kiribati gets ready to furl its flag and move to New Zealand.

Much of the world grasps the urgency of this crisis. The steadily climbing parts per million of CO₂ in the atmosphere is big news elsewhere. Just not here. Our oil- and coal-friendly media gives climate change short shrift. They treat all those disastrous extreme weather phenomena as mere eccentricities of a playful God.

At the same time Exxon Mobil has struck a deal to drill oil from the Russian Arctic, and Royal Dutch Shell is getting ready to do the same off the Alaskan coastline. Chesapeake Energy Corp. and other companies are fracking their way across Pennsylvania, pumping natural gas from deep wells and polluting aquifers. Coal companies are still blowing off mountaintops in West Virginia, and Trans-Canada is scraping up all that poisonous "tar sand" in northern Alberta.

Meanwhile, the Germans and Dutch are ramping up their use of wind and solar power and shrinking their cars faster than we are.

Nonetheless, President Barack Obama continues gamely raising the gas mileage requirement for cars and trucks, at least until the Republicans regain the White House. But for the moment, the GOP is reduced to trashing climate scientists and burying any new anti-warming legislation.

It's perverse. Luckily, many non-energy corporations are working diligently to reduce their own power usage, which actually can save money.

And now disaster has struck my hometown. The Scandinavian store has closed, shutting off my access to those life-sustaining sweaters. I may have to move to Texas to swelter in comfort.

Source : http://otherwords.org/climate_change_disaster_has_struck/