

Green Comes Clean

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Propaganda: The global warming alarmist in chief has unveiled the environmentalists' real objective. And no, protecting the planet is not their top concern.

In a letter addressed to President-elect Obama and his wife, Michelle, James Hansen, head of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, makes an appeal for a carbon tax, ostensibly as a means for cutting emissions of carbon dioxide, a gas that's allegedly causing a dangerous greenhouse effect and warming trend.

Hansen suggests that the tax be levied "at the well-head or port of entry" from where it "will then appropriately affect all products and activities that use fossil fuels."

This tax will have "near-term, mid-term, and long-term" effects on "lifestyle choices," Hansen acknowledges. But he seems unconcerned about how such coercion will rearrange the lives and manage the behavior of a people who should be free of state coercion.

Acting either out of boldness or desperation, Hansen goes on to reveal the environmentalist left's deeper ambition: a collectivist redistribution of wealth. He recommends that the carbon tax be returned to the public in "equal shares on a per capita basis."

That means wealthier Americans whose activities emit more CO₂ will pay more in carbon taxes than they get back, while those who earn less will receive more in refunds than they will lose through taxes.

"A person reducing his carbon footprint more than average makes money," explains Hansen, while "a person with large cars and a big house will pay a tax much higher than the dividend."

Hansen and his ilk never seem to question whether the government should be involved in behavior modification. They believe so zealously in their cause — establishing an egalitarian society where conspicuous consumption is limited to the few who make the rules — that they have no misgivings about using the police power of the federal and state governments to beat society into shape.

Nor do they question their hunch — the idea doesn't even rise to the level of theory — that CO₂ emissions are causing climate change even as there are ample reasons to doubt it.

To his credit, Hansen expresses support in the letter for fourth-generation "nuclear power and coal-fired power plants with carbon capture and sequestration." But he's done so much yammering about global warming and encouraging "young people" to do "whatever is necessary to block construction of dirty coal-fired power plants," that any sensible ideas he might have are lost.

That's what happens, though, when a first-rate mind latches onto a third-rate assumption.