

### 'An absurdly irresponsible position'

Words, of course, have meaning well beyond dictionary definitions. Take the word "deniers." Rather than simply describing anyone who denies something, it has become inextricably linked in the public mind with those racist idiots who deny the historical fact of the Holocaust.

Which brings us - perhaps to your surprise - to greenhouse gas emissions and the environment.

It shouldn't. But unfortunately a growing number of environmental zealots - secure in their faith that there is no room for doubting the "science" of man-made global warming - are referring to the "skeptics" as "global warming deniers."

For example, Pulitzer Prize-winning American syndicated columnist Ellen Goodman, recently wrote in the Boston Globe: "I would like to say we're at a point where global warming is impossible to deny. Let's just say that global warming deniers are now on a par with Holocaust deniers, though one denies the past and the other denies the present and future."

Imagine arguing that global warming critics are the moral equivalent of those who deny the murder of six million Jews and hundreds of thousands of others. Until recently, environmentalists discredited critics by accusing them of being paid apologists for oil companies and other corporations. Canada's own environmental saint David Suzuki, an expert at dissing corporate interests, claims that if Canada doesn't meet the commitments of the Kyoto Accord we'll be viewed as "international outlaws." But the David Suzuki Foundation itself accepted donations from EnCana Corporation, a world leader in natural gas production and oil sands development, as well as ATCO Gas, Alberta's principle distributor of natural gas, and other pension funds including the OPG (Ontario Power Generation) Employees' and Pensioners' Charity Trust. OPG, one of the world's largest electricity suppliers, operates five fossil fuel-burning generation plants and three nuclear plants. But what's good for the goose, apparently, isn't good for the gander.

Despite what environmentalists say - and, alas, Prime Minister Stephen Harper now appears to have signed on - water vapour, not humans, produces about 97 per cent of greenhouse effect. John Leeson, a director of the Calgary-based Friends of Science, says in Western Standard magazine, that Canada produces roughly two per cent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions, so that even if you believe the oft-repeated claim that carbon dioxide is the chief culprit, Canada would have virtually no impact on the global greenhouse gases even if we stopped burning fossil fuels entirely.

But the environmental issue is far more about politics than it is about science.

Until recently, Harper had the guts - and the integrity - to point that out. No more. Faced with polls showing Canadians are supposedly staying up at night fretting about the doomsday scenario, Harper is trying to out-green the Green Party and all the other prophets of the new religion of environmentalism.

You may recall Project Green, an \$80-billion, 35-year program announced by the previous Liberal government as their solution to global warming? Like everything else the Liberals announced on this file, they didn't do much about it. But had they - at least according to a study of the plan by the C.D. Howe Institute - it would have cost more than five per cent of our Gross National Product and without lowering greenhouse gases at all.

So you don't like the C.D. Howe Institute because it's - dare we say it? - "right-wing?" O.K. Never mind what Liberals said. Look at what they did. Dion signed the Kyoto Accord, committing us to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to six per cent below 1990 levels by 2012. But during 13 years under Liberal rule our emissions actually rose more than 30 percent above 1990 levels.

But that dismal reality did not stop Dion and his Liberals from joining forces with the NDP and the Bloc Quebecois to approve a private member's bill from Quebec Liberal MP Pablo Rodriguez demanding a one-third reduction in CO2 emissions within the next five years, an absurdly irresponsible position which, even if it were possible - which it isn't - would virtually guarantee a precipitous national economic collapse.

Indeed, so radical is the Rodriguez bill that commentators from many news outlets previously sympathetic to the end-of-the-world frenzy, now realize that Dion has made an enormous tactical error. To cite Toronto Star columnist Chantal Hebert, never a true believer, Dion has "turned his green armour into a straitjacket."

With enemies like Dion, Harper doesn't need any more friends. Nor does he need to bankrupt our economy to comply with a massive propaganda campaign which relies on old-fashioned fear-mongering over intelligent debate to scare people into compliance.

Ask yourself: If scientific predictions about global warming and climate change covering the next century and beyond are to be treated as the new gospel, why can't they get the five-day forecast right most of the time?



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**Claire Hoy**

## Positive energy is infectious

We all know there's an overabundance of negative energy in the universe. Heck, most of it comes from the socio-economic winds that blow through most of the civilized world. Okay, a few politicians and civil unrest help add to this seemingly endless toxic brew.

Too bad it can't be harnessed, like human fat, to create an endless supply of bio fuel! (Yes it's true about using liposuctioned fat to create bio-diesel.)

Some parents out there will recall the movie Monsters Inc., in which children's screams and then laughter were used to power an entire world. Great idea to be sure.

Part of being human is being grumpy, or falling victim to negativity. Just as it's much easier to frown than smile, it's easier to be mean, self-centred, depressed, crabby, grouchy, surly and cantankerous.

Just look around. And yes, I've been guilty of many of those characteristics mentioned above.

My wife has pointed out for years that given the choice between being irritable and joyful, isn't it much easier to choose the latter? While it takes more effort, wouldn't the world be a better place if we all just tried a little harder to exude glee and merriment? She is right, of course. She also astutely observed that positive energy feeds on positive energy and the resulting domino effect would be not only contagious but wonderfully unstoppable. She's right again.

The choice is obvious. We all know this to be true, yet how many of us practise cheerfulness day in and day out? How many of us curl up the ends of our mouths and walk around elated each and every day?

There are some - I've seen them. Maybe you have, too. They are unmistakable and they definitely stand out in a crowd. Sure, we find them loud, obnoxious and somewhat annoying, but isn't that just like us pessimistic humans? We greet blissfulness with fear and apprehension. There must be something wrong with those happy-go-lucky sorts!

Of course, they've got it all figured out, and we have yet to catch on to yet another big secret of human existence - positive energy.

Again, we all know there's little to be gained by criticizing and standing at the sidelines pointing fingers and making rude gestures. It's action - mostly



**Mark Pavilons**

positive action - that creates results.

It takes more than a positive attitude to affect change, but it's a vital ingredient in the mix. In order to bring about peace, anti-war rallies accomplish nothing. But pro-peace action is just the ticket. If we want to reduce poverty, we need to roll up our sleeves, get down to the street level and start building infrastructure and putting the system in place in real terms. If we want to reduce medical wait times, we need more specialists and more gizmos to get the job done.

It's the classic Little Engine that Could and the "I think I can" attitude.

Authors have been writ-

ing about the power of positive thinking for decades. And most self-help programs include an image enhancement segment, or a way to change our thinking.

Some believe that positive vibes or karma actually send out very real energy pulses into the universe (or at least our own surroundings). These energy beams, for lack of a better description, make their way through our households, friends, neighbours and co-workers, zapping them with positively charged particles. This, proponents contend, can alter the fabric of how the universe unfolds and enhances our lives and futures.

Now, I don't know if projecting strong positive images will result in lottery winnings, a new luxury car in the driveway or a better job, but the basic concept has merit.

How many of us have trouble getting out of bed in the morning? When we place our feet on the floor next to our bed, wouldn't it be better to do so with a smile and new-found hope that today will be a good day? If we tell ourselves, as

we brush our teeth, that we are strong, talented and beautiful people, will it rub off, and set the stage for a great day?

Again, colorful Post-It notes around the bathroom mirror, or happy face stickers in our lunches may not solve world hunger or cure poverty. A few deep breaths each morning during our personal pep talks won't stop conflict in the Middle East.

But you know, it just might bring a smile to your face. And that, in turn, may make other people smile.

As with anything in life, we can curl up in a ball and refuse to go outside. Or we can bring a little glee to our lives and not only make the best of things, but try to make them better.

The universe may not care about how we feel or what brings us down. It will continue just as surely as the sun will rise long after we're gone.

But if it had a choice, I'm sure the universe (and other people we encounter) would prefer some feel-good vibes.

Try it. The universe will thank you!



### PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS ON RETIREMENT HOMES FOR SENIORS

The Ontario Seniors' Secretariat invites seniors and their families, retirement home operators, consumer advocates and other interested members of the community to a public consultation. The goal of the consultation is to seek advice and comment on standards of care that all retirement homes in Ontario will be required to meet.

**MARCH 2**  
**BRAMPTON/PEEL**  
**1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.**  
**Holiday Inn Select**  
**30 Peel Centre Drive**

For those unable to attend the consultations in person, we invite you to call the Ontario Seniors' Secretariat at **416-326-1945** to request a copy of the retirement homes questionnaire.

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