

One thing to be stupid, another to misinform

Obviously, Abraham Lincoln didn't know current Liberal Senator Dennis Dawson. But he sure knew his type. Which is why Lincoln described one prominent hypocrite "the man who murdered both his parents, and then when sentence was about to be pronounced pleaded for mercy on the grounds that he was an orphan."

Which brings us, of course, to Dawson's recent claim that Environment Minister John Baird's predictions about the economic cost of meeting the Kyoto emission-reduction targets before 2012, are yet another example of Tory scare tactics. "The sky is falling - we've seen this before..." says Dawson. "Every time we talk about changes that protect the environment we have people telling us they will destroy the economy."

This would be a representative of the same Liberal

Party which, during all those years in government, did absolutely nothing - nada - to attempt to meet the Kyoto targets which they, you'll recall, signed onto in the first place.

In fact, to say the Liberals did nothing while in office is to understate the case, since under their watch, emissions did not remain static but instead rose at a dramatically faster rate than in, say, the United States, a country which did not buy into the false hopes and junk science behind Kyoto and much of the current environmental lobby.

All Baird did, in fact, was to release the same sort of economic statistics which those same Liberals had access to themselves - but didn't make public.

For a Liberal, any Liberal, to suggest that it is "scaremongering" to simply release the results of a study by five independent economists, is almost beyond belief, even for a party which really believes it is entitled to govern Canada for all time.

You want scaremongering?

How about a quote from Liberal Leader(less) Stéphane Dion, in a joint statement with Green Party leader Elizabeth May announcing they were joining, er, forces, when he claimed that "the planet has reached its limit.

The human-caused damage to our natural environment is devastating."

Oh please. Dion knows - or should know, having been one of various Liberal environmental ministers who did nothing about Kyoto beyond talking about it - that the earth in many ways is better than it's ever been.

In a weekend exchange of e-mails between May and National Post columnist Terence Corcoran on the 37th Earth Day, May actually agreed with Corcoran's point that "since the first Earth Day, in 1970, our environment - in Canada and around most of the world - has improved dramatically: less smog, less pollution, less risk, healthier people."

That doesn't mean there isn't more to do. (And May would certainly go much further than Corcoran would.)

But to paint a doomsday picture of environmental devastation - as Dion and his ilk love to do - is the worst kind of partisan, public fearmongering.

Why the worst kind? Because it's not done simply out of ignorance. It's being done deliberately to push a perceived partisan - or in the case of many environmentalists, economic - advantage.

It's one thing to be stupid. It's quite another to deliberately misinform. Baird's argument is that to reduce Canada's greenhouse emissions by 36 percent over the next five years - as a combined opposition motion demands - would mean the loss of 275,000 existing jobs, a drop of more than four per cent in our overall economy (which means a serious recession) and numerous price hikes, such as a 50 per cent increase in home-heating prices.

That's what Senator Dawson and the Liberals - along with most environmental activists and their friends in the media - are dismissing out of hand. Yet, in 2000, when the Liberals were still in government, their own Analysis and Modelling Group, which formed part of a federal-provincial task force to implement the climate accord - concluded that if the Liberals began trying to reach the Kyoto targets in 2001 it would cause "sustained, long-term negative economic impacts."

To start now, six years later, and implement the targets by 2012, as the opposition is demanding, would obviously make the economic costs even more devastating.

Yet, the Liberals' own report in 2000 on the subject said implementing Kyoto back then - and over a much longer time period - would reduce the disposal income of the typical Canadian family by \$4,400, and our overall economy would shrink by - wait for it - four per cent, the exact same number which Baird predicts and which the Liberals are now using to accuse him of fearmongering.

One more thing. Until the Kyoto backers provide credible evidence to support their spurious claim that not meeting Kyoto would cost more than meeting it, let's just put that fairy tale to bed, shall we?



National Affairs

Claire Hoy

We're masters of our own demise

It's no secret we humans are our own worst enemies.

Whether it relates to our innate biological flaws or mental incapacity to learn from our mistakes, we are apt to mess things up. Thousands of years of our rather blemished human history attests to our propensity for violence and total disregard for our live-giving planet.

In this post-industrialized society - where the emphasis here in North America is on consumption not production - the pursuit of the all-mighty dollar is a major villain in this theatrical tragedy that is the human spectacle.

No matter how you slice it dear friends, we are somewhat doomed. But what the heck, at least when Judgement Day comes we'll be sipping margaritas in our hot tubs, watching our favorite reality show on our big-screen plasma TVs! What a way to go!

We Canadians like to think of ourselves as leaders, roles models and peace-keepers.

We're leaders all right. Canada is second only to the United States in (drum roll please) highest fresh water use per capita; largest per capita emitter of greenhouse gases and incidence of breast cancer. We're also the second most workaholic nation (next to Japan) and second in amount of gum chewed (the U.S. is first). I don't know if there's any correlation to gum-chewing and the wasting of natural resources, but that's another study for another day.

Even though our closest neighbours know very little about their northern brethren, we love to emulate our American colleagues in almost every way.

We're gluttons in terms of trends, fads and fashions. We're gizmo junkies; SUV drivers and huge consumers of coffee, donuts, beer and things made in China.

Don't laugh. Fueling the massive economic engine that China has become is the slippery slope of western economic decline.

Think about it. China has grown exponentially in recent years. They are putting up cities and infrastructure as fast as humanly possible - and with their huge workforce that's pretty fast. Apparently, they are putting up new coal-fired generating plants on a weekly basis. They're beginning to build cars. They've already established themselves as manufacturing pros, churning out everything from silk



Mark Pavilons

designer ties and purses to toys, car parts and electronics.

This is all well and good for that country and its inhabitants. They are reaping the benefits of economic prosperity. The downside is the demand on the rest of the planet.

Given China's size and immense manufacturing prowess, they eat up a great deal of the planet's natural resources - everything from forest products, to minerals and fossil fuels. We all know what a tiny shortage in crude oil means to us at the gas pumps. What will happen when China begins drinking up the fuel faster than we do in North America? We ain't seen high gas prices yet, people.

China has the ability to completely drain the world of its precious resources and, given their current lack of environmental legislation, are polluting their sizeable piece of the planet even further.

Again, they're laughing, all the way to the bank. Apparently, the Chinese are currently the world's largest buyers of luxury cars like the Rolls Royce. Many

would say what's wrong with progress?

Nothing at all. And the fact that millions of Chinese are earning decent incomes is very good news on many fronts. They too, will become important consumers of goods from around the world, stimulating the economies of several countries.

From a purely economic, nationalistic viewpoint, it can be dangerous.

And we're the worst offenders.

We consume anything and everything made in China, from shoes and designer t-shirts to computers and vacuums. More and more North American manufacturers are out-sourcing labor and using Chinese parts for their products. Even the Big Three are starting to buy car parts made in China. And the very intelligent Japanese manufacturers are using China to produce and assemble their goods. Any historian would find that quite ironic, since the two nations have a long history of bad feelings.

But back to us. Our insatiable appetite for consuming, coupled with our workaholic nature to make money, will set the stage for a Super China one day.

If there's even a penny extra in profit to be made by North Americans, they will find a way. If that means sending more work to China, so be it. If that means using parts and systems made outside of North America, that's just dandy. The bottom line must be obeyed!

This has begun a vicious

cycle, a self-fulfilling prophesy of sorts. The more we buy, the more needs to be produced, and the more profits need to be guaranteed.

So what if the product is the result of slave wages, no health care, an absence of human rights legislation, environmental abuse and harvesting turtles as snacks?

We must have our sneakers with wheels on them; our cell phones that sing; plastic widgets that will spend the next 1,000 years in our garbage dumps.

Our entire economy must change to keep pace. Manufacturing jobs in North America may become a thing of the past, as we concentrate on more IT and white collar services.

Unlike a world of the past, we simply can't convert our entire manufacturing sector overnight. And what of the jobs - the people - who depend on these segments of our society?

I don't know if there's a logical, easy way out of this consuming spiral. I can't predict the future.

But my bottom line is this - perhaps we should spent a bit more time on ourselves, our own backyards and our children. Maybe the answers rest with those who are wearing light-up running shoes and Mickey Mouse socks.

An ounce of prevention is always a good philosophy to adopt. When trying to save the planet, we should be casting our net globally, not just the local pond.

The old entrepreneurial motto still rings true today - let the buyer beware!

Notice of Application of Larvicide for Mosquito Control in the Region of Peel

From May 1 to September 30, 2007, the Region of Peel under the authority of the Medical Officer of Health will conduct a program to control mosquito larvae (immature mosquitoes) in stagnant water in order to prevent their development into carriers of West Nile Virus. The program will be carried out in the City of Brampton, the City of Mississauga, and the Town of Caledon.

The larvicide Methoprene (product name - Altosid Pellets Methoprene 4.25%, registration number-21809 and/or Altosid XR Briquettes 2.1%, registration number-27694) or the larvicide Bacillus thuringiensis Strain 2362 (product name - Vectolex WSP (50 BuTU/mg) - registration number 28009) will be applied to municipal roadside catch basins.

The larvicide Bacillus thuringiensis israelensis (Bti) H-14 (product name - Aquabac 200G (200 ITU/mg), registration number-26863 and/or Aquabac xt (1200 ITU/mg), registration number-26860) will be applied in granular or liquid form to selected bodies of surface water such as ditches and ponds, depending on the

results of testing for the presence of mosquito larvae. Signs will be posted at surface water locations where larvicide is applied.

Methoprene, Bti and Bacillus sphaericus are registered larvicides approved for use by the Federal Government. Larviciding applications will be carried out under permit from the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. The larvicides will be applied by licensed applicators of Canadian Centre for Mosquito Management Inc. under contract to the Region of Peel.

For further information about West Nile Virus and other mosquito reduction initiatives in the Region of Peel, please call Peel Health at 905-799-7700 or visit www.peel-bugbite.ca. Caledon residents call toll-free at 905-584-2216.

Region of Peel
Working for you.
Public Health