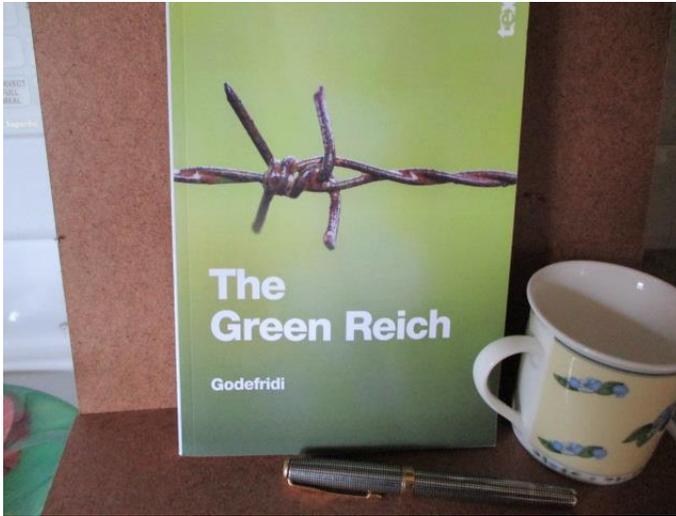


The Green Reich

By Rod Fraser



In his recent column in the UK Spectator, Matt Riley had this to say,

Let nobody tell you that the second decade of the 21st century has been a bad time. We are living through the greatest improvement in human living standards in history. Extreme poverty has fallen below 10 per cent of the world's population for the first time. It was 60 per cent when I was born.

Who knew? The media in Canada and the United States have been warning us for the past decade or

more of a future catastrophe if we don't follow the 'best scientific advice' and drastically curtail our carbon emissions. It seems jobs, economic prosperity, and a good future for our children aren't very important. These good things pale in comparison to saving the world and adopting new environmental imperatives.

Drieu Godefridi's new book, *The Green Reich*, puts in perspective some of the misleading shibboleths of the Green movement. I recommend it for your holiday reading. He makes a compelling argument against pursuing a 'green agenda' at all costs. It isn't long, only 153 pages.

It's one of those books that can be read quickly. It has short chapters, each of which purports to explain one or other of the nuances of the climate debate. There is no doubt that Godefridi is a skeptic. He equates the environmental movement with coercion, manipulation, and group think.

He expects it has morphed (or will shortly do so) into a movement devoted to more taxes, control over our lives, a loss of personal freedom and economic deprivation. You should make up your own mind, but I found his arguments convincing.



There was another aspect to the book I found

innovative and charming. Within its pages, in various chapters, he tells the story of Matthew and Isabelle, two children growing up in the year 2049. They were born before the '*Great Stop*', that time when the '*Green Movement*' assumed control of the economy and government, and their new policies changed the world. There are no other children in the village.

Electricity is now intermittently generated by renewables, its use prohibited from 10 pm to 7 am each day. Motorized transportation is banned, travel is limited to walking, LPJs (long pointless journeys) are a crime and dental care and other so-called necessities are limited to the extent of your CO₂ ration each month.

Isabelle and her mother have left the village under strange circumstances. Isabelle is special to Matthew. She has told him, her dream is to start a family with him, when they are older. This, of course, is strictly forbidden, or possibly just discouraged. It is not quite clear.

What is clear is that Matthew is growing skeptical of the totalitarian world he lives in, and he is determined to find Isabelle, to pursue the one meaningful human connection in his life, in a society where so little of that is on offer.

So starts Matthew's journey to find Isabelle, who he believes has been taken to the '*Nomenklatura of Resources*' facility far away.

I'll leave you to read *The Green Reich* to see if Matthew is successful in his quest for Isabelle. But aside from this lovely story, this coupling of a non-fiction book with a short piece of fiction is a technique that should be done more often. It keeps the book fresh and interesting. One wag referred to this technique as 'factive' writing. Quite so.



Since I come from a background of economic thinking, I was particularly interested to learn if serious environmentalists had any workable theories that might couple economic prosperity with their environmental concerns for 'Mother Earth'. Unfortunately not.

Godefridi suggests the key message from the environmental movement is this,

"The only economic concept that can reasonably be assigned to the environmentalists is negative economic growth..."

"If human CO₂ is the problem, then Man must be controlled, restrained and brought to heel in each of his ... activities."

This is a little bleak to be sure. But Godefridi argues that environmentalists will not be successful in selling this vision of the future. If you recall the 'Yellow Vest' protests in France arising from a carbon tax, or similar protests in Chile from fare increases for public transportation, people are not quite as docile or stupid as political-motivated activists think they are.



I'd like to finish this article on a positive note by noting a few more items from Matt Riley's column referenced earlier. Here is some good news:

- Efficiencies in agriculture mean the world is now approaching 'peak farmland'.... The productivity of agriculture is rising so fast that human needs can be supplied by a shrinking amount of land.
- This has allowed forests to expand, particularly in rich countries.... Populations of wolves, deer, beavers, lynx, seals, sea eagles and bald eagles are all increasing.
- As for Britain, our consumption of stuff probably peaked around the turn of the century.... The quantity of resources consumed per person in Britain fell by a third between 2000 and 2017.
- Global inequality has been plunging as Africa and Asia experience faster economic growth than Europe and North America.

- Child mortality has fallen to record low levels.
- Malaria, polio and heart disease are all in decline.

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