



Written by [Charles Scaliger](#) on November 4, 2019

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## Act Now To Live Poor: The UN's Plan for You

The phrase “American dream” should probably be re-termed the “American ideal” to make better sense. That ideal is based upon using the freedom and opportunity provided to Americans through the U.S. Constitution to achieve prosperity, success, and fulfillment for themselves and their children through hard work — in short, the opportunity for each person to pursue his or her own happiness.



But what does “happiness” entail? For some people, that means eating a brat-burger with cheese and ketchup at a table with family members, swapping the day's stories. For others, it's about having a shiny car that goes 200 miles per hour or weekends at the lake reading books, staying in one's condo or on a houseboat. For some, it's about trips to Rome, Paris, or Miami — visiting Australia, Africa, or South America — or about farming or ranching or hiking or skiing or fishing or hunting or praying or playing video games or something else. For a relative few, happiness means “doing without,” having as little impact on Earth's environment as possible so as to not interfere with “nature.”

One of the things that makes America great is that we can live most any lifestyle we earn.

But if political elites and some well-meaning, if misguided, followers have their way, that will no longer be the case. In the future of their dreams, only a small number of people will be able to “do what they want,” following their own paths to achieve happiness. Others will need to learn to love having less and doing less.

Want to travel to Florida for Christmas to escape another brutal winter for awhile? Sorry, airplane travel is for emergencies and dignitaries, and public transportation for that week is full. Want steak for dinner? Sorry, meat is strictly restricted because of cow flatulence (which supposedly rivals CO2 in its ability to catastrophically warm the Earth) and land-usage laws. Want a heated swimming pool in your backyard? Sorry, that is a frivolous waste of energy, water, and building materials.

Sounds far-fetched doesn't it? But despite the slow start to such an effort — being decades in the making — there are now enough people on board socialist efforts to “save the Earth” through “doing without” (though many may not have thought through the ramifications of what they are pushing) that it likely has a good chance of coming about.

Using the global campaign to combat alleged man-made climate change, they plan to reduce the standards of living of most of Earth's population, deeming the changes necessary for “sustainability.” The people at the top know that this so-called environmental effort is really the method by which power will be centralized under global governance through the UN, while most of their followers probably think they are truly saving the Earth.

The UN's latest campaign on behalf of the climate, ActNow, lays out in lavish detail the globalists' intention to exert control over nearly every aspect of our daily lives, from the food we eat to the clothes we wear — and all, supposedly, in the name of saving the climate. Touted as “a critical part of the UN's



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coordinated effort to raise awareness, ambition, and action for climate change and accelerate implementation of the Paris Agreement,” the new campaign highlights 10 things that the environmentally “woke” must do to serve as a good example for the rest of us. Some of them are familiar territory, while others represent uncharted lunatic terrain. For example, ActNow’s “Drive Less” campaign is nothing new.

*Transportation:* For decades, the environmental movement has arrayed itself against virtually all forms of modern transportation, save for those conveyances necessary to commute to Earth Day celebrations and political rallies. “Gas guzzlers,” both wheeled and winged, have long incurred the wrath of those anxious to eliminate highway and air travel. Now the United Nations is reminding us that travel on foot, on horseback, in buggy, or on bicycle — transportation of ages past — deserves rehabilitation. Although alternative fuel sources such as hydrogen and solar cells show no signs of replacing gasoline and other petroleum-derived products as the propellants of choice, the push is on to rid the world of polluting, fossil-fuel combustibles to protect the air we breathe and the climate we love. Such is the conventional wisdom peddled by environmental extremists.

But returning to a world with 19th-century modes of transportation is unthinkable — unless we are willing to let hundreds of millions of people perish of starvation when our modern trucks, ships, and planes (all of them powered by polluting petroleum products) stop running.

While mass transit such as subways and high-speed electric trains may move masses of people about with less pollution than cars and buses, the fact is that our modern civilization depends crucially on rapid, gasoline-powered modes of individual transportation. Petroleum-derived fuels have been the default method of powering every form of non-rail transportation for more than a century, and with good reason: Gasoline and other fuels are by far the cheapest, most convenient, and most energetic fuel sources ever developed for transportation, especially at the individual level. Modern electric cars are comfortable, quiet, and relatively non-polluting (if we ignore the resources devoted to building and charging them), but they have two huge drawbacks: They require a significant amount of time (usually over an hour) to recharge, and they have relatively limited ranges. Add to this the fact that recharging stations are almost impossible to find outside urban areas, and we have in electric cars a technological curiosity that works well enough in urban areas with suitable infrastructure, but is utterly inadequate for long-distance travel in less-trafficked regions.

So until someone invents some entirely new method of propulsion, gasoline-powered cars, trucks, buses, vans, and motorcycles will continue to crowd our roadways. Take them away, and the consequences will be calamitous. As for their alleged threat to the climate, the vast array of unalloyed benefits modern transportation has conferred on the human race more than offset the very manageable problem of air pollution.

*Diet restrictions:* Far less familiar is the new environmentalist hostility for meat consumption, as retailed in ActNow’s “Meat-free Meals” talking point. According to ActNow’s blurb:

What we eat has major implications for climate change. The destruction of rainforests to create land for agriculture, along with growing demand for meat, are major contributors to the increasing greenhouse gases which are taking a significant toll on climate and global food security... More and more chefs and other food suppliers are focusing on local and organic produce and shifting away from meat-heavy meals and fast food. They are joined by a growing movement of people changing the way they cook and



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eat.

... The Challenge: cooking up dishes that are not only delicious but also good for the planet and good for us — reducing meat and emphasizing diverse vegetarian ingredients instead.

Interest in vegetarian and even vegan lifestyles is not new, but the UN's interest in promoting them is. For decades, vegetarianism has been a minority lifestyle choice in most Western nations — although in many Buddhist and Hindu countries, vegetarianism is the dominant culinary preference. Lately, though, vegetarianism in the West has seen a dramatic increase in popularity, as much for its alleged health benefits as for the perceived moral imperative of avoiding killing animals for food. But the UN's (and environmentalists') interest in eliminating meat consumption is not motivated by either health or concern for the well-being of the world's cow, pig, and poultry population. Instead, "Meat-free Meals," as ActNow's rhetoric makes clear, are intended to suppress meat production — because ranching and similar activities are supposedly extremely destructive of the environment.

In this connection, the recent media hullabaloo about the burning Amazon (and, less conspicuously, about the burning forests in Borneo, another major rainforest area) was very conveniently timed. Much of the clearing of forests in the Amazon region, the adjacent Mato Grosso, and tropical forest areas worldwide has been driven by the cattle industry, or so goes the argument. This is true to an extent — but it is also undeniably true that much of the American continent today is under cultivation or grazing rights of one kind or another. No longer are the Great Plains a sea of virgin grassland brimming with vast herds of buffalo. No longer are the sagebrush-covered high plains and cactus-studded deserts trackless wildernesses. But that is the price to be paid for progress. The American West and Midwest are no longer the "Great American Desert," because of animal husbandry and other types of agriculture.

Modern environmentalists want to deny developing countries such as Brazil and Indonesia the same opportunities that America enjoyed in transitioning from a trackless, lawless frontier to a modern, prosperous, developed country. It is easy to forget that, before modern technology, communications and transportation infrastructure, and the other luxuries that define the modern age, there was agricultural progress. Before the first railroads and telegraph lines opened up the American West, the farmers and cattlemen were already there, because people must eat before all else.

Globally, countries are developing in the same way America developed. Readers over 50 will recall the great African famines of the '80s and earlier. Within living memory, famines and food shortages were still significant problems in many parts of the world. Today, famine is all but unknown because of enormous advances in food production. In the United States, ranching and farming have become so productive and so efficient that the United States can produce enough meat and staples such as wheat to feed not only her own 330 million inhabitants, but also to ship enormous quantities of meat and other foodstuffs abroad (including our rival China, which depends in large measure on American beef and pork to feed its own meat-craving masses).

But this doesn't signify environmental devastation. With more efficient and productive methods of ranching and farming, pressures on American forests and other natural habitats have receded. In recent decades, the United States has enjoyed reforestation and dramatic growth in natural habitats continent-wide. And the same will come to pass in countries such as Brazil as technology and standards of living continue to rise. The miracle of modern capitalism is that it has enabled greater and greater



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prosperity and productivity with less and less intensive use of the land.

Related to the UN's anti-meat campaign is a drive to consume local produce, to reduce demand for mass-grown fruits and vegetables on huge truck farms and plantations (banana plantations, which have gobbled up large swaths of rainforest in the American tropics, come to mind). But of course, this would mean denying oneself the considerable benefits of fruits from different climates. Thus New Englanders would no longer consume oranges, grapefruits, or kiwi fruit; Floridians would no longer enjoy apples; and Americans in general would no longer eat bananas, mangoes, guavas, papayas, or any number of other fruits that will not grow in the continental United States. Nor would we be able to consume grapes, lettuce, and other such fruits and vegetables out of season, because they are often shipped from the Southern Hemisphere during the Northern winter months. A dictum to consume only local produce might make farmer's market habitués happy, but it would entail returning to the eating habits of the 19th century, before modern transportation began to make the shipping of exotic foodstuffs a possibility.

Not only is the food we eat to be curtailed, so are the clothes we wear.

*Clothing:* According to ActNow's website:

Making clothes has a huge impact on climate change. The textile industry contributes around ten percent of global greenhouse gas emissions — it uses more energy than the aviation and shipping industry combined, according to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The industry's impact is not limited to global carbon emissions. It also produces about 20 percent of global waste water and 85 percent of textiles end up in landfills or are incinerated when most of these materials could be reused.

Accordingly, ActNow participants are encouraged to move toward "zero-waste fashion" by "upcycl[ing] your old clothes for new looks and shar[ing] your creations on social media." Translation: Avoid buying new clothes by patching up old ones, and refrain from buying any high-end clothing. Not only are we encouraged to return to pre-industrial eating standards, we are also supposed to go back to the time-honored tradition of our ancestors of dressing in rags and threadbare clothing to bring about a massive downsizing of the evil textile industry.

Taken together, the attacks on modern transportation, food, and clothing amount to a repudiation of the modern age.

*Other areas covered:* And there's more. ActNow also urges its adherents to take five-minute showers, recycle, turn out the lights, unplug electric appliances and devices when not in use, refill and reuse plastic containers, and bring their own bags for shopping rather than relying on bags doled out at the checkout counter. Some of these are fairly innocuous and even make sense for those wishing to reduce monthly bills. Recycling, however, is a longstanding conceit of environmentalism that continues to be on very shaky ground. Recycling is costly and energy-intensive, and it is by no means clear that the time, money, and energy spent on recycling glass and plastic are any less wasteful of resources than simple, old-fashioned disposal. In fact, cities across the country have quietly begun sending recyclables to landfills, instead of recycling centers, because it has become too costly. But they keep requiring you to fill your recycling bins each week in the hopes that the costs will eventually come down enough that the program can be restarted.

All of these agenda items are intended to combat that great bugbear of socialism, "wicked"

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consumerism. So-called consumerism, the alleged popular addiction to excessive consumption and the “throw-away” culture, has all but replaced capitalism as the archfiend of the Left. Where once the myth of “overproduction” animated the radical fringe, now the greatly exaggerated trope of overconsumption has the Left in a lather. Instead of enjoying the fruits of modern progress — abundant food, efficient production, convenient transportation and communication, and all of the other benefits of modern life — it is incumbent on all of us to live lives of renunciation and penury. The ideal is to roll back several centuries of progress and return to the Arcadian bliss our ancestors enjoyed — without modern plumbing, heating, medicine, dentistry, transportation, sanitation, communication, food production, or entertainment. Sure, that was a world in which dodos and passenger pigeons still flourished, and in which tropical rainforests and coral reefs maintained their pristinity. But it was also a world of very few human inhabitants, whose lives were, in comparison with ours, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and often very short.

## **For the Poor**

Noticeably lacking in the UN effort is a long look at the consequences of such actions, if the masses get onboard. For starters, the effort would be costly beyond almost all reckoning, with just the Green New Deal adding up to trillions of dollars per year for the foreseeable future, when considering the costs of mandating that all power be generated by renewable sources. In fact, the costs of the UN effort would entail impoverishing most people across the planet.

Residents of Third World countries would be prevented from developing modern lifestyles, and in First World countries, middle-class taxpayers would be bled dry to pay for the changes, while jobs would disappear in droves.

As for jobs, consider what makes a First World country different from a Third World one. Both types of countries usually have plentiful rich people, but in Third World countries, the middle class is small and the lower classes (the poor) are numerous, while First World countries have many middle-class members. A large middle class happens in countries that allow people the freedom to do as they wish with their money, possessions, and time. After awhile, the numbers of poor people dwindle as more and more people devise ways to provide services to others who have money — from car mechanics to engineers, landscapers to home decorators, chefs to fast-food providers, spa workers to fitness coaches. Under the UN plan, luxuries would be hard to afford for most people, devastating the jobs of tens of millions of Americans who work in service-related sectors, tearing apart the lives of many.

Except for the politically well connected.

Like now, when the world’s leaders in the climate-change movement hypocritically spew loads of CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere as they jet around the world to exotic locales while chastising the common man for taking a car to the grocery store instead of walking, the UN’s plans are not meant to apply to everyone.

First, most of the rich would stay rich under the UN plans because like Al Gore, who made many millions through insider CO<sub>2</sub> dealings, the politically well connected will know in advance exactly where to invest their monies to stay rich.

Second, in the future, the rich, like now, will continue their CO<sub>2</sub>-releasing lifestyles. Everyone has probably heard about the fact that climate-change prophet of doom Al Gore’s Nashville mansion uses 21 times the amount of energy as a typical U.S. household uses in a year (just one of his several houses).



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And that Leonardo DiCaprio who, as noted by *Investor's Business Daily*, “while accepting his Oscar, called climate change ‘the most urgent threat facing our entire species,’ and told viewers that ‘we need to work collectively and stop procrastinating’” also “famously celebrated New Year’s Eve on a yacht in the Sydney Harbor, then flew with his pals to Las Vegas to ring in the New Year a second time.” But many probably don’t know that this is typical of our environmental betters.

*The New American* online related on August 1 about a major climate-change gathering:

The event, dubbed “Google Camp,” is being hosted by Google founders Sergey Brin and Larry Page and many of the world’s “finest” people have been invited.

Among the rumored guests are former president Barack Obama, Great Britain’s Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, and Facebook’s Mark Zuckerberg. Also expected to be on hand are such world-renowned climate experts as Bradley Cooper, Orlando Bloom, Katy Perry, Tom Cruise, and Leonardo DiCaprio.

The seventh annual Google Camp is being held at the luxurious Verdura Resort in Sicily, where individual rooms start at over \$900 per night. The resort features three golf courses (don’t they use up a lot of water, especially on a dry Mediterranean island?), a 60 meter infinity pool, four thalassotherapy pools, and multiple steam baths. Brin and Page are expected to shell out over \$20 million for the three-day event.

... The Duke of Sussex (Prince Harry) himself was reported to have given an impassioned speech, while barefoot, about the moral imperative of fighting climate change to the billionaires and opinion-shapers at the event. At least Prince Harry caught some flak about his climate hypocrisy when British television host Piers Morgan tweeted, “Is this the same Harry who uses helicopters to go from London to Birmingham and whose wife uses celebrity mates’ private jets to cross the Atlantic?”

... Most of these “concerned” celebrities came in on carbon-spewing private jets. At least 114 of those dastardly transportation devices were expected to fly to the airport at nearby Palermo. In addition to the planes were several mega-yachts belonging to people such as designer Diane von Furstenburg, German pharmaceutical magnate Udo J. Vetter, New Zealand tycoon Graeme Hart, and American showbiz mogul David Geffen.

... Yachts such as the ones owned by von Furstenburg, Vetter, Hart, and Geffen can use up to 530 gallons of fuel *per hour* when on the move. The average American auto uses approximately 500 gallons of gasoline *per year*.

The UN guidelines about CO2 emissions would call for the bulk of Americans to eat, dress, and move as if they were in an earlier era, while the rich would be unburdened — in much the same manner that kings of the past forbade commoners from food and lifestyle extravagances through sumptuary laws. Talk about going back to a different era!

## **But It’s Voluntary, Isn’t It?**

While the UN’s ActNow campaign has no binding force, it is a good reminder of the mind-set of the globalist Left, including the UN-centered international socialist establishment. Just as governments everywhere, and at every level, are adopting the radical environmentalist platform (including, increasingly, once-unthinkable measures such as banning plastic cups, fatty foods, and sugary drinks),



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there can be no doubt that a fully empowered United Nations would leave no aspect of our personal lives unregulated and free of controls. An organization willing to impose dietary and clothing restrictions in the name of saving the climate is capable of literally any rationalization for amassing power.

And that, in a nutshell, is what both the UN and socialism are all about.



To many Americans, the United Nations appears remote and impotent, a forum for the world's political elites to air their grievances and, occasionally, to pass resolutions that may or may not be respected. The UN has been with us for 74 years, yet to the casual observer, it has played at most a bystander's role in most of the world's seismic political events.

No doubt the men who founded the United Nations a lifetime ago envisioned the organization to have a larger role, and much greater power, than it has so far been able to amass. It is easy to forget that the UN, from its inception, as well as affiliated global institutions such as the IMF, the WTO, the World Bank, and the World Court, was intended to be the scaffolding for a socialist world government, to be strengthened and reinforced gradually, by consent of member states and as political conditions permitted. The eventual transformation of the United Nations into a worldwide government would, of course, mean an end to sovereign nation-states. It would mean an end to the challenges associated with a world of independent, often warring states — and their replacement by a set of much graver problems: the end of individual rights and liberties, and the elevation of a ruthless, all-powerful socialist group to unassailable planetary authority.

If this seems doubtful given the UN's comparatively muted role in the personal affairs of most Americans, consider this: The United Nations and its affiliates can usually be found leading the charge in almost every Big Government initiative, from gun control to environmental policy, that bedevils the American public. Most such issues are perceived as schemes hatched by homegrown leftist radicals, but in truth, all of them are global initiatives, like as not incubated in the cozy conclaves of the UN and its myriad NGO affiliates.

The ActNow campaign is a textbook case of what internationalists like to call “soft governance,” that is, the use of persuasion, public awareness campaigns, non-binding resolutions and agreements, propaganda, and other non-coercive methods of policymaking calculated to exert pressure on governments by changing public opinion. As a consensual international body with aspirations of eventually transforming into a real world government, the United Nations relies heavily on soft governance to advance its agenda. It is no accident that the ActNow campaign has appeared precisely at a time when the Paris Agreement is threatened by American intransigence.

The hope nurtured by globalists is that the “soft law” entailed by UN resolutions, opinion-molding



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campaigns, and non-binding protocols will eventually be transformed into “hard law,” with real binding effect on member states and their citizenries (a case in point would be the push for the Green New Deal, which would accomplish many of the UN goals). In this connection, the UN and its many global affiliates, like the IMF, have issued volumes of “soft law” on matters ranging from gun control and financial regulations to environmental standards, all of which become “harder” in proportion to member states’ willingness to pass laws codifying such standards and protocols.

The pseudoscience of “anthropogenic” (man-made) climate change has proven the most effective environmentalist propaganda ploy ever devised by globalists. Despite three decades of failed predictions and an avalanche of discrediting climate data, government and foundation grant money continues to pour into climate research, and the mainstream media, along with the environmentalist fringe, remain as committed as ever to their pet dogma — this in stark contrast to numerous other environmentalist scare tactics that have come and gone as flashes in the pan over the years (Anyone remember *Silent Spring*? DDT? Acid rain? The ozone hole? The obliteration of the rainforests by the mid-’90s?). ActNow is but the latest act in the global warming-turned-climate-change theater, intended to shore up support at a time when environmentalist globaloney is on shakier political and evidentiary ground than ever before.

To fully comprehend the mind-set behind the ActNow campaign, and environmental extremism in general, it is necessary to understand what is meant by the catchphrase “sustainable development.” That, after all, was the official overarching objective of the historic 2015 UN conference from which emerged the “17 Sustainable Development Goals” (SDGs) and the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” both of which were adopted by world leaders, including President Obama. “Sustainable development” is defined by its promoters as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” In practice, it means levels of development acceptable to those who, in their self-importance, believe themselves qualified to plan the future of the entire planet, and which will inevitably entail levelling, whereby prosperous societies are required to surrender their standards of living in order to sustain poorer countries.

Sustainable development is a government goal, not a private-sector goal — because the private sector has always sought to reduce waste and reuse materials, hence lowering costs. The private sector has become more and more sustainable, not less. It is the private sector, not government, that has led the revolution in information technology, transportation, medicine, and myriad other modern miracles that have allowed more and more people to live more and more comfortably, with less and less destructive impact on the environment. While there are certainly environmental issues of concern both at home and abroad, overall, the Earth remains a wonderful place of abundance for humans and other living things.

Contrary to decades of dire forecasts, the world’s oceans have not risen to engulf our coastal cities, the polar icecaps and glaciers have not melted away, the world’s biodiversity has not been consumed by a holocaust of man-made extinctions, overpopulation has not dragged humanity into some Malthusian dystopia, climate change has not turned the planet into an oven, the air remains breathable, and the water remains drinkable. Development, in other words, has been nothing if not sustainable — at least to the extent that it is driven by the private sector and by free market incentives.

In general, it is societies that limit the power of government and promote a significant degree of individual freedom, including a flourishing private sector, that have achieved robust development coupled with steadily improving environmental conditions. Socialist and communist planned economies





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— of which the UN plan envisions the most all-encompassing iteration — inevitably engender scarcity and the kind of sustainability issues that the sustainable development goals purport to address.

Socialism operates on assumptions of scarcity, not abundance, on the notion that humans are mere consumers, never producers or creators, in a zero-sum game with finite global resources at stake. The doctrine of “sustainable development” provides ideological cover for this belief system on a global scale, and will require of future generations “sustainable lifestyles” of poverty, devoid of both progress and freedom.

*Photo credit: AP Images*

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