



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on May 4, 2020

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Climate Crusaders Yet Carbon Creators

From the print edition of **The New American:**

“Climate change is real,” actor Leonardo DiCaprio declared in his 2016 Academy Award acceptance speech. “It is happening right now. It is the most urgent threat facing our entire species, and we need to work collectively together and stop procrastinating.”



Likewise, Great Britain’s Prince Charles told the 2020 World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, that “global warming, climate change, and the devastating loss of biodiversity are the greatest threats humanity has ever faced.”

“Do we want to go down in history as the people who didn’t do anything to bring the world back from the brink?” he asked. “The only limit is our willingness to act and the time to act is now.”

One might expect people who are so confident that comfortable Western lifestyles — particularly to the extent that they generate excessive amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) — are going to doom the planet to be doing everything they can to reduce their own contributions to global warming. But one would be very, very wrong.

Rex Murphy, columnist for Canada’s *National Post*, pointedly observed, “There is no issue on this orbiting Earth, nor has there even been, that has the burden and depth, the volume and intensity of the rawest hypocrisy — that burns on the flames of hypocrisy itself — as that of global warming.”

“Those who most harangue and harass the rest of us on our ‘carbon’ usage,” he averred, “are the greatest wastrels of all.”

Leo the Lyin’

When it comes to the alleged threat of global warming, DiCaprio is easily the most outspoken Hollywood celebrity. The Oscar-winning 45-year-old created, produced, co-wrote, and narrated the 2007 documentary film *The 11th Hour*, in which he declared that “global warming is ... the number-one environmental challenge we face today.” He was named a United Nations Messenger of Peace with a special focus on climate change, and spoke at the signing of the 2016 Paris Agreement. He addressed the World Economic Forum. He even obtained a private audience with Pope Francis to discuss the issue.

DiCaprio never misses an opportunity to lecture the rest of us on the need to “decarbonize” to save the world. “Our planet cannot be saved unless we leave fossil fuels in the ground where they belong,” he said in Paris. “An upheaval and massive change is [sic] required now.” He has even argued that people who deny the existence of anthropogenic climate change “should not be allowed to hold public office.”

DiCaprio’s actions, however, belie his public pronouncements.



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According to CelebInsidr.com, DiCaprio has a net worth of \$260 million “and surely knows how to spend it well. He has fine taste in houses and mansions and shops for them like kids shop for candies.... He is known to own at least 13 houses and mansions, including bungalows [*sic*] and apartment[s] in California and New York.” His carbon footprint from his dwellings alone dwarfs that of most other humans.

On top of that, he owns numerous automobiles. Some are electric or hybrid, but plenty, such as his four Rolls-Royces and his Lamborghini Aventador, are gas guzzlers.

Then there’s his long-distance travel, which he does in abundance, often on private jets or yachts.

In 2014, for example, he took a private jet to the World Cup in Brazil. “While there, he stayed on the 470-foot yacht of Sheikh Mansour bin Zayed Al Nahayan — the chair of Abu Dhabi’s International Petroleum Investment Company,” according to a Media Research Center (MRC) report. “DiCaprio had rented the same yacht in April 2014, to co-host an ’80s themed party with Jamie Foxx and Orlando Bloom.”

The previous New Year’s Eve, DiCaprio and his *Wolf of Wall Street* co-star Jonah Hill chartered a 747 from Sydney, Australia, to Las Vegas so they could attend parties in both places.

In six months of 2015 and 2016, DiCaprio took 18 airplane trips totaling almost 100,000 miles. In May 2016, he traveled by private jet from the Cannes Film Festival to New York City to accept — apparently with a straight face — an award for his environmental advocacy. Then he flew back to Cannes, a round trip of 8,000 miles.

Last year, DiCaprio took a private jet to a Google climate-change confab in Sicily. He wasn’t alone: 114 private aircraft and more than a few luxury yachts (which can burn as many as 530 gallons of fuel *per hour*) brought supposedly carbon-hating celebrities to the conference at the luxurious Verdura Resort, where they rode around in gas-gulping Maseratis.

“I reckon this high-class global warming missionary retreat wiped out in a mere three days the presumed benefits of Canada’s useless carbon tax,” Murphy caustically remarked. “Ten such summits and the Earth will barrel into the Sun: not from overheating — from perfect embarrassment that it shelters such a band of plutocratic Uriah Heeps.”

Gore-ging on Fossil Fuels

DiCaprio’s counterpart in the political realm is former Vice President Al Gore. Gore was one of the earliest politicians to warn of the supposed threat of global warming, holding the first congressional hearings on the subject in 1981. He is the author of three books on climate change, two of which have been made into movies. Despite his lack of scientific credentials, Gore is a featured speaker at many climate conferences; he claims to have delivered his keynote address on global warming at least 1,000 times.

According to MoneyInc.com, Gore’s net worth stands at \$300 million. A significant portion of that comes from his global-warming activism. In addition to the profits from his books and movies, Gore rakes in a cool \$100,000 every time he gives that famous keynote speech, and he collected \$1.5 million when he received the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. Gore also scored a \$70-million payday (after clearing debts) from the 2014 sale of Current TV, the network he cofounded, to Al Jazeera, the network partly



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owned by the royal family of Qatar, whose fortune comes from the sale of that well-known green-energy source, petroleum.

While Gore doesn't own a private jet, he does log thousands of commercial air miles every year stumping for global socialism in the name of saving the planet. Others attending those events also fly in for them, some in private planes.

Performers at Gore's 2007 "Live Earth" concert flew a total of at least 220,000 miles, leading the English rock band Muse to dub it "private jets for climate change." *The Guardian* noted: "Its total carbon footprint, including the artists and spectators' travel and energy consumption, was likely to have been at least 31,500 tons, said John Buckley of Carbonfootprint.com — more than 3,000 times the average Briton's annual footprint. One viewer of BBC2's *Newsnight* complained online: 'Would you hold a hog roast to promote vegetarianism?'"

Photo: AP Images

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Gore's real estate, meanwhile, slurps up fossil fuels as if there were no tomorrow. A 2017 analysis by the National Center for Public Policy Research found that Gore's 10,070-square-foot Tennessee mansion "guzzles more electricity in one year than the average American family uses in 21 years." In September 2016, his home used 34 times the electricity of the average American household. The amount of juice he used to heat his swimming pool over the course of a single year could power the average American home for six years. Gore's energy consumption in 2017 was actually higher than it had been a decade earlier, when he was forced to spend tens of thousands of dollars on green-energy upgrades to his home after its energy hogging was first brought to light.

Gore also owns a penthouse apartment in San Francisco and a farmhouse in Carthage, Tennessee, making his carbon footprint even larger.

Royal Planes

Prince Charles "has been campaigning against the dangers of global warming for 50 years," a royal source told the *Daily Mail*. Fifty years ago, of course, the alleged threat was not global warming but a new ice age. Still, it's undeniable that Charles has been one of the world's foremost anti-carbon crusaders for many years.

In 2011, upon his installation as president of the U.K. branch of the World Wildlife Fund, Charles warned that the planet is headed for a "sixth extinction event" and "stressed on the need to bring about a sustainability revolution to keep a check on people's consumption-ridden lifestyles and to reduce petrol, food and other resource consumption," according to the *International Business Times*.

"History will not judge us by how much economic growth we achieve in the immediate years ahead, nor by how much we expand material consumption, but by the legacy for our grandchildren and their grandchildren," he said. "We are consuming what is rightfully theirs by sacrificing long-term progress on the altar of immediate satisfaction."

Charles ought to know. He flies thousands of miles every year, usually by private aircraft, to make a variety of appearances, including many in which he urges an end to fossil-fuel use.

In 2007, for instance, he made an 11,000-mile round-trip flight to New York to accept a Global



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Environmental Citizen award from Gore, generating 20.4 tons of CO₂ in the process. He also traveled from the airport to the event by private train.

“Flying to an environmental award ceremony is a bit like turning up to an Oxfam [anti-poverty] award ceremony in a stretch limo,” Joss Garman, spokesman for the environmental group Plane Stupid, said at the time.

Such criticism did little to clip the prince’s wings. Charles’ visit to the World Economic Forum — where he, in the *Mail’s* words, “called for new eco-taxes, greener fuels and hydrogen-powered planes” — came in the midst of an 11-day series of travels by private aircraft totaling more than 16,000 miles and emitting over 162 metric tons of carbon, 18 times the average Briton’s annual output.

Charles’ son Prince Harry and daughter-in-law Meghan Markle seem to have learned from the old man. They, too, are jet-setting climate crusaders.

The couple flew to the 2019 Google Camp, where a barefoot Harry gave “an impassioned lecture about saving nature,” wrote the *New York Post*. That was just days after telling British *Vogue* that he and his wife planned to have no more than two children in order to protect the planet.

Around the same time, the Duke of Sussex said on Instagram that when it comes to the environment, “every choice, every footprint, every action makes a difference.” Then he and the duchess jetted off to Spain and France, producing, by the BBC’s calculations, 37.6 tons of CO₂, “more than six times an average Briton’s yearly emissions, or 111 times those of a person in [the African country of] Lesotho.”

Greta’s Green Grandstanding

The current star in climate-crisis circles is 17-year-old Swede Greta Thunberg. The girl, who has been diagnosed with Asperger’s syndrome, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and selective mutism, became a celebrity after playing hooky from school to protest what she considered her government’s inaction to combat global warming. Since then, she has been invited to speak before multiple climate conferences and legislative bodies. She, too, met the pope, who encouraged her to continue with her efforts.

Greta has led the “flight shaming” movement, discouraging people from traveling by airplane because of jets’ carbon emissions. She even shamed her own mother into giving up an international career as an opera singer to avoid flying.

She hasn’t given up traveling, though. Indeed, she has been quite mobile, attending climate conferences and other events in Europe and the Americas. She has just found other ways of getting where she’s going. These other means of transportation may shield Greta from charges of hypocrisy, but they’re mostly for show and do little to reduce carbon emissions.

Last year, Greta made a highly publicized, two-week transatlantic voyage in a “zero-emissions” sailing yacht from Plymouth, England, to New York City to attend the UN Climate Action Summit.

While the yacht itself may have operated without fossil fuels, the trip was hardly carbon-neutral, noted OilPrice.com:

Two crewmembers had to fly across the Atlantic to New York to bring the boat back, and two of the crewmembers that made the original voyage had to fly across the Atlantic from the U.S. to return home. That’s four flights to keep Greta from making two. We won’t even mention the train trip Greta took to get to Plymouth, England, in order to set sail, nor will we mention the numerous



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freeze-dried meals, which we assume are encased in some single-use plastic product, which by our estimations, the two-man crew, Greta, her father, and some cameraman documenting the experience equated to over 200 meals...

In a nutshell, the 5,337-kilometer flight times four people generated 2,134,800 grams of CO₂ by our calculations, just for the flights alone.

While in the United States, Greta used a Tesla Model 3 electric car loaned to her by Arnold Schwarzenegger. That sounds like a “green” alternative until one considers that the carbon generated by producing both the car and the electricity required to power it is roughly the same as that generated by producing a gas-powered car *and* burning fuel to power it.

Carbon Copycats

These big-name climate crusaders are hardly alone in their hypocrisy and grandstanding.

“We’re going to have to live with less” to combat climate change, film director James Cameron told the *Los Angeles Times* in 2010. Cameron, at the time, owned three houses with a combined area of more than 24,000 square feet, each of which had a heated swimming pool but not “a single energy-saving solar panel or windmill,” according to the *Independent*.

Actor Woody Harrelson, who favors government intervention to prevent global warming, lives in Hawaii, which MRC wrote “requires him to fly to the mainland several times a year for work and climate activism events.” When it comes to virtue signaling, Harrelson seems to have conflicting priorities: While attending the 2008 Cannes Film Festival, he realized he’d left his vegan belt and shoes in California, so he had them flown in.

Bill Gates has a forthcoming book in which he “will outline his ideas for achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions,” penned the Associated Press. Gates might want to start in his own backyard — or, rather, his own hangar. He owns a private jet and uses it extensively; researchers at Sweden’s Lund University estimated that in 2017, he flew 213,000 miles, generating 1,600 tons of CO₂, about 160 times the average human’s annual CO₂ output. In 2011, he invested \$60 million in NEOS GeoSolutions, a Houston-based firm that helps oil and gas companies decide where to drill.

Politicians get into the act, too. The Washington Examiner reported that among the candidates in this year’s Democratic presidential contest, all of whom claim to believe that cutting carbon emissions is a must, Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) led the pack in private-jet travel, having spent \$1.2 million on it in the last three months of 2019. In addition,

Former Vice President Joe Biden, 77, spent the second-most on private jets, \$1 million, through Advanced Aviation. The campaign for Massachusetts [*sic*] Sen. Elizabeth Warren, 70, spent about \$721,000 on private jets through Advanced Aviation. The private plane bill for former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, 38, was \$324,000 through Advanced Aviation, EvoJets, Solairus Aviation, and Vertivue Air Charters.

Former New York City mayor and billionaire businessman Michael Bloomberg, 77, spent about \$700,000 on private jet travel from his late November campaign launch through the end of December.

When these folks get together, the hypocrisy multiplies like rabbits.



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Consider the annual World Economic Forum summit. The WEF claims that “decarbonizing the global economy in a matter of decades is the number one priority.” However, as HuffPost pointed out, “It’s a bit ironic to discuss climate change at Davos, a remote location in Switzerland that requires a tremendous carbon footprint to even get to.” Hundreds of private jets descend on the nearest airports every year. From there, it’s either drive at least two hours or, as many impatient attendees do, hop a helicopter to get to Davos, spewing carbon all the way.

Then there was the 2019 UN Climate Change Conference (COP25) in Madrid. The UN claims eating meat contributes significantly to global warming, but the Heartland Institute’s James Taylor discovered that Burger King, which did not have its vegetarian burger on the menu, “easily had longer lines than any other food provider at the COP25 food court.” Everyone, it seems, was filling up on either fries or hypocrisy.

“Do as I say, not as I do,” of course, has been part and parcel of the anti-global-warming movement since its inception. UN Environment Programme founder Maurice Strong, one of the early promoters of climate hysteria, once asked, “Isn’t the only hope for the planet that the industrialized civilizations collapse?” Yet Strong made his fortune in the oil business, built an unapproved \$35-million luxury hotel in the middle of a wildlife reserve in Costa Rica, and flew to climate conferences all over the world.

Critical Studies

Although climate-change believers might dismiss these criticisms as the carping of skeptics, they would surely find it more difficult to wave away academic studies reaching the same conclusions — and these do exist.

A 2017 study of 300 “conservation scientists” conducted by like-minded scientists at Cambridge University found that “most have a carbon footprint which is virtually no different to anyone else,” reported the *Telegraph*. The scientists “still flew frequently — an average of nine flights a year — ate meat or fish approximately five times a week and rarely purchased carbon offsets for their own emissions. They were also less green in traveling to work than medics, and kept more dogs and cats.”

The next year, after studying 600 Americans, University of Michigan researchers concluded that individuals’ actions in support of a cleaner planet occurred in *inverse proportion* to their stated commitment to preventing climate change. That is, those who most supported government policies to stave off global warming were the least likely to take individual action to improve the environment, such as recycling, using public transportation, or employing reusable shopping bags. “Belief in climate change,” the researchers wrote, “does not appear to be a necessary or sufficient condition for pro-environmental behavior.”

Climate Confession — With a Caveat

While some climate crusaders bristle at the notion that they don’t practice what they preach — actor Mark Ruffalo once claimed that “anyone who attacks Leonardo DiCaprio [on such grounds] is either a coward or an ideologue” — others have copped to their two-facedness. Last year, over 100 celebrities who support Extinction Rebellion, an environmental pressure group, issued an open letter to the media that began:

Dear journalists who have called us hypocrites,

You’re right.



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We live high carbon lives and the industries that we are part of have huge carbon footprints. Like you — and everyone else — we are stuck in this fossil-fuel economy and without systemic change, our lifestyles will keep on causing climate and ecological harm.

“This letter is one of the more obvious examples of empty, sanctimonious virtue signaling I can remember,” wrote John Phelan, an economist at the Center of the American Experiment, a Minnesota-based conservative think tank.

“If these celebrities want to reduce their carbon footprint they can do so immediately,” he continued. “They can stop flying, as they want the rest of us to. They can take jobs they can walk to, ride a horse to, get public transport to. Don’t jet across the planet to the Oscars or Cannes. If they truly feel that they are battling an existential threat to humanity, giving up air travel is a small price to pay.”

Instead, they say they’re going to keep on being hypocrites, not allowing critics to “silence” them as they “fight for [children’s] already devastated future.” They argue that the world needs “systemic change” to force people to return to their pre-industrial lives — which, compared to life in today’s world, would be, as Thomas Hobbes famously put it, “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.”

“But,” observed Phelan,

apparently, it isn’t up to them to change, it is up to the “system” to change. Except that “systems” are just aggregates. They have no motive power of their own. If we want “systems” to change we need to change the component parts of that system. And, in this case, that is us. And these celebrities aren’t willing to make that change. They hide by palming off responsibility to something called a “system.”

When Branch Rickey wanted to break the racist color bar in baseball and unleash Jackie Robinson’s awesome talents on the Major Leagues, he didn’t sit about waiting for “systemic change.” He just went and picked him.

In short, those pushing the climate “emergency” want credit for having the “correct” opinions without having to alter their lavish lifestyles to conform to those opinions. In this, they are aided and abetted by the mainstream media, which praises them for the hot air they emit in the cause of global government but ignores their vast carbon emissions. Knowing this, how can the rest of us be expected to take their alarmist assertions seriously?

In the words of Instapundit Glenn Reynolds, “I’ll believe that it’s a crisis when the people who claim it’s a crisis start acting like it’s a crisis.”

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