

FREEDOM, NOT CLIMATE, IS AT RISK

Policy Commentaries by

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President of the Czech Republic



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FREEDOM, NOT CLIMATE, IS AT RISK

Freedom, not climate, is at risk

Written by Vaclav Klaus

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/9deb730a-19ca-11dc-99c5-000b5df10621.html>

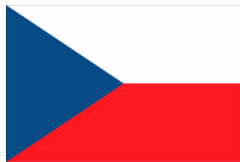
Wednesday, 13 June 2007

Vaclav Klaus, president of the Czech Republic, argues that ambitious environmentalism is the biggest threat to freedom, democracy, the market economy and prosperity.



We are living in strange times. One exceptionally warm winter is enough – irrespective of the fact that in the course of the 20th century the global temperature increased only by 0.6 per cent – for the environmentalists and their followers to suggest radical measures to do something about the weather, and to do it right now.

Is climate change just propaganda? Vaclav Klaus will answer your questions in an online Q&A.



In the past year, Al Gore's so-called "documentary" film was shown in cinemas worldwide, Britain's – more or less Tony Blair's – Stern report was published, the fourth report of the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was put together and the Group of Eight summit announced ambitions to do something about the weather. Rational and freedom-loving people have to respond. The dictates of political correctness are strict and only one permitted truth, not for the first time in human history, is imposed on us. Everything else is denounced.

The author Michael Crichton stated it clearly: "the greatest challenge facing mankind is the challenge of distinguishing reality from fantasy, truth from propaganda". I feel the same way, because **global warming hysteria has become a prime example of the truth versus propaganda problem.** It requires courage to oppose the "established" truth, although a lot of people – including top-class scientists – see the issue of climate change entirely differently. They protest against the arrogance of those who advocate the global warming hypothesis and relate it to human activities.

As someone who lived under communism for most of his life, I feel obliged to say that I see the biggest threat to freedom, democracy, the market economy and prosperity now in ambitious environmentalism, not in communism. This ideology wants to replace the free and spontaneous evolution of mankind by a sort of central (now global) planning.

The environmentalists ask for immediate political action because they do not believe in the long-term positive impact of economic growth and ignore both the technological progress that future generations will undoubtedly enjoy, and the proven fact that the higher the wealth of society, the higher is the quality of the environment. **They are Malthusian pessimists.**

The scientists should help us and take into consideration the political effects of their scientific opinions. They have an obligation to declare their political and value assumptions and how much they have affected their selection and interpretation of scientific evidence.

Does it make any sense to speak about warming of the Earth when we see it in the context of the evolution of our planet over hundreds of millions of years? Every child is taught at school about temperature variations, about the ice ages, about the much warmer climate in the Middle Ages. All of us have noticed that even during our life-time temperature changes occur (in both directions).

Due to advances in technology, increases in disposable wealth, the rationality of institutions and the ability of countries to organise themselves, the adaptability of human society has been radically increased. It will continue to increase and will solve any potential consequences of mild climate changes.

I agree with **Professor Richard Lindzen from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who said: "future generations will wonder in bemused amazement that the early 21st century's developed world went into hysterical panic over a globally averaged temperature increase of a few tenths of a degree, and, on the basis of gross exaggerations of highly uncertain computer projections combined into implausible chains of inference, proceeded to contemplate a roll-back of the industrial age".**

The issue of global warming is more about social than natural sciences and more about man and his freedom than about tenths of a degree Celsius changes in average global temperature.

As a witness to today's worldwide debate on climate change, I suggest the following:

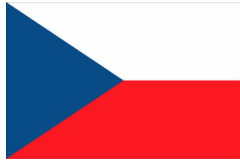
- Small climate changes do not demand far-reaching restrictive measures
- Any suppression of freedom and democracy should be avoided
- Instead of organising people from above, let us allow everyone to live as he wants
- Let us resist the politicisation of science and oppose the term "scientific consensus", which is always achieved only by a loud minority, never by a silent majority
- Instead of speaking about "the environment", let us be attentive to it in our personal behaviour
- Let us be humble but confident in the spontaneous evolution of human society. Let us trust its rationality and not try to slow it down or divert it in any direction
- Let us not scare ourselves with catastrophic forecasts, or use them to defend and promote irrational interventions in human lives.

The writer is President of the Czech Republic

Notes for the speech of the President of the Czech Republic at the UN Climate Change Conference

<http://www.klaus.cz/klaus2/asp/clanek.asp?id=pnHwpGc13sXM>

Distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,



Responsible politicians know that they have to act when it is necessary. They know that their duty is to initiate public policy responses to issues that could pose a threat to the people of their countries. And they know that they have to form partnerships with colleagues from other countries when a problem cannot be confined to national boundaries. To help doing it is one of the main reasons for the existence of institutions such as the United Nations.

However, the politicians have to ensure that the costs of public policies organized by them will not be bigger than the benefits achieved. They have to carefully consider and seriously analyze their projects and initiatives. They have to do it, even if it may be unpopular and if it means blowing against the wind of fashion and political correctness. I congratulate Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on organizing this conference and thank him for giving us an opportunity to address the important, but one-sidedly debated issue of climate changes. The consequences of acknowledging them as a real, big, imminent and man-made threat would be so enormous that we are obliged to think twice before making decisions. I am afraid it is not the case now.

Let me raise several points to bring the issue into its proper context:

1. Contrary to the artificially and unjustifiably created world-wide perception, the increase in global temperatures has been – in the last years, decades and centuries – very small in historical comparisons and practically negligible in its actual impact upon human beings and their activities.
2. The hypothetical threat connected with future global warming depends exclusively upon very speculative forecasts, not upon undeniable past experience and its eventual trends and tendencies. These forecasts are based on relatively short time series of relevant variables and on forecasting models that have not been proved very reliable when attempting to explain past developments.
3. Contrary to many self-assured and self-serving proclamations, there is no scientific consensus about the causes of recent climate changes. An impartial observer must accept the fact that both sides of the dispute – the believers in man's dominant role in recent climate changes, as well as the supporters of the hypothesis about their mostly natural origin – offer arguments strong enough to be listened to carefully by the non-scientific community. To prematurely proclaim the victory of one group over another would be a tragic mistake and I am afraid we are making it.
4. As a result of this scientific dispute, there are those who call for an imminent action and those who warn against it. Rational behavior depends – as always – on the size and probability of the risk and on the magnitude of the costs of its avoidance. As a responsible politician, as an economist, as an author of a book about the economics of climate change, with all available data and arguments in mind, I have to conclude that the risk is too small, the costs of eliminating it too high and

the application of a fundamentalistically interpreted "precautionary principle" a wrong strategy.

5. The politicians – and I am not among them – who believe in the existence of a significant global warming and especially those who believe in its anthropogenic origin remain divided: some of them are in favor of mitigation, which means of controlling global climate changes (and are ready to put enormous amounts of resources into it), while others rely on adaptation to it, on modernization and technical progress, and especially on favorable impact of the future increase in wealth and welfare (and prefer spending public money there). The second option is less ambitious and promises much more than the first one.

6. The whole problem does not only have its time dimension, but a more than important spatial (or regional) aspect as well. This is highly relevant especially here, in the UN. Different levels of development, income and wealth in different places of the world make world-wide, overall, universal solutions costly, unfair and to a great extent discriminatory. The already developed countries do not have the right to impose any additional burden on the less developed countries. Dictating ambitious and for them entirely inappropriate environmental standards is wrong and should be excluded from the menu of recommended policy measures.

My recommendations are as follows:

1. The UN should organize two parallel IPCCs and publish two competing reports. To get rid of the one-sided monopoly is a sine qua non for an efficient and rational debate. Providing the same or comparable financial backing to both groups of scientists is a necessary starting point.

2. The countries should listen to one another, learn from mistakes and successes of others, but any country should be left alone to prepare its own plan to tackle this problem and decide what priority to assign to it among its other competing goals.

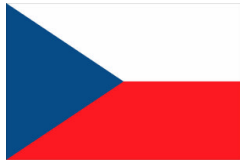
We should trust in the rationality of man and in the outcome of spontaneous evolution of human society, not in the virtues of political activism. Therefore, let's vote for adaptation, not for the attempts to mastermind the global climate.

Václav Klaus, Climate Change Conference, United Nations, New York, September 24th, 2007

What Is Endangered: Climate or Freedom?

Václav Klaus, Council for National Policy Conference, Salt Lake City, September 28, 2007

<http://www.klaus.cz/klaus2/asp/clanek.asp?id=pxJQbZiEtmMH>



Thank you very much for the invitation to this important gathering. Thank you for giving me a chance to address this very distinguished audience.

I have to start on a personal note. This is not my first visit of Salt Lake City. I spent here two hours in one beautiful spring morning in May, 1969. After studying during the spring term at Cornell University I boarded a Greyhound bus and spent 20 days traveling across the United States. I was here in jeans and with long hair. I had breakfast here somewhere, walked around, visited the temple and boarded the bus again with the next stop Reno.

I did not expect to come here again and especially in the position I hold now. It was in the dark communist days. It was at the end of the short but promising era of the Czechoslovak Prague Spring and it was my first and at the same time last visit to your beautiful country for the next 20 years. The collapse of communism in November 1989 changed everything. Freedom and democracy which followed as a result of our radical systemic change made us a totally different country, free and prosperous, member of the European Union and NATO, and a good friend and close ally of the United States of America.

I used the term "communism collapsed" not without purpose. I know that there are – both here and elsewhere – many people who claim that they defeated communism. As an integral part and active player of that process, I would dare to argue that communism melted down and would add that the meltdown was accelerated by the strong stances of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher who refused to compromise with the Soviet Union. What helped us was their policies, not the soft, so called peace-policy of our West European neighbors.

I have had tens, if not hundreds of speeches in your country after that. At the beginning, my topics were communism and how to get rid of its legacy. The transition from communism to a free society is over, and not only in my country. One may have reservations about developments in some of the former communist countries but I strongly disagree with attempts to look at those countries with a misleading optics of fighting communism there now. To trivialize the multifaceted and multidimensional post-communist transition in such a way is a serious fallacy.

My second topic, if not obsession, used to be (and still is) Europe and the European Union, something not sufficiently understood here. After almost half a century of communism the Czech Republic wanted to be again a normal European country, which means – these days – to be a member of the European Union.

This is what we accepted and both our gradual approaching the EU during the first fifteen years after the fall of communism and our entry into it three years ago represented an integral part of our radical political, social and economic transformation. Nevertheless, our communist experience made us sensitive to all kinds, forms, manifestations and aspects of the suppression of freedom and democracy in the name of allegedly "higher" goals and due to it we find that the EU

unification project itself – an almost holy and sacred goal which explains, justifies and excuses everything – not only a blessing. The currently politically correct approach, I call Europeism, does not see it and tries to create a brave new world without nations, without borders, without politics, without a “demos” (which means without authentic citizens) and – as a result of it – without democracy. I see it as a big problem.

Today, I intend to discuss another “high and holy” issue. I want to speak about supposed devastating climate changes, about consequences of global warming and about our responses and reactions to them. Some people try – consciously or subconsciously – caricature people like me and accuse those of us, who dare to speak about it differently than is now politically correct, of talking about things we do not understand and are not experts on. They are wrong. People like me do not try to enter the field of climatology, do not try to better measure global temperature, and do not try to suggest alternative scenarios of the future global climate fluctuations (based on different, but equally speculative and unreliable forecasting models). In my argumentation I don’t talk about climatology but about environmentalism, about an ideology which puts nature and environment and their supposed protection and preservation before and above freedom.

It may sound surprisingly but I have the feeling that I have not changed the subject of my talks in the last 18 years. Talking about communism, talking about europeism and talking about environmentalism is more or less, structurally, similar if not identical. The issue is always freedom and its enemies. Those of us who feel very strongly about it can never accept

- the irrationality with which the current world has embraced the climate change (or global warming) as the main threat to the future of mankind, as well as

- the irrationality of proposed and partly already implemented public initiatives because they will fatally endanger our freedom and prosperity, the two goals we consider – I do believe – our priorities.

After spending the whole day at the UN Climate Change Conference on Monday and two following days at the General Assembly I know what I am talking about.

The problem is that we are confronted with many prejudices, misunderstandings and now already also vested interests. As I said, the climate change debate is basically not about science; it is about ideology. It is not about global temperature; it is about the concept of human society. It is not about scientific ecology; it is about environmentalism.

I would summarize my position on these issues in the following way:

1. Contrary to the currently prevailing views – promoted by global warming alarmists, Al Gore’s preaching, the IPCC, or the Stern Report – the increase in global temperatures in the last years, decades and centuries has been very small and because of its size practically negligible in its actual impact upon human beings and their activities. (The today’s difference of temperature between Prague and Salt Lake City is almost 30 degrees Fahrenheit, which is much more than even Al Gore promises as regards the whole next century temperature increase.)

2. The available empirical evidence is not alarming. The arguments of global

warming alarmists rely exclusively upon very speculative forecasts, not upon past experience. Their forecasts are based on experimental simulations of very large forecasting models that have not been found very reliable when explaining past developments.

3. The whole debate is, of course, not only about ideology. The problem has its important scientific aspect but it should be stressed that the scientific dispute about the causes of recent climate changes continues. The attempt to proclaim a scientific consensus on this issue is a tragic mistake, because there is none.

4. We are rational and responsible people and know that we have to act when necessary. But we should know that a rational response to any danger depends on the size and probability of the eventual risk and on the magnitude of the costs of its avoidance. As a responsible politician, as an academic economist, as an author of a book about the economics of climate change, I feel obliged to say that – based on our current knowledge – the risk is too small and the costs of eliminating it too high. The application of the so called “precautionary principle,” advocated by the environmentalists, is – conceptually – a wrong strategy.

5. The deindustrialization and similar restrictive policies will be of no help. Instead of blocking economic growth, the increase of wealth all over the world and fast technical progress – all connected with freedom and free markets – we should leave them to proceed unhampered. Economic growth, increase of wealth and technical progress represent the solution to the consequences of eventual climate changes, not their cause. We should promote adaptation, modernization, technical progress. We should trust in the rationality of free people.

6. This issue has a very important North-South and West-East dimension. The developed countries do not have the right to impose any additional burden on the less developed countries. Imposing overambitious and – for such countries – economically disastrous environmental standards on them is unfair and discriminatory.

No radical measures are necessary. Famous Czech writer of the early 20th century Jaroslav Hašek, whose book “The Good Soldier Schweik” is known world-wide, made a good point saying: “To chce klid”. The Americans would probably say “Take it easy” or “Let’s be cool” or “Calm down!”. What the world needs now is to remain “quite normal”. It requires, however, to get rid of the one-sided monopoly, both in the field of climatology and in the public debate. We have to listen to arguments. We have to forget the destructive, but currently so fashionable dictate (if not tyranny) of political correctness. We should provide the same or comparable financial backing to those scientists who do not accept the global warming alarmism.

When I spoke at the UN conference on climate change on Monday morning, I concluded my speech by saying: „We should trust in the rationality of man and in the outcome of spontaneous evolution of human society, not in the virtues of political activism. Therefore, let’s vote for adaptation, not for attempts to mastermind the global climate.” There is nothing to add to it. Especially to this audience.

Global Warming Hysteria or Freedom and Prosperity?

<http://www.euportal.cz/Articles/1852-global-warming-hysteria-or-freedom-and-prosperity-.aspx>

Written by Václav Klaus

Sunday, 23 September 2007



One can tell – with a high degree of confidence – what topics are expected to be raised here, this morning when it comes to discussing the key challenges of today’s world. The selection of the moderator and my fellow-panelists only confirms it. I guess it is either international terrorism or poverty in Africa. Talking about both of these topics is necessary because they are real dangers but it is relatively easy to talk about them because it is politically correct. I do see those dangers and do not in any way underestimate them. I do, however, see another major threat which deserves our attention – and I am afraid it does not get sufficient attention because to discuss it is politically incorrect these days.

The threat I have in mind is the irrationality with which the world has accepted the climate change (or global warming) as a real danger to the future of mankind and the irrationality of suggested and partly already implemented **measures because they will fatally endanger our freedom and prosperity**, the two goals we consider – I do believe – our priorities.

We have to face many prejudices and misunderstandings in this respect. The climate change debate is basically not about science; it is about ideology. It is not about global temperature; it is about the concept of human society. **It is not about nature or scientific ecology; it is about environmentalism, about one – recently born – dirigistic and collectivistic ideology, which goes against freedom and free markets.**

I spent most of my life in a communist society which makes me particularly sensitive to the dangers, traps and pitfalls connected with it. Several points have to be clarified to make the discussion easier:

1. Contrary to the currently prevailing views promoted by global warming alarmists, Al Gore’s preaching, the IPCC, or the Stern Report, **the increase in global temperatures in the last years, decades and centuries has been very small** and because of its size practically negligible in its actual impact upon human beings and their activities. (The difference of temperatures between Prague where I was yesterday and Cernobbio where I am now is larger than the expected increase in global temperatures in the next century.)

2. As I said, the empirical evidence is not alarming. **The arguments of global warming alarmists rely exclusively upon forecasts, not upon past experience.** Their forecasts originate in experimental simulations of very complicated forecasting models that have not been found very reliable when explaining past developments.

3. It is, of course, not only about ideology. The problem has its important scientific aspect but it should be stressed that **the scientific dispute about the causes of recent climate changes continues**. The attempt to proclaim a scientific consensus on this issue is a tragic mistake, because there is none.

4. We are rational and responsible people and have to act when necessary. But we know that **a rational response to any danger depends on the size and probability of the eventual risk and on the magnitude of the costs of its avoidance**. As a responsible politician, as an academic economist, as an author of a book about the economics of climate change, I feel obliged to say that – based on our current knowledge – **the risk is too small and the costs of eliminating it too high**. The application of the so called “precautionary principle,” advocated by the environmentalists, is – conceptually – a wrong strategy.

5. The deindustrialization and similar restrictive policies will be of no help. Instead of blocking economic growth, the increase of wealth all over the world and fast technical progress – all connected with freedom and free markets – we should leave them to proceed unhampered. **They represent the solution to any eventual climate changes, not their cause**. We should promote adaptation, modernization, technical progress. We should trust in the rationality of free people.

6. It has a very important North-South and West-East dimension. The developed countries do not have the right to impose any additional burden on the less developed countries. Imposing overambitious and – for such countries – economically disastrous environmental standards on them is unfair.

No radical measures are necessary. We need something “quite normal.” We have to get rid of the one-sided monopoly, both in the field of climatology and in the public debate. We have to listen to arguments. We have to forget fashionable political correctness. We should provide the same or comparable financial backing to those scientists who do not accept the global warming alarmism.

I really do see environmentalism as a threat to our freedom and prosperity. I see it as “the world key current challenge.”

Environmentalism and Other Challenges of the Current Era

<http://www.cato.org/pubs/edb/edb10.html>

By Václav Klaus

April 20, 2007



I came here today as president of the free and democratic Czech Republic, a country that succeeded more than 17 years ago in getting rid of communism; a country that quite rapidly, smoothly, and without unnecessary additional costs overcame its communist heritage and transformed itself into a normally functioning European-style parliamentary democracy and market economy; a country that is an integral part of the free world, a member of NATO and of the European Union, and a good friend of the United States of America.

Everyone has a list — mostly an implicit one — of issues, problems, and challenges that he feels and considers — on the basis of his experiences, prejudices, sensitivities, preferences, and priorities — to be crucial, topical, menacing, and relevant. I will reveal at least some of the items on my own list. All are inevitably related to something that was absent during most of my life in the communist era. What I have in mind is, of course, freedom, something that Americans value very highly, in spite of the fact that they have not experienced its nonexistence or absence personally. The experience of living under communism provides me with a special sensitivity, if not an oversensitivity, to lack of freedom.

Where do I see the main dangers to freedom at the beginning of the 21st century? I will not speak about the current headlines, and I will decline to speak about our external enemies, such as the Taliban, al-Qaeda, and Islamic fundamentalism, because I have nothing special to say or add to the issue of terrorism and I don't want to just repeat well-known arguments and facts. Suffice it to say that our ability to go ahead and eventually face external dangers depends to a large extent on our beliefs, visions, convictions, internal strength, coherence, ability to function, and so on.

I consider it more important, therefore, to speak about our internal challenges, three of which are main challenges of the current era.

Neostatism

My first topic is connected to communism. The Czech Republic — as did all the other former communist countries — had to undergo a difficult transition. We came to understand very early on that the transition had to be homemade as it was impossible to import a system devised abroad. We also came to understand that such a fundamental change was not an exercise in applied economics but a man-made evolutionary process and that we had to find our own path, our "Czech way," toward an efficiently functioning society and economy.

Over the last 15 years, I spoke many times in the United States about the process of transition; about its nonzero costs; about its benefits, tenets, and pitfalls. Now, when it is over, we face a different problem.

We succeeded in getting rid of communism, but along with many others, we erroneously assumed that attempts to suppress freedom, and to centrally organize, mastermind, regulate, and control society and the economy, were matters of the past, an almost-forgotten relic. Unfortunately, those centralizing urges are still with

us. I see more examples of such urges in Europe and in most international organizations than in the United States, but they can be found here as well.

The reason for my concern is the emergence of new, very popular and fashionable, "isms" that again put various issues, visions, plans, and projects ahead of individual freedom and liberty. There is social-democratism, which is nothing more than a milder and softer version of communism, and there is human-rightism, which is based on the idea of mostly positive rights applicable all over the world. There are also internationalism, multiculturalism, europeism, feminism, environmentalism, and other similar ideologies.

Communism is over, but attempts to rule from above are still here, or perhaps they have merely returned.

Europeism

The second main challenge that I see is connected to our experience with the European Union, but goes beyond the EU, because it is part of a broader tendency toward denationalization of nation-states and toward worldwide supranationalism and global governance.

The special sensitivity that I and many of my countrymen have makes me view many current trends in Europe rather critically. My opponents do not seem to hear my arguments. They keep rejecting the views that they don't like a priori. To understand my criticism requires knowledge of developments in the EU — its gradual metamorphosis from a community of cooperating nations to the union of nonsovereign nations — and of prevailing supranationalistic tendencies. Those developments are not well-known in the United States.

I have always been in favor of a friendly, peaceful, and mutually enriching cooperation and collaboration among European countries. However, I have many times pointed out that the move toward an ever-closer Europe, the so-called deepening of the EU, as well as rapid political integration and Europe's supranational tendencies that are not buttressed by an authentic European identity or European demos, are damaging to democracy and freedom.

Freedom and democracy — those two precious values — cannot be secured without parliamentary democracy within a clearly defined state territory. Yet that is exactly what the current European political elites and their fellow travelers are attempting to eliminate.

Environmentalism

I see the third main threat to individual freedom in environmentalism. To be specific, I do understand the concerns about eventual environmental degradation, but I also see a problem in environmentalism as an ideology.

Environmentalism only pretends to deal with environmental protection. Behind their people- and nature-friendly terminology, the adherents of environmentalism make ambitious attempts to radically reorganize and change the world, human society, our behavior, and our values.

There is no doubt that it is our duty to rationally protect nature for future generations. The followers of the environmentalist ideology, however, keep

presenting us with various catastrophic scenarios with the intention of persuading us to implement their ideas. That is not only unfair but also extremely dangerous. Even more dangerous, in my view, is the quasi-scientific guise that their oft-refuted forecasts have taken on.

What are the beliefs and assumptions that form the basis of the environmentalist ideology?

- Disbelief in the power of the invisible hand of the free market and a belief in the omnipotence of state dirigisme.
- Disregard for the role of important and powerful economic mechanisms and institutions, primarily those of property rights and prices, in an effective protection of nature.
- Misunderstanding of the meaning of resources and of the difference between potential natural resources and real ones that can be used in the economy. Malthusian pessimism over technical progress.
- Belief in the dominance of externalities in human activities.
- Promotion of the so-called precautionary principle, which maximizes risk aversion without paying attention to the costs.
- Underestimation of long-term income growth and welfare improvements, which results in a fundamental shift of demand toward environmental protection and is demonstrated by the so-called environmental Kuznets Curve.
- Erroneous discounting of the future, demonstrated so clearly by the highly publicized Stern Report a few months ago.
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All of those beliefs and assumptions are associated with social sciences, not with natural sciences. That is why environmentalism — unlike scientific ecology — does not belong to the natural sciences and can be classified as an ideology. That fact is, however, not understood by the average person and by numerous politicians.

The hypothesis of global warming and the role of humanity in that process is the last and, to this day, the most powerful embodiment of the environmental ideology. It has brought many important "advantages" to the environmentalists:

- An empirical analysis of the global warming phenomenon is very complicated because of the complexity of the global climate and the mix of various long-, medium-, and short-term trends and causes.
- Environmentalists' argumentation is based not on simple empirical measurements or laboratory experiments but on sophisticated model experiments working with a range of ill-founded assumptions that are usually hidden and not sufficiently understood.
- The opponents of the global warming hypothesis have to accept the fact that in this case we are in a world pervaded by externalities.
- People tend to notice and remember only extraordinary climate phenomena, not normal developments and slow long-term trends and processes.

It is not my intention here to present arguments for the refutation of that hypothesis. What I find much more important is to protest against the efforts of the environmentalists to manipulate people. Their recommendations would take us back into the era of statism and restricted freedom. It is therefore our task to draw a clear line and differentiate between ideological environmentalism and scientific ecology. *Václav Klaus is president of the Czech Republic. This essay is based on a speech he delivered at the Cato Institute on March 9, 2007.*

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