

Lend Lease 20 Notes and Links - Climate Change and The End of the Liberal World As We Know It - Jan 19, 2020

- Liberal, representative, multiparty democracy with market liberalism or mild social democratic economics, as opposed to leftist democracies (either radical anarchic/syndicalist workplace total democracy incorporating the entire society or vanguard-party class-war democracy that bars certain elite classes and fascists from participation in the system on the basis that they are too significant a threat to meaningful democracy for the masses)

- ***Australia at the end and implications for our future climate emergency regimes***

- Boonta Vista episodes 130 & 131 <http://boontavista.com>
- **[Rachel] Recap the fires** and the borderline non-existent government response (as well as the opposition being unwilling to make any distinction or critique) -- not just the PM but literally the emergency management guy (their equivalent to Michael Brown in Katrina) just checking out completely

About 130 fires in NSW, with 31 more in Victoria

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-50951043> January 13

Some 28 people have so far been killed - including four firefighters - and an estimated 10 million hectares (100,000 sq km or 15.6 million acres) of bush, forest and parks across Australia has burned.

In the worst-hit state, New South Wales (NSW), fire has affected more than five million hectares, destroying more than 2,000 houses and forcing thousands to seek shelter elsewhere.

The Australian capital Canberra - part of an administrative region surrounded by NSW - has seen some of the worst smoke pollution, with air quality rated the third worst of all major global cities on 3 January, according to Swiss-based group AirVisual.

Australia broke its all-time temperature record twice in December. An average maximum of 40.9C (106F) was recorded on 17 December, broken a day later by 41.9C (107F), both beating 2013's record of 40.3C.

By the end of the month every state had measured temperatures above 40C - including Tasmania, which is usually much cooler than the mainland.

So bad they're generating their own weather - thunder and wind storms

- PM went to Hawaii for X-mas vacation
- <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2020/jan/05/australia-fires-rf-s-commissioner-not-told-of-scott-morrison-call-up-of-adf-reserve> Even though NSW was begging for federal help, Rural Fire Service Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons only learned of Australian Defense Force reservists' deployment from the news.

He said Morrison had not told him personally of the plan and commonwealth and ADF liaison officers embedded in the state control centre were also unaware.

- <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/12/world/australia/fires-bushfires-scott-morrison-interview.html>

[Prime Minister Scott Morrison of Australia](#) said on Sunday that he would call for a high-level government inquiry into the response to the country's devastating bushfires. But he did not signal a significant shift in policies to curb carbon emissions, as many had hoped.

The suggested inquiry, which Mr. Morrison proposed during a televised interview with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, came on the heels of news that [a firefighter had died overnight](#) in the state of Victoria, the site of some of the worst of the fires that have swept parts of Australia since October. At least 28 people have been killed in the fires.

Mr. Morrison and his government have been harshly criticized over their response to the monthslong crisis. The proposed inquiry, known as a royal commission, would look at that response, including the deployment of emergency services to deal with blazes that crossed state borders, streaked across mountain ranges and [forced the evacuations](#) of thousands of people along the country's eastern and southeastern shorelines.

Mr. Morrison has declined to consider major changes to policies on renewable energy, fossil fuels and coal. The mining and export of coal are key industries in Australia's economy, and in his interview on Sunday, he reiterated that he would not put jobs at risk or raise taxes in the pursuit of lower carbon emissions.

Mr. Morrison has repeatedly said that enough was being done to curb emissions, particularly for a nation with Australia's relatively small population. But climate scientists say that the government's targets are low to begin with and that emissions have been rising under Mr. Morrison's government.

Some critics said that royal commissions, which can take a year or more to conclude, are often interpreted as a way for the government to delay meaningful action on a divisive subject.

"It's a fob-off — they always are," said John Blaxland, a professor at the Australian National University in Canberra, the capital. "They give you a

good 18 months of political grace for the issue to die down politically and then shelve it when it comes out."

- Ok also this is an Opposition Shadow Minister DURING the December fires hyping coal exports like a moron
<https://twitter.com/fitzhunter/status/1206032983997599744>
- <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-01-14/volunteer-firefighter-compensation-not-enough-qld-man-bushfires/11863312>

Many volunteers - including pensioners and unemployed - not eligible for compensation.

Compensation only kicks in after 10 days volunteer work and applies to the 11th day forward, and is only for volunteers who are self-employed and work for small- or medium-sized businesses.

Federal Natural Disaster and Emergency Management Minister David Littleproud urged large businesses to support employees who took time off work to fight fires.

"Big business benefits more than most of us from the hard work of our volunteer firefighters and I urge them to support their staff who are part of volunteer services," he said.

\$300 per day, up to \$6000 total.

- As things like fire seasons and hurricane/flood seasons grow longer and longer, will we continue to hand over more and more direct authority to emergency responder leadership and the military? In Australia, the fire chiefs are becoming vocal on the climate connection and the military had to evacuate people from beaches (<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-50975266>). At what point does the civilian leadership become either a failed state or a vestigial appendage to the emergency regimes?
 - The Australian Spectator already published a column calling for an Emergency Supremo (former PM Tony Abbott) to override all political and jurisdictional lines
<https://www.spectator.com.au/2020/01/we-need-a-natural-disaster-supremo-and-tony-abbotts-the-man-for-the-job/> *"effectively combating future natural disasters on the scale we're now witnessing, be they fire, flood, cyclone or any other natural cause, needs a strong, powerful leader in ultimate charge who can cut through the crap, crush political, jurisdictional and professional jealousies, and have overriding control of federal, state and private resources for the common good of saving lives and property. A disaster supremo empowered by federal and state governments, and ultimately accountable to them, **able to put even prime ministers and premiers in their place in times of dire emergency.**"*

- Given the level of persistent emergency we are reaching worldwide when we are still below 1.5 degrees, even a holding pattern at 1.5 might well be sufficient to trigger a collapse of the liberal political and economic order globally. The very real prospect of a 2-4 degree rise would seem to guarantee it.
- The transition away from liberal democracy is here:
 - <https://twitter.com/BillHumphreyMA/status/1205862265704067072>
 - Dec 14 2019: “I think the thing about Left Electoralism within liberal democracies, in this phase of the ecological crisis, is that it can only ever be transitional anyway, so I'm not sure it's a problem as long as we're not putting all our eggs in that basket. Speaking as an elected leftist. You shouldn't put your eggs in one strategic basket anyway. But the political, economic, and social realities of the unfolding climate crisis means that liberal democracy is coming to its conclusion within history. We hope for (and must fight for) other democratic forms to follow or else the far-right & capital formations will instead institute their own, non-democratic economic & political regimes to react to the effects of the climate crisis. Either way, we're almost to the end of the line globally on our current phase of things. Now is transitional.”
 - For the moment, it is still necessary and useful to contest within this system because this is one of the few platforms that is given some amount of automatic legitimacy from the media or indeed the general public to be able to articulate a vision of a different future. By virtue of being a serious candidate or an elected official, you get your message out to a wider audience. Moreover, a bench of candidates and electeds would likely serve as the nucleus of a new leftist democracy, even perhaps new Founding Fathers & Mothers, or else the core resistance leadership against a right-wing climate regime.
- Heat waves in Europe, the Middle East, and Brazil that approach or surpass the heat index levels outdoors that kill people might signal the end of street protests as a potential response to the growing crisis. Historically “hot summers” were often associated with various uprisings and riots but those are only hot enough to be annoying or cause famines, not hot enough to literally kill people when they step outdoors.
- The Fate of the G20+ in Climate Crisis (start from the bottom):
 - Argentina: does anyone actually think this is a genuinely durable liberal democracy?
 - Australia: Incompetent and irremovable right-wing elected government facing an opposition that is unwilling to criticize their handling of crises and agrees with the government on coal exports. They will vote away their own democracy during a climate emergency sooner or later.
 - Brazil: Fascist government literally willing to burn the earth
 - Canada: Ruling liberal party obsessed with expanding fossil fuels, kind of irrelevant who's actually in charge
 - China: Already a command economy
 - European Union has failed to enforce any kind of punishments on illiberal, right-wing governments within their own borders.

- France: An extremely autocratic liberal constitution with an autocratically minded democratic president happy to use emergency powers while governing a volatile population with a powerful fascist opposition party. Famous heat waves plus terrorism plus domestic unrest = end of liberalism
- Germany: Eventually probably the far-right comes to power
- India: Quasi-fascist ruling party is dismantling democracy ahead of likely near permanent climate crises
- Indonesia: Young democracy on the front lines of climate effects, return to military rule seems very plausible in a crisis
- Italy: Quintessentially unstable democracy with mounting fascist pressure
- Japan: Quasi-fascist ruling party with no significant opposition (recent polls show single-digit support for the oppo parties!)
- Mexico: Young democracy facing constant internal security threats and future water crises
- Russia: Already a de facto dictatorship, faced 2010 drought in the breadbowl that triggered the Arab Spring
- Saudi Arabia: Already a royal dictatorship facing huge coming water crises
- South Africa: Relatively young one-party democracy under immense pressure to deal with water crises and unresolved racial apartheid
- South Korea: Relatively young democracy but facing other problems too
- Turkey: Already a dictatorship facing climate pressures
- UK: Breaking gridlock through FPTP majorities for Hard Brexit right-wing Tories means that any pressure toward authoritarianism in crisis is likely to be welcomed by the ruling party that looks set to rule for a while
- US: Mitch McConnell bringing the entire constitutional system to a grinding halt so that nothing on anything will ever get done again all but guarantees a collapse of the US system, accelerated by the climate emergency and tapping into chronic underlying social tensions
- Beyond the G20: These 20 are basically the top 20 GHG emitters as well except for Iran (which is also not a democracy and faces water problems). Outside of these 21 we have countries like Ukraine, Thailand, Poland, and Pakistan where the grasp on liberal democracy is tenuous at best. If you look instead at most populous countries we have very poor, very populous countries on the front lines of climate change like Bangladesh and Nigeria, where the democracies will capitulate to climate crises early on, or Ethiopia where a totalitarian regime already exists, and so on. (List rounds out with Philippines, Egypt, Vietnam, DR Congo ... which, come on...)