

The best article on wind farms you will ever read

By James Delingpole

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Aaaaaaaaaghhh!

Before I got sidetracked this morning by my sublime irritation at the Coalition's latest ludicrous foray into Nanny Statism, what I'd meant to blog about was this.

Some of you will have seen it already. It's by the great Kevin Myers, it ran in yesterday's Irish Independent (not the English one, for reasons which are bleeding obvious) and it's the best piece anyone has written, EVER, about wind farms.

Here's a taste:

Russia's main gas-company, Gazprom, was unable to meet demand last weekend as blizzards swept across Europe, and over three hundred people died. Did anyone

even think of deploying our wind turbines to make good the energy shortfall from Russia?

Of course not. We all know that windmills are a self-indulgent and sanctimonious luxury whose purpose is to make us feel good. Had Europe genuinely depended on green energy on Friday, by Sunday thousands would be dead from frostbite and exposure, and the EU would have suffered an economic body blow to match that of Japan's tsunami a year ago. No electricity means no water, no trams, no trains, no airports, no traffic lights, no phone systems, no sewerage, no factories, no service stations, no office lifts, no central heating and even no hospitals, once their generators run out of fuel.

Modern cities are incredibly fragile organisms, which tremble on the edge of disaster the entire time. During a severe blizzard, it is electricity alone that prevents a midwinter urban holocaust. We saw what adverse weather can do, when 15,000 people died in the heatwave that hit France in August 2003. But those deaths were spread over a month. Last weekend's weather, without energy, could have caused many tens of thousands of deaths over a couple of days.

Why does the entire green spectrum, which now incorporates most conventional parties across Europe, deny the most obvious of truths? To play lethal games with our energy systems in order to honour the whimsical god of climate change is as intelligent and scientific as the Aztec sacrifice of their young. Actually, it is far more frivolous, because at least the Aztecs knew how many people they were sacrificing: no one has the least idea of the loss of life that might result from the EU embracing "green" energy policies.

This is not to do down all the other fine articles which have been written on this subject, many of them by Christopher Booker. But sometimes it takes an outsider, someone who hasn't been covering the story day-in day-out for years, to conjure the full and hideous magnitude of a scandal.

What I love about Myers's piece is the concentrated rage – and the Swiftian disgust with all those who have been pushing the renewables scam or benefiting from it. It chimes perfectly with how I feel. Of all the miserable specimens on this planet, no category repels me quite so much as those parasites involved with the great renewables boondoggle. I've said before that I'd rather break bread with someone who manufactured land mines for his living than someone involved in rent-seeking from solar power or wind farms. At least with land mines a reasonable case could be made – despite their vile, random destructiveness – they offer some practical value for force protection. As Myers recognises, there is no argument for wind farms whatsoever: they're just an emblem of the green religious faith, perhaps too a symbol of the environmental ideology's geographical and political dominance, nothing more useful than that.

Incidentally, I notice that the greenies are now changing their tune on wind farms. Where before the bat-chomping eco crucifixes were spun as a vital part of "energy security",

they are now being repositioned as a kind of carbon-friendly bolt-on which is nice to have around and generally acts as an occasional substitute for fossil fuel when conditions are right.

Have a look at this debate between pro-renewables campaigner Jonathan Pyke and Mark Duchamp of the European Platform Against Wind Farms in The Earth Times and you'll see what I mean:

Q: How accurate is the argument that wind turbines have to be 'backed-up' by alternative sources of power, eg nuclear or coal, due to the irregularity of wind?

Jonathan: It's not accurate and I think it stems from a misunderstanding about what wind energy is for. It's better to think of wind as the back-up for gas, allowing us to make much better use of our existing fossil fuel power plants than relying on gas alone. There's no need to burn gas when the wind is blowing, which National Grid can predict extremely accurately. So comparing it to nuclear or coal is misleading because wind serves a different purpose; every time it blows there's a substantial decrease in carbon emissions, volatile fossil fuel costs, water for cooling, manufacturing and pollution. The 'back-up' argument just isn't valid.

R-i-g-h-t. So what you're saying, Jonathan, is that the ONLY reason we're carpeting some of the world's most attractive wild countryside in horribly costly, economically inefficient, bird-liquidising, noise-polluting, view-blighting, rare-earth-metal-exploiting, property-debasing, horse-frightening, rent-seekers' uber-horrors, is to save the odd tonne of CO2 emissions, as and when, despite the fact that the science increasingly suggests that the difference this will make to global climate will be so negligible as to be beyond measurement?

I genuinely don't understand how the people involved in this scam can sleep at night, really I don't. But I do know what their punishment should be. They should be forced to spend the rest of their lives living in one of the many newly vacant properties at the foot of the nearest wind farm.