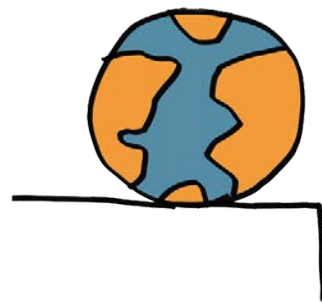


SEIZING AN ALTERNATIVE
Toward an Ecological Civilization
June 4-7, 2015
Section I: The Threatening
Catastrophe:
Responding Now



Most Immediate Actions offered by Tom English, Robert Haw, and Devon Hartman.

(From Final Session)

DG: (Asks Tom English what he considers the first things that should be done.)

TE: The regions of these so called transportation plans. Let's make sure they're compatible with AB32, and the recent Executive Orders of Schwarzenegger and Brown.

DG: Can you flesh that out a little more? Give us an illustration.

TE: For example, in San Diego, for the past 30 years or so, basically had a serious problem where the freeways became parking lots. So, what we do, we say we'll solve that by building another lane or two. And, we did that, and that works for 2 or 3 years, and then we say the freeway has become a parking lot, and then, guess what the solution is? Anybody have an idea? So, that's been going on and on. That's what currently is going on. Those plans are not compatible with AB32, and they're not compatible with the Executive Order of Arnold Schwarzenegger, because they don't have a 2050 time horizon. They basically faked their way through the 2020 time by slight of hand, that the economists are good at. But, the goals for 2050 are not even discussed. So, meet those goals, which they are in the law now. So, if we do that, what this will do is basically take them from this bandaid sort of structure, and force them come up with some sort of mass transportation system.

DG: Now, welcome to AB32.

TE: AB32 was world's first law to require a certain reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by a certain point in time. That was done under Schwarzenegger. What they talked about in there going out to 2020 with slight-of-hand analysis, which makes them look like they're complying with it, but they're not. So, the concept became, thanks to the "Terminator," one of, you have to extend these plans out to 2050. And then there are all these law suits that say, executive orders of a past governor aren't legally binding. Now, that's what SANDAG (San Diego Association of Governments) said. They voted 30 - 0 to ignore those things. And, so what happened, there's a lawsuit by Sierra Club, and an outfit called the Cleveland National Forrest Foundation against SANDAG. SANDAG becomes the premier example to the world in this case. And, so what happened is, it was decided by various administrative judges, several levels, that SANDAG would lose on 4 of the 5 points that were in the lawsuit. But, the 5th point was still up in the air. That is, the EO of Schwarzenegger, being past governor, if it was still applicable to the law. And so, what happened about 2 months ago, there was a Bill passed in the CA Legislature that said the Executive Orders of both Schwarzenegger and Brown are applicable to the situation. So, SANDAG will have lost on 5 out of 5.

DG: So, spell that out. You say, if they went to court, they would lose.

TE: Well, they have lost. 4 out of 5. It was before the CA Supreme Court. And, they hadn't ruled on it yet, but it became mute with the passage of a law by the Assembly and the Senate.

DG: So, the law is clear, and settled. And, now just get them to implement.

TE: Well, yes. But, what we have to do now is keep these rascals from lying. So, people like us need to attend the meetings, and so forth, to assure they are actually following the law.

Unidentified woman: What were you saying about the governor's executive order not being necessary to enforce?

TE: Well, yes, that was the idea. No one had ever really thought about this. Are we still bound by an executive order of the past governor? What happens at the federal level, executive orders are usually canceled by new executive orders from the new President. Traditionally, an outgoing President usually issues a bunch of nice executive orders, and when the new President comes in, he immediately cancels them. So that is how it works at the federal level. But, at the state level, so no one had thought about it. They didn't know what to do. Basically, although they don't know what to do, they do need to plan towards 2050. It's pretty difficult. You can think 2020 pretty easily, but 2050 is too hard.

DG: So, the goal for 2050 is a reduction of how much?

TE: 80% reduction by 2050.

DD: If I can just point out, I think there is still a question of whether executive orders are legally binding, and rather than have that be uncertain, the legislators are, right now, passing a counterpart to AB32. AB32 went to 2020, so there is SB32, the same person, Fran Pavley, is now the Senate, whereas she had been in the Assembly. It just past the Senate last week, and it goes out to 2050 and beyond. It would become a law that requires it. There won't be a continuing question on whether the executive order.

DG: Is that going to pass pretty soon?

DD: Well, it's in the Assembly now. It started out in the Senate. I would say it will be quite soon, and Brown will sign it as soon as it reaches his desk. It is an extension of the first bill, kind of a global warming solutions act. It sets sort of a glide slope for reduction of emissions.

Unidentified woman: So, do you feel that could be a model for other states?

DD: Yes, very definitely.

TE: California often leads the world in those kind of things, so once we settle things, like the SANDAG issue, that will then force the hands of all the other regional transportation agencies in California. That will then start to force the hands of a whole lot of transportation agencies in other states. So, what it does, it starts sort of a landslide.

DG: (09:44) We need to move on to the next. We can come back later to this if we want to. Why don't you [Robert Haw] go ahead and restate the main points that you made.

RH: I think the main points for actions, right, we want some actions in the short term. Let me say this, it's not an action. But, the purpose of CCL is to build political will so we can pass carbon fee and dividend. Now, that might be a long road to hoe, but the way to start that, to build political will to do that, is just to contact your members of Congress. So, for actions, and we can do that starting tomorrow. Please, everybody, if they can phone their member of Congress and ask them to support a revenue neutral carbon fee. I mean, you have to be specific to them, and you can say specific names. There are a couple of bills in Congress that you can ask them to support. Now, let's not be naive, they're coming from the minority party, so they are probably not going to get out of committee. But there's one, Van Hollen, he's from Maryland. He has a different version, it's a revenue neutral cap and fee. But, there's also a revenue neutral carbon fee bill by McDermott of Washington State. So, you can ask them to co-sponsor either of those bills. You can call them by phone, or, better yet, send them an email to their website. Because, basically, a phone call is like a binary type of information. Somebody picks up the phone and asks if you want to leave a message, and the message goes to someone else, and it kind of gets really diluted. If you send it email, at least that goes right to the particular staff member responsible for that area. At least they will have to read it. So, I gave

an overview of carbon fee and dividend. If you can remember a few of those phrases, that's all you need. Or, just go to the Citizens' Climate Lobby website and get a few phrases.

Unidentified male: Can we get the specific sponsors of those bills, and the particular policies that they are advocating, their email addresses?

RH: I can do that. I can send out that information. So, call your member of Congress. And then, if there is an article in the newspaper, or a blog, anything having to do with climate change or tax policy, fire off a quick letter to the editor about that. You may say, who ever reads those? That's not the point. The point is, the staffers of the legislators take a polling of letters to the editor, and what those subjects are. So, it's an indirect way of communicating with the staffers. It allows them to see there's an increasing number of letters on climate solutions.

DG: Let me ask a question about terminology. Most people talk about a carbon tax. Hansen prefers the fee and dividend. A lot of people have trouble understanding it. Most people would remember, we're in favor of something. Most people won't remember the details. You say, fee and dividend, and they say, well, what do you mean by that? How important is it to you that we would say fee rather than tax?

RH: I would say, generally, they don't have to use that jargon at all. You can say, I'm in favor of putting a price on carbon, that will solve climate change with an economics solution. Unfortunately, with the society that we have right now, taxes is a word that is loaded. So, rather than fighting that battle, if you just say 'fee,' it's because it all comes back to the people. The government collects this money, but it's all going to come back to us. So, it's not a tax. The main point, just say, put a price on carbon.

DG: I think so. It's very clear, and you don't have to get into details.

TE: One think about, people like George Shultz, he was a secretary of something under Reagan, He says, this is NOT a tax. What you're trying to do is get the Republications involved. It's wonderful. It's NOT a tax. So, if you call it a tax, it sort of defeats their agenda.

Unidentified male: It sure would be helpful to get information on that bill, HR whatever it is. If we could get a two-line talking point that any of us could get, that would give us the skeleton .

Another unidentified male: Isn't the climate lobby doing something along these lines.

RH: Yes, I didn't want to get into too much detail. If you go to their website, www.climatelobby.org, I'm sorry, I guess I should have had a handout. It's a tiny bit of digging around. Just go to RESOURCES tab. They have lots of what they call laser talks. They're like little elevator talks, one paragraphs. You are not plagiarizing anybody by taking points out of these. They are encouraging you to use these points.

Unidentified male: Which are the papers that you suggest sending letters?

RH: Well, for Los Angeles, it would be the Los Angeles Times. But, for Claremont, there's a staffer here for their representative. So, it would be the Claremont Courier.

DG: Okay, Devon.

DH: Well, I think going with what we heard this weekend, the shift from mechanistic to an objective moral imperative. I think what we've discovered with CHERP in the past five years, with the downturn of the economy, and also as the conversation around sustainability ripens, there are more and more people who intuitively get this conversation, and are wishing to do something about it. This is what we are discovering. We are going into communities, and within 8 weeks, we will have 80 people on the list who are ready to do something that is meaningful.

What we're doing, I mean there are so many meaningful things to do. I think each one of us just needs to decide where our particular passions lie. I think daily work could be done the political level, on Legislative agendas, pushing that. What I'm discovering for my particular passion, I've found myself in the funnel of what my talents are, I consider the most important actions that I can take. I happen to believe that working on the energy issues directly affecting greenhouse gasses is very possible, and that's the most exciting thing to me, since I know something about that space. But, what we're also discovering because of this, I think a shift in the population's sense of moral imperative is that there's a huge latent reservoir of human beings who are ready to do something now. I love the idea around energy, not only a reduction in energy in homes and offices, not only as the primary mitigator of carbon, on the planet. But, it's also locally focused. I think this is the most powerful thing, probably in the threat of all of the years. I don't think there ever was more than 5% of the people engaged in the American Revolution. We know that a very small number of people can affect great change, and it usually happens at the very very local level. So, what we're really working at doing is affecting change on a daily basis, but what we discovered in the State, with all of the Legislations, AB32 on down, the Legislature and the Governor in California, at least, is really doing an extraordinary amount of work, but they need the grassroots cover. They need people to be engaged. And so, the fight is moving to the local government level in a very big way. In fact, right now, there is whole other energy bill, AB758, that we are working with Commissioner [of California Energy] McAllister, and the CPUC, to help them understand how best local government should be engaged. For the past few years, we've been working to employ Energy Upgrade California legislation, starting with AB32. The mandate under AB32 is to start working on transportation and energy in building, and making a dramatic effect. Well, we've had very very little affect on buildings, because the focus in the state has been at the very highest political and most superficial levels. So, we've spent \$200 million to date trying to educate people about Energy Upgrade California. If you go to the mall, nobody's ever heard of it. So, the latest Assembly bills are now geared to giving the Energy Commission a higher degree of authority, not just carrots, but sticks, to help wake up the population at the local governing level. That's where you're going to see the action. They know that's the game in town. So, what we're excited to do at CHERP, not only going house to house and light bulb to light bulb, and making a difference in every action every day, showing people how we can move forward, and also increasing lifestyle and comfort, and a million other things with energy efficiency. We set a goal in the beginning of retrofitting 1% of the homes in Claremont. That made statewide news. It had never been done before, and that was just 1%. That was crazy. It was depressing, and it was also exciting. We now have a goal of 10%, and we know, we're already experiencing a huge political lever knowing that everybody in the state, in the government, is watching it. Because, it's the only game in town. All the other millions and millions of dollars that have been spent on layers and layers of consultants have been sucked up. Never got to granny. So, we need help. Chi Chi Lorham (not intelligible), one of our student leaders, Dave Harmont (not intelligible), we have a number of them right now who are codifying, putting into manuals how best to help, how best to be engaged. We're doing city wide workshops, creating new opportunities for other cities, around Southern California to begin, and then, later next year around California. And so, we would love folks to stay attuned to our news letters. We will find ways to have you help participate with us. One of the things we're going to do after this conference is to start discussing how we can combine some of our charts with the economic benefits, because, one of the things we're trying to do is, at the hyper-local level, bring to play all of the benefits around all of these actions, in one place. So we can find the surprising serendipities of everybody engaged in this conversation, not just a few people. So, that's one of the things exciting to us. We feel very strongly, it's not just either or, it's both and all

of the above. And so, whenever we can kind of synergize with each other, it's going to be important.

Unidentified female: If I can just add to that, about the church and the way they come at it together, at least for me, what is really cool about it, (hard to decipher) , and then it can be tested out in other areas, in other communities. It's like, rather than having other communities having to start from scratch, they will have tools that others have used.

DG: So, to summer-rise, a recommendation from the conference would be that we focus on the fact that energy efficiency, particularly in buildings is the most cost effective and effective method to reduce our carbon emissions?

DH: Yes, that statement can be made, and I think that is helpful for people to understand who are new to the conversation. I think people really do, seriously, want to make a very big difference. And, they need to understand that, most people are either living or working in the buildings that affect 50% of the energy expenditure and creation in this country. And, from a light bulb to good insulation, to solar panels, in your building that you live in, and the building that you work in is a huge huge contribution. And, I think people need, and it's wonderful for people to understand they can really contribute that way. Not trivial.

Unidentified female: Is CHERP working? I mean, in the corporate sector, people try to take your business for more sustainable housing. Are you working with these businesses in that way?

DH: All building types. What we're trying to do, is work with Edison and the gas company. What we're trying to do is create a matrix for every individual and community, all program for every building type. And every type of demographic. A renter in a home has a different program than a home owner. Or, a low income renter has a whole different suite of opportunities. And so, we start with homes, we work with very simple type of symbolics, a very simple understanding of a building. But we deal, obviously, lots of commercial building operators as well, because they don't own. Once they get that conversation, we then talk to them about their commercial homes.

Unidentified female: Did you tell me once, say in the Tucson area, I can get on your site, and there will be manuals, you don't have it yet?

DH: Yes, it's coming. End of this year.

Unidentified male: Can you tell us how this plays into building of new homes? New commercial buildings? Insulation? Bill of materials. Carbon emission reductions?

DH: The whole design community is altering the way we approach new construction. One of the reasons I focused on existing buildings is, new construction is hardly more than 1% of existing building stock right now. California's building codes are moving towards a net zero. All new buildings after 2020 will have to be net zero. So, that's a cool thing to note, but, if you're interested in new buildings, the game, the action right now, is forcing the existing building codes. That's not being done. And the training of building departments and officials to understand, and how to enforce existing code, and also to work with existing heating and cooling contractors especially, have them understand what things are not being attended to. A new job, opportunity cost.

Unidentified female: In a state like, Tucson, Arizona, you probably don't even have renewable codes, right?

DH: (laughter) Not compared to California.

DG: So, what I get, the double focus, new buildings, mainly, getting the code enforced. And, retrofitting older buildings. Correct?

DH: Yes

DG: Booth equally important?

DH: Yes. Every new building we build will be in place at least the next 80 years. So, we lock in dramatic lost opportunity overtime we build less than we could.

TE: There was one piece, I think we talked about, on new buildings. In Lancaster, they passed a law requiring all new buildings to have solar roofs.

DH: 1 KW. Have to have a minimum of 1 KW. See, here's an example. They've set their own scratch code. This is beyond California code. And, cities have the ability to do that. Most cities don't have the time, or resources, or understanding to even follow existing code. They're all over worked and understaffed. This is serious. It's not evil, it's just literally, especially since the downturn, can not keep up. Many of the hire their building officials as consultants, (unintelligible) in-house, staff. This is something everyone can be working on in their cities. To alert people at the city level to the level of urgency around energy. We have brand new buildings going up in Claremont. I'll drive by them and see the insulation will be dramatically underperforming what code requires. And this is to the detriment of comfort and lifestyle, health and safety, not to mention energy or greenhouse gas.