

# The Goldilocks Policy for Energy Transition and the Struggle for Global Governance

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**ABSTRACT:-** The Goldilocks policy for energy transition demonstrates how past energy transitions can provide guidance on the timeframe needed for a sustainable shift to renewable energy sources. Projections based on historical data are presented and then discussed within the context of a struggle for global governance.

**Keywords:** Energy Transition, Global Governance, Goldilocks Policy, Energy Policy

## I. INTRODUCTION

The world is in the midst of a transition from an energy portfolio dominated by fossil fuels to a more sustainable energy portfolio. Fossil fuel consumption accounts for more than 80% of global energy consumption<sup>1</sup>. The Goldilocks policy for energy transition was proposed as a template for guiding the world through the energy transition<sup>2</sup>. It is based on historical energy use in a relatively mature energy province, the United States, as shown in Section 2. An example of implementing the Goldilocks policy for energy transition is presented in Section 3. Once we have demonstrated that the Goldilocks policy for energy transition is feasible, we observe in Section 4 that the world is becoming increasingly chaotic as nations vie for control in a rapidly changing world. It appears that the global desire to implement an energy transition is being leveraged to impose a new world order. A few concluding remarks are presented in Section 5.

## II. HISTORICAL ENERGY USE

Figure 1 shows the United States Energy Mix from 1775 to 2022. The data is presented as a percent of total United States energy consumption.<sup>3</sup> The energy consumption forecast shown in Figure 1 includes the Covid pandemic period.<sup>4</sup> The figure also shows an estimate of the length of past energy transitions. It took approximately 60 to 70 years for wood to be replaced by coal and a similar timeframe for the transition from coal to oil.

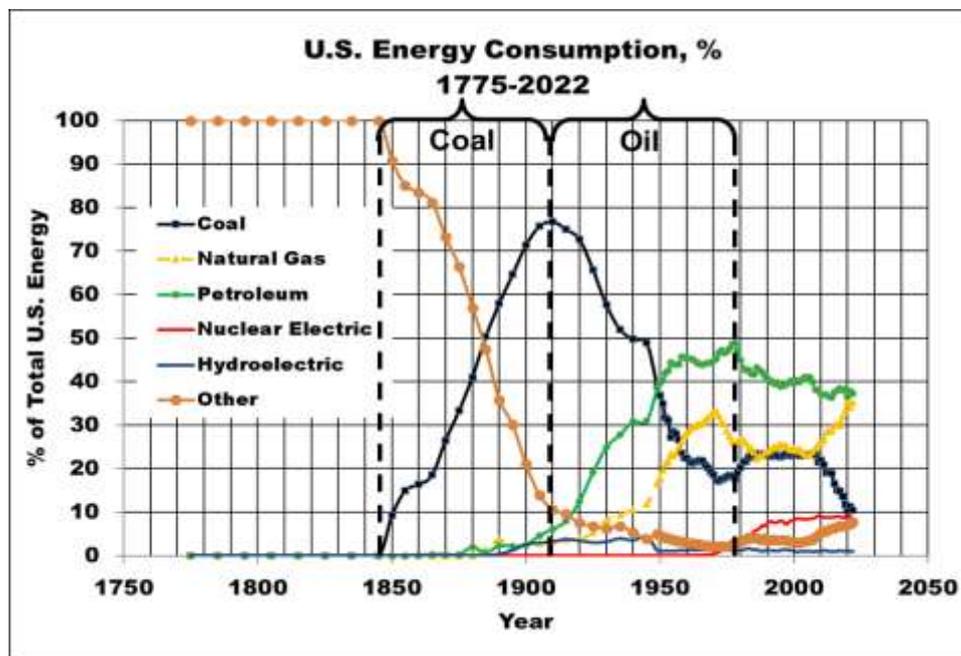


Fig. 1. U.S. Energy Consumption as a % of total U.S. Energy Consumption.

According to Lindsey and Dahlman,<sup>5</sup> the average global temperature is predicted to rise by approximately 0.36°F (0.22°C) per decade. Assuming this is a reasonable estimate, an average temperature increase of approximately 0.36°F (0.22°C) per decade for an energy transition period of 60 years would result in the average global temperature increasing by about 2.16°F (1.32°C).

Other energy analysts have also argued that the energy transition will take decades. Energy expert Vaclav Smil said in a 2018 interview with Paul Voosen<sup>6</sup> that we should decrease our reliance on fossil fuels to help combat climate change. Smil observed in his 2003 book **Energy at the Crossroads** that societies that were energized predominantly by fossil fuels would take most of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to convert to a global system based predominantly on conversions of renewable energies.<sup>7</sup>

Energy expert and economic historian Daniel Yergin agreed that energy transitions could take decades.<sup>8,9</sup> Yergin pointed out that older energy sources can coexist with newer ones after the transition. It is possible to shorten the transition period by technological advances or enacting government laws or regulations that require utilities to generate electricity from renewable energy sources by a specified date. Examples of technological advances include the development of nuclear fusion energy or low-cost energy storage. Technological advances cannot be reliably predicted, and the enactment of government laws or regulations are likely to increase the cost of energy.

### III. THE GOLDILOCKS POLICY FOR ENERGY TRANSITION

The basic idea of the Goldilocks policy for energy transition is that the energy transition should neither be too fast nor too slow; it should be just right.<sup>10</sup> One way to implement the Goldilocks policy for energy transition is to base the timeframe on historical data. This suggests that the transition should proceed at a steady rate of 2% growth in renewable energy per year while phasing out fossil fuels at the same rate. The consumption of nuclear fission energy is assumed to continue. This approach aligns with historical patterns based on Figure 1. Figure 2 shows a forecast of future global energy consumption based on the assumption that nations throughout the world phase out fossil fuels by 2% per year while increasing the consumption of renewable energy at the same rate. Under this model fossil fuel consumption would end around 2080. The transition period would limit environmental damage while allowing time for economic adjustments.<sup>3</sup>

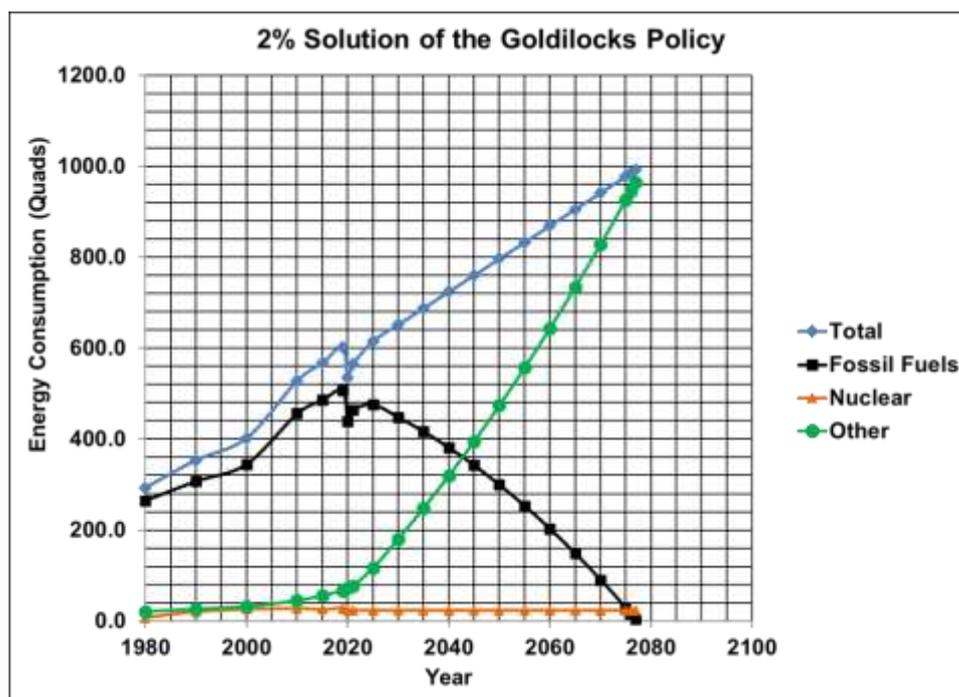


Fig. 2. Forecast of Global Energy Consumption based on the Goldilocks Policy.

The transition shown in Figure 2 does not include the possibility that nuclear fusion is harnessed and commercialized during the transition period. Nuclear fusion could provide unlimited clean energy and accelerate the transition, but viable commercial fusion remains elusive. Nuclear fission energy from small modular reactors is gaining acceptance as a viable complement to renewable energy sources.<sup>11</sup>

#### IV. WEAPONIZING THE ENVIRONMENT<sup>12</sup>

The Goldilocks Policy called for a historically reasonable timeframe to allow society to responsibly move from an infrastructure based primarily on fossil fuels to an infrastructure based on sustainable energy. The energy transition we are witnessing today is not the peaceful process envisioned by the Goldilocks policy for energy transition. Instead, recent events have suggested that the world is becoming increasingly chaotic as nations vie for control in a rapidly changing world.<sup>12</sup> Examples of events include the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, the 2023 Hamas attack on Israel, the Belt and Road Initiative introduced by China's President Xi Jinping, and the formation of BRICS as a challenge to the global reserve currency (the US dollar) and the modern world order.

##### 4.1 Sovereignty and Global Governance

The modern world order depends on national sovereignty, which is a key component of the United Nations Charter adopted in 1945. According to Principle 1 of Article 2 in Chapter 1 of the UN Charter, "1. The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members".<sup>13</sup> The energy transition is serving to catalyze a change in the world order as civilizations clash and evolve.<sup>12</sup>

Many factors are being employed to shape a new world order under a global government following the energy transition. The League of Nations created after World War I and the United Nations created after World War II are examples of multinational organizations that were founded as global governments. The United States and the developed nations of Europe led the United Nations from its inception after World War II until U Thant assumed the post of acting secretary general in November 1961. Prior to U Thant's selection as secretary general, the primary concern of the United Nations was the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States. U Thant believed he could use the environment to implement a UN agenda to advance social progress.

##### 4.2 U Thant and the Environment

U Thant, the first Secretary General of the United Nations from the third world, realized that UN member states were not unified by peacekeeping and economic efforts. It was his hope that member states would unite to counter the threat of worldwide pollution. In May 1969, he told the UN General Assembly that environmental disaster would occur within 10 years unless member states took steps to avert disaster. A month later he blamed most of the problems on the United States.<sup>14</sup> The Environmental Protection Agency was established by United States President Richard Nixon in 1970 in response to public concern about the environment.

In a 1970 article,<sup>15</sup> U Thant discussed environmental issues and advocated for a new global order. According to U Thant, humanity faced "not merely a threat, but an actual worldwide crisis involving all living creatures, all vegetable life, the entire system in which we live, and all nations large or small, advanced or developing." Furthermore, he said that humanity now faces "a rapidly increasing imbalance between the life-sustaining systems of the Earth and the demands, industrial, agricultural, technological, and demographic, which its inhabitants put upon it".<sup>15</sup> (page 13).

U Thant cited urbanization and increasing population as the two main factors contributing to the environmental issues. He said that the "unthinking exploitation and abuse of the world's natural resources, and the plunder, befouling, and destruction of our native Earth, have already gone too far for us to rely any more on pious hopes, belated promises, and tardy efforts at self-discipline".<sup>15</sup> (page 16)

U Thant argued that global authority was needed to enable prompt and effective action to solve environmental problems. According to U Thant<sup>15</sup> (page 17), "nothing less than a new step toward world order would do" to save the environment. He called for globalism by asking "Do the sovereign nations of the world have the courage and the vision to set up and support such an agency now, and thus, in the interest of future generations of life on Earth, depart radically from the hitherto sacred paths of national sovereignty?"<sup>15</sup> (page 16) Furthermore, he asked, "Is it unrealistic to suggest that the undoubted global challenge we now face might become the basis for a new start in world order and a more civilized and generous way of life for the peoples of the Earth?"<sup>15</sup> (page 17)

A suggestion to organize an international environmental conference was proposed by Sweden in 1967 as a strategy for advancing social progress. U Thant endorsed the request for an international environmental conference in 1969. He used the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to advance his environmental agenda. UNESCO held regional symposia on the environment in 1969 and 1971.<sup>16</sup> In 1972, UNESCO held a world conference in Stockholm, Sweden that became known as the 1972 Stockholm Conference. The conference was chaired by Maurice Strong (1929-2015), who was emerging as a key player in connecting environmentalism to global government.

## V. WEAPONIZING CLIMATE CHANGE<sup>12</sup>

Section 4 showed how influential people could use the environment to pursue a political agenda. In this section, we describe how the focus on environment has transitioned to a focus on climate change. The cause and extent of climate change led to a debate about two major factors: natural causes, and human activity. People who believe climate change is due primarily to human activity are considered advocates of anthropogenic, or human caused, climate change.

Advocates of anthropogenic climate change (ACC) want society to transition to a low-carbon economy as soon as possible (as an example, see Srivastava and Ramamurthy<sup>17</sup>). If atmospheric greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase, say advocates of ACC, then sea level could be up to 23 inches higher in 2100 than it was in 1990. According to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in the United States, sea level has been rising at a rate of approximately 12 inches per century, or about one eighth of an inch per year.<sup>18</sup>

The cost of transitioning every country to a low-carbon economy from a carbon-based economy is immense. The counterargument is that the cost of failing to transition will also be immense. Should nations begin an immediate transition to low-carbon economies, or do we have time to make the transition? The Goldilocks Policy for energy transition used historical data to suggest that nations should be able to make a relatively smooth transition in approximately 60 years.

U Thant began to use the United Nations in the 1960s and 1970s to weaponize the environment on a global scale. He endorsed the 1967 Swedish proposal to organize an international environmental conference as a strategy for advancing social progress. U Thant chose to advance his environmental agenda using the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). One of his allies was Maurice Strong.

### 5.1 The United Nations and the 1972 Stockholm Conference

The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment was convened in 1969. It was the first prominent international conference on environmental issues. It was followed by the 1972 Stockholm Conference. Maurice Strong's "success in increasing foreign aid brought him to the attention of U Thant, the secretary general of the United Nations at the time, who selected him to convene the 1972 Stockholm conference".<sup>19</sup>

U Thant's appointment of Strong required approval by the Canadian government. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Canadian Prime Minister from the Liberal Party, authorized Strong's appointment. Strong began work at UN headquarters in New York. He served as both Secretary General of the 1972 Stockholm Conference and UN Under-secretary General in charge of environmental affairs.

Strong applied his "consummate diplomatic skills to obtain the support of the developing countries, who were extremely skeptical about environmental issues".<sup>20</sup> The 1972 Stockholm Conference "adopted a Declaration of Principles and Action Plan to deal with global environmental issues. It put the environment issue on the international agenda and confirmed its close link with development. The Stockholm Conference moved into the history books as a major landmark, launching a new era of international environmental diplomacy".<sup>20</sup>

Strong expressed his concern for the human environment and the need for global ecology in his opening remarks at the 1972 Stockholm Conference.<sup>21</sup> He began his remarks by saying that "We have made a global decision of immeasurable importance to which this meeting testifies: we have determined that we must control and harness the forces which we have ourselves created."

Strong was concerned about the possible occurrence of an environmental catastrophe although he did not think one was imminent. He stated that "Our whole work, our whole dedication is surely towards the idea of a durable and habitable planet." He was aware that most people around the world did not live sustainably. He asked, "can the great venture of human destiny be carried safely into a new century if our work is left in this condition? I, for one, do not believe it can."

The 1972 Stockholm Conference, according to Strong, was the human environment. He believed that the term 'human environment' should be interpreted broadly: "the human environment impinges upon the entire condition of man, and cannot be seen in isolation from war, and poverty, injustice and discrimination."

Strong said that "all nations must accept responsibility for the consequences of their own actions on environments outside their borders." He emphasized that "Our major motivation in gathering here is to consider recommendations, which can only be translated into action by international agreement. By far the major part of the burden of environmental management falls, however, upon national governments operating as sovereign national states."

Strong argued that climate issues should be resolved using an incremental approach. He said, "I cannot stress too strongly, the central importance of accepting this notion of ongoing process, of continuity, of adaptation, of steady evolution, in perception, in organization, in decision making and in action to protect and enhance the human environment."

Strong said that "Many of the fundamental environmental problems of the developing countries derive from their very poverty and lack of resources and, in some cases, from inappropriate forms of development."

Strong did not support unlimited growth. He described the type of growth he did support: "People must have access to more, not fewer opportunities to express their creative drives. But these can only be provided within a total system in which man's activities are in dynamic harmony with the natural order. To achieve this, we must control and redirect our processes of growth. We must rethink our concepts of the basic purposes of growth. We must see it in terms of enriching the lives and enlarging the opportunities of all mankind. And if this is so, it follows that it is the more wealthy societies – the privileged minority of mankind – which will have to make the most profound, even revolutionary changes in attitudes and values."

Strong recognized that change was likely to be gradual and that developed nations would need to rethink how they managed their natural resources. "The overall global goal of the United Nations environmental program," he said, "must be to arrest the deterioration and begin the enhancement of the human environment." He reminded his audience that "The basic task of this conference is to build in the minds of men the new vision of the larger, richer future which our collective will and energies can shape for all mankind, to build a program of concerted action which will make an important first step towards the realization for this vision; to build the new vehicle of international cooperation that will enable us to continue the long journey towards that creative and dynamic harmony between man and nature that will provide the optimum environment for human life on Planet Earth."

The decision to establish the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) in December 1972 by the UN General Assembly was the key outcome of the 1972 Stockholm Conference. The role of UNEP was to organize, promote, and catalyze action within the UN system. UNEP was not permitted to carry out or fund action.

Strong was selected as the first Executive Director of UNEP by the UN General Assembly. UNEP was headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. It became the first UN agency to headquarter in a developing country.

Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau invited Strong "to head the newly created national oil company, PetroCanada." Strong accepted the position and returned to Canada in 1976. He later "became Chairman of the Canada Development Investment Corporation, the holding company for some of Canada's principal government-owned corporations".<sup>20</sup>

Strong served as a member of the Brundtland World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED). The WCED was presided over by Norwegian politician Gro Harlem Brundtland. The work of the Brundtland Commission was summarized in *Our Common Future*.<sup>22</sup>

## **5.2 Agenda 21 and the 1992 Rio Conference**

A new global environmental conference was convened on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1972 Stockholm Conference. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reported that "In June 1992 [Maurice Strong] was asked to lead another landmark meeting: the UN Conference on Environment and Development - also known as the Earth Summit - it was held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil".<sup>23</sup> The formulation of Agenda 21, a program of action for attaining sustainable development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, was a significant result of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), now known as the 1992 Rio Conference.

Strong updated his vision of the future in his opening statement to the 1992 Rio Conference. He welcomed his audience and then acknowledged that "despite significant progress made since 1972 in many areas, the hopes ignited at Stockholm remain largely unfulfilled" [Manitou-Rio, 2020]. He highlighted observations reported by Gro Harlem Brundtland's report *Our Common Future* to the World Commission on Environment and Development<sup>22</sup>: "the environment, natural resources and life-support systems of our planet have continued to deteriorate, while global risks like those of climate change and ozone depletion have become more immediate and acute." Strong cautioned that "all the environmental deterioration and risks we have experienced to date have occurred at levels of population and human activity that are much less than they will be in the period ahead."

Strong specified the main concerns of the 1992 Rio Conference as "patterns of production and consumption in the industrial world that are undermining the Earth's life-support systems; the explosive increase in population...deepening disparities between rich and poor that leave 75 per cent of humanity struggling to live; and an economic system that takes no account of ecological costs or damage."

"Population must be stabilized, and rapidly," Strong said. "If we do not do it, nature will, and much more brutally." Strong then connected Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to population control by observing that "world GDP increased by \$20 trillion. Yet 15 percent of the increase accrued to developing countries" during the 20 years between the 1972 Stockholm Conference and the 1992 Rio Conference. Over 70% of the increase in GDP went to developed countries. "This is the other part of the population problem," he said. "The fact that every child born in the developed world consumes 20 to 30 times the resources of the planet than a third world

child." He concluded that "The wasteful and destructive lifestyles of the rich cannot be maintained at the cost of the lives and livelihoods of the poor, and of nature."

Strong called on all governments participating in the 1992 Rio Conference to prioritize acceptance and implementation of the decisions made at the conference into policies and practices. He identified Agenda 21 as "a framework for the systemic, co-operative action required to effect the transition to sustainable development." He said "The issue of new and additional financial resources to enable developing countries to implement Agenda 21 is crucial and pervasive. This, more than any other issue, will clearly test the degree of political will and commitment of all countries to the fundamental purposes and goals of this Earth Summit."

According to Strong, "poverty and hunger persist in a world never better able to eliminate them. This is surely a denial of the moral and ethical basis of our civilization as well as a threat to its survival." He went on to say that "Agenda 21 measures for eradication of poverty and the economic enfranchisement of the poor provide the basis for a new world-wide war on poverty. Indeed, I urge you to adopt the eradication of poverty as a priority objective for the world community as we move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century."

Strong observed that "Nowhere is efficiency more important than in the use of energy. The transition to a more energy-efficient economy that weans us off our overdependence on fossil fuels is imperative to the achievement of sustainable development."

In conclusion, Strong said that "It is an exhilarating challenge to erase the barriers that have separated us in the past, to join in the global partnership that will enable us to survive in a more secure and hospitable world. The industrialized world cannot escape its primary responsibility to lead the way in establishing this partnership and making it work. Up to now, the damage inflicted on our planet has been done largely inadvertently. We now know what we are doing. We have lost our innocence. It would be more than irresponsible to continue down this path."

He completed his remarks by telling his audience that "The road beyond Rio will be a long and difficult one; but it will also be a journey of renewed hope, of excitement, challenge and opportunity, leading as we move into the 21<sup>st</sup> century to the dawning of a new world in which the hopes and aspirations of all the world's children for a more secure and hospitable future can be fulfilled. This unprecedented responsibility is in your hands."

The acceptance of Agenda 21, a non-binding agreement that presented a plan for attaining sustainable development, was one of the most significant steps made at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. President George H.W. Bush of the United States signed the Agenda 21 accord while attending the conference. To facilitate sustainable development throughout the world, Agenda 21 encouraged

- countries with the largest populations to reduce population growth,
- countries with the largest consumption to reduce consumption, and
- The wealthiest countries to increase financial and technological aid to poorer countries.

In its obituary to Maurice Strong, The New York Times reported that "donor nations agreed to provide \$7 billion in aid to poorer ones, the sum was far short of the \$70 billion that the United Nations said was needed annually".<sup>19</sup>

### **5.3 The Earth Charter Initiative**

The Earth Charter Initiative was launched in 1994 by Maurice Strong and Mikhail Gorbachev, the eighth and final leader of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev led the Soviet Union from 1985 to its dissolution in 1991. The Earth Charter was supposed to be finished at the 1992 Earth Summit. According to Maurice Strong, "the Earth Charter would set out the basic principles for the conduct of people and nations toward each other and the Earth to ensure our common future" [Strong, 2000, page 202]. The Preamble to the Earth Charter is presented in Table 1.<sup>24</sup>

**Table 1. Preamble to the Earth Charter**

"We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations."

“The real goal of the Earth Charter,” according to Strong, “is that it will in fact become like the Ten Commandments, like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It will become a symbol of the aspirations and the commitments of people everywhere. And that is where the political influence, where the long-term results of the Earth Charter will really come”.<sup>25</sup>

The Earth Charter International Secretariat and Council paid respect to Maurice Strong after his passing in 2015. It said that “As a member of the Brundtland Commission and Secretary General of the Earth Summit in 1992, Mr. Strong took on the commitment to carry the idea of an Earth Charter forward (which was a recommendation made in the Brundtland Commission Report and according to him an unfinished piece of business of the Rio Earth Summit). Therefore, in 1994, together with Mikhail Gorbachev he launched the Earth Charter Initiative and became the co-Chair of the International Commission”.<sup>26</sup>

#### **5.4 Strong’s Later Years**

In 2000, Maurice Strong began his book *Where on Earth Are We Going?* with a scenario that illustrated what the world could look like in 30 years if anthropogenic climate change was not mitigated.<sup>24</sup> According to Strong, the world's population might be reduced by two thirds by the year 2031 because of climate change, environmental catastrophes, water scarcity, the resurgence of previously controlled diseases, political unrest, and the breakdown of law and order.

Strong's book served as an appeal for leaders of industrial, governmental, and environmental organizations to find solutions to global problems in the new millennium. “The time has come,” he said, “when we need to act both globally and locally, and that requires the cooperation of all of us, from individuals to grassroots groups to business, governments and supranational organizations”.<sup>24</sup> (page 5)

Strong knew that he had been associated with a movement to create a global government. He thought about transforming the UN into a global government as one possibility. To clarify his views, he maintained that a global government “is not necessary, not feasible, and not desirable” [Strong, 2000, page 319]. Twenty-two pages later he expressed an apparently contradictory view that “the codification, administration and enforcement of international law must become one of the principal functions of the United Nations in the period ahead”.<sup>24</sup> (page 341)

Strong did not believe that the world should become an anarchical world without systems or rules: “A chaotic world would pose equal or even greater danger. The challenge is to strike a balance so that the management of global affairs is responsive to the interests of all people in a secure and sustainable future. Such management must be guided by basic human values and make global organization conform to the reality of global diversity”.<sup>24</sup> (page 319)

Global institutions like the UN could provide the basic components “of an improved system of international agreements and international law and more streamlined international organizations to service and support the cooperation among governments and other key actors that will be required”.<sup>24</sup> (page 321) Strong believed that the rule of law was essential to the functioning of societies on the national and global scale. He realized, however, that the “single greatest weakness of the existing international legal regime is the almost total lack of a capacity for enforcement”.<sup>24</sup> (page 342)

Strong left his position as UN representative to North Korea in 2005 “after Tongsun Park, a South Korean with a scandalous past, was found to have been an unregistered lobbyist for Iraq in the United Nations oil-for-food program and to have invested \$1 million in a company controlled by Mr. Strong. Mr. Strong was cleared of any involvement in the scandal”.<sup>19</sup> After 2005, Strong spent a significant amount of time in China working as an honorary professor at Beijing's Peking University. Maurice Strong passed away in 2015.

#### **5.5 Obama Picks Up the Environmental Baton**

Maurice Strong left a leadership vacuum in the global environmental movement when he left the United Nations in 2005. The vacuum could have been filled by former United States Vice President Al Gore if he would have won the Presidency in the 2000 election. Instead, George W. Bush won the 2000 election and sent Gore to the private sector.

Gore created a presentation for the public that was designed to increase awareness about the risks of global warming. He then helped write and present the 2006 documentary “An Inconvenient Truth” that chronicled his efforts to inform the public about climate change. The movie received two Academy Awards from the American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 2007—one for Best Documentary Feature and one for Best Original Song.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, Gore and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize “for their efforts to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change”.<sup>28</sup>

The leadership vacuum in global environmentalism was filled in 2008 when Democrat Senator Barack Obama defeated Republican Senator John McCain to win the United States presidential election. Gore

recognized that Obama's election answered the question of who would address problems arising from anthropogenic climate change. He said that "The turning point came in 2009...with the inauguration of a new President [Obama] in the United States, who immediately shifted priorities to focus on building the foundation for a new low-carbon economy".<sup>29</sup> (page 394)

During Obama's two terms as president, his administration implemented several energy and climate measures. According to the Obama White House Archives (OWHA), President Obama made "a historic commitment to protecting the environment and addressing the impacts of climate change".<sup>30</sup> In an introductory statement, the OWHA document says that "President Obama believes that no challenge poses a greater threat to our children, our planet, and future generations than climate change — and that no other country on Earth is better equipped to lead the world towards a solution. That's why under President Obama's leadership, the United States has done more to combat climate change than ever before, while growing the economy."

The Obama-Biden Administration sought to protect the environment and address possible effects of climate change. Many of the actions taken by the Obama-Biden Administration were not enacted as laws, but as regulations or executive orders. For example, the Paris Climate Agreement was signed by the Executive Branch but did not have the authority of a Treaty because it was not approved by the United States Senate. A new president had the authority to rescind or change executive actions without Congressional approval if the actions were not enacted into law by Congress.

### **5.6 Trump Disrupts Obama's Climate Agenda**

The Obama-Biden Administration favored many climate and energy policies that were rejected by the succeeding Trump Administration. After being inaugurated in January 2017, President Donald Trump and his administration began repealing Obama-era regulations and agreements. For example, in June 2017, the Trump Administration withdrew the United States from the COP21 Paris Climate Agreement, citing concerns that the agreement would have a greater detrimental impact on the nation's economy than a beneficial impact on the global environment.

The past two decades of United States energy policy demonstrates the impact of competing energy visions. The political right argues that the role of the federal government should be minimal in the development of carbon-free energy. They believe that the free market should be used to develop appropriate technology and determine the length of time needed to complete the transition to a new energy portfolio. The political left, on the other hand, says that the environment is being harmed because the price of different forms of energy in the free market does not adequately account for the cost of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Governments can impose environmental costs on different energy forms by taxing and regulating industries. The imposition of environmental costs increases the cost of the resource. The political left argues that this makes the cost more equitable. Government (taxpayer) funds can also be used to support emerging carbon-free technologies which private enterprises are unwilling to fund. The political right responded with the argument that government intervention in the free market will distort prices and could artificially inflate or reduce prices in an unsustainable manner. The finite resources available to the government might be better used elsewhere. Furthermore, involvement of the government raises the possibility of fraud, corruption, and political favoritism.

### **5.7 Biden Resurrects Obama's Climate Agenda**

Donald Trump favored an energy production strategy that relied on nuclear fission, fossil fuels, and alternative energy sources in his first term. This strategy is known as an "all of the above" strategy. Trump was unable to revive coal production in the early 2020s because he lost his 2020 bid for election to a second consecutive term. He sought a second term as President by running as a Republican candidate in 2024 using the fossil fuel friendly slogan 'Drill, baby drill.'

During the 2020 campaign against Trump, Joe Biden said he would resume many of the policies that were part of the Obama-Biden Administration. In January 2021, Democrat Joe Biden, Obama's former Vice President, was inaugurated President. Biden had already promised to revive the Obama-Biden energy policy with a focus on wind and solar energy. The need for more energy to power new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and cryptocurrencies, is leading to the adoption and expansion of the use of nuclear fission energy. Current interest is focused on the use of small modular nuclear fission reactors.

### **5.8 Trump Regains Power**

Donald Trump won reelection to a second Presidential term in November 2024. He ran on an "America First" platform that recognized the importance of national sovereignty. He also supported a "Drill, baby, drill" strategy that was an indication that Trump would resume an "all of the above" strategy for producing energy during his second term. Many people who challenged the policies of the Biden Administration became official members of the second Trump Administration.

## VI. WEAPONIZING INSTITUTIONS AND EVENTS<sup>12</sup>

Many authors have considered how bureaucracies and their sponsors have sought to control otherwise free states. In this section we describe some notable examples of this mode of weaponization.

### 6.1 The Privileged Minority and Globalization

Maurice Strong was concerned that his plea for action to address anthropogenic climate change was not being supported by the "privileged minority".<sup>24</sup> (page 28) In this context, the privileged minority is a coterie of people who control considerable wealth, power, or influence. Some members of the privileged minority can exercise power in one or more arenas, such as financial, industrial, or political.

Strong believed the privileged minority was not experiencing sufficient hardship to understand and appreciate the need to mitigate anthropogenic climate change. He was able to identify a few exceptions among the privileged minority that were in a position to assist through nonprofit and volunteer organizations: "Particularly noteworthy are George Soros, who donates hundreds of millions of dollars a year through his Open Society Foundation, largely in the countries of the former Soviet Union, and the billionaire media genius Ted Turner, who made the largest single charitable contribution in U.S. history by committing \$1 billion to support United Nations programs and activities. His generosity has since been topped by the computer software king Bill Gates, the first person ever to have his personal net worth reach \$100 billion. They follow in the tradition of the great philanthropists of the past – notably the Rockefeller family, which continues in its current generation to set a remarkable example of enlightened and innovative philanthropic leadership".<sup>24</sup> (page 28)

It is possible to show that a loosely connected international network of the privileged minority is attempting to alter the current world order.<sup>12</sup> Members of the privileged minority may be viewed as oligarchs in a political oligarchy. An oligarchy is a form of government in which most of the population is ruled by a small group of people known as oligarchs. The ruling class consists of people with the authority to manage public resources to the wealthy with the power to influence government decisions.

### 6.2 Eisenhower and the Military-Industrial Complex

On January 17, 1961, Dwight D. Eisenhower addressed the country in his final address as U.S. President.<sup>31</sup> Eisenhower was a retired five-star general. During World War II, Eisenhower was the military commander that led the allies to victory in Europe. In his farewell address following his second term as president, he cautioned that a military-industrial complex was emerging and could be a threat to democracy.

Eisenhower began his farewell address by saying that the history of the United States was an "adventure in free government." He said that "our basic purposes have been to keep the peace; to foster progress in human achievement; and to enhance liberty, dignity and integrity among people and among nations".<sup>31</sup> He recognized that "A vital element in keeping the peace is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction."

In a brief review of the history of armaments, Eisenhower pointed out that the United States did not maintain a permanent armaments industry until the world conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was now clear to him that "we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense; we have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions."

Eisenhower observed that "this conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience." He introduced the term military-industrial complex to describe this conjunction of military and industrial strength. He then warned that "In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist."

Eisenhower considered the infrastructure that developed sophisticated weaponry during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century a technological revolution. The period saw the development of such weapons as radar, sonar, aircraft, aircraft carriers, rocketry, and nuclear weapons. He said that "research has become central; it also becomes more formalized, complex, and costly. A steadily increasing share is conducted for, by, or at the direction of, the Federal government." Furthermore, "The prospect of domination of the nation's scholars by Federal employment, project applications, and the power of money is ever present and is gravely to be regarded." This led to the concern that "we must also be alert... that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific technological elite."

Referring to the conjunction of military and industrial systems, Eisenhower said "We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes... Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together."

Eisenhower expressed his vision for the future: "we – you and I, and our government – must avoid the impulse to live only for today... We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren without risking

the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage.” He hoped that “this world of ours... must avoid becoming a community of dreadful fear and hate, and be, instead, a proud confederation of mutual trust and respect.”

Dwight D. Eisenhower expressed concern about the military-industrial complex, a type of Deep State that emerged during and after World War II. The Deep State refers to individuals and organizations that exercise political power independent of, and sometimes in opposition to, elected officials. Variations of the Deep State have been referred to by other terms, such as the bureaucratic class and the managerial class.

### **6.3 Public Sector Unionization**

Public sector unions can impact elections on the local, state, and national levels using political action committees (PAC). PACs operated by government unions can accept voluntary contributions and make donations to political campaigns.

Jessie Bur reported that “Each presidential administration takes a different approach to union relations. President Donald Trump issued executive orders that restricted union activities and prescribed collective bargaining objectives for agency operations. On the other hand, the Biden administration has taken an openly pro-union approach, rescinding the previous orders and instructing agencies to include unions in many forms of decision-making, even those not required by law”.<sup>32</sup>

Former federal government official Kash Patel wrote that “Congress should ban the existence of public sector unions, which, by their nature, establish an antagonistic relationship between federal bureaucrats and the administration they are employed to work for... Those who do work for the executive branch should know that they serve at the executive branch’s discretion. They should not be able to leverage the power of a union to win concessions from their employer, the president of the United States”.<sup>33</sup> (page 176)

Most Federal union contributions are directed to presidential candidates that support growth of government and unions. In the United States, unions tend to favor Democrat candidates rather than Republican candidates.

### **6.4 Klaus Schwab and Industrial Revolutions**

The World Economic Forum (WEF) was founded as the nonprofit European Management Forum by Klaus Schwab on January 24, 1971.<sup>34</sup> Schwab, with doctorates in engineering and economics, was a pioneer in developing the fourth industrial revolution.

The First Industrial Revolution (FIR) began with the invention of steam engines. It was based on the application of steam power to a range of technologies including steam-powered factories and machine production. Abundant coal was used to provide motive power to a national rail system where locomotives were driven by steam resulting from coal combustion.

The Second Industrial Revolution (SIR) began with the harnessing of electricity. The SIR applied scientific advances to mass production and manufacturing. Generated electricity was used to power new inventions such as the telephone, radio, and television. Inexpensive oil was used by vehicles with internal combustion engines to transport people and goods on national road systems.

The First and Second Industrial Revolutions were part of the carbon economy. They relied on combustion of coal, oil, and natural gas. The digital era began the Third Industrial Revolution (TIR). The TIR was characterized by scientific advances in electronics, computing, and information technology. The use of electricity as a carrier of energy and innovations in renewable energy during the TIR are supporting a transition to a zero-carbon emission economy.

A Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) emerged in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In an essay first written by Klaus Schwab, the digitization of information that began in TIR was extended in 4IR using such technologies as “artificial intelligence, genome editing, augmented reality, robotics, and 3D printing”.<sup>35</sup> The essay recognized that 4IR involved “systemic change across many sectors and aspects of human life”.<sup>35</sup> The 4IR was capable of transforming society on a global scale, but it comes with risks. Among the risks are “cybersecurity threats, misinformation on a massive scale through digital media, potential unemployment, or increasing social and income inequality”.<sup>35</sup> On the other hand, the 4IR “is an opportunity to unite global communities, to build sustainable economies, to adapt and modernize governance models, to reduce material and social inequalities, and to commit to values-based leadership of emerging technologies”.<sup>35</sup>

### **6.5 The 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic and the Great Reset**

Klaus Schwab of the World Economic Forum (WEF) wanted to take advantage of the 2020 COVID-19 Pandemic to implement the Great Reset.<sup>36</sup> He said that COVID-19 responses in the first half of 2020 demonstrated that the social and economic foundations of society should be reset. The goal of the Great Reset was to implement stakeholder capitalism, which is a form of capitalism that requires private sector firms to create long term value by considering the needs of society and all stakeholders.

According to Schwab, the world needs to move quickly and cooperatively to reform every aspect of national economies and societies. The Great Reset of capitalism requires that every nation and industry must be transformed. Schwab argued that COVID-19 provided the most urgent justification for implementing the Great Reset. He said that COVID-19 deaths, increasing government debt, increasing unemployment (due in part to lockdowns), weakening of environmental protections and enforcement, and inequality between the wealth of billionaires and everyone else will exacerbate existing climate and social crises.

The pandemic has shown how quickly we can make drastic lifestyle changes. The crisis compelled people and organizations to change long-held beliefs and practices. For example, frequent air travel was replaced by remote meetings, and commuting to work every day was replaced by remote work and occasional meetings at the office.

The public demonstrated a willingness to make sacrifices so that health care and essential services could be provided to people in need, such as vulnerable groups like the elderly. In a move toward stakeholder capitalism, many businesses took action to support their employees, clients, and local communities.

Schwab looked at human behavior during the pandemic and concluded that society was willing to build a better society by enacting the Great Reset. He said the Great Reset would have three key components: guide the market toward fairer outcomes; ensure that investments advance shared goals based on Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) criteria; and harness the innovations of the Fourth Industrial Revolution to support the public good. Schwab concluded that the “pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity to reflect, reimagine, and reset our world to create a healthier, more equitable, and more prosperous future”.<sup>36</sup>

Not everyone was willing to adopt Schwab’s Great Reset. Glenn Beck and Justin Haskins wrote that the Great Reset is driven by the world’s elite to control the global economy using banks, government programs, and ESG metrics.<sup>37</sup> If the Great Reset is completed, Beck and Haskins believe that already powerful multinational organizations, such as the United Nations, and many of the companies represented by attendees at the World Economic Forum, would acquire additional economic and social power.

In a more recent book, Beck, Haskins, and contributor Donald Kendal wrote that factors such as advances in technology and cultural shifts will result in extreme social disruption.<sup>38</sup> The authors expect advocates of the Great Reset to take control of economies and societies in North America and Europe by exploiting the rejection of traditional values.

Author Alex Jones is another influential critic of the Great Reset. Jones said in his book *The Great Reset* that “The premise of this book is that the battle we are fighting against the Great Reset is nothing more than an ancient battle between the forces of freedom and tyranny”.<sup>39</sup> (page 11) He went on to present an analysis of Schwab’s view of the Great Reset and concluded that “We are in a war for the future of the world. The globalists want an anti-human future in which they will capture control of our species and direct the future of human development. But that’s not a future the people want. They want a future of freedom, where scientific discoveries liberate them to be so much more than they could ever be when they were focused on mere survival or dealing with the ravages of disease”.<sup>39</sup> (page 234)

Author Douglas Murray agreed that a war was being waged for the future of the world, but the war was being waged against the roots of Western Civilization and the benefits that have emerged from Western traditions. In his book *The War on the West*, Murray wrote “about what happens when one side in a cold war – the side of democracy, reason, rights, and universal principles – prematurely surrenders”.<sup>40</sup> (page 6) He presented arguments that support the roots, traditions, and accomplishments of Western Civilization.

Murray was defending Western Civilization against a cultural revolution that author Christopher Rufo said was led by the radical left. Rufo described his study of “the ideology that drives the politics of the radical left”.<sup>41</sup> (page x) in *America’s Cultural Revolution*. He said that the cultural revolution is attempting to negate “the metaphysics, morality, and stability of the common citizen. As [the cultural revolution] undermines the institutions of family, faith, and community, it creates a void in the human heart that cannot be filled with its one-dimensional ideology”.<sup>41</sup> (page 279)

Historian Victor Davis Hanson expressed concern in 2021 that the American citizen was under attack by progressive elites, tribalism, and globalization in his book *The Dying Citizen*. Hanson pointed out that the years “2017 to 2019 had seen progress in restoring the sanctity of American citizenship, an effort rendered ever more controversial by the support and efforts of Donald Trump”<sup>42</sup> (page 345) following eight years of the Obama-Biden administration. Hanson realized that many of the gains made by the middle class during the early Trump years were lost during the 2020 pandemic and presidential election year. He concluded that “As 2021 began, the supporters of restoring the primacy of the American citizen were not so confident in their own powers of renovation as they were convinced that they had no other choice but to keep trying.”

## VII. THE STRUGGLE FOR GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

In *The Energy Transition and the Struggle for Global Governance*,<sup>12</sup> the argument is made that the global desire to implement an energy transition is being leveraged to impose a new world order. Analysis in the book presents evidence for six possible scenarios that might emerge after the energy transition. Each scenario represents a world order and is summarized as follows:

1. Globalization: Picture a world governed by a supranational authority, possibly the United Nations. This scenario envisions substantial enforcement power, including physical control and technological surveillance.
2. A Bipolar World: This scenario divides the world into two main coalitions: the Western Alliance led by the US and NATO, and the Eastern Axis led by China, Russia, and Iran. Historical patterns suggest this could lead to armed conflict.
3. A Tripolar World: Building on the bipolar model, this scenario adds a third coalition of non-aligned states, reminiscent of U Thant's influence during the Cold War era.
4. A Multipolar World: In this scenario, nations pursue their own interests but may form loose alliances based on common goals. This reflects the current trend of rising nationalism and great power competition.
5. Chaos: The importance of nation-states fades as people form alliances based on shared values and traditions, facilitated by global communication technologies.
6. Global Feudalism: This scenario warns of a world where a global ruling class enforces a rapid energy transition, potentially leading to a loss of individual freedoms and a new form of feudal society.

The analysis of scenarios is illustrated by considering Scenario 6: Global Feudalism in more detail. Advocates of global central planning support supranational agreements meant to address the issues posed by anthropogenic climate change. In his book *The Road to Serfdom*, Austrian economist and philosopher Friedrich A. Hayek<sup>43</sup> argued that government-controlled central planning could lead to totalitarianism. Hayek remarked that every step away from the free market and toward government planning results in increased government control at the expense of human liberty.

The formation of a worldwide ruling elite that rejects fossil fuels in favor of a rapid transition to renewable energy requires the establishment of a global centralized authority capable of enforcing the shift. Individuals will lose their liberty and may become members of a global feudal society comprised of a global ruling class and everyone else.

Historically, authority in feudal society was divided between two classes: clergy and warrior-aristocracy. The French referred to the clergy as the First Estate, and the warrior-aristocracy as the Second Estate. All others, even wealthy merchants, were part of the Third Estate. The majority of the Third Estate consisted of peasants.

Today, many Western democracies are moving toward a form of feudalism characterized by falling financial growth and social mobility, as well as a high concentration of wealth within a small number of people. Joel Kotkin described the rise of feudalism in America, particularly California.<sup>44,45</sup> In California, Kotkin characterizes "feudalism characterized by gross inequality and increasingly rigid class lines".<sup>45</sup> The decline of the middle-class is an indication of the rise of feudalism.

The November 2024 election of Donald Trump to a second term shows that there is opposition to globalist policies. Trump was inaugurated in January 2025. By the end of January, he had signed many Executive Orders. Trump's EOs include closing the United States border to unauthorized immigrants, withdrawing the United States from the Paris Climate Accord, canceling DEI Federal programs, withdrawing the United States from the World Health Organization, and declaring a national energy emergency to waive environmental regulations so that the Federal government could facilitate exploration and production of oil and gas.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

The Goldilocks policy for energy transition to sustainable energy is an example of a policy that provides a rational, peaceful timeframe based on historical transitions. The transition to a sustainable energy future requires commitment and cooperation because it will be necessary to make significant changes in infrastructure, politics, consumer behavior, and more. Some issues and scenarios have been outlined here. More discussion can be found in the references.<sup>10,12</sup>

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