



Trump draws battle lines again Democrats and 'prophets of doom' at Davos

BY RUPERT DARWALL, OPINION CONTRIBUTOR — 01/23/20 08:00 AM EST
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It is not hard to see why Democrats are desperate to use any means to prevent [President Trump](#) from standing for reelection. At the World Economic Forum in Davos, Trump [defined](#) the battle lines between himself and the eventual Democratic nominee. The president has a compelling story to tell on what he calls America's blue-collar boom: 7 million jobs gained; record-low 3.5 percent unemployment; more women in employment than men; record low unemployment of African Americans, Hispanics, Asian-Americans and veterans; the return of U.S. manufacturing jobs; accelerating wage growth for the bottom 10 percent of wage-earners and for millennials.

It's not only the numbers that should turn Democrats' blood cold. Trump is going after the core voting blocs that make up the Democratic coalition — middle-class Americans, African-Americans and Hispanics. His priority is their priority: The wellbeing of the American worker. Democrats can't say the same. Trump talks about living standards, while Democrats are obsessed with climate emergencies and saving the planet.

Cutting taxes and deregulation might sound like standard Republican fare. But no previous Republican president has tackled America's perverse, uncompetitive corporate tax rates. After eight years of [Barack Obama](#), the Trump administration's record of [one new regulation enacted for every eight rescinded marks](#) a major reversal in the growth of the administrative state.

The most interesting and significant passages of Trump's talk concerned energy and the environment. It's hard to believe that any other Republican

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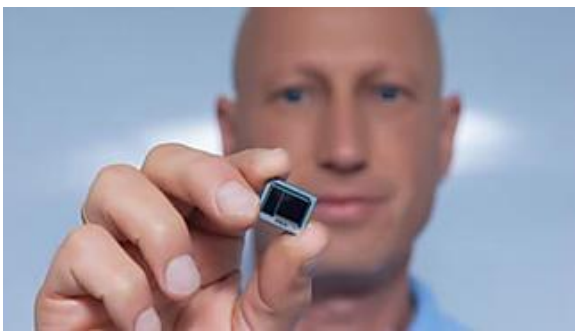
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would have made such a strong, uncompromising case as he did. To his wealthy, privileged audience in Davos who believe climate change and decarbonization are the existential issues of the age, Trump gave no quarter. America was on the threshold of virtually unlimited reserves of energy, he reminded them — and he wasn't going to give up America's energy advantage. He berated European governments for their high energy prices, contrasting them with the average \$2,500 reduction in electric bills of American households. He understands what European politicians and business leaders have forgotten in their rush to embrace climate alarmism: People will maintain faith in a market system only so long as their living standards improve.

The president rejected what he rightly called the "prophets of doom" and their failed predictions of apocalypse. "They are the heirs of yesterday's foolish fortune-tellers," he told the Davos crowd, which happens to believe in the prophecies of the current generation of fortune tellers. "They want to see us do badly. We won't let that happen."

Indeed, earlier doomsayers predicted an overpopulation crisis in the 1960s, mass starvation in the 1970s and an end of oil in the 1990s. "These alarmists always demand the same thing," Trump said. "Absolute power to dominate, transform and control every aspect of our lives." Then came Trump's payoff lines, which one can readily imagine him using against a future Democratic opponent: "We will never let radical socialism destroy our economy, wreck our country or eradicate our liberty. America will always be the proud, strong and unyielding bastion of freedom."

The president understands that the planet doesn't need saving. What needs conserving, as he put it, are the majesty of God's creation and the natural beauty of our world. This philosophy of nature stewardship makes him the lineal descendant of Theodore Roosevelt and Ronald Reagan in prioritizing the preservation of rare habitats, of threatened landscapes and wildernesses. By contrast, an ideological environmentalism, with its belief in imminent planetary catastrophe, will wind up sacrificing the local for the global in a green replay of destroying the village to save it, littering hills and mountainsides with wildlife-killing wind turbines.

Doubtless the liberal media and Trump's Democratic critics will be outraged at the president's rejection of climate catastrophism. But he's the reasonable one in this debate. Consider how the climate alarmists assume decarbonization involves only twisting a few knobs here and there. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), meeting the goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C requires "large-scale transformations of the global energy-agriculture-land economy system, affecting the way in which energy is produced, agricultural systems are organized, and materials are consumed" — in other words, forcibly changing virtually every facet of the economy. These changes, the IPCC concedes, represent "unprecedented policy and geopolitical challenges." In plain English, it's not only going to be hard, it's going to be painful and probably won't even work.

Instead of honesty, Democrats will give voters flannel. Former New York City mayor and Democratic presidential candidate Michael Bloomberg offered a preview. Asked how America can persuade China and India to get to net-zero carbon emissions, Bloomberg told an incredulous Margaret Hoover that China, in an effort to mitigate the impact of emissions on its citizens, was building new coal-fired power stations away from cities. Treating voters as fools is always a loser's strategy. Though Beijing has no intention of cutting its emissions, Bloomberg wants to throw away America's energy advantage. So do the rest of the Democratic presidential candidates.

In selling their party's soul to the modern environmental movement,

Democrats are putting much of their voter base up for grabs. Alone among Republicans four years ago, Trump saw the opportunity and seized it. Now he's moving in for the kill. Democrats could wake up on November 4 to [a similar fate as befell](#) the British Labour Party in last month's election, and for a similar reason — they're no longer the party of the workers.

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