

## EIR Daily Alert Service

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## EDITORIAL

### **Southwest Power Blackout Disaster: What Can Save the U.S. Economy?**

Feb. 15 (EIRNS)—By Monday night Americans in parts of numerous Southwest and Western states were enduring rolling blackouts, some lasting hours in the deep sub-freezing cold of a polar vortex. Many lives were in danger for lack of power and/or electric heat. This shocking event must be a wake-up call to all those, from trade union members to high school and college students, who have been either accepting, celebrating or applying for work to the so-called “Green New Deal.”

“Green” technology—throwback technology—can kill you.

As in the electric grid emergency in Japan's snowstorms in December, windmills are freezing up in Texas. That state's 23% of rated electric power capacity which is wind, has largely stopped working, and more than 3 million Texans were without power Monday afternoon in near-zero temperatures. The *Austin Statesman* had reported Feb. 14 ("Frozen Wind Turbines Hamper Texas' Power Output") that wind power, usually rated at 25,100 MW in the state, was rated at just 12,000 MW on Sunday, and actually generating considerably less than that. The state's regulator, Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), was conducting load-shedding operations and warning of potential blackouts, which became actual with 10,500 MW of customer load cut-off on Monday. Late Monday, rolling blackouts were beginning to affect the Southwest Power Pool, involving parts of 15 other states.

The states of the Midwest, gripped by the same polar vortex cold, were saved from blackouts by coal. An energy attorney on the board of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners and the Missouri Public Service Commission, Terry Jarrett, wrote a Sunday, Feb. 14 column on the Upper Midwest situation for the *Montgomery News*, in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, called "Coal Rescues U.S. Power Grid During Polar Vortex." The Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO), which distributes power north from North Dakota south to Louisiana, in 15 U.S. states and Manitoba, Canada, said that on Feb. 10 coal was generating more than half of all power there in the polar vortex, some 41,000 out of 78,000 MW. Natural gas was generating 22,000 and nuclear 10,000 MW. Wind turbine output, predictably, fluctuated wildly, reaching 3,200 MW at most. Solar? 231 MW. "That means these much-vaunted renewable systems produced only about 4% of the electricity needed across 15 states," Jarrett concluded.

In Texas, some natural gas wellheads also froze, along with refining facilities in some locations. The great demand came both from the extraordinary cold, and from the freeze-up and failure of wind and solar power, the ready back-up power for which is almost always natural gas turbine electric plants.

The Green New Deal has been coming at us for 20 years and more from an instigating center—where? In the British royal family, particularly Prince Charles, who is known along with his father Prince Philip for wishing, *very publicly*, that there were far fewer human beings on this planet than there are. Wind power is just one of the dangerous technological leaps backward it promotes. Just two weeks ago, a big Jan. 25-29 conference of the World Economic Forum, Europe's center for the Green Deal, targeted "the cement, steel, aluminum and chemical industries, as well as the ships, planes, and trucks that move them." It claimed these sectors "exceeded the total amount of carbon the world can emit." And don't get them started about food—the Chatham House/Royal Institute of International Affairs reported to that conference that you should eat no meat, only plant food, and less of that than you do now.

Do you need any of these to live? Food? Electric power? Do you farm with animals? Work with chemicals or steel or cement? Stop kidding yourself that the Green New Deal is "infrastructure" and "jobs." Put yourself in a car in Austin or Houston looking for heat in below-zero weather and to charge your phone. The Green New Deal is physical economic collapse, and deadly.

What will save us? Cooperating with the other major countries that don't accept this green nonsense—especially China and Russia. Build real infrastructure, especially nuclear and fusion power and space travel technology. Listen to the late Lyndon LaRouche, in a speech eight years ago, "[No to the Green Policy; Revive the Credit System](#)":

"So mankind has to change his policy: Dump the Green policy, which is presently the greatest single threat to humanity, that's a killer! And we have to understand that it is the increase of man's intelligence, which means also scientific intelligence, the ability to create, the ability to generate higher energy-flux densities per capita and per square kilometer of territory—these are the standards on which credit is generated. It's to increase the population of the planet: increase it! Stop this killing people: increase it!

Because we need more work done. We need, also, increases of the energy-flux density of the work being done. These are absolute necessities for us....

“So the point is, we need every human being. We need them to live longer and better. We need them to become more creative. We need to have their children better educated, and developed. We need an increase of the potential productivity of the human force, per capita and per square kilometer, and those are the missions that we must fulfill.”

## UNITED STATES POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC

### **Semiconductor Shortage Growing; Huawei Fight Triggered, but Did Not Cause It**

Feb. 15 (EIRNS)—A worldwide shortage of high-quality semiconductor chips is now affecting a number of industries besides auto—which is hard hit—and causing corporate losses estimated to climb to \$60 billion or more in 2021. The shortage is not primarily the result of blockades on Silicon Valley chip makers exporting to Huawei, although Huawei’s hoarding of chips to protect itself was one factor—many other companies were hoarding at the same time, according to a Feb. 7 Bloomberg News review of the situation.

“Chinese” companies hoarding chips drove the Chinese economy’s chip imports to \$380 billion in 2020, one-fifth of all its imports. But this hoarding included prominently Apple, Tesla, Qualcomm, Nintendo, Sony and Microsoft, and many others not headquartered in China. This hoarding followed the first few months of the pandemic when chip demand had collapsed, and production correspondingly had been cut. Simultaneously orders for all kinds of electronic devices rose sharply as a result of pandemic “lock-downs” and shut-ins. Corporate losses will now be largest in China, if the “expert” analysts are correct. The auto companies are now in trouble for not hoarding.

Central to this global industrial bottleneck are a Taiwanese and a Korean company, according to Bloomberg—Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing

Company (TSMC) and Samsung Electronics. Industries worldwide are most dependent on their production.

The article reports that officials from the Biden Administration, Qualcomm, the Semiconductor Industry Association (Silicon Valley chipmakers), and Corning met Feb. 5 with Taiwan's Minister of Economic Affairs and TSMC officials to discuss the crisis.

GM, Ford and Nissan have cut production; Nissan has suspended truck production in Mississippi, Ford at its Chicago Assembly Plant; GM at three plants in the United States. Aviation may be next hit.

## **COLLAPSING WESTERN FINANCIAL SYSTEM**

### **Putin Demonstrates, 'Foreign Powers Seek To Weaponize Frustration over Falling Living Standards Due to COVID'**

Feb. 15 (EIRNS)—The Great Reset exploits crises to undercut nations and civilization. President Vladimir Putin provided a succinct description of that sadistic mentality on national television in Russia on Feb. 13. Putin had met privately with the editors-in-chief of various Russian news outlets on Feb. 10. The Kremlin chose to provide some selected video clips and Rossiya-24 aired them on Saturday.

TASS quoted Putin as saying: “As soon as we began to stabilize, to get back to our feet—the policy of deterrence followed immediately. And as we grew stronger, this policy of deterrence was being conducted more and more intensely.... Our influence in the post-Soviet space has been growing no matter what, despite all difficulties. This causes concern. And this is where they will try to pull us back.”

Then he described the “Navalny” project: “From the dawn of time, our opponents or potential adversaries ... always relied on very ambitious and power-hungry people, always used them. There is nothing new about it. I see nothing new.... [T]hey are too eager to earn loads of money, to sweep into power. And all of this is simply being exploited most actively.” In this context, he said: “Foreign powers are trying to weaponize frustration over

falling living standards due to COVID to stir up protests. Almost every major country is in recession. While it's only normal to blame authorities for such woes," Moscow's opponents "try to exploit" this sentiment to spite the Russian government. "That's what they did! Of course they would. That's what they had counted on," Putin said. "Ambitious, power-hungry people like Navalny are being cultivated and used by foreign powers to undermine and contain Russia. We have had a lot of success, and it annoys them. That's where the containment policy, including the economy, comes from."

The clear implication is that any and all countries can have a version of the "Navalny" project launched against them. That is, while anger over injustice led by persons of integrity who struggle for solutions is one thing, the targeting and manipulation of rage with no attempt at any solution is quite another.

Otherwise, Putin thought that Russia had outperformed expectations in dealing with the pandemic: "The mobilization of the entire healthcare system and industry turned out to be incomparably higher than in European countries and the United States, where it simply collapsed.... The assumption was that we were worthless ... that we couldn't do anything. But we could, and we did better than other countries." He pointed out that, while Western medical levels are "very high," and that Russia is far from such a quality of treatment "in some areas," that did not stop Russia from making a quick response to the pandemic.

### **German Agriculture Minister Rejects Parity Price**

Feb. 15 (EIRNS)—The renewed call for cost-covering parity prices for agricultural products, which has been prominent on the list of demands put forward by protesting farmers in the past two weeks in Germany, has been flatly rejected by the Agricultural Minister Julia Klöckner, in a "fact sheet" which just repeats the EU Commission's narrative on the alleged benefits of the open world markets. The free market would regulate prices much better than state interventions, the paper claims, adding that protecting domestic agricultural products would not benefit the private consumer who

would benefit from “higher diversity of offered products” not necessarily produced in Germany.

The EU Commission’s Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the paper states, has over the past several decades helped to modernize farming and thereby secured a future for farmers. CAP has eliminated the “overproduction of milk and meat” in Europe.

The “fact sheet” has added to the discontent of farmers, who will continue their protest actions, including more direct dialogue with private consumers to win them over to the farmers’ arguments.

## THE NEW GLOBAL ECONOMIC ORDER

### **National Academy of Sciences Reports, Nuclear Propulsion Is Essential for Human Mars Exploration**

Feb. 15 (EIRNS)—The National Academy of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine has produced a report—commissioned by NASA—which lays out a pathway for the United States to begin human exploration of the Solar System beyond the lunar orbit. Stopping just short of mandating nuclear propulsion, the report, “[Space Nuclear Propulsion for Human Mars Exploration](#),” makes clear that current modes of chemical propulsion are inadequate and that therefore a breakthrough is necessary.

“NASA should commit within the year to conducting an extensive and objective assessment of the merits and challenges of using different types of space nuclear propulsion systems,” reads the press release, “and to making significant technology investments this decade. Such a program must include subsystem development, prototype systems, ground testing, and cargo missions as a means of flight qualification prior to first crewed use.”

While fission energy for space propulsion is less capable than a system that uses fusion power (increased energy density), a fission drive would provide an incremental increase in propulsion efficiency as compared to today’s chemical rockets. NASA has started and stopped a half-dozen space

nuclear power projects, needed for manned deep space travel since the 1960s.

While not (yet) addressing the question of fusion propulsion, the report—a 104-page “consensus report” of the NAS’s Aeronautics and Space Engineering Board’s Space Nuclear Propulsion Technologies Committee—“assesses the primary challenges, merits, and risks for developing a nuclear electric propulsion (NEP) system and a nuclear thermal propulsion (NTP) system for a human mission to Mars.”

NASA has the official goal—announced in 2015—of sending a four-person crewed mission to Mars, launching in 2039. Bobby Braun, director for planetary science at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory and co-chair of the committee that wrote the report, said, “Space nuclear propulsion technology shows great potential to facilitate the human exploration of Mars. However, significant acceleration in the pace of technology maturation is required if NASA and its partners are to complete this mission within the stated timeline.”

In their review of the report, *Ars Technica* illustrated the problem bluntly, saying that, “relying on chemical propulsion to venture beyond the Moon probably won’t cut it. The main reason is that it takes a whole lot of rocket fuel to send supplies and astronauts to Mars.” They calculate that, just to get the fuel for the spacecraft into orbit would take 10 launches of the SLS rocket at a cost of \$2 billion each, or \$20 billion.

The other aspect—which is not addressed in the report—is the factor of cosmic radiation, and the fact that a human being could not withstand the extended duration of a Mars journey with the slower speed to which chemical propulsion is limited, making more energy-dense propulsion systems a necessity.

The final chapter of the report, Mission Applications, looks beyond simple space transport, to what might be considered the creation of a nuclear space industry: If a nuclear electric propulsion or nuclear thermal propulsion system is successfully developed for a crewed Mars mission, it will also be able to support the accomplishment of additional space

missions. Separately, the Department of Energy and the Department of Defense are developing small nuclear fission systems for terrestrial applications. “These programs are expected to precede the baseline Mars mission and, if planned synergistically, may provide space nuclear propulsion technology advancement.”

The Space Nuclear Propulsion Technologies Committee was created in 2020, making this report an echo of the Trump-era rejuvenation of the U.S. commitment to human extraterrestrial exploration. If a manned mission to Mars is the goal of policymakers and scientists, the Biden administration will heed the Academy’s report.

## STRATEGIC WAR DANGER

### **Danger of War in Southwest Asia May Be Growing, Again**

Feb. 15 (EIRNS)—A number of developments of the past 24-48 hours may be indications of the growing threat of a new war in the Southwest Asia region, primarily between Israel and Iran but which could likely draw in other regional powers as well along with the U.S. and Russia.

- In Tehran, Foreign Ministry spokesman Saeed Khatibzadeh warned today that Iran will stop implementing the additional protocol for strict inspections of Iran’s nuclear program with the International Atomic Energy Agency if the other participants of the Iran nuclear deal fail to uphold their commitments under the document by Feb. 21. The deadline was set in the legislation passed by the parliament in the aftermath of the Fakhrizadeh assassination. He stressed, however, that Iran will remain a member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and continue to observe its safeguards agreement, but will no longer allow any IAEA supervision beyond those agreements.

- Iranian officials, meanwhile, are talking about upgrading military cooperation with Russia to include weapons purchases now that the UN arms embargo that had been in effect as part of the 2015 nuclear deal has expired. “We have military cooperation with Russia. And when restrictions

were lifted, Russia became one of the countries where we can buy weapons, and we can cooperate with it to protect our territory and the security of the region,” Senior Assistant to Iranian Foreign Minister in Special Political Affairs Ali-Asghar Khaji told Sputnik.

- Iranian officials also announced today that a joint exercise of the Iranian and Russian navies kicks off on Feb. 16. Iranian and Russian Navy forces and aviation units of the Iranian Army and the IRGC will participate at “The Maritime Security Belt Exercise,” the spokesman said, reported by IRNA. Russia has dispatched a destroyer, a logistic warship and a helicopter to the maneuvers, he also said. The drills themed “Joint Cooperation at the sea for the security of maritime trade” will be staged at an area of 17,000 km, the spokesman said.

- Official state media in Syria reported again this morning on an apparent Israeli air strike against targets in the Damascus region. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights claimed that Israeli missiles hit Syrian army positions around Damascus and killed a number of “Iran-backed fighters.” Israeli forces have carried out at least five air strikes against alleged Iranian targets in Syria so far in 2021.

- Only a few hours after these latest strikes, the Israeli air force announced a surprise exercise simulating war in the north. According to the *Times of Israel*, the exercise—called “Galilee Rose”—will include a variety of scenarios that would be involved in fighting a war against the Lebanese Hezbollah group and its allies in Syria. That includes defending Israeli airspace from incursions, offensive strikes, intelligence collection and ensuring aerial superiority by neutralizing enemy air defenses.

- Reports also continue to appear on U.S. military moves to reinforce its bases in Syria. Syria’s official SANA news agency reported yesterday that U.S. forces brought in a convoy of vehicles carrying logistic support and weapons to a base in al-Omar oil field in Deir Ezzor eastern countryside in a step to boost their occupation in the area. Local sources in Hasaka southern countryside also said that two helicopters of U.S. occupation forces landed on al-Shaddadi base and took off after a short period,

carrying 25 U.S. soldiers on board heading east for the Syrian-Iraqi borders. Reports from last week indicated that the U.S. military had built a new base in the city of Hasakah, placing U.S. troops in the vicinity of tensions between the U.S.-supported Syrian Democratic Forces and Syrian government security forces which have remained in the city over the course of the war in Syria.

## COVID-19

### Chinese Vaccines Have Begun To Arrive in Africa

Feb. 15 (EIRNS)—Beginning Wednesday, Feb. 10, Chinese COVID-19 vaccines have begun to arrive in Africa. Separate from their commitments to the UN’s COVAX convention, China has committed to donate vaccines to 14 lesser-developed countries, with Zimbabwe, Equatorial Guinea and Sierra Leone leading the list. This is a commitment begun in July 2020, at the Extraordinary China-Africa Summit on Solidarity against COVID-19, held virtually in Beijing.

“A batch of China-donated Sinopharm COVID-19 vaccines arrived in Malabo, capital of Equatorial Guinea, on Wednesday,” stated CGTN on Feb. 11. At a press conference in Beijing announcing the shipment on Feb. 9, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin stated that it will be the first batch of donations from China to African countries, and that it shows China is fulfilling its promise of making Chinese vaccines a global public good.

The shipment of 100,000 doses was met at the airport by Equatorial Guinea’s Vice President Teodoro Obiang Mangue, who emphasized the generosity of China in fighting “vaccine hoarding” by wealthier nations. As quoted by Xinhua, Mangue said, “Faced with the pandemic, no country, no matter how powerful, has been spared. However, in this context of crisis, only China has extended its hand to Equatorial Guinea, which has become the first African country to receive Chinese vaccine aid, and we are grateful for it.”

Early Monday morning 200,000 doses arrived in Harare, Zimbabwe, with the country committing to purchase an additional 600,000 which they expect in early March. President Emmerson Mnangagwa “applauded” China, “for its consistent humane policy of treating COVID-19 vaccines as global public goods. This kind gesture further attests to the fact that the People’s Republic of China is indeed a true friend of Zimbabwe.”

Other countries in line to receive shots from China include Pakistan, the Philippines, Myanmar, Cambodia, Mongolia, Palestine, Belarus, and Sierra Leone, according to a Chinese Foreign Ministry statement seen by Reuters.

## SCIENCE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Replacing Old Coal with Small Modular Nuclear Reactors

Feb. 15 (EIRNS)—The state legislature of Montana last week passed Senate Joint Resolution 3 by Sen. Terry Gauthier, R-Helena, for an 18-month study of a plan to replace aging coal fired power plants at the Colstrip Power Plant with small modular nuclear reactors (SMRs). The new SMR would be connected to the old plant’s electrical switchyard, grid connection, etc. Oregon-based NuScale Power, producer of SMRs, testified in support.

- Watch [Harley’s Updates](#) with Harley Schlanger on Tuesday, February 16, 2021: Every weekday morning on [The LaRouche Organization](#) website, Harley will give you the strategic briefing on what you need to know to start your day.