

Drifffield March

17th September 2016

Speech by Jon and Val Mager

My name is Jon Mager, here with Val Mager because we are both domestic extremists and we enjoy meeting other domestic extremists like you on a Saturday. We are both extremely concerned about the impact of climate change on our domestic lives and extremely concerned about the dangers posed by fracking here in the East Riding.

Remember Theresa May launched the Prevent campaign to stamp out domestic extremism in schools.

When it was launched to headteachers in the Hull and the East Riding Inspector Downs of Blunderside Police stated that anti-frackers and animal rights campaigners were a more potent threat than ISIS.(1)

The Dalai Lama has said “In the present circumstances no one can afford to assume that someone else will solve their problems. Every individual has a responsibility to help guide our global family in the right direction. Good wishes are not sufficient; we must become actively engaged.”(2)

You are here today because you know action has to start here, not in County Hall or Westminster, to make the changes we all want to see. Hopefully we can give you some ammunition to persuade others to become active too.

Despite the mounting evidence of climate change with severe storm events and record temperatures the fossil fuel industry and our government persist in peddling untruths and distortions to support an increasingly dangerous energy policy.

Everything we will tell you today is based on fact – not the fantasy of the frackers – we can quote sources – they can't.

1. Fuel Poverty

One of the greatest fallacies is that fracking will ensure cheap gas supplies so we are bad people to oppose it because old people will die because of fuel poverty.

Fuel poverty, food banks, housing problems, the cost of care for the elderly – these are about poverty partly caused by Government policy to reduce tax burdens on the rich – and North Sea Oil producers – so that, according to Oxfam

“The richest 1% of the population owns more than 20 times the wealth of the poorest fifth in the UK.....one of the most unequal countries in the developed world.”. (3)

If we really care about fuel poverty we could take a lead from the US government.

Obama plans to increase installations of solar power for low-income households under the Clean Energy Savings for All Initiative. \$287 million will be spent by housing authorities across 36 states to ensure a 10 fold increase in solar powered homes for the poorest. (4)

And remember climate change kills the most vulnerable first – which is why health warnings went out across the country last week about the dangers of high temperatures for the elderly and infirm.

2. Energy Security

Although we do not import gas from Russia we are told to support fracking to achieve energy security. This from a government which has just handed over our nuclear industry to French and Chinese finance and technology. This from a government which has allowed Russia to develop major energy holdings in the North Sea.

There is a much more effective way to achieve energy security.

The Chernobyl disaster left an area of radioactive contamination the size of Luxemburg. The Ukrainian government plans to turn the area into a \$1 billion solar farm – meantime it has already halved its reliance on Russian gas imports in the last year.(5)

Solar and wind combined with battery storage systems now coming on line can provide secure energy – gas and oil can’t because the price is determined by world markets in an unstable international context.

3. Economic Growth and Climate Change

Money doesn’t talk, it swears and in the capitalist world the smart money is more and more concerned about climate change.

Black Rock Inc, the world’s largest asset managers say all investors should factor climate change into their decision making and doing so would not mean having to accept lower returns.

They went on to say firms who have cut their carbon footprint have performed better than their peers who do not.

The risks from climate change are considerable.

According to Black Rock, after an extreme weather event hits a state, economic growth is 10 to 15% lower than usual that month and slower for many more months.

They identify risk to water supplies as the great threat – which is exactly why we are here today (6)

The fact that 57 London tube stations are at severe risk of flooding from heavy rain or high tides on the Thames(7) brings home this issue – or nearer home the fact that almost all of Hull and over one third of the East Riding is highly vulnerable to tidal surges, river flooding and severe weather poses and real and present danger.(8)

So money is pouring in to renewables in the USA. In the first three months of this year gas provided 1% of new energy capacity but solar provided 64% and wind 33%, that is 97% from clean renewable sources. (9)

Contrary to what the frackers would have us believe it is not inevitable that we face ever rising demand for electricity because of the impact of sophisticated demand management, insulation and great environmental awareness.

Global demand for electricity grew by 7% in 2010 but this growth declined to only 1% in 2015 (10)

Global demand for hydrocarbons is not keeping up with supply so there is a glut on the world market. Brent crude costs below \$46/barrel today compared to over \$125/barrel in 2012.(11)

There is no economic or environmental case for further oil and gas investment in the UK – or anywhere.

For the sake of our families, our children and grandchildren we need to act now to stop the frackers.

It is all about action. I'm proud to be wearing the Crawberry Hill T-shirt (Old and in the way of Rathlin UK) and even more proud to be here with some of the local residents who stood by the road there day in day out through the winter. It is also good to see some of the Protectors who were there from day one at the Protection camp.

We need a Protection camp to stop the frackers but equally important is the group of local residents prepared to stand there every day, bearing witness, taking notes, making complaints and stopping the frackers.

Notes/Sources

1. I am the Correspondent who covered the police/teacher conference yesterday.

In the conference Humberside Police expressed the concern that local schoolchildren were at risk of being influenced by 'extreme right wing groups'.

The police went on to cite the Crawberry Hill anti-fracking protest and the Grimston Beagle breeding protest as places where they had evidence that these groups were operating.

The police expressed the concern that local schoolchildren are at risk from being influenced by these people but did not suggest that schoolchildren were active participants in any of the protests.

My report reflected these comments by Humberside Police and my script read:

"The headlines speak of Isis and Syria. But in our area the police believe that far right extremism is a bigger threat. Groups which have attached themselves to legitimate public demonstrations, including the anti-fracking protests"

I hope this clarifies matters.

Kind regards,

Paul Murphy Environment Correspondent BBC . Confirmed by Editor Jane Birch by e-mail 30.06. 2015

2. *The Dalai Lama's Book of Daily Meditations – The Path to Tranquility* 1998 p.221
3. Oxfam Press release 13.09.16
4. Clean Technica 20.07.16 Joshua S. Hill "We generate over 30 times more solar power than we did just eight years ago," said President Obama in a White House video that accompanied the announcement. "Since I took office, we've cut the cost of solar energy systems more than 70%. The solar industry is adding jobs at twelve times faster than the rest of the economy. Solar panels are no longer for the wealthy folks who live where the sun shines every day, they're already a reality for Americans and communities all across the country."
5. Bloomberg 27.07.16 Anna Hirtenstein
6. Black Rock Investment Institute *The Price of Climate Change* October 2015
7. Guardian 10.04.16
8. ERYC Flood Risk strategy
9. Eco Watch 9 June 2016
10. World Energy Investment 2016 from Carbon Brief 14.09.16
11. Bloomberg Energy 17.09.16