

Michael Moore Knocks the Halo Off the Environmental Movement

Right from the get-go, I have to admit that *Planet of the Humans*, a documentary about the environmental movement produced by Michael Moore, is unfair, very unfair. And unkind, too, very unkind, to Al Gore.

Alas.

But as the Sierra Club might have said, you can't produce clean, green biomass energy without levelling forests.

Planet of the Humans was released on YouTube on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. It's free to watch. And painful. It's not at all what green activists would have expected from Michael Moore, an Oscar-winning progressive critic of General Motors, the Republican Party, the National Rifle Association, healthcare funds and more specifically, the way America is run.

What his film argues is that his old antagonists have badged themselves as "clean and green," turning environmentalism into allies of the Big Business that he loathes. "Green renewal energy and industrial civilization are one and the same," says the narrator and director, Jeff Gibbs, a long-time associate of Moore.

Gibbs claims that Bill McKibben, the "grand poobah" of the environmental movement in the U.S., has praised projects which used biomass to produce energy and even promoted investment in them. It turns out that that clean, green biomass required forests to be razed to the ground and tossed into huge incinerators.

And Al Gore, the patron saint of campaigners for climate change, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize for his Oscar-winning PowerPoint presentation *An Inconvenient Truth*, was the chairman of an investment fund, Generation Investment Management, which helped to promote destructive logging in the Amazon.

What about those solar panels?

As Ozzie Zehner, author of *Green Illusions*, tells Gibbs, the glass in solar panels isn't made from sand, but from pure quartz melted by lots of coal. The film shows a ghastly quartz mine in North Carolina as ugly as any coal mine in West Virginia. Wind turbines provide no power when there's no wind and need to be supplemented by power from coal or natural gas. The film shows a windmill graveyard – eventually they wear out and need to be replaced.

There's no such thing as a free lunch and green power can sometimes be as destructive as the technology it replaces. "Is there anything too terrible to qualify as green energy?" asks Gibbs. He says disdainfully that environmentalists got out of bed with coal companies and hopped into bed with logging companies.

As I said, it's very, very unfair. Climate scientists and environmental groups are furious. Moore and Gibbs failed to interview any non-white experts, one critic sputtered. Others point out that some of the more scandalous examples of inefficient energy production are years old. Bill McKibbens' 350.org and the Sierra Club are unjustly maligned. Some have called for the film to be taken down from YouTube. (Too late – more than 4 million people have watched it.)

The critics are probably right. But even if Moore and Gibbs garble some of their facts, exaggeration and satire are their stock in trade. And they get two big things right.

The environmental movement is a religion which you have when

you have no religion. "The Right has religion and they have a belief in infinite fossil fuels. Our side says 'we're OK; we gonna have solar panels, wind towers,'" says Gibbs. "Could it be that we can't face our own mortality. Could we have a religion we're unaware of?" He's right – just watch the millions of people marching behind Extinction Rebellion banners.

Second, green is easy to fake. As Groucho Marx is reputed to have said, "The secret of success is sincerity. Once you can fake that you've got it made." Companies like Amazon, Google, Tesla, and even Exxon are greenwashing their products to make them more appealing to consumers. Greta Thunberg sailed across the Atlantic in a zero carbon emissions yacht – but several crew members had to fly back, creating gazillions of emissions.

I do have some reservations.

Gibbs, not Moore, is the director, and Moore's spark is missing. The film lacks those gotcha moments which gave his other films their raw power. In his hilarious gun control diatribe, *Bowling for Columbine*, Moore discovered a bank in Utah which gave away a rifle to customers opening up new accounts. Or in his doco about the U.S. health system, *Sicko*, he took three 9/11 responders in a boat to Guantanamo Bay looking for the free health care that the terrorists get.

But the main problem is that Gibbs ends up advocating population control. He is far more radical than the people he attacks. "It's not the carbon dioxide molecule destroying the planet," he says. "It's us." *Planet of the Humans* is channelling Paul Erhlich's discredited book *The Population Bomb*. "Our human presence is far beyond sustainability," he says.

But a film made by Michael Moore was never going to be a chocolate box which everyone likes. *Planet of the Humans* is

meant to knock the halo off the environmental movement. It succeeds. And that's good enough. Watch it for yourself.

—

This article is republished with permission from MercatorNet.

Dear Readers,

Big Tech is suppressing our reach, refusing to let us advertise and squelching our ability to serve up a steady diet of truth and ideas. Help us fight back by [becoming a member](#) for just \$5 a month and then join the discussion on Parler [@CharlemagneInstitute](#) and Gab [@CharlemagneInstitute](#)!

Image Credit:

Flickr-mathiaswasik, CC BY 2.0