

Sun Rise of Optimism

By CONSTANCE SCRAFIELD

Said the chap, part of a panel discussion on the CBC, "Well, with the popularity of electric cars, the inter combustion engine is on its way out."

Music to our ears, of course. Hold the pipeline, everybody, and begin again to re-think.

About the Netherlands (Holland): Years ago, I worked with a gentleman, a Dutchman, to introduce an industrial plant, invented in the Netherlands, which takes in and recycles more than 90% of our garbage. Everything is sorted as it comes into the system and is re-configured into useful material to make other things or materials.

Unfortunately, it turned out that Dufferin County at the time, did not create enough garbage to justify the cost of building the plant. It would be interesting to run that through again now and begin the rescue of our land from landfills.

Port-Liner, another Dutch company, is building two "giant all-electric barges," of which the first six they build, are expected to replace 23,000 trucks annually from the roads of the Netherlands. They also developed a battery pack that can be housed in a container, meaning, "This allows us to retrofit barges already in operation, which is a big boost for the industry's green energy credentials. The containers are charged onshore by carbon-free energy provider, Eneco, which sources solar power, windmills and renewables," Port-Liner Chief Executive, Ton von Meegen told The Loadstar, a UK publication.

Similar projects for creating and building electric vessels are in progress in China, Sweden and Denmark.

World wide, there is so much going on to confront the daily increasing dangers of global warming. Three prongs of these movements have appealed to me to begin:

The education of girls where it is not the common practice. This is not only in terror-ridden enclaves where young girls are punished or even killed for going to school but, more moderately, girls in poverty, anywhere it is considered more important for boys to be educated than for girls.

When women are educated, they have fewer children with better health and, through microcredit, build their own business or small farm holdings. The projections for this, wide-spread, are truly remarkable.

Secondly, the approach to agriculture; industrial agriculture, which currently accounts for CO2 emissions on par with industry or worse, there is a growing interest in old, even ancient, ideas and knowledge of agriculture that less is more. That overcrowding plants produces weaker less productive plants, poorer soil health and more emissions.

Whereas, plants grown organically, well spaced and planted earlier give larger, healthier, more produce and better managed soil. Much less emissions.

Ergo, family farmed land produces better agricultural, employs more people for better lives. That organically grown produce is, actually, more productive than using pesticides and "artificial" fertilizers. Poisoning the ground and the foods is not good for us nor good for the planet.

There are proofs and examples across Asia with rice; in Europe, South, central and north Americas where discoveries are being made of ancient soils and agricultural habits to which today's needs are being adapted.

Along with this, is the increased comprehension of the importance of trees like the Great Green Wall being planted along the

southern edge of the Sahara Desert, right across Africa and, similarly, confronting the Gobi desert across China. Every where in the world, the importance of trees is clear, regardless of government policies to the contrary.

Thirdly, buildings. Net zero buildings are being constructed, in many countries. Back in the Netherlands, a company has designed pre-fab walls and roofs that can be attached to existing buildings to make them net zero. The residents can even remain in their homes during the process. (Sources are Cricket Energy Holdings Inc and Drawdown, published by Penguin - everyone should have this book)

Caledon, at one time, had very high standards for industrial buildings to make small foot prints. The new homes being build are not showing that the same pressures have been applied to those developers.

It is all about money. There is no escaping that yet. The rich want to stay that way and, until they are convinced that their money invested will make them more money, they don't want to change the world, whether it has to be changed or not.

It's a really hard sell. Philanthropists make the same mistake as medicine, in that they support bandaid solutions but don't push for cures. This world cannot be saved one fortune at a time. The fortunes must unite and first is to pressure political will to change.

Whereas industry has worked to halt progress against climate change, it should on board, completely, to make money by making the necessary changes to their industry of providing fuel and energy, while also providing good paying, long term jobs.

The wealthy who would use their wealth for the betterment of all must insist that governments do their jobs: curb industry to move on into how Twentieth Century science fiction hoped this century would be.