Climate Change -- Let's Just Pretend

Why do we need to do anything?

Inspired by the succession of United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COP)

Manifesto

1. Climate change is named by many as an emerging global crisis of the greatest urgency in a period when a variety of other crises have been similarly named. Why not simply pretend that the response is adequate, if not effective, as with the other crises?

2. Evidence of the accumulating effects of climate change is a matter of interpretation, as some claim in stressing their particular authority. Why not simply pretend that the evident effects are simply momentary and incidental, however regrettable, as others choose to claim?

3. Some vigorously promote specific actions in urgent response to climate change. Why not simply salute remedial efforts, pretending to subscribe to their agenda if required, without committing to any more than token action?

4. Given the optimism variously cultivated, it is readily assumed that human ingenuity will enable an effective response to the challenges of climate change -- whether through new technology and/or local initiatives. Is there every reason to pretend unquestioningly that human ingenuity will indeed be adequate?

5. If "climate change" is held to be a "hoax", as claimed by some influential leaders in justifying their agendas, most urgent crises could well be so framed. Are the claims of leaders with respect to any preferred agenda increasingly to be recognized as "hoaxes" of a kind -- given the widely documented justifications for erosion of trust in leadership?

6. Preoccupation with climate change, and the nature of the responses promoted, can be recognized by some as a deliberate distraction from other issues, obscuring those which are especially inconvenient and more vital to others. How might those be recognized and distinguished in the present circumstances? Rather than a "hoax", is "climate change" then best recognized as simply as an especially convenient collective pretence in its own right?

7. Considerable effort is devoted by some media to cultivating preoccupation with climate change, and the necessity for everyone to "be on board". How is this public relations process to be distinguished from the pattern of agreement in the classic tale of The Emperor's New Clothes -- or the necessarily misleading use of "fake news"? Will any successful outcome of the COP process be recognizable in that light? Does the key lie in the pretence of agreement?

8. Framed as the ultimate challenge to humanity and life on the planet, the nature of the challenge of climate change bears comparison with other challenges so framed at some time: communism, socialism, capitalism, fascism, poverty, war, evil, and the like. How is the response to climate change to be distinguished strategically from the questionable response to other such challenges? Is there any need to do so? Should the UN's Sustainable Development Goals be more appropriately recognized as a pattern of pretence?

9. The strategic coherence anticipated in the case of climate change initiatives unfortunately neglects an extremely disruptive systemic process -- exploitation of strategic vulnerabilities and any tendency to chaos, most notably by organized crime, corrupt leadership, and local gangs. Is it especially convenient to assume that there will be no strategic disruption liable to be increasingly evident?

10. Claims as to the necessity of urgent action of a new kind neglect recognition of the variety of processes in play which constitute a potentially adequate systemic response -- if of a nature that could be considered regrettable by many. Do many of the current
practices of governments, corporations, institutions and individuals effectively combine to constitute an unrecognized preemptive response to climate change by engendering an early “corrective” collapse -- more effective for the planet (and possibly for society) than the strategies otherwise envisaged and promoted?

11. As a challenge which has only recently acquired global exposure, climate change can be recognized as a convenient vehicle for those who wish to identify with something new -- a new campaign calling into question the practices of previous generations and the past. Appropriately recognized as a healthy catalytic process, is there any need for everyone to use the same strategic vehicle, especially when others will emerge -- more attractive to later generations, and liable to be claimed as of even greater “urgency”?

12. The cultivation of image in every domain, whether of countries, corporations, enterprises or individuals, is indicative of evolution into a society of global pretence. Any pretence of concern and engagement -- in the case of climate change -- is therefore entirely consistent with this pattern. How could this be challenged -- by whom and why -- other than as a form of pretence in its own right?

13. Doing nothing in response to climate change can obviously be challenged as "not an option". Given the extent to which "nothing is done" on a variety of other purportedly more urgent issues, why should doing nothing not be a viable option for some?

14. The changeability of climate is one of the most evident features of the natural environment. Are strategies to "stop climate change" then to be recognized as exemplifying the need for pretence as suggested here -- recalling insights from the legendary tale of King Canute and the Tide?

15. Any tendency to public panic clearly has a marked tendency to exacerbate the emergence of a coherent response to climate change -- as with other crises. Is there then every justification for obscuring uncomfortable "facts" in that regard through systematic pretence as to their lack of justification of "alternative facts" -- if mention of them cannot be prohibited?

16. The most optimistic anticipate the extreme challenges of climate change as heralding supernatural intervention of some kind -- even by "extraterrestrials". Is there not every justification for indulging in the pretence that supernatural intervention may indeed prove to be the case?

17. A manifesto, especially in the articulation of a political agenda, is readily recognized as a form of pretence. How is this manifesto consistent with that pattern?

Assume a virtue if you have it not
William Shakespeare, Hamlet
Assume a virtue, if you have it not.
That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
That to the use of actions fair and good
He likewise gives a frock or livery
That aptly is put on. Refrain tonight,
And that shall lend a kind of easiness
To the next abstinence; the next more easy;
For use almost can change the stamp of nature

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