

Europeans punished by expensive renewables backed by Russian gas

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14 July 2022

Europeans are now paying heavily for their shift in abandoning coal and nuclear and adopting renewable energy supported by Russian gas.

Across the continent, coal generators have been closed as have nuclear facilities in a headlong pursuit of the 'transition' to renewables. Throughout the Western world, that transition has been touted as inevitable by the 'experts' now dominant within government and among their advisory detritus.

Only this week Australia's very own CSIRO masticated energy data to once again proclaim wind and solar as the cheapest form of electricity. That judgment was made

with nary a reflection on why every single wind and solar facility has been made possible only by a subsidy. Nor did the CSIRO take into account the fact that energy, like every other good and service, is only valuable when the customer wants it, not when the supplier can provide it.

With massive subsidies, wind and solar now supply 23 per cent of Australia's electricity (but, tellingly, could only manage 14 per cent in relatively low wind and sunlight periods seen in the past day). The government is planning a new array of subsidies to lift wind and solar to 72 per cent in 8 years.

The madness of the destruction of reliable low-cost supplies and their replacement by irregular high-cost wind and solar is illustrated by the crisis in Europe's energy supply. Europe has gone further than Australia in the closing of its reliable plants, the adverse effects of which are exacerbated by ill-advised decisions to outsource gas supply to Russia.

Coal plants have been closed throughout the continent as have nuclear plants.

Germany, which once had 18 nuclear facilities supplying a third of its electricity, now has just three. Its policies having brought electricity prices to among the highest in the world, now compounded by an energy supply crisis. Nonetheless, it still plans to close its remaining nuclear units in November and proclaims the antidote of high prices and shortages is more subsidies to renewables. However, in closing its coal plants, at least Germany did not sabotage its future, as governments in Victoria and South Australia have, by blowing them up. Germany is able to re-open them to help combat the emergency.

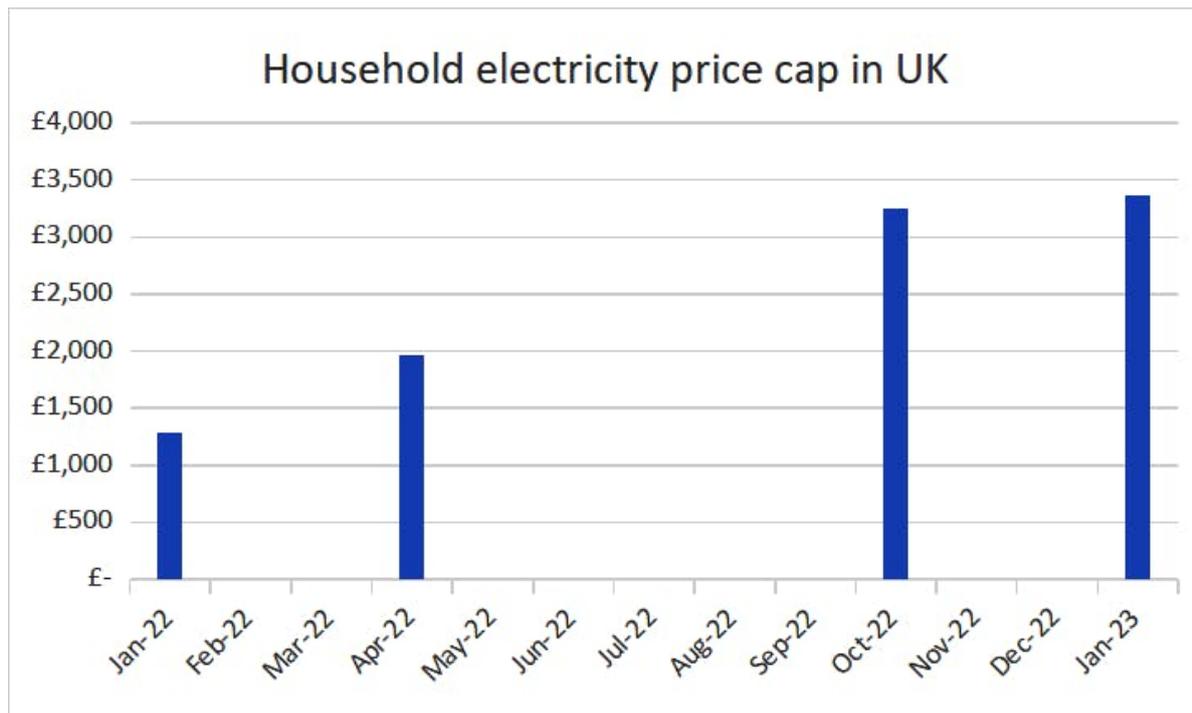
France, with little coal, in the 20th century future-proofed its electricity supply with nuclear growing to supply 70 per cent of demand. That plan has been allowed to decay, as a result of the Macron government contracting the green disease and adopting policies involving replacing nuclear with wind/solar. Much of France's nuclear capacity is now off-line due to poor maintenance reducing its reliability, leaving the nation as a

net electricity importer. But reality bit earlier in France than elsewhere, and last year Macron changed course to restore the nuclear policy.

In the UK Conservative Party's contest to replace Boris Johnson, candidates are all claiming to carry the mantle of Margaret Thatcher, but most forgot the Iron Lady's denunciation of the global warming agenda.

Few UK politicians demurred at Boris Johnson's goal to power every UK home with wind and turning 'the UK into the "Saudi Arabia" of wind power' (a refrain also commonly heard from Australian politicians and energy bureaucrats). But there has been a remarkable transformation over the past two weeks. Of the six candidates remaining in the race for PM, two (Kemi Badenoch and Suella Braverman) now openly campaign against 'Net Zero'; two (the favourite Rishi Sunak and Tom Tugendhat) have gone silent on this the nation's most important policy issue, while two (Penny Mordaunt and Liz Truss) remain dedicated to the 'transition' away from fossil fuels.

Reality is clearly biting in the UK, not only as a result of fears of supply failure (the UK imports little gas from Russia) but with prices surging due to renewables. Excluding hydro, these supply 40 per cent of the market. This graphic of household costs is a persuasive reason to all but die-hard aficionados of the global warming mantra. In October prices will have increased by 150 per cent and further increases are likely.



Both the UK and Germany are planning ‘warm banks’, places where people unable to afford soaring energy prices at home can shelter in the coming winter.

By September, a radical change in UK energy policy is likely. Will this be preceded by a similar change in Germany and the Netherlands (plagued with its greenhouse policy-induced revolt of farmers)?

Australia, with no exposure to Russian gas, faces similar outcomes as a result of government policy subsidising renewables and vandalising firms’ access to our abundant coal and gas resources. Policies have brought electricity shortages with the average electricity spot price in July just under \$400 per MWh – five-fold last year’s price. Even without the proposed AEMO/ALP transmission spending and additional renewables subsidies, this means prices to households must double.

Ludicrously, Energy Minister Chris Bowen has announced:

‘The one supply chain no geopolitical crisis can disrupt is the supply of sun to our land and the supply of wind to our country’s coasts and hills.’

He apparently was unaware that we have massive supplies of domestic coal which is cheaper and more reliable than wind and solar.

Politicians cannot indefinitely blame foreigners, profiteers, and the 'dinosaur' coal plants that are the only barrier to total system collapse. Change must come. Straws in the wind include ALP elder statesman Graham Richardson, proclaiming that coal will have a long future in Australia and a new-found decrying of renewable energy policies by a Barnaby Joyce unshackled from the disciplines of leadership consensus.

But even if this is transformed into policy reversals, the damage caused by twenty years of political meddling and imposing green energy will take many years to correct.