

I. International

Scientists, Leaders Call After Italy's Flood: Infrastructure, Not 'Global Warming'!

by Claudio Celani and Daniel Platt

May 26—The recent floods in Italy have intensified the debate over whether such destructive events are the consequence of too much industrial development, as the “climate” activists insist, or are due to the failure of governments to construct adequate infrastructure.

Over the recent weeks, twenty-three rivers—all the rivers between the Italian cities of Rimini and Bologna—have flooded in the agriculturally key region of Emilia-Romagna, due to the combination of extraordinary rains and a sea storm in the northern Adriatic Sea that pushed back river water outflow. Fifteen persons have died, while many others were saved thanks to a timely red alert and civil protection mobilization. An estimated 36,000 people have lost their homes (hopefully only temporarily). Farms have been devastated.

Historically, such flooding is nothing new to the region. What is new in the 21st Century, however, is that “climate-change” enthusiasts have come to insist that the floods are Mother Earth’s revenge for man’s excessive industrialization. However, it soon came out that the regional administration had failed to build urgently needed infrastructure which had not only been planned, but actually had been financed by the central government. Between 2015 and 2022, the Democratic Party-run Emilia-Romagna region received 190 million euros to build 23 flood control basins; but after eight years, only 12 are in operation. The money was simply not spent, and was given back to Rome.



Visione TV

Carabinieri rescue residents in Faenza, Italy, May 17, 2023.

Even worse for the Democratic Party, its current head, radical environmentalist Elli Schlein, has been Deputy President of the Emilia-Romagna administration and is therefore directly responsible for the failure.

Now the tide—not the physical one, but the political one—is turning. More and more local officials and experts are exposing the fact that the real cause of the loss of life and destruction of property is the lack of infrastructure, and they are finally getting coverage in mainstream media.

Scientists Call for Life-Saving Infrastructure

Eleven scientists, members of the Italian branch of the multi-national Climate Intelligence Foundation, CLINTEL-Italia, published a statement May 20, rejecting the hoax that current levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere are the cause of extreme weather patterns, and



U.S. Army/Jim McGee

There is a history of recurrent flooding in northern Italy. Here, police on a rescue mission search for survivors on a flooded street in Vicenza, Nov. 1, 2010.

calling for infrastructure investments to prevent natural disasters in the future. See their full statement below.

The scientists address the core principle: that adequate energy must be provided to society, for all its needs, including construction of defenses from disasters:

Reducing the use of coal, oil, and gas with the goal of mitigating the climate in order to prevent environmental disasters, is not only illusory but, worse, it diverts resources from being applied to measures whose effectiveness has been proven.

We therefore urge the government not to justify an ostensible aim of protecting us from adverse weather events, initiatives aimed at achieving an illusory energy transition to technologies that are inadequate to the needs of our society, due to their unreliability and intermittency.

Instead, we urge you to adopt measures that achieve greater protection of our country than is currently the case. The example of earthquake-generated damage shows that areas of our country are under-protected and exposed to sporadic events—circumstances that will continue to confront us with situations similar to the one that our fellow citizens are experiencing today.

The Italian peninsula faces not only meteorological but seismic disasters. It is in an active earthquake zone,

at the boundary of the Eurasian and Adriatic continental plates.

The May 20 appeal to the Italian government is titled, “Build the Infrastructure That Will Save Lives by Preventing Flooding,” and the eleven signers are all prestigious scientists (details below): Uberto Crescenti, Alberto Prestininzi, Franco Battaglia, Mario Giaccio, Enrico Miccadei, Giuliano Panza, Ernesto Pedrocchi, Franco Prodi, Renato Angelo Ricci, Nicola Scafetta and Ugo Spezia. Together with a few others, they authored the book *Dialogue on Climate—Dialogues Between Emergency and*

Knowledge, recently published in Italy. Prestininzi, Prodi, Battaglia and Scafetta have spoken at Schiller Institute conferences over the past two years, participating in the international dialogue on science for a new world economic and security architecture.

Two of the signers, Professors Franco Prodi and Franco Battaglia, have been prominently invited onto talk shows in mainstream media, challenging so-called “climate change experts,” with the result that a growing number of opinion-makers and even politicians have found their courage now, and are challenging the climate inquisition as well.

Italian Government Leaders Speak Out

In an interview given May 20 to the Italian news agency ANSA, Lucio Malan, Chairman of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni’s Brothers of Italy Party (FdI) in the Senate, said:

In every scientific field there are no definitive truths; there is always research. On the issue of climate-change there are many voices, starting with Franco Prodi’s, different from the thinking spread by the media.

The same day, Senator Malan tweeted:

The only real climate-change deniers are the climate Taliban who talk as if before 1880 the temperature was always stable, and as if before 1970 there were no extreme events.

Sen. Malan’s statements raised hysterical reactions from the Democratic Party, the Five Star Movement, and other opposition factions. Two women from the radical, green “Last Generation” organization publicly celebrated the flooding in the traditional manner, by appearing, as the Associated Press rather delicately put it, “bare-chested” outside the Senate building in Rome May 23. They smeared themselves with mud “to protest fossil fuel use and [to] remind people of the dangers of flooding linked to climate change.”

Former Prime Minister Romano Prodi, historically a leader of the center-left coalition, dropped the bogus climate-change arguments and began to call, instead, for infrastructure investments, as reported in the daily *La Verità*.

Reverberations in Germany

The Italian debate is remoralizing some factions in Germany, who are calling for a similar debate north of the Alps. The blog, *Tichys Einblick*, recently called for scientists to step up and speak out in Germany:

In Italy, the debate continues as to whether local decisions, such as the neglect of dams and rain-water catchment basins or extended basins for rivers, played a more decisive role than the storm itself. In Germany, such considerations do not even take place. Here, journalists and politicians are jumping on a bandwagon. Especially among green politicians.

The deputy leader of the [Green party] parliamentary group in the Bundestag, Andreas Audretsch, wastes no time: He lashes out at opposition politician Julia Klöckner because the Law for Renewable Heating violates scientific calculations [she has pointed out], and cites the flooding in Italy as counter-evidence. What kind of counter-evidence this is supposed to be—since there cannot yet be any study at all for the causes of the catastrophe—remains in the dark. Only the gut feeling decides....

But, as so often, [Green party Bundestag Vice President] Katrin Göring-Eckhardt is in the forefront. “All those who think you could wait a little longer with climate measures, such as heating buildings without CO₂, should look to our neighboring country Italy. European victims of the climate catastrophe. We have no more time.”



CC/Stefan Malsch

Recent flooding in Germany has prompted calls for open debate for protective infrastructure. Here, flooding of the Elbe River engulfs the Schillergarten Inn in the Blasewitz borough of Dresden, August 2002.

One services the same business of the left as in Italy—although clearly more successfully. Because in Italy, the left doesn’t get away with blaming everything on climate-change nearly as easily. It has governed at all levels for too long for that. The evasions in the climate-change narrative are thus seen as a declaration of bankruptcy: Because either the left has then saved on climate protection or wants to whitewash its responsibility for flood protection. In Italy—unlike in Germany—there is a much greater debate about whether savings have been made in disaster protection or whether there has been an exaggeration in the concreting over of natural landscapes.

The Importance of Infrastructure

The importance of infrastructure—water management (dams, levees, diversions, etc.), power, transportation, health care, disaster-defense, etc.—goes far beyond obvious project-by-project individual benefits. Infrastructure makes possible a whole new platform for higher-level existence and productivity for a growing population, via its full-scale development.

As statesman-economist Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. often pointed out during his long and productive life, the success of the U.S. economy in times past was

closely linked to the successive construction of major infrastructure projects, such as the Erie Canal, the Transcontinental Railroad, and the Ohio River Navigation System, to name a very few. During the Franklin Roosevelt Administration, major nation-serving water infrastructure was developed in the Four Corners projects.

In 2002, LaRouche wrote a 40-page [report](#) on the principles of political economy involved, titled “Science and Infrastructure.”

Large-scale infrastructure projects increase productivity by providing faster, more reliable inputs to physical processes, while speeding the delivery of products to where they are needed. China’s spectacular success in recent decades demonstrates that they have learned this fundamental lesson. At the same time, such projects also serve the purpose of protecting the economy and population against so-called “natural” disasters.

In the U.S., these defenses have been allowed to lapse for more than a half century, as tax dollars flowed elsewhere, mainly into the bailing out of a succession of financial bubbles, as well as to a series of imperialist wars demanded by the ascendant neocons. The last failed attempt at a continental water plan, for example, was the North American Water and Power Alliance ([NAWAPA](#)) project, which was defeated in the Congress in the late 1960s. NAWAPA would have diverted a portion of the continent’s river run-off flowing northward into the Arctic and Pacific Oceans, and southward to the drier Southwest region.

Price of U.S. Infrastructure Neglect

Since that time, all major infrastructure proposals have been blocked by what seems to be a peculiar alliance of ostensibly conservative budget-cutters and ostensibly liberal environmentalists. Upon closer examination, these are but two arms of the same oligarchic creature.

Now, after six decades of allowing U.S. infrastructure to stagnate, we are witnessing the consequences of this negligence in the increasing vulnerability to “natu-



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The “Four Corners” nation-serving water infrastructure project locations developed during the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt—the Columbia River, the Colorado River, the Tennessee Valley, and the St. Lawrence Seaway.

ral disasters” such as Western droughts and fires, extremes of hot and cold, coastal hurricanes, and flooding.

The state of California, for example, which would have been a major beneficiary of NAWAPA, experienced a five-year drought from 2012 to 2016, with concomitant crop failures and devastating wildfires. Now the state is bracing for floods, after a historic wet winter season that saw more than 500 inches of snow accumulate in some areas. But rather than placing the blame where it belongs, the U.S. government, academia, and media institutions are slyly attributing the problem to climate change, and insist that only greater austerity can save the day.

This tactic has been in the works since, at the very latest, the 1975 [Endangered Atmosphere Conference](#) in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, where the conference organizer, the infamous imperialist-anthropologist Margaret Mead, with a wink to the assembled attendees, demanded the creation of “a system of artificial but effective warnings,” imbued with “plausibility,” that could be weaponized against economic development. To the U.S. farmers losing harvest after harvest for want of water, or families who have lost their homes to the deluge when a decrepit levee gives out, “plausibility” is wearing thin, when they are told to eat more “meat substitutes,” turn off the air conditioning, and ride a bike to work. Not an adequate response to disaster.

Consequently, the Biden team is increasingly touting its 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, a \$1 trillion program, as a key component of its strategy for what promises to be an extremely uncomfortable bid for re-election in 2024. However, this legislation does not offer any consequential new infrastructure. The Biden administration's own plaudits for it promise mainly to spend money for "repair," "rehabilitation," and "upgrading" of existing, antiquated infrastructure, along with money for various identity groupings to "build climate resilience." Much of the legislation's ostensible "infrastructure" spending is oriented toward "green" policies, such as subsidizing low-tech energy sources, and proliferating charging stations for the increasing number of electric vehicles.

In preparation for the 2021 UN Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland, a [report](#) titled, "Infrastructure for Climate Action," was co-published by the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the UN Environment Program (UNEP), and the University of Oxford. The report alleges that infrastructure is itself a major cause of climate-change, accounting for 79% of all greenhouse gas emissions, and provides

helpful recommendations for a more "holistic, systematic and integrated approach to infrastructure development." The report's recommendations include the standard neocolonial "appropriate technology" nostrums: for the 26% of the world's population that currently lacks access to safe drinking water, they suggest "grants, subsidies, or tax incentives to install household systems and components, such as rainwater harvesting tanks or efficient appliances such as low-flush toilets or water-saving showerheads."

The World Wildlife Fund warns that while some infrastructure-building may be necessary, it is to be allowed only in the context of "restoring biodiversity, building resilience, and creating a just and carbon-neutral future."

What remains to be seen is whether an open and honest debate over the measures required to defend the population against dangerous weather or seismic events will yield a change in policy. Will the ostensibly "developed nations" continue to embrace energy austerity in hopes of placating the Earth Goddess, or will we see the same blossoming of science and infrastructure-building that has proven so effective in China today, and in the U.S.A. of bygone times?

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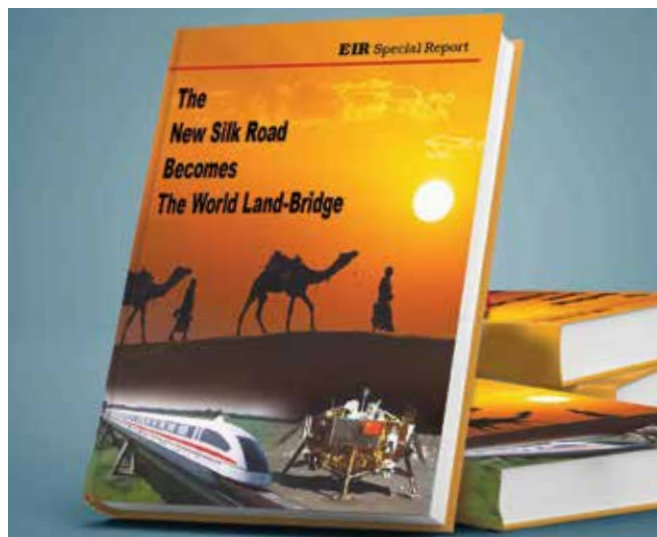
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