

Are EVs a Threat to the Republic?

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This article is not concerned with risks to individuals from driving all electric vehicles (EVs); nor with the effects, if any, EVs may or may not have on the environment.

Our concern is the dangers to which an all EV fleet may expose our society and our country.

To date, the debates surrounding EVs have focused on sales and the environment: Does building and driving EVs really help the environment? "How does one increase EV sales?

For the sake of argument, let us assume everyone agrees that EVs help and one could get the public to accept them.

WHAT THEN?

Recognizing governments cannot control Mother Nature either by raising taxes or issuing mandates; one has to weigh what damage(s), if any, an all electric fleet could cause in the event of a natural, man-made, or maliciously inspired disaster.

The question then comes down to: what happens if we do not have electricity and what are the possibilities of that happening?

NATURAL DISASTERS HAPPEN

On July 13, 1977, a lightning strike on a substation caused a blackout in the City of New York that resulted in looting, arson and other criminal activity,

On November 9, 1965, the tripping of a transmission line near Ontario, Canada caused one of the largest power failures in history, affecting over

30 million people, spanning across all of New York State, portions of seven other states, and parts of eastern Canada.

Millions of commuters were delayed and hundreds of thousands of people were stranded in subways, office buildings and apartments.

As a result, thousands of National Guard soldiers and off-duty police had to drive, or be driven to the area to protect citizens and property.

Then there was the Northeast blackout of 2003 which blacked out parts of the Northeast and Midwest and most parts of the Canadian province of Ontario.

That blackout was supposedly caused by a “software bug” in the alarm system at the control room of FirstEnergy.

Those are but a few of the hundreds of blackouts incurred across the nation from snow storms, hurricanes and overtaxed equipment.

THREATS FROM TERRORISTS

Terrorists are and have been a recognized threat, especially today, with our government having permitted over one million “gotaways” to penetrate our borders.

In a November 15, 2023 hearing before the House Committee on Homeland Security, FBI Director Christopher Wray confirmed that the Border Crisis Poses Major Homeland Security Threat

(COMMITTEE) “. . . members received confirmation of the urgent national security threat posed by the nearly 1.8 million known gotaways and the rising number of individuals on the terrorist watch-list apprehended crossing the Southwest border—especially as America’s enemies, including Iran-backed Hamas and Hezbollah, have been emboldened to spread their malign influence” Source: House Homeland Security website.

In 2013, “. . . a mysterious incident south of San Jose marked the most serious attack on our power grid in history.

For 20 minutes, gunmen methodically fired at high voltage transformers at the Metcalf Power substation. Security cameras captured bullets hitting the chain link fence.

JON WELLINGHOFF, then chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) stated:

"They knew what they were doing. They had a specific objective. They wanted to knock out the substation.

BILL WHITAKER: If they had succeeded, what would've happened?

JON WELLINGHOFF: Could've brought down all of Silicon Valley.

BILL WHITAKER: We're talking Google, Apple; all these guys-

JON WELLINGHOFF: Yes, yes. That's correct."

Source: Vulnerable U.S. electric grid facing threats from Russia and domestic terrorists, By Bill Whitaker, CBS News, February 27, 2022

The following year, on March 12, 2014, the Wall Street Journal warned the U.S. could suffer a coast-to-coast blackout if saboteurs knocked out just nine of the country's electric-transmission substations.

In 2021, Border Patrol Deputy Chief Raul Ortiz (Customs and Border Patrol (CBP)) warned that his agency was recording 1,000 gotaways a day.

Source: Border surge includes people from countries other than Central America, highlighting terror threat, by Nolan Rappaport, Opinion Contributor, The Hill, May 18, 2021.

VULNERABILITY TO OUR ENEMIES

On October of 2018, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security warned, in its "Strategy for Protecting and Preparing the Homeland Against Threats of Electromagnetic Pulse and Geomagnetic Disturbances" that extreme electromagnetic incidents caused by an intentional electromagnetic pulse (EMP) attack or a naturally occurring geomagnetic disturbance . . . such as extreme geomagnetic disturbances associated with solar coronal mass ejections . . . may cause widespread and long-lasting damage to the

electrical grid to include significant portions of the Nation's critical infrastructure, including electric power systems, satellites, electronic navigation systems, communications equipment, water and wastewater systems, and transportation modes and undersea cables.

They reported that "There are 16 critical infrastructure sectors whose assets, systems, and networks, whether physical or virtual, considered so vital to the United States that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating effect on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination thereof. (Source: Homeland Security Site. See link at end of report..)

- On February 27, 2022, ABC's 60-minutes again warned: Vulnerable U.S. electric grid facing threats from Russia and domestic terrorists, and went on to report: One White House official noted that Russia has proven its ability to use cyber attacks to shut down electric grids, and "compromised U.S. energy networks." We've been looking at the grid for months and were surprised to learn how vulnerable it is, and how often it's deliberately targeted.

(Years back, on May 1, 2020 then President Trump recognized the threat and issued Executive Order 13929 " . . . declaring a national emergency with respect to the nation's electric grid and prohibiting the acquisition or installation of "any bulk-power electric equipment designed, developed, manufactured, or supplied, by persons owned by, controlled by, or subject to the jurisdiction of such foreign adversaries." In addition to China and Russia, the order identified North Korea, Iran, Cuba and Venezuela as 'foreign adversaries.'

Unfortunately, for some unknown reason, that Executive Order was suspended."

Source: March 10, 2021 Commentary: Could China Hack Our Electric Grid?, by The Hon. J. William Middendorf II, Emeritus Trustee since 2022, Heritage Trustee from 1988 to 2022.)

Middendorf also warned that:

"Secret 'back doors' in transformers and generators imported from such adversaries as China and Russia could enable those countries to shut

down the entire national electric grid, throwing the entire country into chaos.

. . .

[In (2020) . . . the Wall Street Journal reported that U.S. officials had seized a Chinese-built transformer they suspected had been (sic) secret capabilities that could allow distant adversaries to monitor or even disable it. Cybersecurity expert Joseph Weiss told the Journal that officials had found “electronics that should not have been part of the transformer (i.e., hardware back doors) that could secretly allow the Chinese to gain effective control of the transformers.” Weiss added that as far back as 2001, China was caught trying to hack into a U.S. grid in California. He further contends that the Russians have been ‘in’ the U.S. grid since 2014.”

WILL INTERNAL COMBUSTION ENGINES (ICE) EVER BE REPLACED?

Several, non-damming solutions are on the horizon.

Aiko Toyota said it a long time ago. “We start with hybrids and EVs, while still allowing ICE vehicles to be sold and operated, and we proceed naturally from there. We do not mandate.” Source: “Toyota Shareholders Will Be Thanking Aiko in September,” by: John Pico February 11, 2024. See LinkedIn post.

Currently, most of the major manufacturers Toyota, Ford, Honda, GM, and others are working on Hydrogen engines.

Hopefully, in short order, we will gravitate from Hybrids and EVs to hydrogen and eventually, to fusion.

Fusion is one of the most promising forms of energy. Its fuel is plentiful and easily accessible and it could supply our energy needs for millions of years.

It does not emit carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gases; its reactors will not produce long-lived nuclear waste; and a meltdown at a fusion reactor is practically impossible.

The first International IAEA Fusion Energy Conference was held in 1961 and, since 1974, the IAEA convenes a conference every two years to foster discussion on developments and achievements in the field.

At this time, nuclear fusion and plasma physics research are being carried out in more than 50 countries. Since nuclear fusion was first understood back in the 1930s, scientists have been on a mission to recreate and harness the energy of the sun here on earth – oft nicknamed “Sun in a Bottle”.

Finally, on December 5, 2022, the Inertial Confinement Fusion (ICF) achieved by the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory’s (LLNL) National Ignition Facility (NIF) proved the theory that a thermonuclear fusion reaction (producing more energy from the self-sustaining fusion reaction than required to create the reaction), a condition known as ignition, can be reproduced in the laboratory. It is the same reaction limitless energy that powers the sun and all the stars.

Achieving ignition opened the door to finding a pathway to create commercial fusion plants, which would be a viable clean-energy option.

Such a result, however, is obviously a few decades away, but it could likely provide the ultimate clean energy to power not only our cars, but our ships and spaceships.

The point is that EVs are fine as a piece of the pie, but they are not the final solution. They are merely a baby step in the progression of clean energy alternatives and to risk the security of our country and our way of life by mandating 100% compliance may, to some, appear folly.

Based upon the evidence to date, it would appear that the manufacturers should leave the EVs to Tesla and focus on the future alternatives to Internal Combustion Engines (ICE).

The graveyard is replete with Tesla challengers, while the big three (GM, Ford and Stellantis) have lost billions on their foray into the field.

Hats off to Jim Farley, president and CEO of Ford Motor Co., for having the insight and integrity to leave the comfort of his office to experience firsthand the difficulties encountered by his customers’ driving Ford EVs, and for giving an unabashed report of his findings.

Unlike U.S. Energy Secretary, Jennifer Granholm, who had her staff, to the chagrin of citizens who wanted to charge their vehicles, block a public charger with a gasoline car to “reserve” it for her upcoming convoy of EVs

she was using to highlight the White House investment in electric vehicles, Farley mimicked his drive on the actual driving habits of customers.

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