



Poems for

POEMS FOR 2020 PARLIAMENT

**The poems in this collection are dedicated to
The UK Parliament of 2020/21**

*The pdf and hardcopies are available from eBay
Cost £2*



INVOCATION

*Perhaps these poems can inspire
A culture change to light a fire
In every heart and every mind
Letting a new truth unwind
Once everybody feels the same
Hope is shared as well as blame.*

**This pamphlet was sent to every UK MP
In September 2020**

The UK hold the presidency for the UN Committee on Climate Change that will take place in November 2021 (known as COP26). This provides the UK with the opportunity to lead the world by example in advance of this summit. With a government-led awareness campaign our citizens could learn the extent of our ecological overshoot. Lord Hodgson's paper 'Overcrowded Islands?' reveals that we are exceeding our biocapacity by 301%. We all need to understand what is causing this over-consumption. We need to learn how to curb our expectations in order to set a worthy example to other affluent democratic countries like the USA. The USA are exceeding their biocapacity by 100%. Only by setting a worthy example can we influence the negotiations that will precede the COP26 summit, and by so doing we would improve the chance of a constructive outcome.

2020 Vision

2020. The year of vision

The time to make the big decision

To open our eyes and see the signs

The downside of our grand designs

In hindsight, we've been in denial

Walked blind into our greatest trial

Our dreams have led us to the brink

There's so little time to stop and think

What we want and what we need

Are poles apart, like gift and greed

What we think and what we do

Are crucial now, the debt is due

Today we're rich, tomorrow poor

Nature can't give us any more

Better preserve what we have left

Before we leave the world bereft



Share My Strength

*Emotions bind us and empower
Fear can motivate and inspire
If you could only feel my shame
You'd know that we are all to blame*

*Share with me the sense of guilt
And you will share the strength I've built
Death is not my greatest fear
But losing all that we hold dear*

*For so many decades we've denied
Our part in this great mortal tide
The sixth extinction under way
We cause dying every day*

*Find the courage to share my fear
Guilt admitted is conscience clear
Then perhaps we'll have a chance
To start to learn a different dance*



Country Lanes in Lockdown

*Delicious sunlit days lightened the lockdown for me
Endless sunny strolls along our country paths
The virus was nothing; since a greater fear
Haunted the hedgerows and made me see clear*

*Each walk was a farewell to the countryside I love
A day before the last day, and though it broke my heart
Somehow in the moment I could savour that last taste
Of what we are destroying and consigning to waste*

*The Sixth Mass Extinction puts the virus in its place
My own life a minor detail on the canvas of decline
Our England is warming; things will never be the same
Before it's lost forever I'll enjoy its last refrains*



The Case against the Human Race

*We're blinded by our human rights
Our animal kin are out of sight
If nature must remain excluded
Our story will soon be concluded*

*If human nature must come first
We'll think we're best and be the worst
Unless we change collective thinking
We'll never realise we're sinking*

*The road to privilege for all
Is paved with pride, it's our downfall
Humility as a human grace
Is all that will protect our race*

*Those with plenty need to share
Before their cupboards too are bare
We must see we're in this together
A change of heart to change the weather*



2019 Graduation

*My lovely bright young niece
On her graduation day
I worry for her future
But what should I say?*

*Perhaps the hosting Principal
Will give a thoughtful speech?
Old platitudes are all I hear
Is this all that we can teach?*

*Why are we so unaware?
As evidence is mounting
Have decades of denial
Made us so bad at counting?*

*What point in educating
To learn the same mistakes
The same consumption patterns?
Tell the truth for all our sakes!*



The Realistic Optimist

*The realistic optimist will see
That we are heading for catastrophe
But he'll draw the line at deep despair
So long as we begin to be aware*

*We know our ecological debt is high
Fuelled by every new thing that we buy
We know this is how we need to measure
The true cost of our luxury and leisure*

*This knowledge will help us to make a start
To find a new way and to give us heart
First realism, so we know the score
Then optimism, so we can do more*



Concrete Tomb

*Now we live in concrete boxes
Safe and sound from birds and foxes
The only nature children see
Is what's presented on TV*

*Remember when you were a child?
You spent your days outside, half wild
We did things in a different way
In touch with nature every day*

*Now nature has to fight for space
As concrete cities grow apace
In every block the children hide
It isn't safe to go outside*

*Unless we change, it will get worse
Our box a tomb, our car a hearse
Nature gone, and in its place
The remnants of a once proud race*



How Dare You!

How dare you!

Rages Greta. Oh so true

The things we'll put our children through

What have we been thinking of?

What foolishness is this?

Expecting the young to lead the way

Expecting them to save the day

It's time for grown-ups to grow up

And take responsibility

We made this mess, it's our bequest

Do children have to do the rest?

We shop till we drop and all our glitter

Is turning into toxic litter

It's not too late to change our ways

And we must alter, as Greta says



Tipping Points

*We've reached the point of no return
But scientists warn in vain
Heatwaves in Siberia
While China's drenched in rain*

*Our last chances pass us by
To do the things we must
Such sad observers we shall be
When landscapes turn to dust*

*A tall tree that's about to fall
Starts slowly then falls fast
The slippery slope is beckoning
Which tree will be the last?*

*Greenland turning green again
Its glaciers will be no more
The Arctic will be free of ice
In twenty thirty-four*

*The bleaching of the Coral Reefs
Makes deserts in the sea
Must we wait to see savanna
Where rainforests used to be?*

*Melting permafrost spews methane
To further heat our atmosphere
The endless ice of the Antarctic
On its way to disappear*

*When the Gulf Stream loses its memory
The oceans will be lost
We need a different point of view
To help us pay the cost*



My MP and I

*My MP and I, we correspond
It is an unusual sort of bond
With care he tows the Tory line
Degrowth the last thing on his mind*

*His children will still be at school, when the Arctic turns ice-free
He tells me that he's on the case, the 'Green recovery'
Will his children be impressed with this meagre legacy?*

*He tells me he spoke out at school, on the environment
He hasn't spoken out much since; that's sadly evident
The policy may work for now, delusion and denial
He may well get away with it – but only for a while*



Dying for a New World

*The world is just too full of us
That much at least is obvious
Maybe it would be for the best
If some of us died to save the rest?*

*I love my life, don't get me wrong
I don't think I've been here too long
But if it would really help then I
Might choose a little help to die*

*But not yet! Not until I see
A sea change in humanity
A true desire to save the Earth
To give my sacrifice some worth*



Big Al

*Big Al loved me, and I loved him,
Love is what makes life worthwhile
That's what I learnt from him*

*We never had children
And that was my choice
A decision taken
To give Earth a voice
I knew there was a limit
To what Earth could take
In a world being managed
By folks on the make
If we keep on taking
And forget to give
Then the earth will be barren
And no one will live*

*My sweetheart is gone now
Reclaimed by the Earth
His love still inspires me
And helps me to smile
And leads me to hope
That in a little while
A new way of thinking
May finally dawn
And there will be a future
For all the unborn*

*This poem 'Big Al' is dedicated to all
those who are child-free by choice*



The Quiz

*We love to do quizzes
In the pub on quiz night
To test our knowledge
And to feel we are right*

*Our favourite questions
Soap operas or sport
Nothing to challenge
Our old ways of thought*

*When will the Arctic
Give up its last ice?
We don't like such questions
We don't think they're nice*

*But if we can't answer
Such questions as these
What happens to quiz night?
It's dust in the breeze*

*Until we ask questions
That matter the most
And think of some answers
Our future is toast*



XR Awakening

*XR woke me up in Easter nineteen
The end of my quiet retirement dream
I needed to act as soon as I knew
That all the predictions were now coming true*

*They brought a new kind of awareness to me
They inspired me to act and say what I see
How my beloved and green countryside
Will wither beneath the unstoppable tide*

*Our wildlife is struggling to prosper and thrive
The seasons are changing; it's a race to survive
I'm using my voice to get the truth out
So the whisper of protest turns into a shout*

*XR lays the blame on the powers that be
But the problem, I think, lies with you and with me
Our opinions all count and they drive what we do
There's no hope of changing without me and you*

XR is a commonly used abbreviation for the 'Extinction Rebellion' movement. The ideas and opinions expressed in this pamphlet represent the author. They do not represent any movement or organisation.



Notes to the Reader from the Author

In order to set a worthy example prior to COP26 we need the following:

Raise Awareness

An awareness campaign equivalent to that achieved for the COVID emergency. Advising UK citizens that climate and ecological collapse is now underway. Advising them that in order to mitigate the long-term impact it is not wise to try to maintain all aspects of the way of life that the UK have enjoyed in recent decades. The ecological cost of that life-style was never sustainable.

Emergency Government

Create a cross-party emergency government. This will ensure that the responsibility for the difficult decisions that need to be taken are shared. It will also send a powerful message to other world leaders, that we regard the Climate and Environmental breakdown as both real and urgent.

Ecological Objectives

Make the UK the first country to rewrite its objectives from the perspective of an ecological budget rather than a financial one.

Embrace Degrowth

Make the UK the first country to actively seek Degrowth as part of its emergency damage limitation exercise with regard to the ongoing and rapidly accelerating Climate and Ecological collapse.

The author is Barbara Williams (Mrs), a UK citizen and a resident in the Witney constituency. The poems and text in this pamphlet represent her personal views.



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- *Greta Thunberg with her inspiring advice 'No one is too small to make a difference'*
- *All my friends and acquaintances for demonstrating daily how deep the lack of awareness is regarding the ecological collapse which we have caused and is now well underway. They have taught me that nothing will change until Boris (or a successor) stands in front of a BBC camera and tells the UK public that we have been rather unwise in recent decades and that we need to rethink the way that we go about life.*



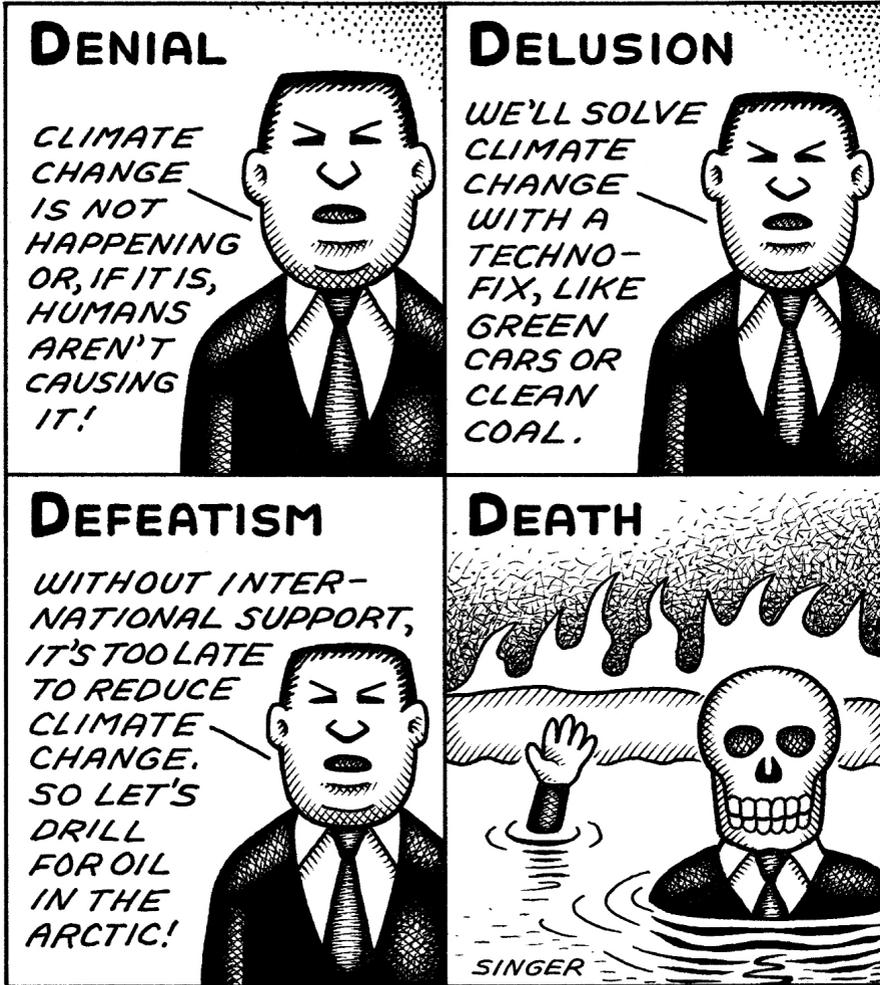
The text from the letter that accompanied this pamphlet is provided below

Dear Administrator,

There should be two copies of 'Poems for Parliament' enclosed, one is for you and the other for the Minister to whom the package was addressed. This is because we all have a role to play in the Climate and Ecological collapse that is now unfolding. Despite the fact that Humans are intelligent beings, we are still subject to herd instincts. Stanley Milgram showed this conclusively in his psychology experiment about obedience, where people were persuaded to press a button that they were told was inflicting harm on an unknown person in another room (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEaKl5_Nn3w). Thus it has transpired in recent decades, that we in the developed world, have embraced a way of life that has already harmed many lives both animal and human, and find ourselves unable to change course.

It is hoped that these Poems and will inspire a different way of thinking. We are already locked into 2 degrees of warming above industrial levels. Many Climate tipping points have been passed and the collapse of our eco-system is now very evident. Every year we can now expect to experience more extreme weather events than the past. We somehow need to change the direction of the human-herd. The UK parliament are uniquely placed to do that, as they hold the presidency for the next UN Committee for Climate Change.

AVOID THE 4Ds OF CLIMATE CHANGE



Special thank you to the cartoonist Andy Singer from the USA, for waiving his copyright license for this publication.