

# Why Big Government Is Literally Killing You

—Dr Robert Hanson



## Introduction

When governments intervene in things, they often get things spectacularly wrong. No more so than with the ban on incandescent bulbs. In banning safe incandescent bulbs, Big Government is now bullying people into using toxic ‘energy saving bulbs’—in their own homes.

‘Energy saving’ bulbs are the asbestos of the 21st Century. Just using an ‘energy saving bulb’ can make you feel tired, cause eye strain, headaches, skin rashes and even skin cancer. If you are exposed to a broken ‘energy saving bulb’, you run the risk of developing long term cancer of the liver, kidneys and brain. Believing the claim that ‘energy saving bulbs’ are safe, and save energy, is a bit like believing Blair’s claim that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction.

## How We Got Into This Mess

Had free market forces been allowed to run their course, it is unlikely that ‘energy saving bulbs’ would still be sold today. For over 25 years, bulb companies tried, but failed, to persuade people to buy their expensive ‘energy saving bulbs’. Free markets had sent a clear message to manufacturers—people wanted incandescent bulbs, they did not want ‘energy saving bulbs.’

With potential high revenues at stake, bulb companies lobbied governments and even wrote the regulatory standards that would ban their incandescent bulbs from sale. A ban on incandescent bulbs was crucial to the major bulb manufacturers’ strategy. Without a ban, someone else could make them—and actually provide what consumers wanted. Unfortunately weak governments wanting to appear ‘green’ caved in to

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pressure from a coordinated attack by bulb manufacturers and powerful green groups. Big Government then set about taking millions of dollars of taxpayers' money to subsidise bulb companies and various 'greens' to promote toxic 'energy saving' bulbs.

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### Liberal Fascism or Free Markets

Bulb company executives, like bankers, are not earning their 'new money' bonuses under free markets and genuine capitalism. Rather, they are making money through government bailouts, subsidies, and regulations mandating their products—a form of champagne socialism. In making these regulations palatable and even attractive, bulb companies and green activists have successfully manipulated language to hide the toxic side of their operations.

Toxic mercury Compact Florescent Lights (CFLs) and toxic lead and arsenic Light Emitting Diodes (LEDs), are referred to as 'energy saving' or 'green' bulbs by a lazy media and politicians desperate to appear green. However, this 'energy saving' claim is based on the false assumption that all light bulbs produce and distribute the same type of light (they don't), that 'energy savers' last their claimed life span (they don't), and conveniently ignores the huge costs of mining and manufacturing of lead, mercury, and arsenic along with a whole cocktail of other harmful toxins required to make 'energy savers' work. It also ignores the energy and resources required to make the thirty plus electronic components 'energy savers' contain.

Claims that 'energy savers' are good for the environment dodge around the fact that

'energy saving bulbs' unlike incandescent bulbs, are classified as hazardous waste which is disguised by their label 'recyclable'. Used energy savers should not be put in your dustbin. Rather, used energy savers need to be carefully packed, to ensure they don't break, and then taken to specialist hazardous waste recycling sites—failure to do this will result in mercury vapour spewing in to the lungs of any unfortunate persons coming into contact with your broken 'energy saver'.

Likewise if an 'energy saver' breaks in your home you are recommended to open all windows (tough if you work in one of those offices with sealed windows), evacuate the room, and throw away all clothing, carpets and bedding etc. exposed to mercury vapour from the bulb. Such details have been deliberately left off the packaging of these toxic bulbs—yet governments feel the need to label cigarette packets containing cigarettes which do a lot less harm than the mercury, lead and arsenic poisoning that you are at risk from with 'energy saving bulbs.'

Differences in light spectrum, radiation and spread of light are similarly absent from information contained on the packaging—because incandescent bulbs outperform 'energy savers' at every level of safety and quality. Traditional incandescent bulbs are not toxic and as such can be disposed of in your dustbin without harming anyone. Similarly if you, or your child, break an incandescent bulb the only harm likely to be suffered is a possible cut—much less harm than a possible cut and cancer from a broken 'energy saver'.

Under this 'green' champagne socialist new order, money is being extracted from people under regulations aimed at closing down free choice and concentrating power in the hands of the few. Goldberg refers to this 'new order' in the following way, 'When fascism comes to America, it will not be in brown and black shirts. It will not be with jack-boots. It will be Nike sneakers and Smiley shirts. Smiley-smiley. Germany lost the Second World War. Fascism won it.'

This 'new order' has bullied its way into your home, removed your safe and inexpensive high quality incandescent bulbs and is forcing you to buy expensive, low quality, CFL and LED bulbs—ones that can harm you. Worse still, you actually believe that these CFL and LEDs provide the same



Adolf Hitler & Joseph Goebbels.

light quality as incandescent bulbs, use less energy, and are good for the planet—you are the victim of another evil EU force, the spirit of Goebbels.

Goebbels was Hitler's spin doctor; as part of Hitler's template for global domination, Goebbels wrote, 'We do not want to be a movement of a few straw brains, but rather a movement that can conquer the broad masses. Propaganda should be popular, not intellectually pleasing. It is not the task of propaganda to discover intellectual truths.'

'A movement that can conquer the broad masses'—today, one arm of this movement is the champagne socialist green movement pulling the puppet strings of big government. The lightbulb ban is top drawer EU eco-fascism being rolled out to conquer the world in the same way Hitler rolled out his armies in 1945. As Goldberg points out, 'contrary to what most people think, the Nazis were ardent socialists (hence the term "National Socialism").' They confiscated inherited wealth and inserted the authority of the state into every nook and cranny of daily life. The lightbulb ban, just like the Nazis, is liberal fascism entering every nook and cranny of your life in 2012.

## Moral Wrongs of Government Bans and Subsidies

It is morally wrong for government to take tax payer money to subsidize and promote the products of bulb companies—bulb companies should pay for the promotion of their own products in a free market. Government subsidies are taking tax payers' money and putting them into the pockets of rich bulb company executives. If 'energy saving' bulbs were really so great, they would be sold without the need for government subsidies and without the need to ban the incandescent bulb. Before the ban in England, a 60W incandescent bulb was selling at 23 pence. Now bulb companies are able to extract four pounds for a CFL and a massive ten pounds for an LED, while the remaining 40W incandescent bulbs are selling for one pound each.

The increase in revenue has not been achieved under competitive market conditions, but through a government ban. This ban has left the poorest people on low and fixed incomes hardest hit. Many elderly people are being made very ill without the incandescent light they have grown up with ('energy savers' produce a different type of light to incandescent bulbs). Yet whilst the elderly suffer, the politicians that banned the bulb continue to jet across the globe and drive Jaguar motor cars paid for by the taxpayer. It is quite sickening to see the number of elderly in England suffering

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***The top three pollutants in the world that cause really serious harm to humans and the environment are mercury, lead and arsenic—the three key toxins used in ‘energy saving bulbs’.***

***All ‘energy saving’ lighting, LED and CFL, harm humans in two ways. First, harm arising from just being close to them; this harm ranges from just feeling lethargic, to skin cancer. Second, harm from the toxins released when they break exposes people to a risk of a number of cancers in the long term.***

under ‘energy saving bulbs’ and the number of bin collectors being exposed to mercury poisoning.

A supporter of imposing these poisonous bulbs on people is Andrew Seaton, British Consul General in Hong Kong. I met him at a conference here in Hong Kong, where a bunch of legal academics had jetted in from London (paid for by someone else) to preach to Hong Kong students (get them while they are young) the need to reduce CO2 emissions—the hypocritical nature of such a conference being that one return trip, economy class, from London to Hong Kong produces the same amount of CO2 emissions that an average Hong Kong person produces in a whole year.

Seaton himself is more likely to be flying business or even first class, he drives a Jaguar and has promoted them in the local press—yet he wants to ban the incandescent light bulb in the name of reducing CO2 emissions. At another talk that afternoon was Michael Bloomberg who had jetted into Hong Kong—on his private jet—to promote cities in their reduction of CO2 to curb global warming (something disputed by many independent scientists).

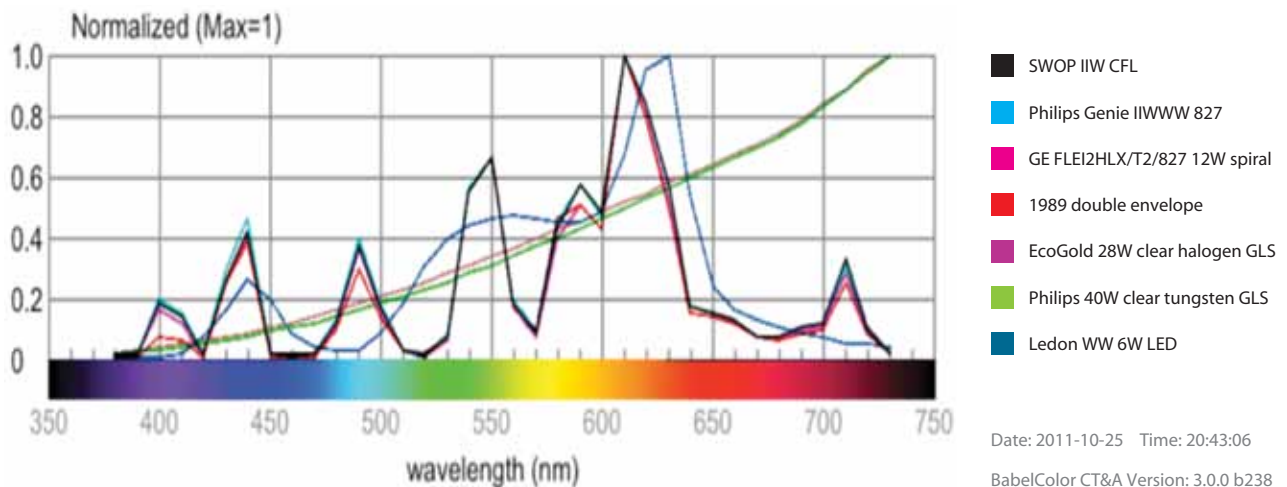
Electricity consumed in the home is measured on a meter. It should be up to the individual how he chooses to use that electricity, whether through using an incandescent bulb or watching television. A person living in a small apartment in Hong

Kong using incandescent bulbs is likely to be consuming a considerably less amount of energy than bulb executives and their multi-millionaire carbon trading friends living in a house on the Peak or in Brussels. The bulb ban has little to do with reducing total energy consumption and everything to do with telling people what they can and cannot do in their own home.

One only has to look at the private jet setting lifestyles of self titled eco warriors, such as Al Gore or the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), who are forever telling the rest of us to give up consumerism. Gore has a private jet and the WWF has offered exclusive wildlife viewing trips at US\$64,000 a pop. Yet the same minds deny the elderly in small apartments the choice of using a healthy incandescent bulb and force them to use bulbs that will make them ill—all in the name of saving the planet! And, as it turns out, these ‘energy saving bulbs’ actually do more harm to the planet than the incandescent bulb. The top three pollutants in the world that cause really serious harm to humans and the environment are mercury, lead and arsenic—the three key toxins used in ‘energy saving bulbs’.

The bulb ban is a case of big government putting image ahead of substance—an unfortunate symptom of the pro-European Blairite political class which continues to be self serving and rotten to the core. It is precisely because governments cannot be

**Smooth healthy light spectrum of incandescent bulbs vs. unhealthy spiky spectrums of LEV and CFL bulbs**



Created by Malcolm Innes for Spectrum Alliance and supplied by Kevan Shaw, Lighting Design Director (KLSD).



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to CFLs than are in wheelchairs'. Dr. John Hawk, from the St John's Institute of Dermatology, London, has similarly observed, 'a significant number of people with certain skin disorders such as seborrhoeic eczema and lupus cannot tolerate any form of fluorescent lighting in their vicinity. [Such people] can only tolerate incandescent lighting from tungsten filament bulbs.'

Dr Hawk was the SPECTRUM observer at the SCENIHR meeting on Compact Fluorescent Lamps, European Commission, Brussels, in October 2011. After the meeting, Dr Hawk wrote, 'It seemed to me that the SCENIHR committee, the UK representatives and I were all of similar mind concerning the potentially adverse effects of the lamps. The lighting representatives (three lighting experts from Philips) tried to modify the overall opinion slightly towards suggesting less harm but were not hugely adamant. The overall feeling of the meeting was that the lamps had a number of potentially adverse effects, mostly for abnormally photosensitive subjects but also somewhat for normal ones, on both skin and eye. ...SCENIHR committee members also suggested that the incandescent lamps may not be particularly more wasteful of energy than the new CFLs.'

### Toxic LEDs

The diodes are widely hailed as safer than CFLs. But, as Oladele Ogunseitan, Chair of University of California (UC) Irvine's Department of Population Health & Disease Prevention said, 'they weren't properly tested for potential environmental health impacts before being marketed.' The 2011 University of California (UC) found that that LED bulbs contain lead, nickel, arsenic, and a dozen more potentially hazardous substances, raising wide-ranging health and environmental issues.

The UC study went on to warn consumers of the potential harm from contaminants found in LED bulbs: Toxins like lead and arsenic are linked to various cancers, brain damage, hypertension, skin rashes, and other illnesses. The copper in LED bulbs, once released, can affect rivers, lakes, and infect fish. If a bulb was to break, and somebody breathed in the fumes released, it could act as

a tipping point on top of exposures to other carcinogens. Plus, because lead tastes sweet, it is possible that children may mistake small ornamental LED lights as candy.

### Poisons Released from Broken 'Energy Efficient Bulbs'

Traditional incandescent bulbs are simple and safe. The tungsten they use does not harm humans and the effects of tungsten on the environment are limited. You can sit close to one and suffer no harm, break one and you are not exposed to any poisonous toxins. In contrast, both LED and CFL lighting contain harmful toxins. If you have read the EPA instructions on what to do if a CFL breaks, who would want to eat in a restaurant in which a CFL was broken? How about working in an office with sealed windows (which cannot be opened to 'air out' the Hg vapors)? Would you like to work in a factory making 'energy saving bulbs'? Are you foolish enough to use them in your home, particularly in your kid's bedroom?

It is simply wrong when green groups and big government assert that because CFLs only contain a small quantity of mercury a broken CFL cannot harm you. When a CFL is broken, mercury is released in its most toxic and deadly form—as an odourless vapour (very different than mercury in your fillings and thermometers). It also means that you do not immediately realise that you have been poisoned. Mercury accumulates in the body and attacks the vital organs—the brain, liver and kidneys—over a long and prolonged period of time. The following are extracts from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency issued in June 2010;

'Before Cleanup: Air out the room. Have people and pets leave the room, and don't let anyone walk through the breakage area on their way out. Open a window and leave the room for 15 minutes or more. Shut off the central forced air heating/air conditioning system, if you have one. Do not use a vacuum or broom to clean up the broken bulb on hard surfaces. If clothing or bedding materials come in direct contact with broken glass or mercury containing powder from inside the bulb that may stick to the fabric, the clothing or bedding should be thrown away. Do not wash such clothing or bedding



because mercury fragments in the clothing may contaminate the machine and/or pollute sewage.’

Yet despite these guidelines, bulb companies are still putting out adverts telling you that CFL’s only contain a small amount of mercury, or try to mislead you into thinking that their CFL does not contain mercury. Such claims need careful examination. All CFLs, whatever the label says, contain toxic mercury. As Professor Ron Hui points out: ‘The danger of mercury is measured by its toxicity. Each CFL is a toxic chemical hazard with toxicity thousands times higher than the safety limit. Most of the electronic components and toxic chemicals such as carcinogenic flame-retardant coatings PBDE cannot be recycled.’

Similarly Maine DEP tests found that from just one broken CFL: ‘Mercury concentration in the study room air often exceeds the Maine Ambient Air Guideline has particular significance for children rolling around on a floor, babies crawling, or non mobile infants placed on the floor.’

If advertisements for bulb companies are telling you their ‘energy saving’ bulbs are safe, why the need to issue these guidelines? The answer of course is that ‘energy saving’ bulbs are not safe—and the bulb companies know it. Governments across the globe committed to banning incandescent bulbs without doing their homework; so they now

have to talk out of both sides of their mouths—one side telling you they are safe, and the other side issuing safety warnings in the form of clear up and disposal instructions. Big government is also wary of the power of heavily funded green groups supporting the ban on incandescent bulbs and is scared of the demagogic behaviour they are capable of—it is so much easier to bully the elderly and weak who are not capable of staging elaborate protests or riots.

### ‘Energy Saving Bulbs’ Poison Workers

When I wrote to then British Energy Minister, Dan Norris, regarding the inevitable exposure workers will have to face in the production of ‘energy saving’ bulbs, Norris’s reply, littered with ‘hopes’ and ‘shoulds’, made it clear that he was aware that workers were being poisoned in China. Yet despite this awareness, the British government continues to promote these bulbs and in the next breath criticizes China’s human rights record. The following is an extract from what the *Sunday Times* had to say:

‘In China, however, a heavy environmental price is being paid for the production of “green” lightbulbs.. Large numbers of Chinese workers have been poisoned by mercury, which forms part of the compact fluorescent lightbulbs. ...A

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***In addition to being fully aware that the bulbs they promote are poisoning Chinese workers, the British Government is also aware that over two million people are ill under energy saving bulbs, particularly the elderly and sick. By not facing up to the serious health problems it has created by denying free choice, the British Government should be awarded first prizes in arrogance, smugness, and bullying.***

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surge in foreign demand, set off by a European Union directive making these bulbs compulsory. Doctors, regulators, lawyers and courts in China - which supplies two thirds of the compact fluorescent bulbs sold in Britain—are increasingly alert to the potential impacts on public health of an industry that promotes itself as a friend of the earth but depends on highly toxic mercury. Making the bulbs requires workers to handle mercury in either solid or liquid form because a small amount of the metal is put into each bulb to start the chemical reaction that creates light.

Mercury is recognised as a health hazard by authorities world wide because its accumulation in the body can damage the nervous system, lungs and kidneys, posing a particular threat to babies in the womb and young children...mercury poisoning in lighting factories is a growing public health concern. Doctors at two regional health centres said they had received patients in the past from the Foshan factory of Osram, a big manufacturer serving the British market.'

In addition to being fully aware that the bulbs they promote are poisoning Chinese workers, the British Government is also aware that over two million people are ill under energy saving bulbs, particularly the elderly and sick. By not facing up to the serious health problems it has created by

denying free choice, the British Government should be awarded first prizes in arrogance, smugness, and bullying. After I raised these concerns with Conservative MP Philip Davies in December 2011, a reply was received from Lord Taylor, the minister now responsible for bowing down to, and enforcing the EU ban forced on England—against the wishes of the English people.

Lord Taylor was not able to produce an actual comparison of the total energy and resources used throughout the life cycle of each type of bulb; in other words he was not able to support his department's claim that CFL and LEDs consumed less energy than incandescent bulbs when all factors are taken into account.

However it is the bullying, with a big polite smug smile, by big government, of the elderly, sick and poor that is particularly disconcerting. There is no doubt that a growing number of people are ill under 'energy saving lights.' In dodging this point Lord Taylor manipulated the English language to making this knowingly harmful ban appear to be helping people by stating that the British government was, 'working with patient groups, clinicians and the lighting industry to keep the health issues under review.' Thank you Lord Taylor—but it is the EU ban that you are enforcing that is creating sick people; people who were perfectly well under incandescent bulbs; people that consume considerably less energy than you and your jet setting cronies in the House of Lords.

Lord Taylor demonstrated in his reply that the Conservative Party, like the Labour and Liberal Party, does not respect free markets and free choice, and that big government, rather than protecting people, is knowingly causing physical harm to people with this ban. It is such arrogant, dismissive and misleading letters from Lord Taylor that underline the importance of the need to remove big government from the lives of as many people as possible. Whilst people suffer under toxic 'energy saving bulbs,' MPs who think it right to ban the bulb in the name of saving energy (itself a false claim) cheat on their expenses, drive highly polluting Jaguar cars, set up trust funds to avoid tax, and jet around the globe at the taxpayers expense.





## Energy Saving Lamps are Energy Wasting Lamps and Should Be Discouraged from Use

Incandescent bulbs are safe, produce high quality light and use very few resources to make—just pull one apart yourself and see. In contrast to incandescent bulbs, ‘energy saving bulbs’ contain a complex mixture of substances which are indispensable for the production of light: Phosphor compounds, zinc beryllium silicates, cadmium bromides, vanadium compounds, rare earths (europium, terbium, etc.), lead and arsenic. Sourcing these elements and chemically processing them requires substantial technical facilities and corresponding energy consumption. Producing compact fluorescent bulbs, with all pre-fabrication steps for the control gears taken into consideration require considerably more energy to produce than a simple safe incandescent bulb.

LEDs are even more complex than CFLs, since they must include conversion to DC (direct current), and additionally a heat sink system since, as with CFLs and unlike with incandescent bulbs, the heat is internalized rather than radiated externally, and adversely affects performance and lifespan.

Energy saving bulbs do not distribute their light in the same way as a standard incandescent bulb, resulting in the reading surface appearing effectively dimmer than an incandescent with the same lumens. To produce the same effective light as an incandescent bulb, ‘energy saving’ bulbs need to generate about a third more lumens and thus use a third more energy. This is why, Dr Klaus Stanjek, after carrying out a detailed investigation into the resource implications of ‘energy saving’ bulbs concluded that, ‘Energy saving lamps are energy wasting lamps and should be discouraged from use.’

Claims that ‘energy saving’ bulbs last longer than incandescent bulbs are not true. The lifespan of a CFL bulb has been artificially measured under laboratory conditions. Studies have shown that in the real world, the lifespan of a CFL can be shortened by a massive 85% under normal domestic household use conditions. In other words, if the bulb lab lifespan was 6,000

hours (five years) it would give you only 12 months or so of light before dying unceremoniously.

Incandescent bulbs were artificially limited to a mere 1000 hours under the Phoebus Cartel. Now that Philips, Osram et al have abandoned this cartel, incandescent bulbs are lasting up to a massive 20,000 hours—much longer than any ‘energy saving bulb.’

## ‘Energy Saving Bulbs’ Poison the Environment

Practically, there is no way to prevent people disposing of a used CFL and LEDs with their other garbage. This leaves garbage collectors and anyone collecting or handling rubbish vulnerable to lead, mercury and arsenic poisoning. Mercury vapor can be emitted for weeks after a single bulb is broken. Young children and the elderly who drop rubbish into a bin containing a broken CFL risk serious long term health problems.

The EU in its promotion of CFL and LEDs refers to them as needing to be taken to special collection points for ‘recycling’ under Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive (WEEE). However, they are not actually fully recycled and used again. Rather they are classified as hazardous waste and require special energy intensive procedures to make them safe—‘recycling’ sounds so much nicer! And it is not just about taking ‘energy saving bulbs’ to special hazardous waste sites; before embarking on the journey, they need to be specially packaged so as to avoid breakage or leakage—they should not be just placed in any old bag or box.

Across the EU and America, which are supposed to have high standards, most CFL and LED bulbs are just thrown in the bin and end up in landfills where they pose major environmental risks. Landfills become waste sites of major toxicity and ultimately leak these deadly poisons into the water stream and food chain, thus creating long term health problems. As Professor Hui points out, ‘Government departments like the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have misleading arguments, like landfills are OK. In many countries, like Hong Kong, the garbage truck will compress the garbage [en

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route to the landfill]. The lamps will be broken which means the mercury will be transferred all over the city. The Hong Kong government told us that the landfill can handle mercury. I told them the mercury vapour will escape before it gets there. Even if they can safely transport the CFLs [to the landfill], the safety layer has a lifespan of about 100 years. So you are building a time bomb for future generation.'

To add some numbers to what Hui is saying, based upon the Canadian Water Quality Guideline (CWQG) to protect



freshwater life, one 'energy saving' light bulb could contaminate 190,000 liters (50,193 U.S. gallons) of water to levels that exceed Canadian Water Quality Guidelines. In Sweden, which has established and well organised recycling practices and prides itself on being informed and spearheading environmental awareness, people are disposing of their Mercury CFL and arsenic LEDs in glass recycling bins, thus contaminating all the other glass for recycling.

## The Dark Side of Green

When I was at school, green groups would have been protesting at people driving Jaguar cars, taking private jets, and promoting bulbs that poison workers in the name of profit—now green groups are supporting these guys. It begs the question, have green groups been taken over by EU central office to promote EU law across the globe? It certainly seems this way. Patrick Moore, Greenpeace co-founder, points out in Driessen's 'Eco-Imperialism', 'The environmental movement I helped found has lost its objectivity, morality and humanity. The pain and suffering it is inflicting on families in developing countries must no longer be tolerated.'

## Conclusion

The ban on incandescent bulbs shows how government intervention, rather than helping and protecting people, is causing real physical harm to significant numbers of people from workers to consumers. Big government claims the ban is about saving energy and saving the planet; both claims are false. There is strong evidence that over their whole lifecycle, 'energy saving bulbs' use more energy and resources than incandescent bulbs. They also cause a great deal of harm to the environment as they rely on the top three most polluting toxins on the planet—mercury, lead, and arsenic.

Big government has a bad record of swindling and bullying the public from Westminster MPs stealing from the taxpayer—many getting away with simply giving the money back—to now bullying elderly ladies into using light bulbs that big government knows is making them ill. Big government has banned a perfectly safe, high quality product, sold at a low price; and is forcing people to use unsafe, highly toxic, highly expensive products in their own homes. As pensioners suffer, MPs continue to jet around the world and drive Jaguar cars paid for by the taxpayer—big government is evil.