

# **Briefing Note: Tenet Media & Climate Disinformation**

## Introduction

Nashville, Tennessee-based Tenet Media was recently [identified by federal law enforcement officials](#) as being partially funded by a Russia-based influence operation as part of [a sweeping indictment](#) from the Department of Justice on 4 September 2024.

Tenet Media had — and continues to have — a sizable social media presence, including its own branded accounts, accounts for founders Liam Donovan and Lauren Chen, and six content creators explicitly mentioned on their website as affiliated with Tenet: Matt Christiansen, Tayler Hansen, Benny Johnson, Tim Pool, Dave Rubin, and Lauren Southern. Since Tenet Media's role in the Russian influence operation was revealed, the content creators affiliated with Tenet [have claimed that they were unaware](#) that their efforts were being funded by a foreign-state influence operation.

This memo analyzes the social media presence of Tenet and individuals affiliated with it (both before and after the federal indictment), their role in spreading disinformation content specifically related to climate change, and the role of platforms and platform owners in amplifying and enabling them.

We specifically looked at posts from 69 total websites and social media accounts belonging to Tenet Media, founders Lauren Chen and Liam Donovan, and the six content creators named on their website, posted from 1 September 2023 to 23 September 2024.

**This study is a product of collaboration between CAAD, Dewey and FOE.**

[Climate Action Against Disinformation \(CAAD\)](#) – CAAD is a global coalition of leading climate and anti-disinformation organisations.

[Friends of the Earth \(FOE\)](#) – Contributing partner to the study.

[Dewey Square Group](#) – This study was conducted by CAAD's solution partners, Dewey.



## Summary

- **Tenet Media's branded channels and content creators funded by Tenet (and thus by the Russian influence operation) were highly active in the climate discussion.** Climate content from the allegedly Russia-funded operation is indistinguishable from other far-right and fossil-fuel backed disinformation – including standard denialism, slur-laced attacks on intersectional climate, race and LGBTQ+ advocacy efforts, conspiracy theories, and policy debates on gas stoves and agriculture.
- **We identified 183 total posts by Tenet-associated content creators, who have more than 16 million combined total followers/subscribers, from 1 September 2023 to 23 September 2024 that engaged in bad acting or disinformation about climate change. These posts had a total of 23,555,000+ views and 1,048,902 social engagements (shares, likes, etc.).**
- **X/Twitter was by far the most prominent platform for this content,** with 19.4 million total views, 290,000 likes, and 144,000 retweets of climate bad-actor posts from Tenet-associated creators.
- **YouTube videos featuring climate denialism narratives from Tenet-associated content creators continue to be monetized as of the publication of this report.** Climate bad actor content on YouTube from creators associated with Tenet Media had a total of 3.91 million views and 368,000+ favorites.

## Methodology

We conducted an analysis of the online presence associated with Tenet Media, its founders, and the six content creators listed on their website. The analysis covered websites, podcasts, and social media accounts across various mainstream and alternative social media platforms.

We analyzed 69 total websites and social media accounts belonging to Tenet Media, its founders Lauren Chen and Liam Donovan, and the six content creators named on their website: Lauren Southern, Tim Pool, Tayler Hansen, Matt Christiansen, Dave Rubin, and Benny Johnson. Social media accounts analyzed included X/Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Truth Social, TikTok, Rumble, and Gab, as well as their podcasts. Our analysis included 51 social media accounts and video channels, seven websites, and 11 podcast channels.

Data on these accounts — including post content and engagement numbers — was gathered using a third-party collection service. We then searched the data for a series of terms related to climate change, coded all relevant items according to the six narratives we outline here, and then totaled the engagement for each narrative. Our initial search captured 539 total posts, of which 183 were coded; the uncoded remainder either only marginally mentioned climate or mentioned our search terms in another context (e.g., posts about the “political climate” in connection with the assassination attempt against Donald Trump). Where a given post referenced more than one of the six narratives outlined above, the analyst selected the narrative they thought to be most prominent in the post. Our analysis includes data from 12:00 AM EDT on 1 September 2023 to 11:59 PM EDT on 23 September 2024.

## Findings


Our analysts identified the following six major climate bad actor and disinformation narratives in their analysis of climate-related content from Tenet Media and its associated content creators, who have been implicated in an influence operation involving Russian government funding.

### Mockery/Protest


A great deal of anti-climate activism within the right-wing conversation, including Tenet Media and associated content creators, takes the form of mocking prominent climate advocates, climate protesters, or climate diplomats. Greta Thunberg is a particularly

popular target for right-wing advocates, who assail her as a child who doesn't know what she's talking about or mock her looks or presentation, but prominent political climate advocates like former US climate envoy John Kerry are also up for mockery. This narrative undermines by implication all climate advocates, suggesting that they are just as ridiculous as the prominent figures the right-wing activists are mocking. **This was by far the most prominent narrative (in terms of number of posts and total engagement) from Tenet-associated content creators; 87 posts with the Mockery/Protest narrative from Tenet-associated content creators during our study's timeframe had 14 million views and 427,000 engagements.**


Some examples (*content advisory: sexist slurs*):


**TENET Media** 🌟  
@watchTENETnow

Justin Trudeau believes that climate change is responsible for flooding in Toronto.



11:40 AM · Jul 18, 2024 · **13.5K** Views


**Dr Jordan B Peterson** 🔵  
@jordanbpeterson


[x.com/rubinreport/st...](#)

We plan to run around and screech about pronouns and climate change, @RubinReport

How about you?

Sincerely,  
@TheDemocrats

And  
Of course  
Satan himself





**Dave Rubin** 🔵 @RubinReport · Jun 23


Masked Hamas members attacking people in LA.

They will be blowing up buses and airplanes soon enough.


The question is what we will do about it? [x.com/afshineemrani/...](#)

10:49 PM · Jun 23, 2024 · **163.4K** Views


<p><b>rumble</b> Search</p>  <p><b>THEY SOLVED CLIMATE CHANGE</b></p> <p>Is Big Oil Funding Climate Activists??   Lauren Southern</p>	<p><b>Lauren Southern</b> @Lauren_Southern</p> <p>Subscribe</p> <p>Convinced big oil are funding climate activists.</p> <p>"Let's make a campaign to destroy everyone's favorite things. Really make sure it's the stuff people like so much they put it in museums and spend thousands of dollars to visit it. Yeah that will make people like our ideas. Perf."</p> <p>1:40 PM · Jun 20, 2024 · 38.6K Views</p>
<p><b>Benny Johnson</b> @benny</p> <p>Nationalists SHOCK World, Conquer GLOBALIST Europe in Election LANDSLIDE! Greta Weeps, Libs RESIGN</p> <p><a href="https://youtu.be/7f22EBtfu58">youtu.be/7f22EBtfu58</a></p>  <p><b>NATIONALIST SURGE!</b></p> <p>www.youtube.com</p> <p>Nationalists SHOCK World, Conquer GLOBALIST Europe in Election LANDSLIDE! Greta Weeps, Libs RESIGN</p> <p>Populism is surging in Europe. Is this a preview of 2024? CHECK OUT OUR MERCH: <a href="https://shop.bennyjohnson.com">https://shop.bennyjohnson.com</a> Sign up for The Benny Newsletter: <a href="https://www.benny...">https://www.benny...</a></p> <p>88 ReTruths 330 Likes Jun 10, 2024, 6:44 PM</p>	<p><b>Dave Rubin</b> @RubinReport</p> <p>The best part of this is that Israel has done more for the environment through drip irrigation, desalinization and a myriad of other inventions than this Climate Communist Cunt could ever imagine...</p> <p><b>Oli London</b> @OliLondonTV · May 9</p> <p>Greta Thunberg drapes herself in a Keffiyeh as she joins huge antisemitic mob protesting outside the Eurovision venue in Malmö, Sweden.</p> <p>The eco activist, who has been accused of antisemitism in the past spoke at the 'Stop Israel' protest saying: ...</p> <p><a href="#">Show more</a></p> 


**Dave Rubin** ✓  
@RubinReport

Narcissistic Gaze of Climate Cunt.

**Ian Miles Cheong** ✓  
@stillgray · May 9


Caption this.



**Benny Johnson** ✓  
@bennyjohnson

Subscribe

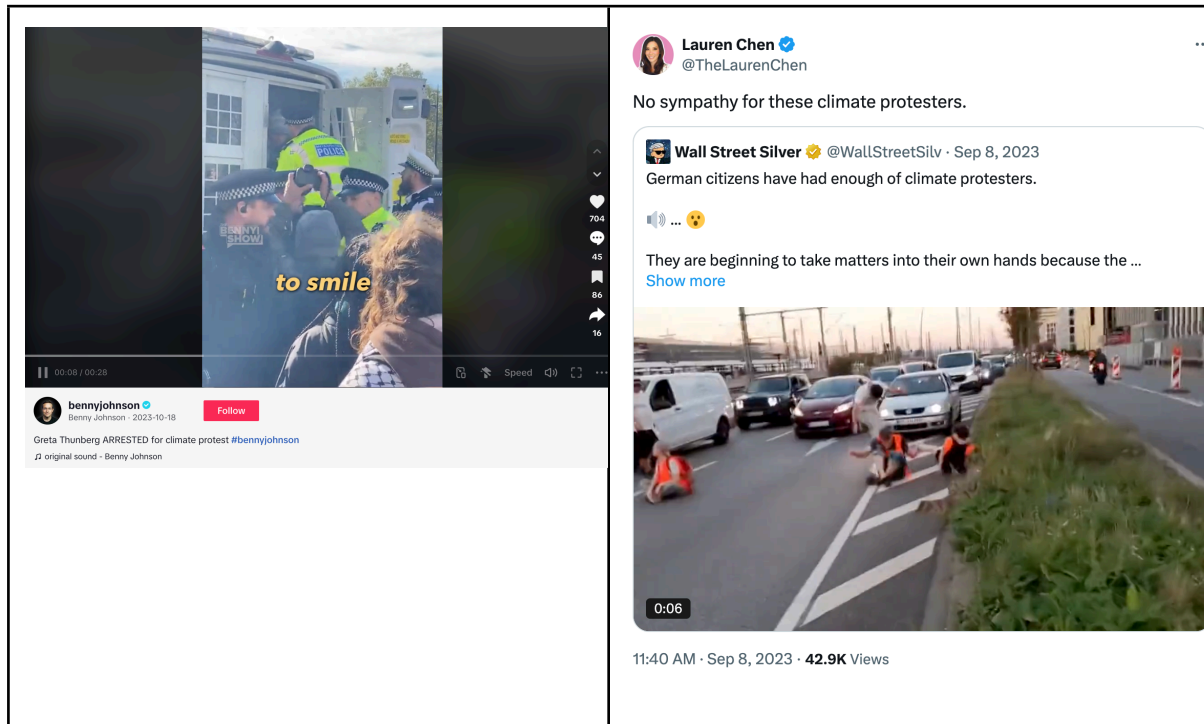
Greta got arrested again..



0:04

From **RadioGenoa** ✓

1:23 PM · Apr 6, 2024 · 7.2M Views

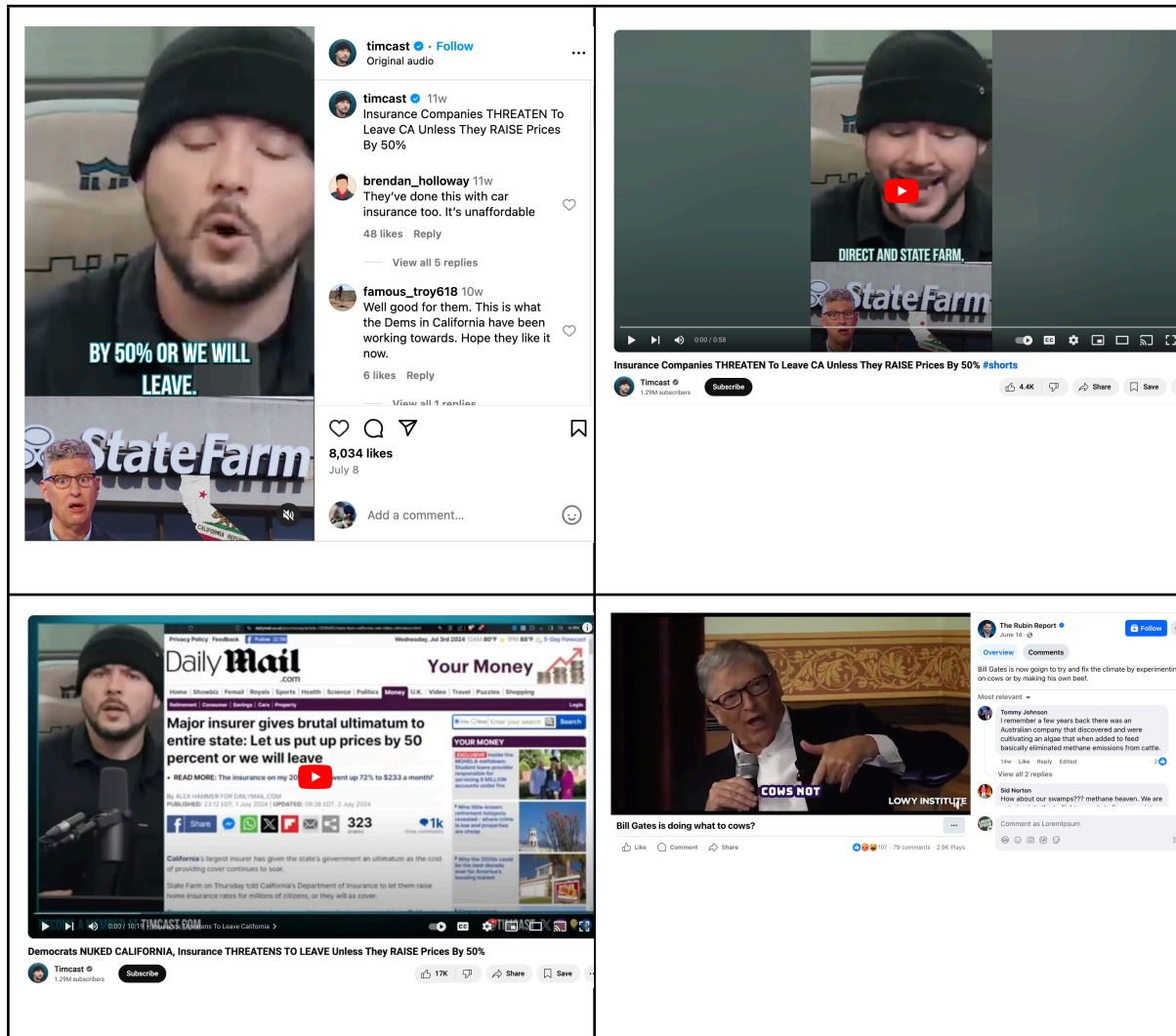


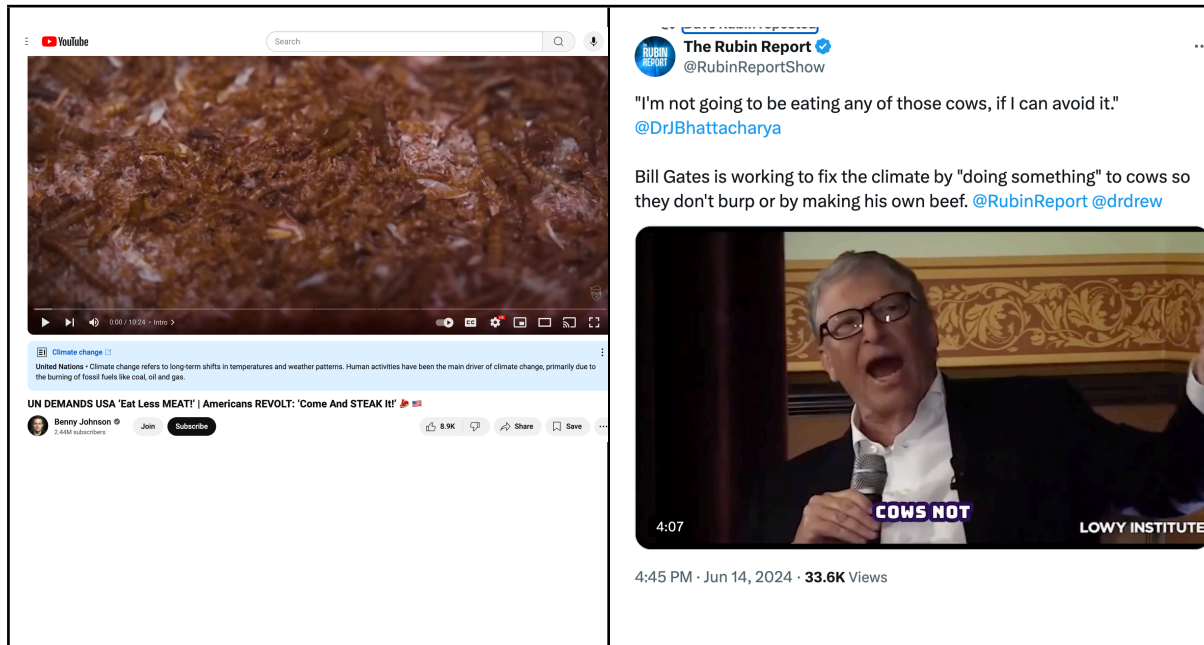
## Food, Gas Stoves, & Cost

Climate denialists frequently point to some of the changes to everyday lifestyles recommended by climate advocates, including eating less meat or replacing gas-fueled appliances with more efficient electric ones, as evidence that climate advocates' main concern is to disrupt normal people's lives. (This is often paired with the Hypocrisy/Elitism and Opposition to Diversity narratives, highlighted below). Climate denialists claim that they are standing up for ordinary people who would face higher costs for everyday items if climate mitigation measures were put in place, as well as presenting themselves as the defenders of farmers and the agriculture industry. **13 posts with the Food, Gas Stoves, & Cost narrative from Tenet-associated content creators during our study's timeframe had 589,000 views and 97,000 engagements.**

Some examples:







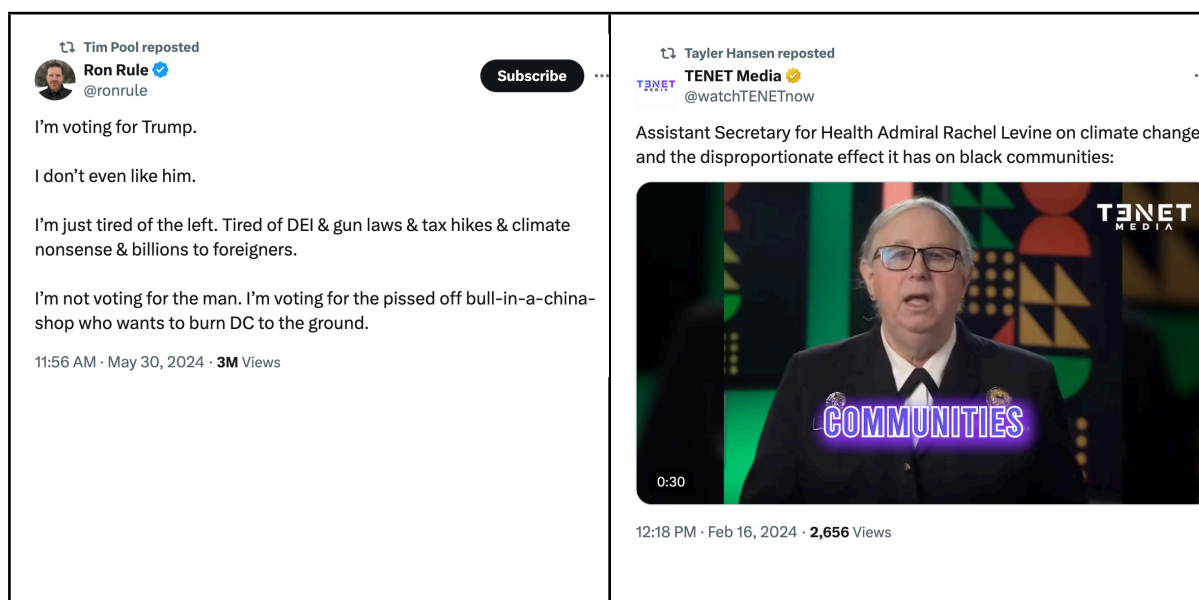
## Opposition to Diversity

Numerous right-wing content creators link climate denialism to other right-wing themes in their opposition to the overall trend of increasing respect for diversity and inclusion in society — including advocacy against LGBTQ+ people, the crusade against “woke,” and ongoing efforts against corporate accountability measures like DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) and ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) initiatives — suggesting that climate advocacy and climate policy are just new ways for “liberals” to impose their will on ordinary people. (This theme is often linked with the Food, Gas Stoves, & Cost narrative above, as well as the Hypocrisy/Elitism narrative below.) **22 posts with the Opposition to Diversity narrative from Tenet-associated content creators during our study’s timeframe had 1.18 million views and 122,000 engagements.**

Some examples:



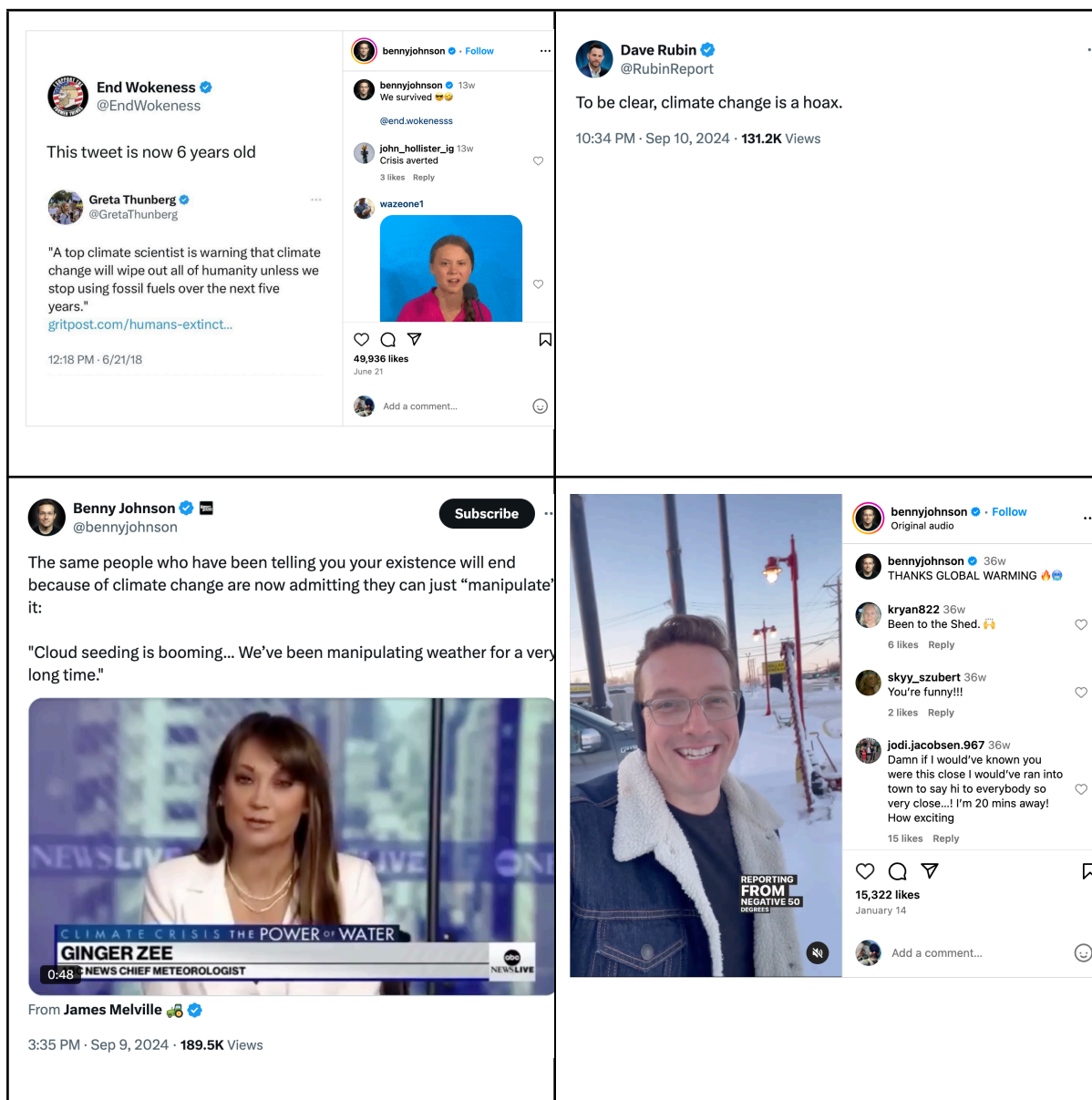
<p>Tim Pool reposted</p> <p><b>SOVEREIGN BRAH</b> @sovereignbrah</p> <p>Obsessions of the “far right”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- having children</li> <li>- exercising</li> <li>- eating meat</li> </ul> <p>Cool.</p> <p>Contrast this with the obsessions of the left:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- child genital mutilation</li> <li>- not having kids b/c of climate change</li> <li>- supporting vaccines that cause infertility</li> <li>- generally being retarded &amp; gay</li> </ul> <p><b>POLITICO</b> @politico · Apr 28</p> <p>The far right is so obsessed with making babies, they just held a whole conference about it.</p> <p>Behind the scenes at the first “NatalCon”</p> <p>politico.com/news/magazine/...</p> <p>12:04 AM · Apr 29, 2024 · 244.9K Views</p>	<p>YouTube</p> <p>Mega Corporations Like BlackRock Use ESG &amp; DEI To Control The Market, No One Is Pushing Back</p> <p>Tim Pool</p> <p>Subscribe</p> <p>936</p> <p>Share</p> <p>Save</p>
<p>YouTube</p> <p>Elon Musk criticized by civil rights groups over claim that diversity efforts make flying less safe</p> <p>In several posts on X, Musk claimed without evidence that diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives put airline customers in danger.</p> <p>Elon Musk SLAMS DEI After Expert Says Major PLANE CRASH IMMINENT, Airlines GET WOKE GO CRASH</p> <p>Timcast</p> <p>Subscribe</p> <p>11K</p> <p>Share</p> <p>Save</p>	<p>Benny Johnson reposted</p> <p><b>Robby Starbuck</b> @robbystarbuck</p> <p>Subscribe</p> <p>It's time to expose Tractor Supply.</p> <p>It's one of the most beloved brands in by conservatives but what do they REALLY stand for under CEO @hallawton's leadership?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBTQIA+ training for employees</li> <li>• Funding pride/drag events</li> <li>• They have a DEI Council</li> <li>• Funding sex changes</li> <li>• Climate change activism</li> <li>• Pride month decorations in the office</li> <li>• DEI hiring practices</li> <li>• LGBTQIA+ events at work</li> </ul> <p>Hal also liked posts attacking unvaccinated people and @AllisonW_Sports when she left ESPN over the COVID vaccine. Let's just say those likes make it appear he's NOT fond of people who chose to</p>















## Denialism

Climate denialism is the denial of the scientific consensus that climate change exists, or in its more “moderate” iterations, that climate change is the result of human activity and can be mitigated by cutting carbon emissions. Tenet Media associated creators, like many other right-wing commentators, insisted that climate change is a “hoax” or a “scam” and, thus, that any action to combat climate change is pointless and not worth the cost. **30 posts with the Denialism narrative from Tenet-associated content creators during our study’s timeframe had 2.84 million views and 173,000 engagements across all platforms.**

Some examples:

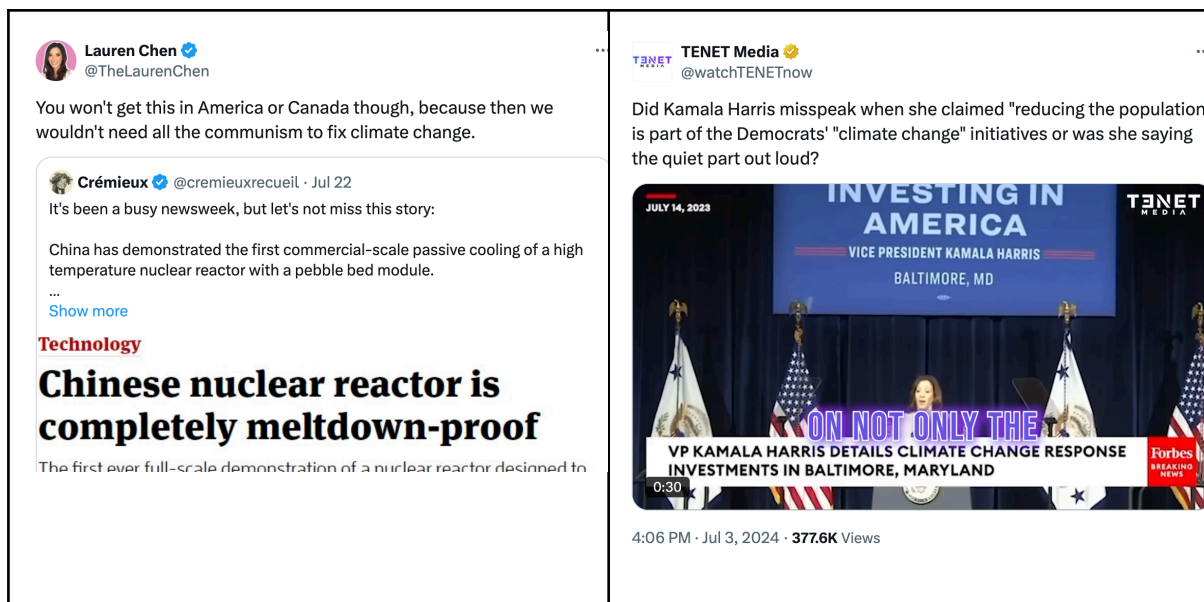


<p><b>Benny Johnson</b>   @bennyjohnson <span>Subscribe</span></p> <p>Can a single photo make you cold? </p> <p>This is what Chicago looked like from our flight window this morning.</p> <p>The Night King has conquered the windy city.</p> <p>Can't wait to experience Global Warming first hand in Iowa!</p> 	<p><b>Dave Rubin</b>  @RubinReport</p> <p>There is no climate crisis and big oil is what's in Newsom's hair.</p>  <p>10:20 PM · Nov 30, 2023 · 41.9K Views</p>
<p><b>Benny Johnson</b>   @bennyjohnson <span>Subscribe</span></p> <p>.@elonmusk totally debunks every climate myth ever told:</p> <p>"The Earth can probably take 10x the current civilization."</p>  <p>0:28</p> <p>4:39 PM · Oct 31, 2023 · 538.4K Views</p>	<p><b>Benny Johnson</b>   @bennyjohnson <span>Subscribe</span></p> <p>Candace Owens schools lib late-night host Bill maher on climate change cult:</p> <p>"I feel like in two years you're going to have a totally different perspective."</p>  <p>1:00</p> <p>11:18 AM · Oct 24, 2023 · 80.7K Views</p>

## Conspiracy, Great Reset, & Communism

Consistent with overall trends within right-wing fringe conversations over the last ten years, anti-climate activists (including those associated with Tenet Media) connect climate change advocacy with larger conspiracy theories. The most prominent of these conspiracy theories for the climate conversation is the “great reset”: the idea that global elites are using crises like COVID and climate change to end capitalism, reverse economic and industrial development in North America and Europe, force mass immigration from non-western countries, and impose major social change. (This is often linked with the Hypocrisy/Elitism narrative below.) Some more extreme versions of this conspiracy suggest that the ultimate agenda of climate advocates is a forced drastic reduction in the human population or even the extinction of the human species. **16 posts with the Conspiracy, Great Reset, & Communism narrative from Tenet-associated content creators during our study’s timeframe had 1.7 million views and 73,000 engagements.**

Some examples:





<p>Lauren Southern reposted</p> <p><b>pagliacci the hated</b> @Slatzism</p> <p>every few weeks there's a smugtard on this app from the UK or Europe or Canada who points out a pristine patch of greenery and goes "there's plenty of space for everyone if we just built a high density housing development right here!"</p> <p>and the funny part is, it's usually the same genre of smugtards who bitch about climate change or using plastic straws.</p> <p>when push comes to shove, these people would literally rather irreparably destroy the environment than just admit "maybe we don't need infinity Uber drivers from Bangladesh"</p> <p><b>Lewis Goodall</b> @lewis_goodall · Jun 25</p> <p>Great to be travelling through the densely populated full south east where there's definitely not space to build new houses or new towns for young people to live.</p>	<p>YouTube</p> <p><b>BETWEEN OAT MILK AND ALMOND MILK</b></p> <p>Climate change</p> <p>United Nations • Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.</p> <p>Climate Scientists Says HUMANS MUST BE CULLED To Stop Global Warming, PANICS Then DELETES TWEET</p>
<p><b>Tim Pool</b> @Timcast</p> <p>its life saving because sterilizing kids slows population growth and helps reverse climate change</p> <p><b>ACLU</b> @ACLU · Feb 28</p> <p>BREAKING: We just asked the Supreme Court to reject Idaho's attempt to ban life-saving care for transgender youth.</p> <p>10:12 AM · Feb 29, 2024 · 149.7K Views</p>	<p><b>Benny Johnson</b> @bennyjohnson</p> <p>Vivek Ramaswamy SLAMS biggest LIE about climate change agenda:</p> <p>"Here's the dirty little secret about the climate change agenda: it has nothing to do with the climate. It's all about letting China catch up to the U.S. Sadly, it's working."</p> <p>From <b>Vivek Ramaswamy</b></p> <p>11:37 AM · Oct 3, 2023 · 139.6K Views</p>

## Hypocrisy/Elitism

Anti-climate activists often point to climate advocates or prominent celebrities like Taylor Swift using private jets, or wealthy climate advocates owning beachfront property, as an

example of the hypocrisy of climate advocacy. Closely linked to the hypocrisy narrative is the elitism narrative, the idea that climate advocacy is being imposed by the wealthy and powerful (who intend to change nothing about their own lifestyles) on ordinary people in order to make ordinary people's lives worse. (This is often linked with the Conspiracy, Great Reset, & Communism, Opposition to Diversity, and Food, Gas Stoves, & Cost narratives outlined above.) **15 posts with the Hypocrisy/Elitism narrative from Tenet-associated content creators during our study's timeframe had 3.29 million views and 168,000 engagements.**

Some examples:

**Mark Cuban Appears To Take Aim At Trump's Environmental Stance: 'I Won't Vote For Anyone That Doesn't Believe Climate Change Is Real' (CORRECTED)**

By Benzinga/News. Benzinga Staff Video. June 17, 2024. 9:54 PM EDT · 2:00 min · 1.2M Views

**Climate change** United Nations • Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.

**Marc Cuban ROASTED Over Private Jets While Complaining About Climate Change, Voting Biden**

**Tim Pool** @Timcast



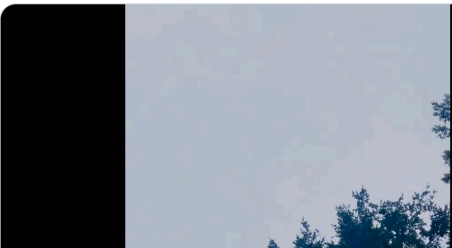
Subscribe

i dont listen to anyone who claims climate change is real but owns ocean front properties that by their explanation would be underwater in 20 years



**Mark Cuban** @mcuban · Jun 17

I won't vote for anyone that doesn't believe climate change is real  
x.com/BallonaWetland...

7:49 PM · Jun 17, 2024 · 1.2M Views

<p>Tim Pool reposted</p> <p><b>Oli London</b> @OliLondonTV</p> <p>The same Gen Z students who preach about climate change are the same people that leave a music festival covered in trash.</p>  <p>0:22</p> <p>6:28 AM · Aug 28, 2024 · 4.1M Views</p>	<p>rumble</p> <p>HOW DARE YOU!</p>  <p><b>TUCKER DESTROYS JOHN KERRY!</b></p> <p>Tucker TORCHES Climate Cultist John Kerry As Half-Demented 80-Year-Old   He's Destroying The Country</p>
<p><b>Lauren Southern</b> @Lauren_Southern</p> <p>Insane watching dozens of eagles pick through a landfill and cover the trees in garbage. Very dystopian.</p> <p>Meanwhile most of our money for environmentalist causes just gets eaten up by nonsense bureaucratic commissions given 6 figure budgets to make climate change PowerPoints.</p> 	<p>Benny Johnson reposted</p> <p><b>Pierre Poilievre</b> @PierrePoilievre</p> <p>So the Davos billionaires board their private jets after lecturing the world's working people about heating their homes and driving to work.</p> <p>I will ban all my ministers from any involvement in the World Economic Forum.</p> <p>1:13 PM · Jan 21, 2024 · 1M Views</p>



**Tim Pool**   
@Timcast

[Subscribe](#)

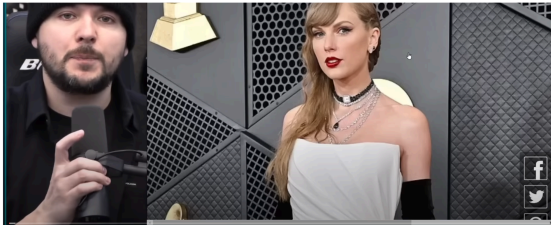
climate change is trying to get taylor wtf


### Worrying clip shows Taylor Swift 'struggling to BREATHE' at sweltering Rio show where fan, 23, died of cardiac arrest

- Taylor Swift seemed to struggle with her breathing in the extreme 100°F heat during her concert in Rio de Janeiro on Friday night
- Worrying video captured the pop superstar struggling to catch her breath, gasping for air as she turned away from fans at the end of one of her songs
- Concerns for Swift and her own health escalated after a 23-year-old fan died of cardiac arrest inside the sweltering stadium just hours earlier

9:23 AM · Nov 19, 2023 · 203.7K Views

YouTube



Climate change 

United Nations • Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. Human activities have been the main driver of climate change, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.

Leftists ATTACK Taylor Swift Over Private Jet Carbon Emissions, Swift FURIOUS Dude STALKS Her Jet