

*If I wanted America to fail ...*

*To follow, not lead; to suffer, not prosper; to despair, not dream — I'd start with energy.*

*I'd cut off America's supply of cheap, abundant energy. Of course, I couldn't take it by force. So, I'd make Americans feel guilty for using the energy that heats their homes, fuels their cars, runs their businesses, and powers their economy.*

*I'd make cheap energy expensive, so that expensive energy would seem cheap.*

*I would empower unelected bureaucrats to all-but-outlaw America's most abundant sources of energy. And after banning its use in America, I'd make it illegal for American companies to ship it overseas.*

*If I wanted America to fail ...*

*I'd use our schools to teach one generation of Americans that our factories and our cars will cause a new Ice Age, and I'd muster a straight face so I could teach the next generation that they're causing Global Warming.*

*And when it's cold out, I'd call it Climate Change instead.*

*I'd imply that America's cities and factories could run on wind power and wishes. I'd teach children how to ignore the hypocrisy of condemning logging, mining and farming — while having roofs over their heads, heat in their homes and food on their tables.*

*I would never teach children that the free market is the only force in human history to uplift the poor, establish the middle class and create lasting prosperity. Instead, I'd demonize prosperity itself, so that they will not miss what they will never have.*

*If I wanted America to fail ...*

*I would create countless new regulations and seldom cancel old ones. They would be so complicated that only bureaucrats, lawyers and lobbyists could understand them. That way small businesses with big ideas wouldn't stand a chance — and I would never have to worry about another Thomas Edison, Henry Ford or Steve Jobs.*

*I would ridicule as “Flat Earthers” those who urge us to lower energy costs by increasing supply. And when the evangelists of commonsense try to remind people about the law of supply and demand, I'd enlist a sympathetic media to drown them out.*

*If I wanted America to fail ...*

*I would empower unaccountable bureaucracies seated in a distant capitol to bully Americans out of their dreams and their property rights. I'd send federal agents to raid guitar factories for using the wrong kind of wood; I'd force homeowners to tear down the homes they built on their own land.*

*I'd make it almost impossible for farmers to farm, miners to mine, loggers to log, and builders to build. And because I don't believe in free markets, I'd invent false ones. I'd devise fictitious products — like carbon credits — and trade them in imaginary markets. I'd convince people that this would create jobs and be good for the economy.*

*If I wanted America to fail ...*

*For every concern, I'd invent a crisis; and for every crisis, I'd invent the cause.*

*Like shutting down entire industries and killing tens of thousands of jobs in the name of saving spotted owls. When everyone learned the stunning irony that the owls were victims of their larger cousins — and not people — it would already be decades too late.*

*If I wanted America to fail ...*

*I'd make it easier to stop commerce than start it — easier to kill jobs than create them — more fashionable to resent success than to seek it. When industries seek to create jobs, I'd file lawsuits to stop them. And then I'd make taxpayers pay for my lawyers.*

*If I wanted America to fail ...*

*I would transform the environmental agenda from a document of conservation to an economic suicide pact. I would concede entire industries to our economic rivals by imposing regulations that cost trillions.*

*I would celebrate those who preach environmental austerity in public while indulging a lavish lifestyle in private. I'd convince Americans that Europe has it right, and America has it wrong.*

*If I wanted America to fail ...*

*I would prey on the goodness and decency of ordinary Americans. I would only need to convince them ... that all of this is for the greater good.*

*If I wanted America to fail, I suppose I wouldn't change a thing.*