



THE DUTCH FARMERS' PROTEST: HECATOMB FOR THE GREEN REICH

Posted on August 1, 2022 by Ernst Wolff



Farmers provide us all with food. When they are no longer willing or able to do so, our food supply suffers. In the Netherlands, farmers have been demonstrating for weeks, blocking border crossings, access routes and even supermarket entrances with their vehicles. This has led to supply shortages in this European country for the first time in a long time—and the reason is not Ukraine. Rather, it was the pronouncement of a woman with the fancy job title of "nitrogen minister" that brought farmers' anger to a boil. The government demanded a reduction in nitrogen oxide and ammonia emissions to meet ambitious climate targets and callously accepted the destruction of the livelihoods of some 30 percent of livestock farmers. Instead of understanding, authorities responded to the farmers' plight with police brutality.

The farmers' protests in the Netherlands, which have been going on for weeks, continue to expand. After initially blocking access routes and later border crossings, the protesters targeted ports and the distribution centers of major supermarket chains at the beginning of July. Among other things, they prevented loaded trucks from delivering their goods to supermarkets, triggering the first supply shortages of fresh products, such as bread, vegetables, fruit and milk.

In addition, confrontations with the police intensified. On a freeway ramp, near Heerenveen in the north of the country, police officers shot at a tractor driven by a sixteen-year-old on July 5. A video circulating on the Internet proves that the police-account that they acted in self-defense is not true.

The mainstream media in Germany has almost completely ignored the development over the past weeks, but can no longer pass over the incidents, given the escalation that has become known via the Internet.

What triggered the protests?

The protests were triggered by statements made by Christianne van der Wal, who has held the newly created post of "Minister for Nature and Nitrogen Policy" in Prime Minister Mark Rutte's fourth cabinet since January 2022.

Van der Wal proposed legislation to the Dutch Parliament on June 10 to achieve climate targets. It calls for a 50 percent reduction in nitrogen oxide and ammonia emissions by 2030, up to 70 percent near

nature reserves and as much as 95 percent in some places. Provincial governments would be given one year to develop plans to meet this target.

The consequences would be dramatic. According to official government estimates, about 30 percent of ranchers would have to give up their farms. "I know this has enormous consequences for farmers who have been living in uncertainty for a long time," van der Wal justified her plan in parliament. "This is terrible. At the same time, we have no other choice. Nature cannot wait."

Van der Wal's party colleague, Prime Minister Rutte, came to her rescue. "It's just terrible," he said. "Especially when you're talking about farms that are passed down in the family and that want to continue with pride."

A statement from the House official said: "The honest message is that not all farmers will continue to farm and that those who do will have to farm differently."

It was primarily the condescending tone and indifference with which those in power commented on the destruction of the livelihoods of several thousand hard-working farmers that sparked a wave of outrage among them.

What is behind it?

But what is behind this major attack on the agricultural middle class in the Netherlands? Why are such plans being pursued, especially in the current already tense economic situation, and in a country that has never cared about emission limits in the past?

To answer this question, one must first look to Brussels, where the EU has been working for some time to achieve its supposed climate goals. However, it is obviously not pursuing them in the interests of EU citizens, nor in the interests of the environment, but for the benefit of the lobbyists of the world's largest industries, and these include the agricultural and agrochemical sectors.

As early as 2019, the highest court in the Netherlands, under pressure from the EU, ruled that EU nitrogen standards must not be exceeded, but to no avail. In the meantime, however, the pressure has

intensified considerably. The EU Commission, led by Ursula von der Leyen, adopted the "Green Deal" at the end of 2019, which calls for a gradual reduction in emissions to zero by 2050.

While the measures needed to meet these ambitious standards will not, as officially claimed, make a decisive contribution to saving the world's climate, they will destroy more than 15,000 farms in the Netherlands.

As the Netherlands is currently the world's second largest exporter of agricultural products, it does not take a clairvoyant to know who will compensate for the government-enforced production losses. The U.S., the world's largest exporter of livestock, has four giant corporations—Cargill, Tyson Foods, JBS, and National Beef Packing—that are just waiting for the opportunity to take over the business of the bankrupt companies. Incidentally, mega-asset managers BlackRock and Vanguard are among the largest shareholders in three of these four.

The pressure from these lobbyists is thus basically merely continuing a trend that has already been going on for many years, namely the ever-greater concentration of money and market power in fewer and fewer hands. In 2000, Holland still had more than 100,000 farms; in 2021, there were only 52,000.

The Great Reset Agenda

Looking to Brussels, however, is not yet enough to understand the pace and the harshness that the government in The Hague is putting forward in the dispute with farmers. But a look to Davos sheds more light.

In recent decades, the World Economic Forum (WEF) has become one of the most important centers of power for the global elite. Not only do the richest and most powerful people in the world meet there, but since 1992 a large proportion of the leading corporate CEOs and politicians of our time have also been trained there. According to WEF founder Klaus Schwab, the WEF has succeeded in recent years in "penetrating some of the most important cabinets in the world."

Less well known may be the fact that Mark Rutte is not only officially listed as a "contributor" by the WEF, but is one of Klaus Schwab's favorites, along with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and has devoted himself wholeheartedly to his organization and its current agenda, the Great Reset.

Particularly interesting in this context is the role he played at the WEF's virtual annual meeting in January 2021. That is where the Food Innovation Hubs (centers for innovation in the food sector) were launched.

According to the WEF, this is an important multi-stakeholder platform to leverage technology and broader innovation to strengthen local ecosystems as the global food system transforms. Rutte pledged at the time to fund this initiative over several years and to have its global coordinating secretariat established in the Netherlands.

The role of this coordination secretariat, according to officials, will be to "coordinate the efforts of the regional centers and align with global processes and initiatives such as the UN Summit on Food Systems."

Who the secretariat will actually work for, and in whose interest, becomes apparent when one takes a look at the organization's official partners. In addition to the Dutch government, these include Rabobank, Unilever, PepsiCo, Master Card and the world's largest agrochemical company, Syngenta, which was acquired by Chinese state-owned Chemchina in 2017.

These usual suspects are unlikely to ensure that world hunger is curbed and that impoverished small farmers in Africa, Asia and South America, whose livelihoods have been systematically destroyed for years by large transnational corporations, get back on their feet. Since BlackRock and Vanguard are the largest shareholders in Unilever, PepsiCo and Master Card, it should once again be clear who is pulling the strings in the background.

The magic formula of the future: laboratory meat

But there is another reason for the enormous pace destruction of the livelihood of livestock farmers in the Netherlands, which has so far remained largely hidden from the general public. It is the biggest upheaval in the global meat market due to the development of lab-grown meat.

All the major meat producers in the U.S. are currently making the largest investments in precisely this area, and it's no wonder.

If it were possible to artificially produce the meat the world needs, it would create a gold rush in the industry. The costs of raising and maintaining the animals, of pastures and stables, of feed, transport and slaughter would all be eliminated.

The only problem at the moment is that mass production of lab-grown meat is not yet ready for the market. However, numerous start-ups are working on this in the background, and it is probably only a matter of time before the first lab-grown meat—accompanied by a global campaign against factory farming steered by the meat producers themselves—is in the works.

However, in the initial phase, this lab-grown meat will still be more expensive than conventional meat. What could be better for the producers than for a government like the Dutch one to ensure in time that thousands of competitors in this sector are driven into bankruptcy?

Ernst Wolff grew up in Southeast Asia, went to school in Germany and studied in the USA. Because of the worldwide financialization brought about by deregulation, he has been focusing for years on what he considers the most important area of global society: the financial sector. Wolff lives as a freelance journalist in Berlin, writes regularly on current topics and gives lectures around the world that illuminate current events against their financial policy backgrounds. He is the author of various books, including, [Pillaging the World: The History and Politics of the IMF](#). [This article appears through the kind courtesy of [Rubikon](#)].

[Featured](#): "Abandoned Farm," by David Vance; 20th century.

