Addenda #14 – October 2023
Re: Ch. 15, Sustainable Living – Smart Cities (Control by Authorities),
Smart Thermostats (Control by utility companies)
SDG 12 - Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

On another issue related to green energy, specifically about the N.Y. Electric Power Grid, I received a mailing from National Grid the other day, about their "Smart Meter" program.

NatGrid promotes installation of electric service smart meters, saying they will help identify outages quicker and alert the utility to peaks in power demand so they can transfer electricity to cope with them.
"The goal of the program is to empower customers ***to better manage*** *their energy use... Smart meters are part of our ongoing commitment to empower our customers while working to build a more reliable, robust, and climate-friendly energy grid"*

They also promote customers being able to identify when they use the most electricity and on what, and to encourage users how they can reduce their costs (reduce your use).
"By getting continuous access to your energy usage data, you can make informed choices, which means you'll have more ways to ***take control of your energy use****, and potentially lower your bill."*
National Grid intends *all* electric utility customers will change over to smart meters, with a natural gas smart meter program to follow.

The meters transmit data wirelessly to the utility company, giving them and hackers, details on your energy use. They report data in "real-time" as opposed to current electric meters that report in time intervals (ie. daily, weekly or monthly)
We already have traditional AMI meters on our electric service, gas service and water service. A utility company van drives up & down streets capturing the data from each household, which is then downloaded by the company to calculate the billing.
Smart meters will use a radio frequency (RF) transmitter in the meter, sending data to a collection device (data concentrator) mounted on the utility pole. Several households transmit to the same location, the data is then sent to the utility central grid thru a wireless or cellular network. This eliminates the need for a service van driving around collecting customers data, saving the company a lot of money over the course of a year!!

Complaints about meters already installed in the U.S. include; communications issues, inaccurate readings and failures, leading to the utility estimating the reading and overbilling customers. Health issues from RF transmissions have also been raised, with a bill introduced into the NY state legislature to do a study about these health risks.

National Grid is installing them in the U.K. too (N.G. is based in the U.K.) The "incentive" in the U.K. to get customers to agree to use them, is to give them rebates if the customers voluntarily cut electricity use during peak times; heat waves and evening hours when everyone is home from work.

Customers not participating are charged full price, the “penalty” for failure to comply.

In N.Y. you can opt out of the smart meter program... but
"If you decide you do not want a smart meter installed, you will have a conventional, or non-communicating, meter installed instead. Since this meter will not transmit data to us automatically, your meter will need to continue to be read manually by a utility representative and you will be charged the following fees for this service."

For "failure to comply" non smart meter users will be charged a monthly fee of $11.64.
If you wait until after the meter is installed, you have to pay an additional $44.63 fee to change back to the conventional "non-communicating" meter.
If National Grid has to pay for those service vans to travel around and collect our usage data, we will be billed for the cost!!

Smart Meters | National Grid
https://www.nationalgridus.com/Upstate-NY-Home/Smart-Meters/

Note: these meters will be communicating devices only. They can't be used to reduce electricity use the way smart thermostats do.
(A Clear and Present Danger #2, Ch. 15 Sustainable Living-Smart Thermostats)
But.... in the future I can see customers who use more electricity than their allowance from an aging power grid, would be assessed a "surcharge" for excessive electricity use, which equals excessive CO2 emissions.
Excessive energy use / CO2 emissions surcharges are already being assessed to utility companies through the NY state RGGI program. (A Clear and Present Danger #2, Ch. 9 Progressive states climate policies).
In addition, Governor Hochul added a "Cap and Invest" program into the FY2023 state budget, which was approved by the Democrat majority of both houses. Cap-and-Invest will force companies to report their emissions and buy allowances in the amount of their pollution above the amount they are allowed.

So there are already two programs in effect in NY state. One charges utility companies for excess emissions in production of energy. The other charges large companies for excess emissions for their usage of energy.
Is it so hard to believe that the smart meter program will eventually extend the surcharges to individual households?

It was never about saving the planet...
It was and is all about CONTROL, and forcing *us*, the ordinary citizens to live sustainably, to consume less of everything.