



Casualties in the Climate Wars?

The [NY Times](#) describes the current negotiations in Beijing as resembling an arms control contest, with demands for verifiable reductions (but in emissions rather than missiles). The military comparison may be apt.

Dealing with climate change is going to be like fighting a major war in a number of respects:

- *It will involve mobilizing for collective action on a vast scale.
- *It involves *offensive* actions (climate mitigation to reduce the strength of the “enemy”) and *defensive* actions (adaptation to protect ourselves against “enemy” action.)
- *It involves important uncertainties, high costs, and huge downside risks.
- *It will involve pervasive changes in consumption and individual behavior.
- *It poses serious threats to national well-being and national welfare.

[Jimmy Carter](#) once spoke of moral equivalent of war, [borrowing a phrase](#) from William James. Maybe that will turn out to be the climate issue.