“DANGEROUS AND GROWING THREAT OF CLIMATE CRISIS”

A response to Al Gore’s Senate testimony of January 28, 2009

by

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The Testimony

Al Gore, testifying before a Senate Committee on a bitterly cold, snowy late January day in 2009, said the “global community” was facing “the dangerous and growing threat of the climate crisis”. He used the words “climate crisis” eight times in his written 15-minute testimony. The text of Gore’s testimony, unlike previous statements by him about the “climate crisis”, contained no scientific information. Gore’s “science”, such as it was, was confined to a series of slides shown to the Committee but still unavailable to public enquirers thereafter.

Gore now says little in public about the science of climate, because he has been proven wrong on his facts so often in the past. Two years ago a High Court Judge in London ordered1 the British Government to correct nine “errors” in Gore’s movie, An Inconvenient Truth, before allowing innocent schoolchildren to be exposed to it. Gore’s propaganda movie in fact contained at least 352 serious scientific errors3.

Gore’s Senate testimony, as published, was little more than a string of childishly Apocalyptic generalities – “Earth is in grave danger”; “urgent and unprecedented threat to the existence of our civilization”; “dangerous over-reliance on carbon-based fuels”; buying oil from “dangerous and unstable regimes”; “national security at risk”; oil’s “roller-coaster is headed for a crash, and we’re in the front car”; “70 million tons of global warming pollution”; “we move closer and closer to several dangerous tipping points” that will “make it impossible for us to avoid irretrievable destruction of the conditions that make human life possible”; burning oil “in ways that destroy the planet”; “securing the future of human civilization”; “new evidence and fresh warnings from scientists”; etc., etc.

Gore urged the Senate to support President Obama’s “recovery package”4 – energy efficiency, renewable energy, a national electricity grid, and “clean cars” -- that would create “millions of new jobs”. He also said Congress must “place a price on carbon”. He said there was “much stronger support for action than when we completed the Kyoto Protocol in 1997”.

His ideal Copenhagen treaty to replace the expiring Kyoto Protocol would contain asymmetrical limits on carbon emissions, hitting the West hard5 but letting off Communist China and other developing countries with lesser restrictions, softened by cash subsidies from Western nations. He also wanted a “strong compliance and verification regime”. He said the treaty to protect the ozone layer had banned most of the “major substances that create the ozone hole over Antarctica”.

1 http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/reprint/ukcourthearing.html
2 http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/monckton/goreerrors.html
3 http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/monckton/gores_10_errors_old_new.html
4 For Gore’s self-interest, see Al Gore's Carbon Empire, Cashing in on Climate Change http://www.capitalresearch.org/pubs/pubs.html?id=654
5 The Cost and Futility of Trading Hot Air: http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/monckton/cost_and_futility_of_trading_hot_air.html
Finally, Gore discussed “in more detail why we must do all of this within the next year”\textsuperscript{6}. But the further “detail” was not included in the published text of his speech, and the Kerry Committee staff have not released Gore’s “few new pictures that illustrate the unprecedented need for bold and speedy action this year”, even though the Senate Committee hearing was supposedly public.

**The Fact-Based Response**

There was not, is not, and will not be any “climate crisis” – or, if there is, the human contribution to it will be negligible. In the four years since Gore’s movie was released, global surface temperatures have fallen at a rate equivalent to 6 degrees Celsius per century, enough to usher in an Ice Age if this exceptional and rapid rate of global cooling were to continue as far as 2100 –

![Graph showing global monthly temperature anomalies, January 2005 to December 2008](http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/originals/ClimateChange/graph.png)

The above graph shows the very rapid decline in global mean surface temperatures between January 2005 and December 2008, compared with the range of projections (shown as a pink region) made by the UN’s climate panel, the IPCC, in its 2007 report. The shortfall between the IPCC’s central projection and the real-world decline in temperatures is an astonishing 0.4 Celsius degrees (0.7 F) in only four years. This is hardly the profile of a “climate crisis” caused by “global warming”.

Gore now routinely refers to CO2 as “global warming pollution” – a term he used twice in his presentation to the Senate Committee. However, CO2 is not a pollutant – it is essential food for plants.

\textsuperscript{6} See: Climate Action Plans Fail to Deliver: Updated 12-20-08

http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/originals/climate_action_plans_fail_to_deliver.html
and trees\textsuperscript{7}, and, together with water, sunlight, and chlorophyll, it is an essential ingredient in photosynthesis, on which all plant life and hence all life on Earth depends –

The chart to the right, from the US Forest Service, shows the remarkable and very rapid growth in the cubic footage of standing timber in the United States over the past half-century. The additional CO\textsubscript{2} in the atmosphere has helped trees and plants to grow at record rates, and has been an important factor in increasing crop yields worldwide.\textsuperscript{8}

Gore’s predictions of doom grow ever more extreme, notwithstanding the blunt warning of the High Court in London that “the Armageddon scenario that he depicts is not based on any scientific view”. Notwithstanding the High Court’s findings, Gore continues to maintain, for instance, that sea level will imminently rise by 20 feet. It is actually rising by just 1 foot per century, one quarter of the mean centennial rate of increase over the past 10,000 years. Even the IPCC only projects 1-2 feet of sea-level rise by 2100, a harmless and entirely natural increase.

Though Gore says “global warming pollution” is getting worse, in fact the atmospheric concentration of CO\textsubscript{2} has been increasing at a rate well below the IPCC’s range of official projections –

The above graph shows the anomaly (dark blue irregular curve) and trend (thick line) in observed global CO\textsubscript{2} concentration from NOAA’s global CO\textsubscript{2} dataset, compared with the IPCC’s predicted

\textsuperscript{7} See: Plant Growth Data Categories: http://co2science.org/data/plant_growth/plantgrowth.php

\textsuperscript{8} Terrestrial Plant Growth Response to Very High CO\textsubscript{2} Concentrations: http://co2science.org/subject/v/veryhighco2.php
range. Since 1980, CO2 concentration has increased at a rate equivalent to 163 ppmv/century, though the rate of increase has itself risen. In the past eight years, CO2 concentration has grown at 200ppmv/century. However, the rate of increase has now settled towards linearity, so that by 2100 CO2 concentration will not be 836 ppmv, the IPCC’s central estimate, but just 570 ppmv, requiring all of the IPCC’s projections of future temperature increase to be halved.

What is more, the official estimates of the effect of a given proportionate increase in atmospheric CO2 on global temperatures have been falling steadily as reality inexorably dawns on the small clique of scientists chiefly responsible for the “global warming” scare –

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Estimate 1</th>
<th>Estimate 2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
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<td>1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The histogram shows official projections of the warming to be expected in response to a doubling of atmospheric CO2 concentration, and at the end of the 21st century. The first projection, by Arrhenius, was in 1896. Each successive projection has been smaller than the last. Between 1995 and 2007 the IPCC reduced the official projection three times in succession. Then, in 2008, James Hansen of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies, probably unaware that the IPCC’s central estimate of the climate sensitivity parameter lambda was close to 1, issued a statement to the effect that his central estimate of lambda was 0.75, requiring a further reduction of the official climate sensitivity estimate by one-quarter, to just 2.5 Celsius degrees for a CO2 doubling, and less than 3 C° by 2100.

The “climate crisis” is not getting worse, because CO2 concentration is rising at well below the IPCC’s estimates, and because temperatures are falling when the IPCC had predicted that they would rise.

However, a stream of papers in the peer-reviewed literature over the past few years has reduced the central climate-sensitivity estimate still further. These papers – e.g. Lindzen (2008); Wentz et al. (2007); Schwartz (2007); Monckton (2008) – provide information to suggest that a doubling of CO2 concentration might well increase global temperatures by less than 1 Celsius degree. Theory, then, confirms observation: the “climate crisis” is not getting worse, because CO2 concentration is rising at
well below the IPCC’s estimates, and because temperatures are falling when the IPCC had predicted that they would rise.

Indeed, temperatures have been falling throughout the last eight years. During this period, the US had avoided any climate deal that would pointlessly require the Western economies to inflict grievous and strategically-damaging self-harm on themselves. Gore himself, as vice-president, was leader of the Senate when it voted 95-0 to reject the Kyoto Protocol, though his presentation to the Senate in January 2009 somehow failed to mention this vote when he mentioned the Senate’s consideration of that Protocol. Gore now says times have changed and more Senators will be willing to commit the United States to economic and political hara-kiri: yet the trend in global temperatures has been firmly downward for eight full years –

Once again, the contrast between the official projections of temperature increase and the actual trend of temperature decline is painfully obvious. In the longer run, the trend in temperatures since 1980 is now no greater than the equivalent of a 1.5 C° increase over a century. It is unlikely that any of Gore’s slides would have shown the Senate Committee this notable and now-prolonged downturn in global temperatures. Indeed, the downturn has hardly been reported anywhere.
Gore’s proposed remedies for the “global warming” -- that ceased in 1998 and has not resumed since then -- would do especial strategic damage to the economic and political well-being of the United States. In effect, he is proposing that the United States, now some way behind China as the world’s greatest emitter of carbon dioxide, should throw her own workers on to the scrapheap in ever larger numbers, while transferring their jobs and their industries to China, where the emissions of carbon per unit of production are considerably greater than they are in the US. The net effect of this policy would be to increase very greatly the world’s total carbon emissions – the very reverse of the effect Gore pretends to desire – while causing fatal, strategic harm to the US economy.

For good measure, Gore demands a carbon cap’n’trade system, just as the European system is about to collapse for the second time. The EU’s first attempt ended in ignominious failure when the price of carbon emissions fell below 50 cents/ton. Its second attempt is also now failing, with the price of what the traders on the London market call “hot air” falling below $15/ton. The system has enriched various City of London traders while impoverishing the taxpayers and industries that must pay the prodigious bureaucratic costs of this purposeless and harmful scheme.

Finally, Gore mentioned the international treaty intended to shrink the “ozone hole over Antarctica”. However, recently the ozone hole has been larger than ever, and scientists have discovered that they had overestimated the destructive power of the now-banned chlorofluorocarbons at least tenfold. It is becoming increasingly evident that the ozone hole has very little to do with CFCs, and tends to wax and wane for reasons that we do not yet understand.

The difference between the ozone-hole scare and the “global warming” scare is that the former caused the shutdown of only a few industries, while the latter would, if President Obama carries out his promise made during the election campaign, close down 95% of the carbon-emitting industries of the US. Since virtually all US industries have a “carbon footprint”, Obama has in effect announced his intention to destroy very nearly every working person’s job throughout the United States, and without any climate advantage whatsoever, for the emissions “saved” as Obama took the US back into the jungle of the Stone Age would pass to China, and would then increase.

It is no surprise then, that the dwindling minority of Democrats that still cares about the future of the working people who were once the mainstay of the party are deeply concerned at Obama’s destructive and pointless policy. Even if there were a “climate crisis” on the scale imagined by Gore, adaptation as and if necessary would be many times cheaper than attempting to prevent it by costly, artificial controls on carbon dioxide emissions, and by closing down the economy of the United States. As it is, the globe
continues to cool as the Sun’s activity rapidly declines from the 11,400-year peak in the last 70 years of the 20th century. So there is no need for any action at the moment.