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"Considerable presence" of skeptics

<http://www.dailytech.com/Myth+of+Consensus+Explodes+APS+Opens+Global+Warming+Debate/article12403.htm>

The American Physical Society, an organization representing nearly 50,000 physicists, has reversed its stance on climate change and is now proclaiming that many of its members disbelieve in human-induced global warming. The APS is also sponsoring public debate on the validity of global warming science. The leadership of the society had previously called the evidence for global warming "incontrovertible."

In a [posting](#) to the APS forum, editor Jeffrey Marke explains, "There is a considerable presence within the scientific community of people who do not agree with the IPCC conclusion that anthropogenic CO2 emissions are very probably likely to be primarily responsible for global warming that has occurred since the Industrial Revolution."

The APS is opening its debate with the publication of a [paper](#) by Lord Monckton of Brenchley, which concludes that climate sensitivity -- the rate of temperature change a given amount of greenhouse gas will cause -- has been grossly overstated by IPCC modeling. A low sensitivity implies additional atmospheric CO2 will have little effect on global climate.

Larry Gould, Professor of Physics at the University of Hartford and Chairman of the New England Section of the APS, called Monckton's paper an "expose of the IPCC that details numerous exaggerations and "extensive errors"

In an email to *DailyTech*, Monckton says, "I was dismayed to discover that the IPCC's 2001 and 2007 reports did not devote chapters to the central 'climate sensitivity' question, and did not explain in proper, systematic detail the methods by which they evaluated it. When I began to investigate, it seemed that the IPCC was deliberately concealing and obscuring its method."

According to Monckton, there is substantial support for his results, "in the peer-reviewed literature, most articles on climate sensitivity conclude, as I have done, that climate sensitivity must be harmlessly low."

Monckton, who was the science advisor to Britain's Thatcher administration, says natural variability is the cause of most of the Earth's recent warming. "In the past 70 years the Sun was more active than at almost any other time in the past 11,400 years ... Mars, Jupiter, Neptune's largest moon, and Pluto warmed at the same time as Earth."

No smoking hot spot

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24036736-7583,00.html>

David Evans | *July 18, 2008*

I DEVOTED six years to carbon accounting, building models for the Australian Greenhouse Office. I am the rocket scientist who wrote the carbon accounting model (FullCAM) that measures Australia's compliance with the Kyoto Protocol, in the land use change and forestry sector.

FullCAM models carbon flows in plants, mulch, debris, soils and agricultural products, using inputs such as climate data, plant physiology and satellite data. I've been following the global warming debate closely for years.

When I started that job in 1999 the evidence that carbon emissions caused global warming seemed pretty good: CO₂ is a greenhouse gas, the old ice core data, no other suspects.

The evidence was not conclusive, but why wait until we were certain when it appeared we needed to act quickly? Soon government and the scientific community were working together and lots of science research jobs were created. We scientists had political support, the ear of government, big budgets, and we felt fairly important and useful (well, I did anyway). It was great. We were working to save the planet.

But since 1999 new evidence has seriously weakened the case that carbon emissions are the main cause of global warming, and by 2007 the evidence was pretty conclusive that carbon played only a minor role and was not the main cause of the recent global warming. As Lord Keynes famously said, "When the facts change, I change my mind. What do you do, sir?"

There has not been a public debate about the causes of global warming and most of the public and our decision makers are not aware of the most basic salient facts:

1. The greenhouse signature is missing. We have been looking and measuring for years, and cannot find it.

Each possible cause of global warming has a different pattern of where in the planet the warming occurs first and the most. The signature of an increased greenhouse effect is a hot spot about 10km up in the atmosphere over the tropics. We have been measuring the atmosphere for decades using radiosondes: weather balloons with thermometers that radio back the temperature as the balloon ascends through the atmosphere. They show no hot spot. Whatsoever.

If there is no hot spot then an increased greenhouse effect is not the cause of global warming. So we know for sure that carbon emissions are not a significant cause of the global warming. If we had found the greenhouse signature then I would be an alarmist again.

When the signature was found to be missing in 2007 (after the latest IPCC report), alarmists objected that maybe the readings of the radiosonde thermometers might not be accurate and maybe the hot spot was there but had gone undetected. Yet hundreds of radiosondes have given the same answer, so statistically it is not possible that they missed the hot spot.

Recently the alarmists have suggested we ignore the radiosonde thermometers, but instead take the radiosonde wind measurements, apply a theory about wind shear, and run the results through their computers to estimate the temperatures. They then say that the results show that we cannot rule out the presence of a hot spot. ***If you believe that you'd believe anything.***

2. There is no evidence to support the idea that carbon emissions cause significant global warming. None. There is plenty of evidence that global warming has occurred, and theory suggests that carbon emissions should raise temperatures (though by how much is hotly disputed) but there are no observations by anyone that implicate carbon emissions as a significant cause of the recent global warming.

3. The satellites that measure the world's temperature all say that the warming trend ended in 2001, and that the temperature has dropped about 0.6C in the past year (to the temperature of 1980). Land-based temperature readings are corrupted by the "urban heat island" effect: urban areas encroaching on thermometer stations warm the micro-

climate around the thermometer, due to vegetation changes, concrete, cars, houses. Satellite data is the only temperature data we can trust, but it only goes back to 1979. NASA reports only land-based data, and reports a modest warming trend and recent cooling. The other three global temperature records use a mix of satellite and land measurements, or satellite only, and they all show no warming since 2001 and a recent cooling.

4. The new ice cores show that in the past six global warmings over the past half a million years, the temperature rises occurred on average 800 years before the accompanying rise in atmospheric carbon. Which says something important about which was cause and which was effect.

None of these points are controversial. The alarmist scientists agree with them, though they would dispute their relevance.

The last point was known and past dispute by 2003, yet Al Gore made his movie in 2005 and presented the ice cores as the sole reason for believing that carbon emissions cause global warming. **In any other political context our cynical and experienced press corps would surely have called this dishonest and widely questioned the politician's assertion.**

Until now the global warming debate has merely been an academic matter of little interest. Now that it matters, we should debate the causes of global warming.

So far that debate has just consisted of a simple sleight of hand: show evidence of global warming, and while the audience is stunned at the implications, simply assert that it is due to carbon emissions.

In the minds of the audience, the evidence that global warming has occurred becomes conflated with the alleged cause, and the audience hasn't noticed that the cause was merely asserted, not proved.

If there really was any evidence that carbon emissions caused global warming, don't you think we would have heard all about it ad nauseam by now?

The world has spent \$50 billion on global warming since 1990, and we have not found any actual evidence that carbon emissions cause global warming. Evidence consists of observations made by someone at some time that supports the idea that carbon emissions cause global warming. **Computer models and theoretical calculations are not evidence, they are just theory.**

What is going to happen over the next decade as global temperatures continue not to rise? The Labor Government is about to deliberately wreck the economy in order to reduce carbon emissions. **If the reasons later turn out to be bogus, the electorate is not going to re-elect a Labor government for a long time. When it comes to light that the carbon scare was known to be bogus in 2008, the ALP is going to be regarded as criminally negligent or ideologically stupid for not having seen through it.** And if the Liberals support the general thrust of their actions, they will be seen likewise.

The onus should be on those who want to change things to provide evidence for why the changes are necessary. The Australian public is eventually going to have to be told the evidence anyway, so it might as well be told before wrecking the economy.

Dr David Evans was a consultant to the Australian Greenhouse Office from 1999 to 2005.

Gore Likens 'Moon Shot' Goal on Climate to JFK

http://www.newsmax.com/insidecover/gore_electricity/2008/07/17/113670.html?s=al&promo_code=6629-1

Thursday, July 17, 2008 9:30 AM

WASHINGTON — Just as John F. Kennedy set his sights on the moon, Al Gore is challenging the nation to produce every kilowatt of electricity through wind, sun and other Earth-friendly energy sources within 10 years, an audacious goal he hopes the next president will embrace.

The Nobel Prize-winning former vice president said fellow Democrat Barack Obama and Republican rival John McCain are "way ahead" of most politicians in the fight against global climate change.

Rising fuel costs, climate change and the national security threats posed by U.S. dependence on foreign oil are conspiring to create "a new political environment" that Gore said will sustain bold and expensive steps to wean the nation off fossil fuels.

"I have never seen an opportunity for the country like the one that's emerging now," Gore told The Associated Press in an interview previewing a speech on global warming he was to deliver Thursday in Washington.

Gore said he fully understands the magnitude of the challenge.

The Alliance for Climate Protection, a bipartisan group that he chairs, estimates the cost of transforming the nation to so-called clean electricity sources at \$1.5 trillion to \$3 trillion over 30 years in public and private money. But he says it would cost about as much to build ozone-killing coal plants to satisfy current demand.

"This is an investment that will pay itself back many times over," Gore said. "It's an expensive investment but not compared to the rising cost of continuing to invest in fossil fuels."

Called an alarmist by conservatives, Gore has made combatting global warming his signature issue, a campaign that has been recognized worldwide — from an Academy Award to a Nobel Prize. He portrayed Thursday's speech as the latest and most important phase in his effort to build public opinion in favor of alternative fuels.

He knows politicians fear to act unless voters are willing to sacrifice — and demand new fuels.

"I hope to contribute to a new political environment in this country that will allow the next president to do what I think the next president is going to think is the right thing to do," Gore said. "But the people have to play a part." He likened his challenge to Kennedy's pledge in May 1961 to land a man on the moon by the end of the decade.

Gore narrowly lost the presidential race in 2000 to then-Texas Gov. George W. Bush after a campaign in which his prescient views on climate change took a back seat to other issues. While dismissing a suggestion that he pulled his punches eight years ago, Gore said his goal now is to "enlarge the political space" within which politicians can "deal with the climate challenge."

To meet his 10-year goal, Gore said nuclear energy output would continue at current levels while the nation dramatically increases its use of solar, wind, geothermal and so-called clean coal energy. Huge investments must also be made in technologies that reduce energy waste and link existing grids, he said.

If the nation fails to act, the cost of oil will continue to rise as fast-growing China and India increase demand, Gore said. Sustained addiction to oil also will place the nation at the mercy of oil-producing regimes, he said, and the globe would suffer irreparable harm.

Government experts recently predicted that, at the current rate, world energy demand will grow 50 percent over the next two decades. The Energy Information Administration also said in its long-range forecast to 2030 that the world is not close to abandoning fossil fuels despite their effect on global warming.

While electricity production is only part of the nation's energy and climate change problem, Gore said, "If we meet this challenge we will solve the rest of it."

Time To Focus On The Conservatives

http://web.me.com/sinfonia1/Global_Warming_Politics/A_Hot_Topic_Blog/Entries/2008/7/17_Time_To_Focus_On_The_Conservatives.html

Thursday, 17 July 2008

With my return to posting, I sense a new, yet real, opportunity for all of us in the UK who argue that 'global warming' - as distinct from climate change - is the dangerous nonsense of the age to begin to redirect British politics on this issue.

The sheer vapidness of the G8 Summit in Japan demonstrated once again, as if this were not already abundantly apparent, that world political leaders will not, and indeed can not, do anything significant to reduce so-called 'greenhouse gas' emissions. In the UK, this truth is daily underscored by a Government and a Labour Party that have seemingly lost control of the political agenda, from energy to schools, and which, accordingly, are in serious, if not terminal, decline. We are thus likely to be spared any further damaging and precipitate actions in the name of 'global warming' from this wounded animal [e.g., ['Brown defends fuel duty decision'](#), BBC Online Politics News, July 16].

The Tories

The focus must therefore shift to the Conservatives and to the Liberal Democrats. Despite the superficial 'greening' and eco-toffery of David Cameron, the Leader of the Conservatives, I know personally that a significant percentage of his party, including MPs and Councillors, remains deeply sceptical about the science, the economics, and, more importantly, the politics of 'global warming', a fact strongly supported yesterday by a report on a new survey in The Guardian [['Many Tory MPs still sceptical on climate change'](#), The Guardian, July 16]. This is encouraging, as "... a third of Tory MPs who responded to the survey questioned the existence of climate change and its link to human activity. Two-thirds said tackling climate change should not be a priority for local councils."

I thus believe it is time to broach the Conservatives head on over this issue, and to build on innate Tory scepticism, while, at the same time, seeking a realistic policy from them on the future of UK

energy. Moreover, the Tories could well be surprised at the political dividends to be gained from adopting a more realistic policy towards climate change. Millions of sensible, down-to-earth folk, not to mention hard-hit businesses, are currently seething over attempts to use the 'global warming' hysteria to raise taxes and to increase costs, especially where these are retrospective and retrogressive on the poor. Such folk are crying out for a rational economic party to take a more balanced and critical approach.

The Lib-Dems

Somewhat amazingly, this trend is even apparent in the wettest and weakest of the three main political parties, the Liberal Democrats, where, only this morning, their fresh-faced, undergraduate-style leader, Nick Clegg, has reversed long-standing policy to call for "tax cuts for those who need it most", as he prepares to present details of a new pledge to reduce the overall tax burden [['Lib Dems in taxation cut pledge'](#), original headline, BBC Online Politics News, July 17]. Of course, Clegg will continue to talk vaguely about compensating 'green taxes', but, in reality, he is encouragingly reverting to type, as a supporter of the so-called 'Orange Book Liberals', a group of prominent Liberal Democrats who have called for the party to shift to a more pro-market, less regulative agenda [see: ['Lib Dems call for pro-market move'](#), BBC Online Politics News, September 2, 2004]. Clegg was himself a contributor in 2004 to *The Orange Book: Reclaiming Liberalism*, in which he offered market liberal solutions for the reform of European institutions.

Targeting The Tories

But, above all, I believe we should now begin to try to turn the Conservative Party towards a more sensible agenda on climate change. This process has already been wonderfully assisted by the former Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer (June 1983 to October 1989), Nigel Lawson, with his elegant critique of 'global warming', [An Appeal to Reason. A Cool Look at Global Warming](#) (Duckworth, 2008), and by a series of excoriating attacks on the 'global warming' trope in the more Conservative newspapers, such as *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Daily Mail*, and *The Daily Express*. I believe that this process will become even more persuasive if, as is being widely predicted, world climate enters a 'cooling phase'. Cameron will, of course, continue to try his utmost to appear 'greenish' until the next General Election (he has to win over yet more Liberal Democrat and Green Party voters in certain parts of the country), but I fully expect that the tide of 'greenery' can be stemmed, if and when he achieves office.

As economic and political climate-change realists, this must be our prime political target. Unless Labour and Gordon Brown recover dramatically, which appears to be increasingly unlikely, they will do little more on 'global warming', while the Liberal Democrats are being squeezed by the Conservatives and appear to be changing tack somewhat in any case.

It is, accordingly, time to focus on the Conservative Party as our best hope for the development of more critical and rational policies on climate change. The credit crunch, the cost of energy, increasing unemployment, inflation rising steadily above 3.8%, near-recession, if not a full technical recession, the reduced competitiveness of UK business, and the embarrassing inability of politicians to reduce emissions should all focus the Conservative mind.

There can be no more pseudo-consensus on 'global warming'; the British people require, and demand, a genuine political choice. It is time for the Tories to become Conservatives again, and to follow their founder, [Sir Robert Peel](#) [pictured above], adopting "the redress of real grievances", but avoiding "a perpetual vortex of agitation"(*).

(*) Quotations from the famous [Tamworth Manifesto](#) of 1834.

Clean air legislation has an ironic side-effect

<http://www.dailytech.com/Europes+Warming+Attributed+to+Cleaner+Air+Not+Climate+Change/article12371.htm>

When the effects of global warming are discussed, Europe is often the focus. While many parts of the Earth have seen little or no warming in the past two decades, Europe has seen a rapid temperature increase of one full degree Centigrade. The rise has been a contributing factor in at least one deadly [heat wave](#) in recent years.

A new study suggests much of that warming isn't due to global warming at all, but rather a decrease in atmospheric pollution as a result of clean air legislation. The cleaner air has fewer small particles known as aerosols, which tend to block sunlight from reaching the Earth's surface. A reduction in aerosols leads to an effect known as "solar brightening," which increases surface warming.

The research was conducted by a team of 13 scientists, and led by Christian Ruckstuhl of the Institute for Atmospheric and Climate Science, in Zurich, Switzerland. By measuring an atmospheric characteristic known as optical depth, they determined that a substantial amount of solar brightening had taken place, leading to an increase in surface heat of 1 watt per square meter. Such a change is enough to add some some 360,000 megawatts of solar heat to Germany alone.

The measurements were conducted at a series of sites across Germany and Switzerland. Over the 20 year period from 1986-2006, a 60% decline in atmospheric aerosols was detected. The authors attribute this primarily to emission reductions of sulfur dioxide and carbon black particles, both of which were heavily generated in the 1970s and early 1980s by diesel engines and coal power plants. Clean air regulations requiring ULS (ultra-low sulfur) fuel and scrubber systems for coal-fired plants have dramatically reduced these emissions. The result is the observed solar brightening, which has "strongly contributed" to Europe's warming over the period.

In performing their analysis, the authors had to subtract out the years from 1991 to 1994, as the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines caused a spike in aerosol concentrations in Europe that more than doubled readings in some places.

The [research](#) appears in the June 26 edition of *Geophysical Research Letters*.

GLOBAL WARMING BECOMES A HOT POTATO FOR U.S. POLICY MAKERS

<http://thehill.com/leading-the-news/some-finding-goes-timing-inconvenient-2008-07-16.html>

The Hill, 16 July 2008

By Alexander Bolton

Al Gore hopes to put global warming back at the top of Washington's agenda Thursday, but some Democrats in Congress are questioning his timing when they are getting pummeled by Republicans over record gas prices.

Gore hopes to deliver a major speech on the environment at Constitution Hall in Washington that will "press the reset button on how people are looking at the energy crisis and the climate crisis," said Brian Hardwick, spokesman for Gore's Alliance for Climate Protection.

The former vice president-turned-elder statesman has achieved rock-star status within his party, not to mention a Nobel Prize, for his environmental activism. But Democrats' political troubles over the issue of gas prices and domestic drilling prompt some lawmakers to wonder about Gore's timing.

The question some Democrats have is whether a high-profile speech about the importance of protecting the environment might be exploited by Republicans who want to portray their ideological opponents as caring more about polar bears than Americans who have had to pay record prices for gasoline.

"It depends on how it's presented," said Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.), who emphasized he did not want to "pre-empt" Gore's speech by telling him what to say.

"I think the American public will be much more receptive to arguments about climate change when gas prices aren't so critical," said Rep. Zack Space, a freshman Democrat who represents a mostly rural district in Ohio.

Space and other Democrats say that gas prices have begun to overwhelm other issues.

Republicans are pouncing on Gore's re-emergence, holding it up as proof that Democrats favor environmental policies that further escalate energy costs.

"Mr. Gore will yet again call attention to the policies called for by radical environmentalists that would result in even higher gas prices," said Michael Steel, spokesman for House Republican Leader John Boehner (Ohio).

Gore's speech comes at a time when others are vying for the spotlight in the energy debate.

Prominent oilman T. Boone Pickens is also positioning himself at the forefront of the energy debate.

He has launched a national media campaign to advocate for wind energy with television and newspaper ads.

Some Democrats on the Hill speculate that Gore is trying to maintain his visibility on energy issues after winning the Nobel Peace Prize last year for his work on global climate change.

"It's an important speech to lay out his vision for the future of America in energy and climate," said Hardwick, who said it was Gore's first major speech on energy this year. "It will connect the dots between the energy crisis and the climate crisis."

Democratic lawmakers have backed away from the global warming debate in the past few weeks, concentrating instead on attempts to lower gas prices.

"The fact is the price issue of oil and gas has become a very dominant issue," said Sen. Byron Dorgan (N.D.), chairman of the Senate Democratic Policy Committee.

Republicans have pressed for expanded domestic drilling, throwing Democrats on the defensive.

Republican strategists view drilling as one of the few clear policy advantages they have over Democrats.

Senate Democrats considered global-warming legislation after the Memorial Day recess but quickly dropped the issue after a Republican filibuster. Since then they have focused on proposals closely related to gas prices: taxing the windfall profits of oil companies, curbing oil speculation in the futures markets and pressing oil companies to develop millions of acres in untapped federal land under lease.

Surging energy prices have forced Democratic leaders to grapple with dissension in their ranks. They have postponed consideration of legislation seeking to strip energy companies of untapped federal leases, fearing the issue could spin out of control and into Republicans' favor.

Global warming has divided Democrats such as Rep. John Dingell (Mich.), chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and Rep. Edward Markey (Mass.), chairman of the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, who supports stricter curbs on carbon emissions.

Dingell reminded his colleagues of the cost of curbing greenhouse gases by introducing an expensive carbon tax proposal last year.

Dingell said in a C-SPAN interview last year that he questioned whether "the American people are willing to pay what this is really going to cost them" and said his proposed tax would let him "see how people really feel about this."

But Rep. Rick Boucher (D-Va.), chairman of the Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Air quality, disputed arguments that global warming legislation would make energy more expensive.

"A properly drafted climate control measure would not be economically disruptive," said Boucher.

"Those who oppose a climate control measure will make the argument that it should not be considered at a time of high energy prices, but that is a bogus argument."

Environmental activists are hoping for big things from Gore.

"I think this is a teachable moment," said Anna Aurilio, the Washington director of Environment America, a coalition of 26 state environmental groups. "People know that we're at a crossroads for the policies of the past," which she described as offshore drilling, expanded domestic drilling and the expanded consumption of fossil fuels.

Some lawmakers warn that Americans are angry about gas prices and don't necessarily want to be reminded about the economic sacrifices that may be necessary to reduce the nation's oil consumption.

"People's anger about a lot of things is crystallized as a result of the gas prices," said Lautenberg. "The anger is focused by the visibility [of inflated prices] at the pump."

Lautenberg warned that Americans aren't eager to hear about the need for more financial sacrifices if there's not a possible reward in the not-too-distant future.

"If it looks like it's just a continuation of an attack of our economy and family budgets, then it starts getting dispiriting," he said of innovative yet expensive energy proposals.

CARBON COPIES DOWN UNDER

The Wall Street Journal, 17 July 2008

http://online.wsj.com/public/article_print/SB121623522472659303.html

The global warming craze officially landed in Canberra yesterday, as the Labor government released a sketch of what it calls "one of the highest priorities of the Australian government": its carbon trading scheme.

That should signal the beginning of an important debate about the costs of this grand plan. But can the opposition Liberal Party muster a coherent argument?

Yesterday's 516-page report calls for a huge bureaucratic expansion and undefined costs to industry. Canberra has pledged to reduce emissions to 60% of 2000 levels by 2050, and it wants to set emissions caps this year. The government hasn't yet said how much companies will have to pay for all this. But they did say electricity prices could rise 16%, and fuel, 9%, when emissions trading begins in 2010.

You'd expect the Liberals to be howling. Instead, they're as green as Al Gore. Part of this is a legacy issue. Former Liberal Prime Minister John Howard embraced the idea of an emissions trading scheme by 2012 when he saw then-opposition leader Kevin Rudd gaining support by fearmongering about global warming. Mr. Howard said he'd implement carbon trading only if costs to the Australian economy were capped. His commitment has, for now, left the Liberals mostly on the same page as Labor.

Current Liberal leader Brendan Nelson hasn't tried very hard to distance himself from Mr. Howard's platform. He hasn't questioned the science underlining global warming. (Yesterday's report takes as truth the United Nations' discredited Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change estimates.) He's repeatedly said that he supports an emissions trading scheme without seriously exploring other, more transparent, forms of taxation on industry - or opposing the tax altogether. He hasn't questioned the wisdom of the schemes Australia already has in place to pick winners among clean energy industries, such as mandatory renewable energy targets.

Mr. Nelson's only attempt to rejig the Liberals' position was a feeble try last week to step back from that 2012 implementation date and to ask that Australia - which emits only 1.5% of global greenhouse gas emissions - not act until big emitters like China lead the way. But as soon as he floated these common-sense ideas, his deputy Julie Bishop, shadow treasurer Malcolm Turnbull and shadow environment minister Greg Hunt all publicly cried foul. Mr. Nelson fell back into line. So much for leadership.

Labor is taking full advantage of the Liberals' disarray. Yesterday's report blithely asserts that an emissions trading scheme will touch "around 1,000 Australian companies in total," or "less than 1%" of Australian businesses. In reality, forcing companies to buy pollution permits would raise the cost of energy production and hit every corner of the world's 15th-largest economy.

Labor's report admits as much, noting there will be "adjustment costs" and pledging to offset energy price hikes by temporarily cutting excise taxes on gasoline. But Climate Change Minister Penny Wong played down any change of making such cuts permanent, suggesting yesterday that the Labor government would instead buffer the immediate impact on low-income families through cash handouts.

As for the economic havoc Labor's global warming plan would wreak, you know it's bad when even the labor unions - the Labor Party's core constituency - cry foul. The 130,000-member Australia's Workers' Union, the country's largest blue-collar union, and a local think tank estimate that the cost to the aluminum industry alone in job losses could range "from A\$285 million to A\$1.124 billion."

Given rising fuel costs, now is the perfect time for the Liberals to point out the economic cost of Labor's global warming scheme. But they can't do so effectively if they are carbon-copies of Labor. The public may not understand carbon trading schemes, but they understand hits to their pocketbook. It's time for the Liberals to start pounding that message home, in unison.

What is it about global warming that turns sane men into ranting alarmists?

<http://www.spectator.co.uk/print/the-magazine/comment/808251/what-is-it-about-global-warming-that-turns-sane-men-into-ranting-alarmists.shtml>

The Spectator, July 2008

By Neil Collins

The science of climate change is far from settled, but one thing's for sure: energy bills are set to rise. So why don't Labour's gurus offer practical policy ideas instead of doom-laden prophecies?

Nicholas Stern doesn't want to alarm us, but by the end of the century he fears there may be alligators at the North Pole. Anthony Giddens is even more apocalyptic. He thinks dramatic climate change could happen in less than 10 years. Golly, we're all doomed, then. Might as well jump into the Hummer and burn gas before it all runs out. Sorry kids, we screwed it up. All we can offer you is subsistence farming and a pony and trap – that's if the pony hasn't died of heatstroke or fallen into the alligator swamp.



Just what is it about the subject of global warming that makes normally (fairly) sane men into evangelical ranters? I can't pretend I've ever been a fan of Lord Giddens, Tony Blair's friend who invented the Third Way, a philosophy which can be summed up as: steer for the middle, and you'll upset everybody, but not by enough to stop you muddling through. It's more like old-fashioned compromise than philosophy, and his interminable books dress it up in impenetrable language. But hey, he's built a career on the obfuscation of a simple idea, and good luck to him.

Lord Stern is a career civil servant, long enough in the trade to sense what his masters want almost before they ask, so we shouldn't be surprised at the conclusions of his report into climate change. Make it as shocking as you can,' might have been the brief. 'It'll give us a cast-iron excuse for more taxes, and we need the money.'

Thus it was that the pair of peers found themselves last month addressing a conference organised by Goldman Sachs, telling the assembled fat-cats that we have a one in two chance of destroying civilisation within the lifetime of our children (Stern), and that leaving it to the market is not a possible solution (Giddens). Both speakers claimed to point to scientific evidence to back up their visions of doom. Fortunately for the bankers and the planet, neither Giddens nor Stern is a climatologist. Stern studied maths and Giddens (you might have guessed) sociology.

You might have guessed, too, that I am not entirely convinced by either of these eminent speakers. It's an uncomfortable truth that the science here is far from settled, despite the claims of those on the warmer side of the climate-change debate. (Incidentally, if Barack Obama becomes president and gives a substantial role to Al Gore, then we really are all doomed.) The David who is confronting these Goliaths is called Benny Peiser, a social anthropologist from Liverpool John Moores University. The smooth, round pebbles he is using for ammunition are fired from a website called CCNet.

Peiser trawls the internet, and any other sources that take his fancy, to send research, comments and feedback to the 6,000 similarly sceptical recipients who have signed up (free) for his emails. Each one is carefully sourced, so readers can click through and assess it for themselves. This is proper scientific publishing for the Internet age, providing a track back to verify such

embarrassing (to the warmers) facts that sea levels are not rising, that Antarctica is not melting, and that the 1990s were not the warmest decade of the last century.

You would think a fine public service, disseminating scientific knowledge, would be welcomed. Yet to true believers, man-made global warming is the new religion. Few would go quite as far as the Bishop of Stafford, who claimed that by refusing to 'face the truth' about climate change, we're collectively as guilty as Josef Fritzl, who locked his daughter in the basement for 24 years and fathered seven children by her. The bishop's analogy is that our behaviour locks our children into a world with no future and 'throws away the key'.

Stern is just as cheerful, if less melodramatic. He says we're all doomed unless the world halves its CO₂ emissions by 2050, which requires a cut of 80 per cent in the developed world. Well, Nicky old boy, forecasting is always difficult, especially for the future, but if we need to cut four-fifths off our energy use in just 42 years, I can tell you we won't do it, not even if oil goes to \$500 a barrel. The existing pledge for 20 per cent of energy from renewables by 2020 hasn't a prayer of being met either, as the government knew full well when it made it. Of course, even if Labour is in power then, those making the pledge will have long since gone.

The fatuous slogan for the Scottish Climate Change Programme is 'Do a little, change a lot', as if we can save the planet by switching to those dismal low-energy bulbs and turning off the stand-by on the telly. This is gesture politics at its most pathetic, but it's hardly surprising that people believe it when bodies like the Royal Society have abandoned science in favour of polemic.

In June last year, the society presented eight 'misleading arguments' to counter the climate-change sceptics. The paper attacks those who disagree with the party line as seeking 'to distort and undermine the science of climate change and deny the seriousness of the potential consequences of global warming'. It has taken the Centre for Policy Studies, a right-wing think tank, a whole year to respond, but it is at least a scientific response, and it highlights the weaknesses and plain mistakes in the global warmers' bible, the report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The idea of the IPCC would be familiar to students of The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, where a computer was asked to provide the answer to life, the universe and everything: it turned out to be 42. Likewise, the IPCC would provide the definitive answer to whether the world was getting warmer, and whether it was our fault. Since the prospects for grants for further research would be much diminished if the answer was no, it was not hard to predict what it would say.

In its predictions for rising temperature, however, it has been no more accurate than other weather forecasters. This decade has been a bitter disappointment to the warmers, and North America has just experienced its coldest winter for 30 years. The promise or threat of Mediterranean summers in Britain has been broken. The warmers now forecast that the warming is just resting, and that it will resume from 2010. We'll see.

However, it's easy to sneer. Whether we're warming or not, we can be pretty confident that energy is going to be expensive. The oil price is a leading indicator which sets the cost of gas, coal and thus electricity, and if we want to maintain a decent standard of living, we're going to have to use it much more efficiently.

The Climate Change Bill, currently struggling through parliament, ought to be a step along this road, but it's not. It's more like the road to hell, paved with good intentions, but woefully short of practical measures. It contains targets and goals and promises to 'maximise social and economic benefits and minimise costs to the UK as we pursue these goals'. Well, golly gee, that's groundbreaking stuff. As Julian Morris of the International Policy Network points out in his critique of the Bill, there is no logic in the arbitrary target for emissions reduction (although it's not 42 per cent).

There is plenty that we could do, if the government would stop grandstanding and help prepare us for much higher home heating bills. An intelligent letter to the Financial Times from one Abby Taubin of London SE22 last month pointed out that with a little financial encouragement she could put in geo-thermal heating and rainwater loos tomorrow to add to her ten photovoltaic roof panels. 'Within a year my house would be a net exporter of electricity and carbon neutral. I live in a very, very ordinary house.' Instead, she receives peanuts for any electricity exported to the grid, 'and I get a kick up the proverbial as thanks'.

Most of us would be pleasantly surprised to get anything else from this useless administration, but if the problem is a quarter as bad as the doomsday duo of Stern and Giddens say, they might help fashion policies that make sense, rather than generating yet more hot air.

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Economic climate casts dampener at G-8 meet

<http://www.livemint.com/2008/07/16224309/Economic-climate-casts-dampene.html>

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"It is the economy, stupid!" The economic and political concerns dampened the desire of world leaders at the Group of Eight (G-8) summit in Japan to ride the hot air balloon of climate change. That's no surprise. In any contest between a present crisis and future threat, the present always wins. The G-8 leaders are hardcore politicians and recognize that in hard times, politicians must not get carried away by the future. This explains why they agreed to a future goal: 50% reduction in carbon emission by 2050, without any signposts towards that goal for the present.

The politicos seem to have drawn their lessons from the Kyoto Protocol, two decades earlier, when they burnt their fingers by accepting short-term goals of emission cuts by 2012. Those targets will, of course, elude most signatories. And so, the leaders at this G-8 meet expressed a desire to reduce emissions by 2050, when few can be held accountable.

Clearly, it suited all not to push the agenda too far. With the economic slowdown, funding for new investments in alternative energy and desire for technology transfer will inevitably get squeezed. Consequently, there is little inducement for major emerging economies to even consider climate goals. This prospect was not lost among the climate change community. As the G-8 leaders were gathering in Japan, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) made a pitch to the European Union to take the lead role. A group of senior corporate executives publicly appealed for funds to facilitate the development of energy- and emission-related technologies. It was clear that, in hard times, everyone could do with some spare funds!

The National Action Plan for Climate Change (NAPCC) that Prime Minister Manmohan Singh released a week before he left for the G-8 summit seems to have accepted this political reality. And so, India found itself in a comfortable situation at the side meetings at G-8; none of the core points of NAPCC was questioned.

With oil prices at record highs, it is natural that NAPCC will be seen more in the context of energy security, not just climate change.

Virtually all the eight missions of NAPCC are policies identified much earlier, but progress has been mixed. NAPCC talks of benchmarking certain energy-intensive sectors. But some of the

sectors that have seen dramatic improvement in energy efficiency are those that experienced greater global competition. So the lesson is that, rather than setting industry-specific benchmarks, deepening the reforms process can greatly help in improving industrial competitiveness and efficiency.

Perhaps, it is this relationship between economy, energy efficiency and emissions which made Singh assert that India is unlikely to cross the per capita energy consumption and emission levels of richer, industrialized countries. Increased commerce and competition will motivate Indian companies to leapfrog to higher levels of efficiency with increased access to global technologies.

However, it has dawned on policymakers that there is a real and rising threat of using climate change arguments to restrict commerce. With economic slowdown, the political climate could easily turn protectionist in the richer countries. Thus, it is even more important for India to identify and argue for the economic and environmental benefits of liberalization and free trade.

A key element of India's position is that the developmental aspirations of its people cannot be sacrificed for emission targets. India's per capita emission, at 1.2 tonne, is far lower than the world average of 3 tonnes-plus, and a fraction of that in rich countries. Besides, the "historical responsibility" for the anthropogenic greenhouse gases (GHGs) in the atmosphere lay squarely with the developed world. NAPCC also questions the role of man-made GHGs - it observes changes in climatic behaviour in India, such as a 0.4 degree Centigrade increase in surface temperature over the past century or about 1mm per year sea-level rise in northern Indian Ocean or wider variation in rainfall patterns. Yet, it affirms that no firm link between documented changes and warming due to anthropogenic climate change has yet been established.

This vital question needs to be read along with the last of NAPCC missions, which talks of the strategic knowledge sharing platform to identify challenges of, and response to, climate change and funding for focused research. This can help open the debate to more critical scientific scrutiny and generate more creative policy responses.

IPCC's repeated assertion that there is a scientific consensus behind its reports and policy prescriptions reflects its own unscientific foundation. Science progresses by continuously questioning existing orthodoxy. The earth's climate may or may not be changing, but the global economic slowdown and the rise of India among the emerging economies have opened a window of opportunity to change the climate of discourse, by grounding it to real-world concerns. Ultimately, the hard reality is that the political leaders can no longer afford to sacrifice the poor today for the sake of the rich tomorrow. India can legitimately play a leadership role and change the climate of discussion on climate change.

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GREY SKIES ARE GOING TO CLEAR UP?

The National, 13 July 2008

<http://www.thenational.ae/article/20080713/Frontiers/415021450/1036>

Robert Matthews

There is a word that should be in the lexicon of anyone trying to protect the environment. Like *schadenfreude*, it's one of those German words that has no direct equivalent even in the vast vocabulary of the English language. The word is *Verschlimmbesserung* - literally a "worse bettering". And as the results of studies published over the last week show, it is all too apt a description of many attempts to "improve" our environment.

Last week a draft report from the World Bank confirmed what many have suspected for some time: that world food prices are being driven upwards largely because of the increasing use of biofuels. Such energy sources have been long been touted as environmentally friendly because, unlike traditional fossil fuels, the carbon released when they are burnt is mopped up by the crops from which they are derived.

Encouraged by their governments, farmers around the world have now switched land use to biofuel crops at the expense of food production - with consequences now being felt by consumers around the world.

This is a classic example of a *schlimbesserung*: a change made with the best of intentions which turns out to have an unwelcome downside. In the case of biofuels, it's far from being the only one. Other research published last week has added to concern that in turning uncultivated land over to biofuel crops, the decay and burning of existing vegetation will inject enough carbon into the atmosphere to cancel out any net benefit for centuries.

There are also growing suspicions that current biofuels emit far more of the potent greenhouse gas nitrous oxide than previously thought - so much, in fact, that the fuels may actually boost global warming.

According to one recent study, rapeseed biodiesel, which makes up the bulk of biofuel production in Europe, produces up to 70 per cent more warming through the release of nitrous oxide than it cancels out by reduced fossil fuel use.

As if all this wasn't enough, a study by Stanford University suggests such biofuels are also a richer source of ozone, a toxic gas which may boost deaths from asthma and respiratory disease.

Many environmentalists are already calling on governments to rethink their policies and focus on so-called second generation biofuels, extracted from trees and grasses. Yet it's already possible to see another unintended consequence looming. Vegetation such as trees affects the reflectivity of the Earth, and thus its ability to bounce back some of the sun's heat back into space. Covering large swathes of light ground with dark trees could thus lead to more heat being absorbed, boosting temperatures.

This effect has been studied in detail by scientists at the US-based Carnegie Institution in Washington DC, who found that only trees planted in equatorial regions are likely to produce a net benefit. Those planted further away - especially in high latitudes, where snow is common - are likely to lead to increased global warming.

The upshot of all this is clear: when it comes to the environment, a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. What isn't at all clear is whether it will ever be possible to have sufficient knowledge to make big environmental policy decisions with any confidence.

The signs are not good. Past experience shows that environmentalists are clearly right about one thing: the interconnectedness of nature. But those connections are both ill-understood and exceptionally hard to capture mathematically - making attempts to predict the impact of policy decisions the devil's own job.

Nowhere is this more clear than in the huge effort put into creating computer models of the world's climate. These attempt to capture the incredibly complex interaction of the oceans, land and atmosphere and thus reveal the impact of various scenarios on global temperatures.

As anyone who has ever been let down by a weather forecast knows, this is easier said than done. The blame is often put on the so-called Butterfly Effect, whereby even small errors in a computer simulation - caused by the proverbial flap of a butterfly's wings - produces dramatically different outcomes. In the case of climate models, however, this isn't the real problem. Roughly speaking, the impact of these small errors tends to average out as the models run further into the future.

The real problem with computer simulations with the climate is more familiar: "garbage in, garbage out" - or what the experts call model error. In other words, the reliability of such simulation depends crucially on what's fed into them. And in the case of climate models the principal source of such error is held to be how they deal with the effect of clouds.

In an ongoing experiment at Oxford University, a climate model is being run repeatedly with different values for the effect of clouds and moisture. Worryingly, early results revealed that the impact on the simulation can be dramatic, with forecasts ranging from a staggering 11.5 deg C increase in global temperatures to a slight cooling.

Now climate modellers may have another, even more important, source of uncertainty to contend with: atmospheric pollution. Research published last week by a team led by Dr Christian Ruckstuhl of the Institute for Atmospheric and Climate Science in Switzerland found that dramatic reductions in industrial pollution achieved by European countries has served to drive temperatures up far more rapidly than by global warming alone.

In other words, the clean-up campaigns are another schlimmbesserung, with the airborne gunk actually having a powerful - and beneficial - impact on temperatures, by reflecting the sun's heat back into space.

Dr Ruckstuhl and his colleagues describe the sheer size of the effect as "very surprising". But with no current climate models taking it into account, anyone using computer simulations to guide policy decisions can only hope this latest schlimmbesserung doesn't have consequences best summed up by a short Americanism: "Doh !".

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