

ON INQUIRIES REGARDING THE
PHYSICS AND SOCIETY AFFAIR
OVER PUBLICATION OF “CLIMATE
SENSITIVITY RECONSIDERED”

by Christopher Monckton

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**On Inquiries Regarding the *Physics and Society* Affair
over Publication of *Climate Sensitivity Reconsidered***

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*Responding to enquiries to me as the author of "Climate Sensitivity Reconsidered"*¹

The paper was reviewed in meticulous detail by Professor Alvin Saperstein, an eminent Professor of Physics who is perhaps best known for maintaining a database of the current locations of all civil and military satellites. His approach was simple but robust: since the paper was to appear not in a climate journal but in a journal read by general physicists who might not be familiar with climatological terms and equations, he asked me to lengthen the paper considerably so that every term unfamiliar to him was defined, and every equation whose derivation was not made clear was thoroughly explained.

He also asked me to justify various assertions that I had not proven: for instance, the proposition that the IPCC finds the sum of all non-CO₂ anthropogenic radiative forcings net-negative. The result was a paper that, in his opinion, would make "a major contribution to the literature", and he kindly recommended it for publication, a recommendation that was endorsed by the commissioning editor, Jeffrey Marke, who added that he too was very pleased with the paper.

Normally, *Physics and Society* publishes papers at a maximum length of 2500 words: however, I had obtained Jeffrey Marke's permission to write at twice that length in order to provide a complete overview of the climate sensitivity question, and the clarifications for the general physicist requested by Professor Saperstein lengthened the paper to 8000 words - more than three times the usual maximum length. And that was significant, for this was the last printed edition of *Physics and Society*, and there was no small cost in running so lengthy a paper.

I was as baffled as you are when, ten days after the publication of the paper that *Physics and Society* had requested me to submit, a disclaimer to the effect that the paper had not been scientifically reviewed appeared above my paper in the internet edition of *Physics and Society*, and a further disclaimer to the effect that *Physics and Society* does not publish reviewed articles appeared above the entire publication. All previous editions of *Physics and Society* had previously contained statements that it published "reviewed articles" in which "technical detail" was encouraged. I investigated. The following, as best I can make it out, is what happened.

The commissioning editor, Jeffrey Marke, had approached me at the kind recommendation of Dr. Jerry Marsh of the Argonne National Laboratory, who had written a paper in the previous edition of *Physics and Society* questioning

¹ Also see: http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/images/stories/papers/monckton/monckton_letter_pys.pdf

the mathematics underlying the official "global warming" notion. Dr. Marque had asked Dr. Marsh for the contact details of people who had a track-record of studying the "global warming" question from the perspective of Huxleian skepticism (i.e. skepticism of *all* sides of any scientific question). Dr. Marsh supplied five names, of which mine was one. Dr. Marque wrote to all five, and I was the only one who replied indicating a willingness to produce a paper. I referred Dr. Marque to a guest weblog I had contributed to the scientific website of Dr. Roger Pielke, Sr., and asked him whether the level of technical detail in that weblog was what he required for *Physics and Society*. He read the weblog and said that indeed he did want plenty of technical detail such as that which I had provided in the weblog. Accordingly, I wrote the paper in good faith, at Dr. Marque's request.

However, the publication of the paper greatly upset the well-funded, highly-organized and surprisingly small faction that is (with increasing desperation) promoting the "global warming" notion. They contacted two powerful allies within the American Physical Society, that controls *Physics and Society*.

First, they contacted the Chairman of the Forum on Physics and Society, Lawrence Krauss, who has never studied climate sensitivity but is nevertheless a known true-believer in the new religion. He was furious that so long, detailed and devastating an argument against the official position had appeared in a publication under his control, and it was he who drafted the first version of the disclaimer that appeared above my paper. The first version not only said, mendaciously, that the paper had not been scientifically reviewed, but also said, mendaciously, that the world's scientific community disagreed with its conclusions [not a sound argument against publication], and, again mendaciously, that the Council of the American Physical Society disagreed with it [the Council had not met and had taken no such decision]. I protested. The disclaimer was amended to remove the second and third lies, but the first remained. Why? Because the faction that controls the debate does not want any peer-reviewed paper published that questions the imagined magnitude of "global warming", because the IPCC, which claims to review all peer-reviewed papers, would then be compelled to take account of it. Worse, other papers might cite it, whereupon other researchers might look at my equations in more detail and discover that they represented the truth. This, of course, would have been catastrophic for the promoters of the new religion.

Next, the APS' database manager, a known campaigner on "global warming" from the extreme Left, was called in to write a 3000-word rebuttal of my paper. He did so and, in accordance with the usual practice, sent me a copy. I was readily able to answer the generally rather insubstantial and often scientifically-baseless points he had made and, within 12 hours, I had produced a 3000-word refutation of his rebuttal. In accordance with the usual practice in academic circles, I copied the rebuttal and my refutation to the APS' database manager, and also to the editors of *Physics and Society*, with a request that the rebuttal and my refutation should appear, as is normal, in the next following edition of *Physics and Society*.

However, Lawrence Krauss again intervened, for my refutation of the rebuttal was, in the words of one scientific reviewer to whom I sent it, "crushing". To accord me the usual courtesy of allowing me to respond to the rebuttal would make matters far worse for the alarmists. So the editors did not agree to publish the "global warming" campaigner's attempted rebuttal and my refutation of it. I arranged for both to be published instead at www.scienceandpublicpolicy.org².

By now, Fellows and members of the APS, in large numbers, began writing to its President asking him why I had been so unreasonably treated. Krauss thereupon decided to try to discredit me publicly in the lay news media in the UK, so that he could then circulate any article that appeared.

First, he approached *The Guardian*, which has always supported every Leftist cause and is particularly unquestioning in its enthusiastic endorsement of the "global warming" notion. *The Guardian* would not touch the story, because it had been compelled to publish a very strongly worded correction by me after one of its correspondents, a zoologist of no particular eminence, had wrongly and scathingly criticized me for misunderstanding the fundamental equation of radiative transfer (it was in fact the zoologist who had misunderstood the equation).

Next, Krauss tried *The Independent*, another Left-leaning true-believer in the new religion. That paper's science editor rang me and asked me why I had misrepresented myself to the editors of *Physics and Society* as a doctor of science. I explained that I had done no such thing: it was the editors who had requested the paper from me, and, when they had asked me for my qualifications, I had replied accurately.

Krauss was more successful with *New Scientist*, once a good journal of science for the layman. It ran a full-page article by Krauss saying that I had misled the editors into thinking I was a doctor of science. The only basis they could have had for any such conclusion was the quality of the paper I had submitted and the ease with which I had been able to substantiate all of the propositions and equations that they had questioned.

New Scientist kept up the attack on me in four successive weekly issues, and would not allow me any right of reply. I complained to the Press Complaints Commission, which ordered the editor to print a letter from me setting out the true position. The editor of *New Scientist* altered the agreed letter without the consent of the Commission and brought forward its publication by a week so that I would have no chance to comment.

In particular, the *New Scientist* removed all mention of the scientific review of my paper by Professor Saperstein. The Press Complaints Commission censured

² http://scienceandpublicpolicy.org/monckton/monckton_rebutted.html

the editor for having acted behind its back, and wrote to him requiring an undertaking that his misconduct would not be repeated.

In the next following edition of *Physics and Society*, a historian of science wrote an article in which he attacked me in discourteous terms, but he did not attack the scientific content of my paper, which remains unchallenged in the peer-reviewed literature to this day.

The first half of the paper faithfully reproduces the IPCC's method of evaluating climate sensitivity, providing a clearer exposition than that of the IPCC itself: the second half draws attention to various exaggerations by the IPCC, and establishes those exaggerations by reference to the peer-reviewed literature. The conclusion is that climate sensitivity to atmospheric CO₂ enrichment is likely to be <1 K at CO₂ doubling.

The two editors of *Physics and Society* were sacked at Krauss' instigation. Had they stood their ground and refused to publish his lying disclaimers, it was he who would have had to resign, for lying is not scientific.

I have set out this history at some length because it is a not uninteresting example of the difficulties which researchers who question the current orthodoxy face when trying to get their results published.

I am by no means alone in having been treated with what you may think is unreasonable discourtesy on the part of *Physics and Society*. I was targeted with particular savagery by Krauss because my paper is a deadly threat to the prevailing orthodoxy and because it was written by a layman. If even a non-scientist can see through the scientific nonsense that is the "global warming" notion, then in due time the public are going to be asking why they have been paying so much to so many climate scientists for so long to come up with so many readily-falsifiable conclusions.

I am now working on the draft of a second paper, *Climate Trends Reconsidered*, which benchmarks the official predictions of CO₂ and temperature change against observed reality and demonstrates that the predictions have thus far proven exaggerated. The draft has already passed informal review by a professor of physics and a doctor of mathematics, and will be submitted shortly to a learned journal. But, for reasons you will understand, it will not be submitted to *Physics and Society*. - Monckton of Brenchley

The statements, views and representations are those of the author and not necessarily those of SPPI.