

Global Warming: Science Falsely So Called

by Charles Whitaker

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Everyone talks about the weather, but no one ever does anything about it. So goes an old-as-the-hills adage that in fact lies at the crux of the current global warming debate. The issue boils down to this: *Can anyone do anything about the weather?*

The answer is a categorical "yes and no." Yes, planting a number of trees around your house can lower the temperature in your patio. And yes, the Romans' millennium-long, tree-cutting binge in North Africa did result in the desiccation of the region. An area that once enjoyed a temperate Mediterranean climate has come to experience searing heat and debilitating winds. Tree cutting with abandon in Palestine over many centuries probably explains today's desert-like conditions there. David, who as a boy kept sheep and shared the environment with lions and bears, would not recognize Palestine's arid waste today.

But, no, mankind is unable to effect *global* changes in climate. Fluctuations in average global temperatures appear to correlate with solar activity and indeed with supernova activity within the Milky Way. These are variables clearly beyond man's control. Yet, in their pride, many scientists offer the "anthropogenic hypothesis" as an explanation for today's global warming trends. That is, they assert the warming is taking place *because* of human activity. Specifically, they blame man's burning of fossil fuels (that is, coal and oil) to generate power. This combustion, they aver, pours hydrocarbons, "greenhouse gases," into the atmosphere. More airborne hydrocarbons increase the levels of carbon dioxide in the air—increase the earth's "greenhouse" effect, which in turn results in warming temperatures worldwide. These scientists assert that mankind is indeed doing a whole lot to change the weather.

Is their position defensible? In his article, "Strange Science" (*First Things*, November 2004, pp. 5-7), Thomas S. Derr, Professor of Religion and Ethics at Smith College and the author of *Environmental Ethics and Christian Humanism*, argues that it is not. In fact, he holds that a growing number of "skeptical" scientists take issue with the global warming thesis. Their writing, he submits, has been largely and effectively suppressed by a closed-minded confraternity of scientists and political leaders, with the media doing the dirty work. He cites, for example, the vitriol generated by advocates of global warming over Björn Lomborg's *The Skeptical Environmentalist*. Unable to refute the statistics presented and conclusions reached by this former leader of Greenpeace, they resorted to *ad hominem* rhetoric—like name calling—in their "fiercely hateful reaction."

Just the Facts, Ma'am

Scientists are not without tools to determine the facts. Tree rings, whose distance from each other correlates with temperature, as well as precipitation, is one way to determine mean global temperature in the past. Taking core samples from ice fields is another tool. Other tools include coral growth, isotope data from seafloor sediment, as well as insect populations. Even "historical reconstruction" can be of use.

For example, the Norsemen discovered a "green" Greenland. When they first settled there over a thousand years ago, they were able to crop the land. Today, Greenland is "quite inhospitable to

settlement, let alone to agriculture." Greenland has actually become *colder* in the last millennium. Indeed, historical data, as well as all the tools mentioned above, "point to a very warm climate in medieval times" (AD 800-1300). This abnormally warm period is called the Medieval Climate Optimum. After about AD 1300, the world experienced a "little ice age" until about 1800, when mean temperatures again began to rise. After World War II, things began to cool down again, prompting the National Science Board, in 1974, to predict "the dawning of the next glacial age." *Newsweek* actually reported that "meteorologists were almost unanimous in the view that the trend will reduce agricultural productivity for the rest of the century." Surprise: in 1975, temperatures began to rise again. A "unanimous" view is not necessarily a right view, is it?

It is clear that these fluctuations in temperature relate to something besides human influence. For example, note that the Medieval Climate Optimum (AD 800-1300) took place when world population was much lower than today and *before* the industrial revolution. That is, it occurred before the world witnessed anything like the widespread burning of fossil fuels we see today. Obviously, there are other causative factors at play.

A general warming of the globe is taking place. This is incontrovertible. However, human activity is not the cause. *Moreover, human activity will not reverse the trend.* The Kyoto Treaty, even if assiduously followed, would lower the planet's mean temperature "maybe two-hundredths of a degree Celsius, or at most six-hundredths of a degree." Yet, it would impose immense economic costs on the United States, requiring that she pare back her energy consumption by 25% by 2012. No wonder the U.S. Senate rejected the treaty by a 95-0 vote!

Europe, which is signatory to Kyoto, is falling far behind in its commitments to cut back energy consumption. The European Union has reduced consumption 4.7% from 1990 levels, far from the 2012 target of 8%. Japan is likewise running behind. What is interesting is that Kyoto exempts the developing nations, such as Brazil and India, which so heavily contribute to current levels of greenhouse gases. Indeed, "China will become the world's biggest source of carbon dioxide emissions in just a few years." Yet, she is doing virtually nothing to curtail her consumption of fossil fuels. Clearly, Kyoto will not turn the situation around.

Nor should it! Professor Derr argues that, overall, higher mean global temperatures are good, not bad. Pointing out what so many have forgotten—that "carbon dioxide is not a pollutant," he argues that its increased presence helps plants grow. "Mapping by satellite shows that the earth has become about six percent greener overall in the past two decades, with forests expanding into arid regions (though the effect is uneven). The Amazon rain forest was the biggest gainer. . . ." Not all parts of the planet will benefit, of course, but overall, there will be "fewer storms (not more), more rain, better crop yields over larger areas, and longer growing seasons, milder winters, and decreasing heating costs in colder latitudes." God commanded people to multiply. They have done so, and He has provided for them. Simply put, greenhouse gases are a good thing!

Satan, however, has another aim in mind: The impoverishment of the earth's people and, finally, the destruction of the planet's ecosystem itself. Toward these ends, atheist scientists and covetous leaders of developing nations are lending their hand.

The Liars, the Covetous, and the Marketers

The scientists stoop at nothing to impress the gullible public with their lies. Stanford University's Steven Schneider, a firm advocate of global warming theory, actually went on record as saying he advocated lying to the public. His comment, published in *Discover* in 1999, deserves quotation here:

To capture the public imagination, we have to offer up scary scenarios, make simplified dramatic statements, and make little mention of any doubts we may have. Each of us has to decide what the right balance is between being effective and being honest.

The profit-driven media is always more-than-ready to print a sensational story today and answer questions about its truth tomorrow. With that all-too-compliant institution waiting in the wings, what is wrong with broadcasting a "little white lie" to 5 billion people, if it will mean the salvation of their planet? What is wrong with suppressing dialogue concerning scientific "doubts" in the interest of global salvation? Scientists' "the end justifies the means" approach indicates the moral bankruptcy of the godless intelligentsia.

Thankfully, some scientists are above this sort of rank prevarication. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Richard Lindzen, testifying before the U.S. Senate's Environmental and Public Works Committee, called a "doom-and-gloom" UN report "very much a child's exercise of what might possibly happen . . . [which] conjures up some scary scenarios for which there is no evidence." The movie *The Day After Tomorrow*—about sudden and cataclysmic climate change, particularly a new ice age—is an example of such evidence-less scenarios in pop culture.

The UN report that so "exasperated" Lindzen was a typical call-for-action paper by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), "a body responsible for an increasing crescendo of dire warnings" about global warming. The IPCC, as a part of the UN, "reflects UN politics, which are consistently favorable to developing countries, the majority of its members." Within the IPCC's hearing rooms, scientists willing to fudge the facts for ideological reasons shake hands with the covetous leaders of developing nations.

The politics of scientists and leaders become almost conspiratorial when viewed under the light of Kyoto. That treaty exempts developing nations from emission standards imposed on developed ones. Much more, though, Kyoto calls for compensation "from the wealthier nations for any economic restraints that new climate management policies may impose on these developing countries." This is redistributionist policy writ large. The leaders of developing nations are as savvy as they are covetous. They know they stand to get big bucks from America and Europe. Of course, they collude with deceitful scientists to produce "scare" movies like *The Day After Tomorrow*!

They know that the day after the day after tomorrow they will get a billion bucks from Uncle Sam.

Death to the Lamb!

The global warming theory and its spawn, Kyoto, are modern manifestations of what the apostle Paul termed "science falsely so called" (I Timothy 6:20). The *New King James Version* puts it more idiomatically: "falsely called knowledge." That base of false knowledge has at least one of its roots in the ancient romantic myth: Progress is intrinsically evil. The "noble savage" of Africa or India or Oceania or America, living simply and off the land, is morally superior to modern man, who has corrupted himself by material things and organized religion. Its goals are to break the hold of superstition (read "religion"), limit hydrocarbon emissions, curtail factory production, and curb

human reproduction. Let evolution take its course by returning man to nature. The weak will be weeded out, and the strong will survive—the lion will thrive, the lamb fail. That is the aim of the romantic myth.

Moreover, that—the destruction of the lamb—is Satan's plan. The Satan-inspired romantic myth denies man's God-given role to keep and tend the Garden (Genesis 2:15). It also denies the God-given command to "multiply [and] fill the earth" (Genesis 1:28). The purpose behind God's commanded fecundity was His intention that man be the dominant life-form on the planet (see verse 28). To the extent that Satan's counter-philosophy rules the hearts and minds of men, God's creation will decay ever faster, and people, refusing to reproduce in sufficient numbers to replace themselves, will cease to be the dominant life-form on the planet. Satan will have had his way. We see Satan's victory over reproduction (and over reason!) in the future seat of the Beast, in Europe, which has become a demographic disaster.

In I Timothy, Paul reminds Timothy that "the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and the doctrine of demons" (I Timothy 4:1). This is a prophecy for today. Paul concludes his comments on this subject with a warning to avoid "the profane and vain babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge" (I Timothy 6:20). To profess such false knowledge is to stray "concerning the faith" (verse 21).

Never buy Satan's teachings that the savage is more noble than the civilized, that material dearth is more desirable than wealth, and that yesterday is better than tomorrow. For, to those who do not stray from the faith, decency and prosperity remain the standard, and in the end, the day after tomorrow is the best day of all.

Suggested Reading:

Bailey, Ronald, *Global Warming and Other Eco Myths: How the Environmental Movement Uses False Science to Scare Us to Death*, Competitive Enterprise Institute, Prima Publishing, 2002.

Essex, Christopher, and McKittrick, Ross, *Taken by Storm: The Troubled Science, Policy and Politics of Global Warming*, Key Porter Books, 2003.

Huber, Peter, *Hard Green: Saving the Environment from the Environmentalists: A Conservative Manifesto*, Basic Books, 1999.

Kirkland, Robert, *Skeptical Environmentalism: The Limits of Philosophy and Science*, Indiana University Press, 2002.

Lomborg, Bjørn, *The Skeptical Environmentalist: Measuring the Real State of the World*, Cambridge, 2001.

Michaels, Patrick J., *Meltdown: The Predictable Distortion of Global Warming by Scientists, Politicians, and the Media*, Cato Institute, 2004.

Michaels, Patrick J., and Balling, Robert C., *The Satanic Gases: Clearing the Air About Global Warming*, Cato Institute, 2000.

