The Week That Was: 2010-10-02 (October 2, 2010)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week:

"The same prudence which in private life would forbid our paying our own money for unexplained projects, forbids it in the dispensation of the public moneys." --Thomas Jefferson

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Number of the Week: 2% [H/t Timothy Wise]

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THIS WEEK:

By Ken Haapala, Executive Vice President Science and Environmental Policy Project (SEPP)

The Royal Society of Great Britain softened its stance on human-caused global warming. But it retained the IPCC position that the warming over the past 50 years is mostly human caused, without providing the physical evidence that the recent warming is different than past warming periods. The big changes are that The Royal Society recognized the uncertainty of the science, and the limited skill of the models in describing changes and making projections (not to be confused with predictions).

Although some headlines declared that the Royal Society bowed to skeptics, others who question human-caused warming were not satisfied with the changes. But it is a first step by a scientific body in recognizing that the so called "consensus of scientists" is not as solid as many have claimed. Please see the letter from R.C.E Wyndham to Lord Rees, the President of the Royal Society, and the Global Warming Policy Foundation statement in the Articles section and referenced articles under "Royal Society."

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The US Congress left Washington this week to campaign in an election that may be devastating to many of its members. Congress ignored the responsibility to pass a budget for the current fiscal year that began on Friday; instead it passed a continuing resolution. Speaker of the House Pelosi had to cast the deciding vote to adjourn.

As it stands now, Congress will reconvene on November 15, after the elections but before the new Congress convenes in January. The November - December "lame duck" Congress is of concern for many of those who oppose cap-and-trade, the Renewable Electricity Standard (RES), and similar measures by the Federal Government to control energy use. They fear that if the election goes as badly for the incumbents they may pass extreme measures to spite their constituents.

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The Washington Examiner had a 5 day 25 article series on "Big Green" – the multi-billion dollar environmental industry. The series focused on how wealthy donors, powerful lobbyists, and influential government officials work together to change Federal environmental policy, including energy policy. According to the articles one of the goals is to make energy more expensive for Americans. Many key governmental officials are from Big Green.

Several relevant articles are referenced under "Washington Examiner Series on Big Green." The concluding editorial, "A human balance is needed for the environment," is reproduced under Articles. Having personally seen thousands of acres of orchards destroyed by government officials turning off irrigation water to the western San Joaquin Valley of California when supplies were plentiful, I will attest to the need to restore humanity in government environmental policy. The affected area is about the size of

Rhode Island, and once prosperous farming communities are experiencing unemployment rates up to 40%.

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In a structured Forum debate held at Purdue University on Monday evening, Fred Singer and Ken Haapala faced Susan Avery, President of Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and Robert Socolow, Co-Director of the Carbon Mitigation Initiative and Professor at Princeton University. The Moderator was Moira Gunn, host of NPR's Tech Nation and BioTech Nation. The event was sponsored by Purdue's College of Engineering, College of Science, and Global Policy Research Institute. The main floor of the Loeb Playhouse, which with balcony seats almost 1100, was packed.

Each panelist was given 10 minutes for a presentation, and then each panelist could ask a total of two questions of the other panelists. The queried panelist had 2 minutes to respond and the questioner had 1 minute to give a rebuttal.

The opposing panelists could not answer Fred Singer's zinger: "What is the strongest empirical evidence that global warming is caused by man-made greenhouse gas emissions rather than natural causes?" Both danced around the question until Susan Avery claimed there is lots of evidence without citing any. Also, neither opposing panelist could address the failure of empirical observations to reveal the distinctive human fingerprint to warming that is projected in the models and vigorously cited in the literature. – that is, carbon dioxide warming is significantly amplified by an increase in water vapor over the tropics.

In partial response to the global chart of warming over the 30 plus-year record of satellite data that shows that the recent warming was largely concentrated in the northern part of Northern Hemisphere, Susan Avery commented that 30 years is a very short time – ignoring the IPCC claim of human caused global warming which is based on a very short 50 year record. Although he spoke repeatedly of a 40% increase in atmospheric CO2, Robert Socolow ignored the external benefits of increase CO2 for crop yields, and thus, for humanity.

Hopefully, the video tape will be posted shortly for all to assess.

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The Number of the Week Is: 2% [H/t Timothy Wise]
According to an article in the *Modesto Bee*, a new report from the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy reveals that the production and consumption of milk accounts for 2% of total US emissions of greenhouse gases. (See article under "Below the Bottom Line.") Under the EPA's unscientific Endangerment Finding, for carbon dioxide should similar studies be done for beer and for wine to determine which drink better protects human health and welfare?

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SEPP SCIENCE EDITORIAL #29-2010 (Oct. 2, 2010)
Guest Editorial by Dr. Harrison "Jack" Schmitt

Harrison H. Schmitt is a former United States Senator from New Mexico as well as a geologist and former Apollo Astronaut. He currently is an aerospace and private enterprise consultant and a member of the new Committee of Correspondence.

THE CENTRAL ROLE OF THE SUN IN CLIMATE CHANGE

Policy makers at the head of government in the United States and elsewhere apparently want to believe, and to have others believe, that human use of fossil fuels accelerates global warming. They pursue this quest in order to impose ever greater and clearly unconstitutional control on the economy and personal liberty in the name of a hypothetically omnipotent government. There exists no true concern by the President or Congressional Leadership about the true effects of climate change - only a poorly concealed,

ideologically driven attempt to use conjured up threats of catastrophic consequences as a lever to gain authoritarian control of society.

There has been an absolute natural increase in global surface temperature of half a degree Centigrade per 100 years (0.9 degrees Fahrenheit) over the last three and a half centuries.[1] Observational climate data and objective interpretations of those data strongly indicate that nature, not human activity, exerts the primary influence on this current long term warming and on all global climate variations. Human influence through use of fossil fuels has been and remains minor if even detectable.[2] Claims to the contrary only find support in highly questionable climate models that fail repeatedly against the reality of nature. What, then, stimulates historically and geologically observed, sometimes slow and sometimes radical, changes in climate?

The primary alternative hypothesis to human-caused global warming is natural climate change driven by the Sun.[3] Unfortunately, the "human-caused global warming" or “carbon dioxide forcing” hypothesis has become embedded in the minds of otherwise strong teams of observational scientists and their publication outlets. They cannot entertain any other alternative to enhance and amplify variations in the natural heating of the Earth by the Sun[4] - nor can they prove their own hypothesis of human-caused global warming.[5]

As many scientists have documented, the position and orientation of the Earth in its orbit around the sun, and the Sun’s variable influence and activity, determine weather and climate.[6] Seasons vary because of changing solar energy input in annual response to the varying orientation of Earth’s Northern and Southern Hemispheres. Indeed, the Earth’s 23-degree inclination to the rays from the Sun and its annual orbit around that star guarantee large seasonal changes away from the equator. Further, variations in solar radiation received by the Earth correlate with short-term variations in Earth’s weather, based on the slow movement of loops called "Rossby waves"[7] in atmospheric jet streams.[8]

Observations by astronomers over the centuries, as well as studies of tree rings,[9] stalagmite layers,[10] and other pre-historic and geological records[11], have defined an 11-year sunspot cycle superposed on a number of longer climate cycles[12]. Much modern research documents that the sunspot cycle also correlates with variations in stratospheric winds[13] and ozone production,[14] cosmic ray flux,[15] ionosphere-troposphere interactions,[16] and the global electrical circuit that exists between the ionosphere and the Earth's surface[17].

Correlations of records of seasonal changes, solar activity cycles, and local and regional rainfall oscillations all confirm that in some way radiation emanating from the Sun drives changes in weather and climate.[18] Solar interplanetary magnetic fields, whose polarity varies every 22 years or twice the sunspot cycle, may play an additional role as their strength varies directly with increases and decreases in numbers of sunspots.[19]

As a further natural demonstration of the importance of the Sun in determining climate variation, the well-documented solar shielding effects of atmospheric ash and aerosols from volcanic eruptions document the tie between solar irradiance and at least short-term climate swings. Particularly illustrative have been eruptions such as Huaynaputina (1600)[20], Tambora (1815)[21], Krakatoa (1883)[22], and Pinatubo (1991)[23]

More broadly, geological and planetological observations show that major perturbations in climate relate to the position and orientation of the Earth in its orbit around the Sun. For example, as Serbian mathematician Milutin Milankovic pointed out in 1941,[24] as have many others since,[25] initiation of the major ice ages on Earth correlate with a 23,000-year precession cycle, a 41,000-year obliquity cycle, and a 100,000-year eccentricity cycle in the position of the Earth relative to the Sun. Cyclic variations measured in oxygen isotope ratios that correlate with the growth of ice sheets and biogeochemical

responses closely reflect the 23,000-year precession cycle.[26] Also, a half-precession cycle appears to be related to the dynamics of the East African Equatorial monsoon[27]. In addition, the 41,000-year obliquity cycle shows strongly in North American marine depositional records.[28]

Climate cycles related to internal solar activity are superposed on long-term orbital cycles. For example, the Medieval Warm Period (800-1300) and the Little Ice Age (1400-1900) correlate, respectively, with very active and very passive periods of recorded sunspot activity.[29] As a fairly recent example of solar influence on climate, the Little Ice Age occurred during a 500-year long sequence of three deep reductions in sunspot frequency.[30] The coldest temperatures came during the last of these minima, a 70-year period of exceptionally few sunspots (the Maunder Minimum).[31] The Medieval Warm Period, (when the Vikings colonized Greenland, glaciers retreated, and farmers could at least survive)[32] also correlates to repeated multi-century long, high sunspot frequency.[33] Since the end of the early 1900s, peak values in sunspot activity rose steadily until 1960, leveling off at higher than normal values until apparently starting to fall about 2000.[34]

The 11-year sunspot cycle repetitions are superposed on a number of long-term cycles of past highs and lows in solar activity. For example, the Gleissberg cycle has imprecisely defined periods of 90±30 years in length.[35] More energetic sunspot activity in the Gleissberg cycle may correlate with temporary decades of warming, such as in the 1930s and 1990s with the reverse being true in the 1810s and 1910s. Analyses of tree rings, lake levels, cave deposits, tree ring variations in cosmic ray-produced isotopes (^{14}C and ^{10}Be)[36], and oxygen isotope ratios record what appear to be other long period solar cycles, specifically, 2400, 1500 years, 200, as well as the Gleissberg cycle[37].

Many advocates of human-caused global warming agree that solar cycles show correlations with regional climate variations[38]; but, absent a proven amplification mechanism to enhance small solar energy (irradiance) variations, they reject nature in favor of fossil fuel burning. These reviews all document broadly accepted relationships of weather and climate with many different repetition cycles in solar activity[39], ranging from significant but random solar flares affecting jet stream tracks,[40] to the 11-year sunspot cycle,[41] to the long-term Milankovic orbital repetitions discussed above.

Specifically with respect to the last 120 years, the correlation of measured solar energy input variations with global surface temperature and sea surface temperature is very strong.[42] The statistical correlation of solar irradiance with air temperature has been about 79%.[43] In contrast, during the last 50 years, the correlation of measured carbon dioxide increases with global surface temperature has been only about 22%. This directly contradicts the assumption that carbon dioxide has had a large influence on climate in the last 50 years.[44]

Since the end of the last Ice Age 10,000 years ago, the increase in total energy from the Sun has been about 0.6 watts per square meter,[45] an increase of less than 0.05% over an average total of about 1367 watts per square meter. On shorter time scales, total variations reach about 3 watts per square meter, or 0.22% from the average.[46] Considering the actual amount of possible atmospheric heating (30% of incoming solar energy is reflected to space), this variation results in a third to a half a degree Centigrade (0.6 to 0.9 degree Fahrenheit) global temperature change over seven years, that is, a half solar cycle.[47]

Various natural mechanisms for visible, infrared, and UV light reflection, adsorption, emission, and water vapor feedback determine the net solar heating effect on the Earth.[48] Global atmospheric circulation moderates the <u>short-term</u> solar energy inputs, particularly upward convection of oceanic heat and water vapor in the large scale equatorial Hadley Cells that span latitudes from 30ºS to 30ºN.[49] Ocean circulation overall moderates the <u>long-term</u> transfer of solar energy around the globe.[50]

Evidence for the existence, if not the nature, of a means for amplifying solar energy-solar magnetic field interactions with Earth comes from the oceans. Determination of the total contribution of the oceans to

heating of the atmosphere, using three independent observational measures of oceanic heat flux, shows that the oceans' heat contribution to be five to seven times larger than variations in total solar energy input.[51]

Additional support that an amplification mechanism exists comes from recent observational data on variations in stratospheric water vapor concentrations over three decades. These data suggest that decreases in water vapor have contributed to amplified sea surface cooling since 2000 while increases between 1980 and 2000 accented surface warming.[52] This relationship may correspond with stratospheric cooling and lower water retention due to lower than average solar energy input since 2000.

Climate change driven by the Sun constitutes a strongly competitive, purely scientific hypothesis to the climate modeling-political hypothesis of human-caused global warming advocated by climate modelers and their acolytes in the science, media, and political establishments. Solar influence ranges from significant but random solar flares affecting jet stream tracks[53], to the 11-year sunspot cycle,[54] to the 22-year magnetic cycle, up to the long-term Milankovic orbital repetitions discussed above. The current decade or longer period of cold winters in the northern United States and Europe coincide with a relatively prolonged reduction in sunspot activity below even the norm for a minimum in the 11-year cycle.[55]

Actual observations show that climate varies in response to natural forces and that human burning of fossil fuels has had negligible effect over the last 100 years.[56] Lets us hope that State and national policy makers taking office in 2011 and 2013 will understand the facts about natural climate change and the fictions about human influence on change before taking enormous constitutional and economic risks - and before liberty and incomes suffer further erosion.

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For the numbered articles below please see:

www.haapala.com/sepp/the-week-that-was.cfm.

1. Letter from R.C.E. Wyndham to Lord Rees, President of the Royal Society
Oct 2, 2010

2. Royal Society Bows To Climate Change Sceptics
Global Warming Policy Foundation, Sep 30, 2010
http://www.thegwpf.org/ipcc-news/1617-royal-society-bows-to-climate-change-sceptics.html

3. A human balance is needed for the environment
Editorial, Washington Examiner, Sep 30, 2010
http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/A-human-balance-needed-for-the-environment-1060419-104112878.html

4. Canada must free scientists to talk to journalists
Strict controls on what federal researchers can reveal about their work is a disservice to science and the public.
By Kathryn O'Hara, Nature News, Sep 29, 2010 [H/t Best on the Web]
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5. Obama Vows Energy Will Be 'Top Priority' In 2011
By George Lobsenz, Energy Daily, Sep 30, 2010 [H/t Toshio Fujita]
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6. Energy roulette
Editorial, Washington Post, Sep 27, 2010 [H/t David Manuta]
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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued
United Nations climate panel 'one sided,' prof says
By David Roach, Baptist Press, Sep 27, 2010 [H/t Best on the Web]
http://www.bpnews.net/bpnews.asp?ID=33756
[SEPP Comment: An interview with Ross McKitrick covering a few Climategate issues. "Had the IPCC conducted itself according to the standards advocated by the IAC, it could never have released its previous reports, according to McKitrick."]

Challenging the Orthodoxy
Global Cooling and the New World Order
By James Delingpole, Telegraph, UK, Sep 26, 2010 [H/t Joe Bast]
http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/jamesdelingpole/100055500/global-cooling-and-the-new-world-order/

Defending the Orthodoxy
Report: U.S. Needs National Strategy for Adapting to Warmer Climes
By Eli Kentsch, Science Insider, Sep 29, 2010 [H/t Toshio Fujita]
http://news.sciencemag.org/scienceinsider/2010/09/report-us-needs-national-strategy.html

The Royal Society Report

Climate Change: a summary of the science, September 2010
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The Royal Society: Still Embarrassing Science
By Indur Goklany, Watts Up With That, Oct 1, 2010
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Top science body cools on global warming
By Graham Lloyd and Matthew Franklin, The Australian, Oct 2, 2010 [H/t Cooler Heads Digest]
http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/top-science-body-cools-on-global-warming/story-e6frg6nf-1225933012675

Royal Society issues new climate change guide that admits there are 'uncertainties' about the science
By Niall Firth, Mail Online, Sep 30, 2010 [H/t Icecap]
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Weather Extremes

Some Weather Extremes are Real but Causes are Natural
By Joseph D'Aleo, ICECAP, Sep 29, 2010
http://www.icecap.us/
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[SEPP Comment: A quiet sun may cause persistent weather patterns that are marked by extreme warming as well as extreme cooling.]

Multidecadal Tendencies in ENSO and Global Temperatures Related to Multidecadal Oscillations
By Joseph D'Aleo and Don Easterbrook, SPPI, Sep 17, 2010
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By Madhav Khandekar, ICECAP, Sep 28, 2010
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BP Oil Spill and Aftermath

U.S. Issues New Rules on Offshore Drilling
By John Broder, NYT, Sep 30, 2010
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Drilling Plans Off Cuba Stir Fears of Impact on Gulf
By Clifford Drauss, NYT, Sep 29, 2010
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A Plan for the Gulf

Editorial, NYT, Sep 28, 2010
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Energy Issues

Half of German Solar Firms Could Go Under
UPI.com, Sep 29, 2010 [H/t Toshio Fujita]
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http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/sep/30/uk-renewable-energy-production-drops

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By Elisabeth Rosenthal, NYT, Sep 28, 2010
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China's cities: steel, cement, coal, cars and information
By Frank Clemente, Energy-Facts.org, Sep 30, 2010 [H/t James Rust]
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Fifteen Bad Things with Windpower – and Three Reasons Why
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Is Windpower the Ethanol of Electricity? Part II: Environmental Issues
By Ben Lieberman, Master Resource, Sep 29, 2010 [H/t John Droz, Jr.]
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Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Another government mandate
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California Dreaming

Schwarzenegger defends climate law, slams Texans
By Peter Fimrite, San Francisco Chronicle, Sep 23, 2010
http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2010/09/27/BA071FKEMG.DTL#ixzz10phETYXt

California Energy Commission licenses Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System
Press Release, Sep 23, 2010
http://www.elp.com/index/display/article-display/4239779379/articles/electric-light-power/renewable-energy/solar/2010/09/California_Energy_Commission_licenses_Ivanpah_Solar_Electric_Generating_System.html
[In February 2010, the U.S. Department of Energy awarded BrightSource Energy $1.37 billion in conditional loan guarantees to support the financing of the Ivanpah project.]

EPA and other Regulators On the March

The American Automobile: Target of Climatism
By Steve Goreham, Big Government, Sep 28, 2010
http://biggovernment.com/sgoreham/2010/09/28/the-american-automobile-target-of-climatism/#more-173429

Global Acidification: The Next EU Bought-And-Paid-For Science Hoax
By P Gosselin, No Tricks Zone, Sep 28, 2010 [H/t Icecap]
http://notrickszone.com/2010/09/28/global-acidification-the-next-eu-bought-and-paid-for-science-hoax/

New EPA Rules Will Cost More than 800,000 Jobs
By Hans Bader, Global Warming.org, Sep 28 2010 [H/t Cooler Heads Digest]
http://www.globalwarming.org/2010/09/28/new-epa-rules-will-cost-more-than-800000-jobs/

Washington Examiner Series on Big Green

Big Green: They're the green gorillas of American politics
By: Mark Tapscott, Washington Examiner, September 27, 2010
http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columns/special-editorial-reports/Big-Green-Theyre-the-green-gorillas-of-American-politics-103831954.html

When journalists become Big Green spinmeisters
By Mark Tapscott, Washington Examiner, Sep 29, 2010
http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columns/When-journalists-become-Big-Green_s-spinmeisters-1038479-104013573.html

Critical funding for Big green comes from taxpayers
By Mark Tapscott, Washington Examiner, Sep 28, 2010
http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columns/Crucial-funding-for-Big-Green-comes-from-taxpayers-1032783-103949388.html

Big Green regulations suffocate jobs, economic growth
By: Mark Hemingway Washington Examiner, September 27, 2010
http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columns/special-editorial-reports/Special-report-Big-Green-regulations-suffocate-jobs-economic-growth-103846204.html

How environmentalists do it when Congress fails them
By Ron Arnold, Washington Examiner, Sep 30, 2010
http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columns/special-editorial-reports/SPECIAL-REPORT-How-environmentalists-do-it-when-Congress-fails-them-104013174.html

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC
For a full list of articles see www.NIPCCreport.org

How Does Global Warming Impact the El Nino Southern Oscillation?
Reference: Collins, M., et al. The impact of global warming on the tropical Pacific Ocean and El Niño. *Nature Geoscience* **3**: 391-397, Archived Sep 30, 2010
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CO2, Global Warming and Sugarcane: Prospects for the Future

Reference: Vu, J.C.V. and Allen Jr., L.H. 2009. Stem juice production of the C_4 sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum*) is enhanced by growth at double-ambient $CO_2$and high temperature. *Journal of Plant Physiology* **166**: 1141-1151. Archived Sep 30, 2010
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The Changing Climate of Canada: Implications for Agriculture
Reference: Qian, B., Zhang, X., Chen, K., Feng, Y. and O'Brien, T. 2010. Observed long-term trends for agroclimatic conditions in Canada. *Journal of Applied Meteorology and Climatology* **49**: 604-618. Archived Sep 30, 2010
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Human Mortality in Castile-Leon Spain
Reference: Fernandez-Raga, M., Tomas, C. and Fraile, R. 2010. Human mortality seasonality in Castile-Leon, Spain, between 1980 and 1998: the influence of temperature, pressure and humidity. *International Journal of Biometeorology* **54**: 379-392. Archived Sep 29, 2010
http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2010/sep/29sep2010a1.html

Other Scientific Issues

Northern Lights becoming rarer, researchers warn
The Northern Lights have petered out during the second half of the decade, becoming rarer than at any other time in more than a century, according to meteorologists**.**
Telegraph, UK, Sep 18, 2010 [H/t Malcolm Ross]
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/science/science-news/8030884/Northern-Lights-becoming-rarer-researchers-warn.html

Back from the dead: One third of 'extinct' animals turn up again
By David Derbyshire, Mail Online, Sep 29, 2010 [H/t Tomas Burch]
http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-1315964/One-extinct-animals-turn-again.html#ixzz117BKhnoo

Miscellaneous Topics of Possible Interest

In the Habitable Zone
Editorial, NYT, Sep 30, 2010
http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/01/opinion/01fri4.html?th&emc=th

The spaced-out U.N.
Earth to Turtle Bay: The aliens aren't coming
Editorial, Washington Times, Sep 29, 2010
http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2010/sep/29/the-spaced-out-un/

Human-powered aircraft makes aviation history by becoming the first to fly using flapping wings
By Niall Firth, Mail Online, Sep 24, 2010 [H/t Toshio Fujita]
http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-1314509/Human-powered-aircraft-makes-aviation-history-fly-using-flapping-wings.html

Iran admits Stuxnet worm infected PCs at nuclear reactor
But denies that 'groundbreaking' malware infiltrated control system or caused major damange

By Gregg Keizer, Computer World, Sep 27, 2010
http://www.computerworld.com/s/article/9188147/Iran_admits_Stuxnet_worm_infected_PCs_at_nuclear_reactor

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Milk's effect on climate tallied
Cow to kitchen, emissions during process added up
By John Holland, Modesto Bee, Sep 24, 2010 [H/t Timothy Wise]
http://www.modbee.com/2010/09/24/1352785/milks-effect-on-climate-tallied.html

This is a news website article about a scientific paper
In the standfirst I will make a fairly obvious pun about the subject matter before posing an inane question I have no intention of really answering: is this an important scientific finding?
By Martin Robbins, Guardian, UK, Sep 24, 2010 [H/t Jeff Braswell]
http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/the-lay-scientist/2010/sep/24/1

Snow Pile in Finland Finally Melts
By Gina Cherundolo, AccuWeather, Sep 29, 2010 [H/t Best on the Web]
http://www.accuweather.com/blogs/news/story/38066/snow-pile-in-finland-finally-m.asp

Scientists look at deodorant for New Zealand's smelly birds
Yahoo News, Sep 24, 2010 [H/t Best on the Web]
http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20100924/sc_afp/sciencenzealandanimalsoffbeat_20100924160555

French town swap rubbish trucks for horse-drawn carts
By Jacqueline Karp, Guardian, UK, Oct 1, 2010
http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2010/oct/01/french-recycling-horse-and-cart

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ARTICLES:

1. Letter from R.C.E. Wyndham to Lord Rees, President of the Royal Society

Oct 2, 2010

Lord Rees
President
The Royal Society
6-9 Carlton House Terrace
London SW1Y 5AG.

Dear Lord Rees

Let me begin by quoting in part a letter from you to me dated as long ago as 20 April 2007. You wrote:

> *"We have on our website a detailed response to some of the comments made in the Channel 4 programme last month. The issues are sufficiently important that they deserve wide discussion, but this should be on the basis of the best scientific evidence."*

During the intervening three and a half years, in essentials, "the best scientific evidence" has changed hardly at all. In colloquial terms, a trace gas, amounting to less than 1/400th part of a single percentage

point by volume of the atmosphere, continues to be branded as "the Great Satan". As such tens, nay hundreds, of billions of taxpayers funds in consequence continue to be squandered.

So, there's the background. Now, though, from the Royal Society, we have this morning the following:

> *"It is not possible to determine exactly how much the Earth will warm or exactly how the climate will change in the future.*
>
> *"There remains the possibility that hitherto unknown aspects of the climate and climate change could emerge and lead to significant modifications in our understanding."*

There is also the acknowledgement that any warming "trend" seemingly represented by the 80s and 90s has ceased during the past decade.

In reaction to its freshly acknowledged epiphany, the new RS guidelines also note:

> *"The size of future temperature increases and other aspects of climate change, especially at the regional scale, are still subject to uncertainty."*
>
> *"There is little confidence in specific projections of future regional climate change, except at continental scales."*
>
> *"It is not possible to determine exactly how much the Earth will warm or exactly how the climate will change in the future.*
>
> *"There remains the possibility that hitherto unknown aspects of the climate and climate change could emerge and lead to significant modifications in our understanding."*

Really?

Hitherto, you wrote to me as follows:

> *"The point on which we, at the Royal Society, are <u>very firm</u> is that the science, despite the wide range of uncertainties, gives sufficiently strong evidence of the likelihood of drastic climate change that the way to deal with it should be high on the political agenda."* [My underlining]

Inconsistencies can be allowed to speak for themselves. In any event, however, whilst the change of tone may warrant a tepid welcome, it should not be forgotten that, for years now under your stewardship, the Royal Society stands accused of having done everything in its power to obstruct legitimate questioning of AGW orthodoxy and to stifle debate surrounding the science. Furthermore, even now, it continues to peddle falsehood. In relation to climate models, for example, its stance continues to be predicated on their essential reliability, when it is abundantly clear that they are even now highly subjective, and have been in the recent past manifestly fraudulent. As much to the point also, of course, is the fact that the IPCC has publicly acknowledged that general circulations models are unreliable. Malign human influence on climate remains the theme, but actual mechanisms are carefully skirted.

In my reply to your 20 April 2007 letter, amongst other things, I wrote as follows:

> *"An important cause is at stake here, and it is <u>not</u> global warming. It is nothing less than the truth allied to the integrity of the scientific endeavour. It may surprise you to learn that there are*

people in the world outside of science, as well as inside (pray God!), who consider that to be quite important."

Three and a half years later, I see no reason to alter a syllable of that conclusion.

Yours sincerely
R.C.E Wyndham
(Published with permission)

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2. Royal Society Bows To Climate Change Sceptics

Global Warming Policy Foundation, Sep 30, 2010
http://www.thegwpf.org/ipcc-news/1617-royal-society-bows-to-climate-change-sceptics.html

Britain's leading scientific institution has been forced to rewrite its guide to climate change and admit that there is greater uncertainty about future temperature increases than it had previously suggested.

The Royal Society is publishing a new document today after a rebellion by more than 40 of its fellows who questioned mankind's contribution to rising temperatures.

Climate change: a summary of the science states that "some uncertainties are unlikely ever to be significantly reduced". Unlike Climate change controversies, a simple guide — the document it replaces — it avoids making predictions about the impact of climate change and refrains from advising governments about how they should respond.

The new guide says: "The size of future temperature increases and other aspects of climate change, especially at the regional scale, are still subject to uncertainty."

The Royal Society even appears to criticise scientists who have made predictions about heatwaves and rising sea levels. It now says: "There is little confidence in specific projections of future regional climate change, except at continental scales."

It adds: "It is not possible to determine exactly how much the Earth will warm or exactly how the climate will change in the future.

"There remains the possibility that hitherto unknown aspects of the climate and climate change could emerge and lead to significant modifications in our understanding."

The working group that produced the new guide took advice from two Royal Society fellows who have links to the climate-sceptic think-tank founded by Lord Lawson of Blaby.

Professor Anthony Kelly and Sir Alan Rudge are members of the academic advisory council of the Global Warming Policy Foundation. They were among 43 fellows who signed a petition sent to Lord Rees, the society's president, asking for its statement on climate change to be rewritten to take more account of questions raised by sceptics.

Professor John Pethica, the society's vice-president and chairman of the working group that wrote the document, said the guide stated clearly that there was "strong evidence" that the warming of the Earth over the past half-century had been caused largely by human activity.

Meanwhile, the Government is planning an exercise to test how England and Wales would cope with severe flooding caused by climate change. Exercise Watermark will take place in March and test emergency services and communities on a range of scenarios that could occur.

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3. A human balance is needed for the environment

Editorial, Washington Examiner, Sep 30, 2010
http://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/A-human-balance-needed-for-the-environment-1060419-104112878.html

Everybody wants clean air and water. Everybody wants to conserve America's abundant natural resources. Everybody wants to protect ecosystems and wildlife. Americans came together in a public consensus on these issues decades ago and remain united in support of these goals to this day, in no small part because tremendous progress has been achieved in all of these areas since creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in 1970.

But who wants to turn one of the world's most fertile farming regions, an area that long fed millions of Americans and provided jobs for countless workers, into an arid wasteland, all on behalf of a small fish? Who wants to force the U.S. to walk away from the abundant oil, coal and natural gas stores under our land and coastal areas, thus deepening the nation's dependence on foreigners who hate America and exposing our waterways to more spills and related disasters, just because environmental zealots prefer windmills and solar panels? Who wants to tell countless suburban families to give up their homes, their automobiles and backyard barbecues, their very way of life, to move back into crowded cities, to please government planners and ideological fanatics on bicycles? These are official policies today.

What's wrong with this picture? Somewhere along the way things got out of balance between the public consensus on the environment that emerged in this country decades ago, and the oppressive new reality of government-entrenched environmental extremism that threatens to suffocate America's economic freedom and the prosperity, progress and innovation this freedom produces in abundance. The admired conservationists of yesterday have become the privileged, arrogant, powerful and unaccountable special interests that collectively constitute the environmental movement described this week in *The Examiner's* Special Editorial Report on Big Green.

There are countless reasons that help explain why this happened. But they all come back to this fundamental fact: American public policy has been shaped by a determined movement, not by the daily economic, political and social needs of the American people. As a result, federal environmental policy attaches greater importance to saving the delta smelt than to protecting the people and economy of California's Central Valley. Similarly, federal policymakers heed the apocalyptic claims of global warming advocates, while telling American families their utility rates must "necessarily skyrocket." And officials at every level of government pursue "smart growth" plans that if fully implemented would force millions of Americans to return to a 19th century model of social organization.

There is a dangerous extremism behind the view that human beings are a blight on the Earth, that the supposed interests of trees and animals and geographies of all description must come before the needs of people. It's time to end such thinking in government. It's time to restore a human balance to environmental policy, to remember that the health, safety, liberty, and prosperity of the American people must always come first.

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4. Canada must free scientists to talk to journalists

Strict controls on what federal researchers can reveal about their work is a disservice to science and the public.
By Kathryn O'Hara, Nature News, Sep 29, 2010 [H/t Best on the Web]

http://www.nature.com/news/2010/100929/full/467501a.html

This week is Right to Know Week in Canada, intended to acknowledge and celebrate our freedom-of-information laws. Some 40 other countries have a Right to Know Day, but we Canadians get a whole week. And you know what? We need it.

Ironically, this celebration of open information comes on the back of new evidence of unacceptable political interference in the public statements of federal government researchers. In short, the information policies of Conservative Prime Minister Stephen Harper are muzzling scientists in their dealings with the media.

What happened to the transparency and accountability promised when the government formed the first of two minority administrations in 2006? Its stated communication policy, posted on a federal website, directed civil servants to "Provide the public with timely, accurate, clear, objective and complete information about its policies, programs, services and initiatives." Yet today, that openness is being held ransom to media messages that serve the government's political agenda.

The signs were there in spring last year, when press reports revealed that climate scientists in the government department Environment Canada were being stymied by Harper's compulsive message control. Our researchers were prevented from sharing their work at conferences, giving interviews to journalists, and even talking about research that had already been published. Carefully researched reports intended for the public — Climate Change and Health, from Health Canada, and Climate Change Impacts, from Natural Resources Canada — were released without publicity, late on Friday afternoons, and appeared on government websites only after long delays. This is not a government that is comfortable with climate change or the implications for action, as its largely obstructionist stance at climate talks has shown.

But it is not just climate-change research that is being targeted. Margaret Munro, a science reporter for PostmediaNews, has uncovered that a policy enacted in March stipulates that all federal scientists must get pre-approval from their minister's office before speaking to journalists who represent national or international media. The pre-approval process requires time-consuming drafting of questions and answers, scrutinized by as many as seven people, before a scientist can be given the go-ahead by the minister's staff. This is to spare the minister 'any surprises'. What kind of politician needs that sort of pampering? And what kind of journalist submits questions for a scientist to a ministerial clearing house? This message manipulation shows a disregard for the values and virtues of both journalism and science, and subverts timely disclosure and access to scientific data.

Message Manipulation shows a disregard for journalism and science

All governments try to control their political message and push for policies that reflect party philosophy, but these new restrictions also seek to control the scientific message in research with no link to partisan politics. When Scott Dallimore, a geoscientist for Natural Resources Canada in Sidney, British Columbia, reported evidence of the colossal flood that occurred in northern Canada at the end of the last ice age (Nature **464,** 740–743; 2010), he was put through the message-moulding machine. As a result, Canada's taxpayers, who funded the research, were left in the dark. While the news broke elsewhere, journalists in Canada who had previously had open access to Dallimore, a gifted communicator, were left spinning their wheels while deadlines passed. The flood happened 13,000 years ago, so how can this work be construed as politically sensitive?

Scientists in departments that deal with natural resources, health, fisheries and oceans have also felt the pinch of the muzzle. Consequently, Canadians learn little about the results of their wider government

science, at least first-hand. Media clearance can take four or five days — ridiculous in a 24/7 news world. And because of the delays, research led by Canadian scientists is regularly channelled through international collaborators and released through their agencies.

The situation is more bizarre still, given a 2007 pledge from the government to get Canadians excited about science. Forget excitement, it's hard to even maintain public trust in taxpayer-funded research when scientists are not allowed to explain their work. Government media officers also find it difficult to craft informative press releases and bring research to media attention. Journalists tend not to buy media lines, and a savvy public can smell a partisan puff piece. No wonder, then, that the relationship between government press officers and media outlets has grown strained.

So, how might we set out to re-establish a respectful, workable relationship? The Canadian Science Writers' Association in Toronto is asking for timely access to federal scientists whose research is published in journals or presented at conferences open to the media. Our journalists need to speak with scientists to avoid misinterpretation of research. And, as journalists around the world will testify, scientists usually avoid politics and steer clear of policy-sensitive discussions. Canada's researchers are no different.

There is nothing new here. Rather, there is a need to return to a procedure that served us well in the past. It means working without cumbersome and propagandistic media lines, and trusting that scientists, journalists and press officers know what they are doing, are good at their respective jobs and will not work from a script that restricts the spirit of enquiry or accountability. Access to scientific evidence that informs policy is not a luxury. It is an essential part of our right to know.

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5. Obama Vows Energy Will Be 'Top Priority' In 2011

By George Lobsenz, Energy Daily, Sep 30, 2010 [H/t Toshio Fujita]
http://www.theenergydaily.com/publications/ed/Obama-Vows-Energy-Will-Be-Top-Priority-In-2011_5105.html

While hopes appear to be fading for energy proposals in the lame-duck congressional session following the November elections, President Obama this week said that one of his top priorities for 2011 would be getting Congress to pass legislation to reduce U.S. reliance on fossil fuels.

However, in an interview with *Rolling Stone* published this week, Obama said that rather than seek passage of comprehensive energy legislation—as he did in 2010 with no success—he might opt for passing separate bills that achieved "chunks" of his clean energy agenda.

Obama also contended that that while energy legislation has not moved this year, his administration still had made significant progress on key efficiency and renewable energy objectives, including higher automobile fuel economy standards and major federal investments in the expansion of U.S. wind, solar and other clean energy sectors.

"Understand…that even in the absence of legislation, we took steps over the past two years that have made a significant difference," he told the magazine. "Am I satisfied with what we've gotten done? Absolutely not.

"One of my top priorities next year is to have an energy policy that begins to address all facets of our overreliance on fossil fuels. We may end up having to do it in chunks, as opposed to some sort of comprehensive omnibus legislation. But we're going to stay on this because it is good for our economy, it's good for our national security, and, ultimately, it's good for our environment."

Obama admitted disappointment that Congress had not acted on climate change legislation, which he said considered an "urgent priority."

However, he suggested the lack of action on the issue was not surprising given the problems caused by the recent economic recession.

"During the past two years, we've not made as much progress as I wanted to make when I was sworn into office," he said when asked about climate change. "It is very hard to make progress on these issues in the midst of a huge economic crisis, because the natural inclination around the world is to say, 'You know what? That may be a huge problem, but right now what's a really big problem is 10 percent unemployment,' or 'What's a really big problem is that our businesses can't get loans.' That diverted attention from what I consider to be an urgent priority."

Still, the president said his policies had put the nation on track to substantially reduce its greenhouse emissions.

"The progress that we're making on renewable energy, the progress that we're making on retrofitting buildings and making sure that we are reducing electricity use—all those things, cumulatively, if we stay on it over the next several years, will allow us to meet the target that I set, which would be around a 17 percent reduction in our greenhouse gases."

Obama also rejected complaints from some environmentalists about his refusal to bow to their demands to fire Interior Secretary Ken Salazar following the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The president said that from the outset of the administration Salazar clearly recognized the need to reform the Interior Department's Minerals Management Service (MMS), which oversees offshore drilling, but did not have time to complete the reforms before the disaster happened.

"When Ken Salazar came in, he said to me, 'One of my top priorities is cleaning up MMS.' It was no secret," Obama said. "You had seen the kind of behavior in that office that was just over-the-top, and Ken did reform the agency to eliminate those core ethical lapses—the drugs, the other malfeasance that was reported there.

"What Ken would admit, and I would admit, and what we both have to take responsibility for, is that we did not fully change the institutional conflicts that were inherent in that office. If you ask why did we not get that done, the very simple answer is that this is a big government with a lot of people, and changing bureaucracies and agencies is a time-consuming process. We just didn't get to it fast enough."

Obama's remarks on making energy policy a priority in 2011 illustrate the fading hopes for such legislation in the lame-duck session.

While Senate Democrats are trying to revive clean energy legislation in the lame-duck session—particularly legislation to establish a national renewable electricity standard—industry and Hill sources say action on such measures appears unlikely if Republicans make gains in the November elections because GOP leaders would have a stronger hand in the next Congress when their new members are seated.

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6. Energy roulette

Editorial, Washington Post, Sep 27, 2010 [H/t David Manuta]
http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/09/26/AR2010092603020.html?referrer=emailarticle
[SEPP Comment: Criticism of RES from the Washington Post.]

DEMOCRATS' PLANS to put a price on carbon -- a good idea -- died over the summer. So last week a handful of senators led by Energy Committee Chairman Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.) announced that they would offer a bill that would establish a so-called renewable electricity standard (RES), which would require that utilities derive 15 percent of their power from sources such as wind and solar by 2021. Republican Sens. Sam Brownback (Kan.) and Susan Collins (Maine) joined in. More co-sponsors may sign on, giving the policy a chance of attracting the 60 votes that it needs to avoid a filibuster. Green groups that once questioned the wisdom of such a weak RES -- as proposed, it probably wouldn't require much more than what many state governments already demand -- are getting behind the effort, too.

With both a carbon tax (our preference) and a cap-and-trade scheme politically out of reach, smart regulation could be better than nothing. But if the government is going to set rules, why not a technology-neutral carbon reduction standard, under which utilities would be required to reduce the carbon they emit per megawatt by adopting cleaner generation technologies? The government interest is in reducing climate change; the goal therefore is low-carbon electricity generation. If nuclear power, which produces no carbon, can help reach that goal, why should government aid only wind and solar? And why not include natural gas, which emits about half as much carbon as coal, in some way?

Backers of the proposed RES counter that the point is to help a carefully defined set of energy sources that are truly renewable -- unlike nuclear, which requires fuel and produces waste -- and that face trouble attracting capital because of uncertainty about market demand in the medium and long terms. But that's the sort of thinking that leads to ever more distorted energy markets in which dozens of government interventions have complex, sometimes unwanted effects and obscure the central goal. Lawmakers should put their carbon-cutting policies in terms of carbon reduction and stop trying to decide who wins and who loses.

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