

The Week That Was (Nov 7, 2009) Brought to you by SEPP (www.SEPP.org)

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Quote of the Week:

The less a thing is known, the more fervently it is believed -- *Montaigne*

THIS WEEK

As you all know, on Nov 3 Bob McDonnell was elected as Governor of VA. We take a little bit of credit for this -- by setting up a new organization called VA-Scientists and Engineers for Energy and Environment (SEEE), with five Chapters in the State (Northern VA, Richmond, Piedmont, Shenandoah, and Tidewater).

We met with McDonnell last summer and explained that -- though non-partisan -- SEEE would fully support the energy/environmental objectives he was advocating. Indeed, in his victory celebration, the first pronouncements were directed against the destructive Cap&Trade scheme being hatched right now in the US Senate. We look forward to Governor Bob McDonnell becoming a national spokesman for a sensible US energy policy that does not demonize CO2, the natural plant fertilizer.

And a note: according to VA law, a governor gets only a single 4-year term -- which means that McDonnell will be unemployed in 2014 -- unless

The Senate C&T bill is in serious trouble. It may get to the Senate floor but it is not likely to pass. This month's election results have spooked the Congress. All House members are up for re-election in Nov 2010 -- and one-third of the Senate -- so there isn't likely to be a climate bill in 2010 either. Enough senators now recognize the economic penalties of C&T and its utter uselessness for affecting global climate -- or even global CO2 levels -- as long as China, India, etc continue to emit CO2 without any restraint.

Which brings us to the upcoming COP-15 conference in Copenhagen -- about which there is deep gloom among its UN promoters. The negotiations are stalled, mainly between developing and industrialized nations (almost all in OECD) -- with the former demanding rather large sums of money for 'reparations.' Having preached that CO2 is a pollutant and that future climate 'catastrophes' will hurt poor nations most, the OECD nations are now hoist on their own petard -- as the saying goes.

In any case, CPH is unlikely to produce a new legal framework -- and even less likely to result in mandatory emission limits. So maybe Kyoto will just expire peacefully in 2012 -- as CO2 levels keep on rising and while the climate keeps on its current cooling trend.

SEPP Science Editorial #35-2009 (11/7/09)

By S. Fred Singer, President, SEPP

No Consensus about Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW)

There is a general impression, based on flawed analyses [Oreskes in *Science* 2004] that scientists support nearly unanimously the so-called scientific consensus on AGW. But more than 31,000 scientists and engineers disagree and have signed a petition that affirms their disbelief in AGW [for a listing of names see pp. 745-855, in *Climate Change Reconsidered*, available at www.NIPCCreport.org]

There is even widespread belief that major scientific societies, like the American Geophysical Union (AGU), have polled their membership before issuing formal Statements which essentially endorse the IPCC conclusion that the temperature rise of the past 50 years has been caused by human activity – and more specifically by the emission of greenhouse (GH) gases. Not so: This false impression seems to be due to a misleading survey result published in an AGU journal [P. Doran and M. Kendall-Zimmerman, *Eos* 90, 20 Jan 2009, pp 22-23].

We will discuss this survey here and the question of bias and confounding factors.

The *Eos* authors report the response of 3146 earth scientists to two questions:

1. Has the climate warmed, cooled, or remained constant -- compared to pre-1800?

Regardless of what one may believe about the causes of climate change, the answer must be: ‘Warming.’ Pre-1800 refers to the Little Ice Age, which ended around 1800. [If the question were changed to ‘compared to 1998,’ then the answer would be ‘Cooling.’]

2. Do you think human activity is a significant factor in changing global mean temperature?

Here the answer will depend on what is meant by ‘significant’ -- and whether ‘human activity’ should include urbanization, land changes, agriculture, irrigation, deforestation, etc. Many might answer ‘Yes’ – even if they don’t think that GH gases are a significant factor in climate change.

The authors report that their selection involved faculty in relevant academic departments and employees of government establishments. Presumably, they did not include retirees or those in the private sector. The authors claim that known dissenters were included. But my casual inquiries did not find anyone who participated.

Most of the responders described themselves as geochemists; only 5% claimed to be ‘climate scientists.’ (But where are the ‘atmospheric scientists’?)

The widely quoted result of the survey is a 97.4% ‘Yes’ to question #2; it is based on a sample of only 77 responses from ‘actively publishing climate scientists.’ Disregarding the claimed accuracy, what can we deduce from this response? That these are likely individuals who derive large research grants and contracts from a federal budget that almost exclusively supports research designed to affirm AGW.

[Of this same group, only 96.2% (rather than 100%) thought that the climate had warmed since 1800. It would be interesting to learn who these individuals are.]

By contrast, on question #2, less than half of ‘economic geologists’ (103 responses) said ‘Yes’ and slightly more than one-third of ‘meteorologists’ (36 responses) said ‘No.’

The American Physical Society (APS) in 2007 published a position statement enthusiastically endorsing AGW, without reference to the views of its members. Recently, some 200 APS members and Fellows

have petitioned the APS Council to change or withdraw the Statement, in view of scientific evidence that is counter to AGW. Perhaps there will develop a similar initiative within the AGU.

ARTICLES [For the numbered articles below please see the attached pdf]

1. **The Cap & Trade Bill hurts national security**
2. **How Government spending hurts national security**
3. **Controlling climate? More like controlling humans**
4. **Congress is planning to make your home unsalable**
5. **Cash for Clubbers: Congress's fabulous golf cart stimulus**
6. **The Copenhagen Climate Extortion**
7. **Stern Warning to go Vegetarian (but first eat the dog).**
8. **Gaia's Oil Spills**
9. **The real climate change catastrophe**

NEWS YOU CAN USE

CEI Press Release: [Boxer Rams Economy-Killing Energy-Rationing Bill through EPW Committee](#)

Tactics Doom Cap and Trade in Senate

Washington, D.C., November 5, 2009: Senate Environment and Public Works Committee Chairman Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.) today rammed a major energy-rationing bill through the committee, without the presence of any Republicans on her committee.

Under Senate committee rules and precedent, two members of the minority are customarily required to make a quorum for marking up a bill. But Republicans balked at Democratic efforts to pass the energy tax-and-ration bill before a complete analysis of its economic impacts had been done by EPA. The bill, S. 1733, the Clean Energy Jobs and American Security Act, was introduced by Senator John Kerry (D-Mass.). The chief co-sponsor is Chairman Boxer.

”We congratulate Chairman Boxer and the committees Democrats for their methods. They have so poisoned the atmosphere in the Senate that the terrible Kerry-Boxer bill is now dead, said [Myron Ebell](#), CEI Director of Energy and Global Warming Policy. We also congratulate Senator James Inhofe (R-Okla.) and the committee’s other Republicans for their steadfast opposition. They have made clear that the Democrats cannot move this catastrophic bill without violating the Senates rules.”

”This transparent end-run around agreed Senate rules not only is an admission that the bill's floor chances are non-existent, but it further dooms them, said [Christopher Horner](#), CEI Senior Fellow and energy policy expert, in an [earlier statement](#). What we see now is the acting out of the global warming industry's frustration over politicians valuing their own jobs, even if they recklessly flirt with threatening the jobs of others.”

The aim now is to wave around a committee-passed bill at the December Kyoto talks in Copenhagen, as the ultimate 'offset' for the lack of political will to impose energy rationing on America, even through this back door, said Horner. But, as one key senator recently said, there's no bill so bad that it can't be voted out of the Senate Environment Committee.

In related news, CEI yesterday [criticized the U. S. Chamber of Commerce and called on small business members to withdraw their membership in the U. S. Chamber and join with CEI in continuing to fight against all energy-rationing legislation](#). Ebell offered further comment. "It is unfortunate that the U. S. Chamber of Commerce has decided to give new life to this dead horse by announcing that they want to work with Senators John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) on some other version of the legislation, he said. Today's committee action as well as the result in Virginia's gubernatorial election show that it can be defeated if major groups like the U. S. Chamber can refrain from snatching defeat from the jaws of victory."

Last week, B.P. America, Inc. testified before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee and proposed a program to retire 30 GW of coal generation capacity through "transitional incentives" for natural gas. Obviously, this will drive up natural gas and electricity prices.

Below is a press release by the National Mining Association responding to the BP proposal.

http://www.nma.org/pdf/misc/110409_nj_quinn.pdf

MYRON EBELL, *Standpoint*, June 2009, reviews two rather different books:
<http://standpointmag.co.uk/global-warning-books-june-09-an-appeal-to-reason-nigel-lawson-blueprint-for-a-safer-planet-nicholas-stern>

BBC's Richard Black <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/richardblack/>
Next week, the Boxer-Kerry bill is supposed to come before the crucial - and divided – US Senate Environment and Public Works committee. [Republican members are planning a boycott](#).
It's one of the key spaces to watch next week. [We have already seen the result – Senator Boxer ignored Senate committee rules and reported out the bill.]

Another is the meeting of G20 finance ministers in St Andrews, Scotland, at the very end of the week that might produce something more concrete in terms of pledges on money.

But most climate-oriented eyes will be on the UN session in Barcelona, the final week of formal negotiations before the Copenhagen meeting opens. [According to early reports the Barcelona session ended Friday night will little progress. Thankfully!]

Also from BBC:

The UK government says it is highly unlikely that a new legally binding climate treaty can be agreed this year - and a full treaty may be a year away.

BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE

After a full week of a chance to retract, UK's DECC (Department of Energy and Climate Change) is still claiming today that (and I quote)

Waste glass, plastic and metal are to be converted into clean energy as the go-ahead was given by the Government for a new plant in Peterborough.

Energy and Climate Change Minister David Kidney today granted consent to Peterborough Renewable Energy Ltd for the construction of the 80MW energy from waste and biomass-fuelled power station at Storeys Bar Gate.

Story at <http://www.decc.gov.uk/en/content/cms/news/pn126/pn126.aspx>

On Thursday, [the Archbishop of Canterbury](#) hosted a multi-faith (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Baha'i, Jain and Zoroastrian) seminar that concluded with a declaration:

"As leaders and representatives of faith communities and faith-based organisations in the UK we wish to highlight the very real threat to the world's poor, and to our fragile creation, from the threat of catastrophic climate change.

"We recognise unequivocally that there is a moral imperative to tackle the causes of global warming."

And on Tuesday, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will speak to what looks like [a bigger faith leaders' gathering](#) at Windsor Castle.

From WSJ, Best of the Web:

[We Blame Global Warming](#) "Chinese Scientists in Hot Water Over Icy Weather"--headline, Taipei Times, Nov. 5

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1. THE CAP&TRADE BILL HURTS NATIONAL SECURITY

"Oil Supply LCFS: A Great Blow to American Security"

Opinion by James J. Carey, Rear Admiral [Ret]

Richmond Times-Dispatch, November 7, 2009, <http://tinyurl.com/vbt738p>

ARLINGTON Earlier this month, it was announced in Washington that the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee would be named the lead sponsor of a cap-and-trade bill in large part authored by the chairwoman of the Senate Environment Committee.

The listing was not accidental: As the debate over climate policy in Congress has evolved over the past few months, proponents of a policy that seeks to ration the amount and type of energy available to the American people have come to recognize their success in selling this plan will depend on whether they can make the case that raising the cost of energy here at home will somehow strengthen our security position around the world.

Of all the current and future components of the Senate cap-and-trade bill, no provision stands at greater odds with that imperative than an infrequently mentioned policy proposal known as the Low-Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS). Added initially to the House's version of cap-and-trade, some in Congress are chafing for its inclusion in the Senate version expected to be debated later this fall. If successfully added, an LCFS would initiate a direct and systematic assault on the energy and economic security of this nation.

It doesn't take a four-star general to understand that America's security is strengthened in direct proportion to the amount of energy we're able to procure from secure, affordable sources. Unfortunately, over the past 25 years, the volume of energy we've been forced to import from foreign, often unstable sources has more than doubled -- a function of naturally declining production at home, and an unwillingness on the part of our elected leaders to unlock new areas for exploration so that the next generation of Americans has the same access and opportunity that was afforded to us.

Thankfully, as production volume in the United States has gradually declined over the past several decades, production potential for our allies in Canada has steadily risen. Today, more than 2.5 million barrels of Canadian energy crosses the U.S. border every 24 hours, much of it routed to grateful consumers in the Midwest, but a significant portion also making its way to the mid-Atlantic, Intermountain West, and even Texas.

An LCFS would effectively undo this important security and economic relationship, and worse, actually divert this secure Canadian energy to people and places around the world who don't live under the same stifling regime. A recent analysis compiled by the U.S. Department of Energy's top policy adviser suggests that China will be the chief recipient of this gift from Washington, claiming more than 2 million barrels a day of Canadian oil that, without an LCFS, would've been sent straight to the American public.

The Canadians, for their part, are beginning to read the writing on the wall as well, inking a deal with a state-owned Chinese oil giant last month in a not-so-thinly-veiled response to efforts by Congress to unilaterally ban their chief export from entering the United States.

Proponents of an LCFS note their preferred policy doesn't "explicitly" target Canadian crude. They're right. What it does do, however, is assign rankings to world crude sources that favor energy produced in the Middle East, Africa, and elsewhere -- on the grounds that this oil is "lighter" in form and thus "easier" to produce. Conversely, secure energy available to us in the United States -- and nearly all of the crude produced in Canada -- is deemed under an LCFS to be "heavy" and thus more difficult to get to market.

Unfortunately, our competitors in China will be more than happy to claim the resources we blithely leave behind. And once secured, they'll emit significantly more carbon in transporting, refining, and consuming those resources than Americans ever could or would. That doesn't sound very bright to me.

America's long-term economic and strategic security does not, contrary to popular view, depend on our nation cutting off all ties to regional energy partners and insisting upon complete independence from foreign sources of crude. Even Saudi Arabia imports a portion of its energy from abroad. But it does depend on our ability to finally and fundamentally reclaim our energy destiny, and once again put ourselves in a position to contract with producers of our own choosing -- not the choosing of our competitors and agitators overseas.

An LCFS, if passed, would erode our present situation even more than it currently is. And it would render our country, and those who both live in it and have spent their lives defending it, less secure as a result.

Rear Admiral [Ret.] James J. Carey is national chairman of the National Defense Committee (<http://www.NationalDefenseCommittee.org>) and former chairman of the U.S. Federal Maritime Commission. Contact him at (703) 971-3220.

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SEPP Comment: This refers to oil production from Tar Sands. But an even more serious national security issue is how the C&T bill would destroy the domestic oil-refining industry

2. HOW GOVERNMENT SPENDING HURTS NATIONAL SECURITY

By Amanda Reinecker, Heritage Foundation, October 30, 2009

<http://tinyurl.com/y9qpwda>

America is one of the strongest, wealthiest and freest nations on earth; she is largely in control of her own fate. Therefore, any real threat against America will likely come from within. Today, one of the main internal threats is crushing government debt.

"Few things can march a great power down the road of decline faster than irresponsible economic policies," [Heritage Foundation Vice President Kim Holmes writes in the Washington Times](#). Current estimates of our national debt exceed \$7 trillion -- \$22,000 per person -- a figure likely to increase by \$9 trillion over the next decade.

Unlike in times past when the nation was saddled with exorbitant deficits, today's imbalance is long-term and will heavily burden future generations. And this financial shortfall will wreak havoc on our national security. That's because the more money we commit to ever-expanding big-government programs, the less we have for defense.

Holmes outlines the dangers we face if the nation continues down this track of runaway spending: The U.S. military might be unable to protect a sea lane vital to trade and military supply lines. We might be unable to suppress an enemy regime that launches a terrorist attack against us. And absent the great American economic engine, we might lack the resources to stay on the cutting edge of technology, leaving our soldiers vulnerable to being matched or even trumped on the battlefield by better-equipped foes.

3. CONTROLLING CLIMATE? MORE LIKE CONTROLLING HUMANS

By Marc Morano, October 31, 2009, *Climate Realists*, <http://tinyurl.com/yculmeg>

The proposed "solutions" to scientifically fading man-made global warming fears are set to alter American lifestyles and sovereignty in ways never before contemplated.

MIT climate scientist Dr. Richard Lindzen has warned: "He who controls carbon controls life. It is a bureaucrat's dream to control carbon dioxide." Washington, D.C., and the U.N. are in a field of dreams right now as they envision one of the most massive expansions of controls on human individual freedom ever contemplated by governments.

Leading the charge is none other than former Vice President Al Gore, who declared in July 2009 that the congressional climate bill will help bring about "global governance." U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon also trumpeted the concept in an Oct. 25, 2009, New York Times op-ed. "A [climate] deal must include an equitable global governance structure," he wrote.

Gore and the U.N.'s call for "global governance" echoes former French President Jacques Chirac's call in 2000. On Nov. 20, 2000, then-President Chirac said during a speech at The Hague that the U.N.'s Kyoto Protocol represented "the first component of an authentic global governance."

Former EU Environment Minister Margot Wallstrom said, "Kyoto is about the economy, about leveling the playing field for big businesses worldwide." Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper once dismissed U.N.'s Kyoto Protocol as a "socialist scheme."

In addition, calls for a global carbon tax have been urged at recent U.N. global warming conferences. In December 2007, the U.N. climate conference in Bali urged the adoption of a global carbon tax that would represent "a global burden sharing system, fair, with solidarity, and legally binding to all nations."

The environmental group Friends of the Earth advocated the transfer of money from rich to poor nations during the 2007 U.N. climate conference. "A climate change response must have at its heart a redistribution of wealth and resources," said Emma Brindal, a climate justice campaigner coordinator for Friends of the Earth.

The Obama administration revealed even more controls in September 2009 when it was announced that the State Department wanted to form a global "Ecological Board of Directors."

But even more chilling than a global regime set up to "solve" global warming is the personal freedoms that are under assault. In September, a top German climate adviser proposed the "creation of a CO2 budget for every person on planet." Hans Joachim Schellnhuber told *Der Spiegel* that this internationally monitored "CO2 budget" would apply to "every person on the planet, regardless whether they live in Berlin or Beijing."

Czech physicist Dr. Lubos Motl, formerly of Harvard University and a global-warming skeptic, reacted to Schellnhuber's CO2 personal "budget" proposal by citing tyrannical movements of the past. "What Schellnhuber has just said is just breathtaking, and it helps me to understand how crazy political movements such as the Nazis or communists could have so easily taken over a nation that is as sensible as Germany," Motl wrote on Sept. 6, 2009.

The movement to control personal CO2 "budgets" and personal freedoms is growing internationally. In 2008, the U.K. proposed a "personal carbon-trading scheme" where "every adult in U.K. should be forced to use 'carbon ration cards.'" According to the *Daily Mail* article: "Everyone would be given an annual carbon allowance to use when buying oil, gas, electricity and flights – anyone who exceeds their entitlement would have to buy top-up credits from individuals who haven't used up their allowance." The U.K. government would have the authority to impose fines, "monitor employees' emissions, home energy bills, petrol purchases and holiday flights." The *London Times* reported in September 2009: "Rationing being reintroduced via workplace after an absence of half a century. ... Employees would be required to submit quarterly reports detailing their consumption."

In January 2008, the California state government stunned the nation when it sought to control home thermostats remotely. Even the *New York Times* appeared to be shaken by this proposal, comparing it to the 1960s sci-fi show "The Outer Limits." "California regulators are likely to have the emergency power to control individual thermostats, sending temperatures up or down through a radio-controlled device," the *New York Times* reported.

Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi was dubbed the "eco-nanny" in May 2009 when she told audiences in China that "every aspect of our lives must be subjected to an inventory" in order to combat global warming.

What is most surprising is that even the granddaddy of global warming treaties, the Kyoto Protocol, would have had a barely measurable impact on global CO2 levels even if fully enacted and assuming the U.N. was correct on the science. The congressional global warming cap-and-trade bill has been declared "scientifically meaningless," and President Obama's own EPA is now on record admitting that U.S. cap-and-trade bill "would not impact world CO2 levels."

Even a cursory examination of the global-warming issue reveals that the proposed climate tax and regulatory "solutions" are more important to the promoters of man-made climate fears than the accuracy

of their science or concern for human welfare. Former Colorado Sen. Tim Wirth summed up this view succinctly: "We've got to ride the global-warming issue. Even if the theory of global warming is wrong, we will be doing the right thing – in terms of economic policy and environmental policy."

The "right thing" Wirth is referring to is the unprecedented transfer of wealth, power and control to domestic and global governance. Controlling climate change appears not to be about controlling temperatures, but about controlling human freedom. Czech President Vaclav Klaus, who lived through totalitarian regimes, now warns that the biggest threat to freedom and democracy is from "ambitious environmentalism."

4. CONGRESS IS PLANNING TO MAKE YOUR HOME UNSALABLE

By Craig J. Cantoni, Oct. 22, 2009

[Excerpts:] In the midst of the raging healthcare debate over who owns your body and can decide what repairs it receives, the media and the public have overlooked the fact that the U.S. House of Representatives has already ruled in H.R. 2454 [American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009] that the state owns your house and can decide what repairs it receives. Your name might be on the title, the mortgage, the homeowner's policy, and the property tax bill, but if H.R. 2454 becomes the law of the land, the federal government will become a dictatorial homeowners association (HOA) with the power to make your house unsalable unless you comply with its diktats.

The Act is 1,428 pages long. I strongly encourage you to read every page. By doing so, you'll get an education in political science, economics, and history that will be better than a PhD in these subjects. You'll not only understand how nations destroy themselves from within, but you'll also understand how politicians like Waxman, and the people who elect them, are turning the U.S. economy into an economy of high-paid consultants, lawyers, lobbyists, and apparatchiks. At the same time, these great intellectuals bemoan that high-paying jobs for working stiffers are evaporating. Connecting dots is not their forte.

The Act can be found at: http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&docid=f:h2454pcs.txt.pdf

Warning: You're going to find a lot of gobbledygook like this:

(b) APPRAISER CERTIFICATION AND LICENSING REQUIREMENTS.--Section 1116 of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989 (12 U.S.C. 3345) is amended--

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting before the period at the end of the following: , and meets the requirements established pursuant to subsection (f) for qualifications regarding consideration of any renewable energy sources for, or energy efficiency or energy-conserving improvements or features of, the property . . .

Such gobbledygook will ensure that thousands of young Americans who might have pursued careers in science or engineering will instead pursue careers as gobbledygook interpreters -- as lawyers, consultants, and bureaucrats. Its hard to imagine that a sane person would want to attend college for four years and then law school for another three years in order to spend his life deciphering the meaning of a confusing clause before a period in subsection (a) of 12 U.S.C. 3345.

Speaking of sanity, its impossible for a sane person to read 1,428 pages of such tripe and still be sane afterwards and know for sure what the Act says. As such, my interpretation of what the Act says about your house might not be accurate, because I'm typing this in a padded cell with drool dripping off my chin. In any event, the following is what I think it says about your house.

It says that the federal government, in conjunction with state and local governments, will set environmental standards and building codes for residential homes. Then, any major renovation or planned sale of a house will trigger a report to the authorities on whether it meets the standards. Such information will be maintained in a national database and reflected in real estate records, including titles and property tax records.

In other words, if your house doesn't meet the standards, this will become public information available to prospective buyers, who would have to be as stupid as Henry Waxman to buy a substandard house and risk the possibility that the government will someday force them to bring it up to standard. The Acts language doesn't preclude that possibility.

Of course, the expense of such renovations will be borne by you, unless you're in a favored socioeconomic or racial group, in which case the expense will be borne by others. For example, if you live in a manufactured home (mobile home) that was manufactured prior to 1976, and if your household income is less than twice the poverty rate, you can get a rebate of up to \$7,500 on the purchase of a new manufactured home that meets the standards. And if your race is diverse, owners of multifamily housing properties with more than 50 units will be required to make room for you in order to meet the environmental standards. Maybe some races produce less CO2 than other races.

Although the Act's language doesn't say it as explicitly as I'm going to say it, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac will be pressured under the Act to give favorable terms to mortgages for Green homes. Also, to be eligible for free stuff under the Act, contractors will have to pay prevailing wages, or, in other words, will have to share the loot with union friends of the Democrat Party.

The good news in all of this is that your home will still be your castle. The bad news is that if it doesn't have thermal windows, a reflective roof, thick insulation, and the proper appliances and heating and air-conditioning systems, you'll be living in it until you die, unless you can afford to bring it up to the standards in order to sell it.

But none of this is what made me insane. What put me over the edge was the section in the Act on trees. Yes, the federal government wants to set national standards on trees in your yard.

The Act will establish a program to use the best available science to create tree-siting guidelines which dictate [well, at least they admit it] where the optimum tree species are best planted in locations that achieve maximum reductions in consumer energy demand -- while causing the least disruption to public infrastructure, considering overhead and underground facilities. It goes on, of course, to specify that free trees will be available under the program. It also specifies that loot will be given to power companies to be shared with nonprofit tree-planting organizations.

I have to end here. An orderly is entering my padded cell to wipe the drool off my chin and change my diaper. Let me quickly close with this: The most insane aspect of the Act is that it is not needed -- not its 1,428 pages, not its legions of lawyers, not its brigades of bureaucrats, and not its tremendous shift of productive resources to unproductive make-work. If the consensus in the United States is that global warming is man-caused and can be stopped -- as wrongheaded as that is -- it is not necessary for the government to micromanage your life to the extent that it tells you what trees to plant in your yard. Instead, the government would only have to raise energy prices through a tax on carbon, and the market and individual choices would sort out the rest.

But what do I know? I'm insane.

An author and columnist, Mr. Cantoni can be reached at ccan2@aol.com.

5. CASH FOR CLUBBERS: CONGRESS'S GOLF CART STIMULUS

Review and Outlook, Wall Street Journal, October 17, 2009

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704107204574473724099542430.html>

We thought cash for clunkers was the ultimate waste of taxpayer money, but as usual we were too optimistic. Thanks to the federal tax credit to buy high-mileage cars that was part of President Obama's stimulus plan, Uncle Sam is now paying Americans to buy that great necessity of modern life, the golf cart.

The federal credit provides from \$4,200 to \$5,500 for the purchase of an electric vehicle, and when it is combined with similar incentive plans in many states the tax credits can pay for nearly the entire cost of a golf cart. Even in states that don't have their own tax rebate plans, the federal credit is generous enough to pay for half or even two-thirds of the average sticker price of a cart, which is typically in the range of \$8,000 to \$10,000. "The purchase of some models could be absolutely free," Roger Gaddis of Ada Electric Cars in Oklahoma said earlier this year. "Is that about the coolest thing you've ever heard?"

The golf-cart boom has followed an IRS ruling that golf carts qualify for the electric-car credit as long as they are also road worthy. These qualifying golf carts are essentially the same as normal golf carts save for adding some safety features, such as side and rearview mirrors and three-point seat belts. They typically can go 15 to 25 miles per hour.

In South Carolina, sales of these carts have been soaring as dealerships alert customers to Uncle Sam's giveaway. "The Golf Cart Man" in the Villages of Lady Lake, Florida is running a banner online ad that declares: "GET A FREE GOLF CART. Or make \$2,000 doing absolutely nothing!"

Golf Cart Man is referring to his offer in which you can buy the cart for \$8,000, get a \$5,300 tax credit off your 2009 income tax, lease it back for \$100 a month for 27 months, at which point Golf Cart Man will buy back the cart for \$2,000. "This means you own a free Golf Cart or made \$2,000 cash doing absolutely nothing!!!" You can't blame a guy for exploiting loopholes that Congress offers.

The IRS has also ruled that there's no limit to how many electric cars an individual can buy, so some enterprising profiteers are stocking up on multiple carts while the federal credit lasts, in order to resell them at a profit later. We should note that some states, such as Oklahoma, have caught on to the giveaway and are debating whether to cancel or limit their state credits. But in Congress they're still on the driving range.

This golf-cart fiasco perfectly illustrates tax policy in the age of Obama, when politicians dole out credits and loopholes for everything from plug-in cars to fuel-efficient appliances, home insulation and vitamins. Democrats then insist that to pay for these absurdities they have no choice but to raise tax rates on other things, like work and investment that aren't politically in vogue. If this keeps up, it'll soon make more sense to retire and play golf than work for living.

6. THE COPENHAGEN CLIMATE EXTORTION

By Jon Entine, October 23, 2009, The American, Journal of the American Enterprise Institute

<http://tinyurl.com/yeq7z7b>

Going into the Copenhagen climate change summit, the delegates appear to be competing over who can offer the most ambitious and least realistic targets.

If the upcoming Copenhagen climate change summit fails to result in substantive agreements, as increasingly seems likely, look for the global warming lobby to turn up the extortion heat. Here's the dilemma:

The United States, Europe, Japan, and other developed countries are steadily cutting per capita emissions. But there remain contentious divisions about what future cuts are technologically and economically feasible. Going into the talks, the delegates appear to be competing over who can offer the most ambitious and least realistic targets so everyone can return from Copenhagen satisfied that they did their part to save the world, at least on paper.

Using 1990 as the benchmark, Britain pledges to reduce emissions by the year 2020, or shortly thereafter, by at least 34 percent. Japan pledges a 25-percent cutback. The U.S. House of Representatives bill passed in June of this year, less ambitious by the airy standards of climate geopolitics but no more realistic, assures a 17-percent reduction from 2005 levels.

But as Roger Pielke, former director of the Center for Science and Technology Policy Research, notes, “the problem with all these promises to achieve deep and rapid cuts in emissions is that no one knows how these cuts are going to happen, and most simply cannot happen as promised. So these countries have turned to designing very complex policies full of accounting tricks, political pork, and policy misdirection.”

Making promises and expecting the future to miraculously take care of itself appears enough to satisfy many enviro-romantics.

Making promises and expecting the future to miraculously take care of itself appears enough to satisfy many enviro-romantics. But the narrative gets worse, far worse. Someone will have to pay for attempting to achieve this scientific Great Fantasy, particularly in the financially strained developing world—and that’s where the extortion factor comes in.

The Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change, commissioned by the British government, estimates that reorganizing the world energy economy could cut GDP growth by upwards of 1 percent, and perhaps as much as 5 percent, per year. Under current Copenhagen treaty drafts, developed countries are expected to cover the modernization and clean up of the energy sector in developing countries, which could result in an annual transfer of \$150 billion by 2020.

Now, some measure of wealth redistribution can have merits, including greater global stability. And if indeed the world faces environmental disruptions from greenhouse gases and the more prosperous countries are in a better position to finance mitigation efforts, then expediency if nothing else dictates that targeted foreign aid to address climate change may be warranted. But there must be limits—and strings. And there’s no sign yet that’s in the cards.

The issue was put in play earlier this month, rather bluntly, in an interview with the incoming president of the summit, Connie Hedegaard, the Danish minister for climate and energy. It’s the obligation of North America, Europe, Australia, and Japan to “prove ... to the developing world [that] we know we’re going to pay, or there will be no agreement,” she said.

This alliance of developing countries is aggressively promoting what amounts to a wealth-transfer scheme to lure countries with the dirtiest and fastest growing industrial sectors into the cap-and-trade fold.

Let’s be clear on what she is saying. The economically successful countries of the world are being threatened into reducing emissions far beyond what is possible, its impact on growth and world economic stability be damned, while simultaneously financing the transition of the rest of the world to a lower-carbon economy. Driving the push for a funding mechanism is the Group of 77 (G-77) and China. Its 130 member states from the developing world make up a solid majority in the United Nations. This alliance of developing countries, complimented by a collection of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs),

aggressively promotes what amounts to a wealth-transfer scheme to lure countries with the dirtiest and fastest growing industrial sectors—China, India, and Brazil are the Big Dirty Three—into the cap-and-trade fold.

Hedegaard is merely echoing the talking points of developing countries, egged on by anti-globalist NGOs demanding that the industrialized West face its “historical responsibilities” for growing its economies on the back of low-cost coal and oil.

“Developed countries have been accumulating a climate debt for the past 200 years, based on their fossil fuel intensive development,” declared Stephanie Long, a spokesperson for Friends of the Earth. “This climate debt must be repaid ... [t]his means that those that are historically responsible for climate change must reduce their emissions to give more resources to developing countries so they can develop sustainable economies.”

Seizing the moment, Ambassador Lumumba D'Aping of oil-rich Sudan, home to the genocidal government of Omar al-Bashir and a member of the G-77, has attacked the developed world as climate terrorists, intent “to maintain their profligate consumption lifestyles at the expense of the rest of humanity, and to do that by spinning it as if the rest of the world is responsible for damaging the environment.” His piece of flesh: “5 percent of the developed countries’ (annual) GDP.”

Reorganizing the world energy economy could cut GDP growth by upwards of 1 percent, and perhaps as much as 5 percent, per year, according to one estimate.

The suddenly emboldened emerging countries want the best of both worlds: limited environmental regulation so they can keep growing, with the West covering their under-funded mitigation and modernization efforts. Can you say “free rent”?

Granted, any person—or as in this case any country—with an opportunity to come into easy money would grab at it. But public policy experts are well aware of the “resource curse” theory, also known as the paradox of plenty: the easier you come by your wealth, the more you waste and the less accountable you are. It applies to mineral and oil rich countries in Latin America, Africa, and much of the Arab World, home to the misgoverned, but also to anybody getting a free lunch. Let’s not fool ourselves. We’re talking about welfare handouts with very few strings attached, and anytime someone or some country gets buckets of money under those conditions, accountability and restraint go out the window.

Climate change activists and their friends in economic dynamos like Denmark not only want the “U.S. and Co.” to share in the cost of modernization, they propose a no-deductible insurance policy covering any and all “climate events” that may—or more than likely may not—have been caused by the incremental carbon emission contributions of developed countries. Every time a typhoon, such as Ketsana that recently roared through the Philippines, wreaks havoc in the developing world or a drought or natural disaster hits, they will expect “rich nations” to foot the bill.

This amounts to naked extortion by emerging economies, aided and abetted by anti-globalist advocacy NGOs. Either the United States and other “rich nations” agree to allow developing countries to belch ever-increasing amounts of carbon and massive industrial pollutants—indeed to increase their per capita emissions—while forking over billions in aid dollars or they face political wrath. If the transfer from the most productive economies to the least efficient occurs at the projected magnitude, a nightmarish growth-dampening scenario is a real possibility.

As Pielke suggests, the world may come out of Copenhagen with the joke on NGOs and climate activists: “they will get just about everything they campaigned for, except any prospect for actual reductions in

future emissions.” The more immediate question may be: what price will the growth engines of the world be forced to pay for this latest demonstration of eco-narcissism?

Jon Entine is a visiting fellow at the American Enterprise Institute and co-director of Global Governance Watch/NGOWatch

7. STERN WARNING TO GO VEGETARIAN (BUT FIRST EAT THE DOG).

Blog by Roger Helmer, MEP, October 29, 2009, <http://tinyurl.com/ybq9avs>

Lord Stern, the pin-up economist of the climate hysteria movement, and author of the Stern Report on the costs of global warming, has delivered himself of a new gem. He predicts that "eating meat could become as socially unacceptable as drink-driving".

Livestock farming has come under fire in recent years from environmental campaigners because methane from cattle and pigs is a significant source of greenhouse gases. They seem to have forgotten that when humans first reached North America the plains were black with buffalo, and the savannahs of Africa with Wildebeest. This is called *life*, and the earth has been quite good at sustaining it for many hundreds of millions of years. They have also forgotten (if they ever knew) that compared to geological history, today's atmosphere is impoverished in terms of CO₂, levels of which have been up to ten times higher than today's. And in those CO₂-rich days, did we observe a "tipping-point", with "run-away global warming"? We did not. In fact we had the greatest ice age in geological history.

Stern has a poor record in these matters. Although his report is frequently quoted, it is in fact an outlier amongst economic analyses of climate mitigation measures. Most reach the opposite conclusion -- that the cost of our proposed climate mitigation policies is likely to exceed any damage that climate change might do, even if the alarmists are right. If, as I believe, they're wrong, we are beggaring our grandchildren for no good reason at all. How did Stern get it so wrong? By swallowing the IPCC position wholesale; by accounting for the downsides of global warming while ignoring the up-sides; and above all by using a wholly unrealistic discount rate for future costs and benefits (the costs are mostly up-front, while the benefits -- if any -- are many years in the future).

But of course Stern is not the first one to raise concerns about meat-eating. The Chairman of the IPCC since 2002, Dr. Rajendra K. Pachauri, has been on the same tack for years -- not surprising, perhaps, seeing that in terms of faith he is a Hindu. Dr. Pachauri is often represented as a global authority on climate change, which is a bit bizarre when you look at his education record. He commenced his tertiary education at the Indian Railways Institute of Mechanical and Electrical Engineering at Jamalpur, Bihar, and began his career at the Diesel Locomotive Works in Varanasi. He later received an Masters degree in Industrial Engineering from North Carolina State University, Raleigh, in 1972, as well as a joint Ph.D. in Industrial Engineering and Economics in 1974. Nothing much there on climatology or atmospheric physics -- a level of unfamiliarity with the subject that he still shows to this day.

A new book by New Zealand authors Robert and Brenda Vale urges pet owners to "Eat the dog", since the carbon footprint of a year's dog-food is too awful to contemplate. The hysteria of the climate alarmists has gone from worrying, to pathetic, to richly comical. It's enough to make you order a fillet steak, medium rare, with a good portion of *gratin dauphinois*. Meantime I shall continue to patronise Mr. Chapman, who runs an excellent old-fashioned butcher's shop in Lutterworth High Street.

8. GAIA'S OIL SPILLS

IBD Editorial, *Investors.com*, October 12, 2009

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article.aspx?id=508841>

Environment: With much of the world still feeling the sting from last year's oil shock, a group of federal scientists is encouraging Washington to limit offshore drilling. Its counsel would best be ignored.

Citing harmful effects on marine life and oil spills in the Arctic, scientists from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are asking the Interior Department to "drastically reduce plans to open the coast to offshore oil and gas drilling," the Los Angeles Times is reporting.

Their concerns are justified. Marine life is affected by offshore oil production, and spills do happen. The issue is how and to what degree. If the NOAA scientists would step back, they would notice a couple of points that are germane to the debate.

First, the impact of offshore drilling on marine life has hardly brought on a fish and fowl holocaust. Earlier in this decade, a Florida oceanographer working for the Interior Department studied the impact of relatively new offshore oil drilling in the Arctic off of Alaska. He did not discover what he expected he would.

"We found early in the process that impacts to the environment from offshore drilling were minimal," said John Trefry, a marine and environmental systems professor at the Florida Institute of Technology. "In fact, the entire offshore area was near-pristine."

Follow-up monitoring by Trefry's group found "no evidence of significant impacts."

Other research has found that offshore oil rigs bring not disaster for marine life but health. Four years ago, the Washington Post reported that Paul Sammarco, a marine biologist at the Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium, surveyed abandoned drilling rigs and discovered that they had "spawned lush marine habitats that are home to a profusion of rare corals and 10,000 to 30,000 fish each."

Second, companies work hard to prevent spills. They don't want to see their profits pouring into the sea. Energy firms, not drilling opponents, have the greatest interest in preventing spills.

Even if man were careless in his stewardship and doubled overnight the amount of crude he spilled into the sea through offshore production, his impact would be negligible.

According to the U.S. Minerals Management Service, between 1985 and 2001, spills from offshore platforms and pipelines accounted for only 2% of the oil released in U.S. waters.

Major spills, eagerly covered by the media, are actually rare. In 97% of spills, the volume of oil released is one barrel or less.

We won't hear this from the NOAA scientists or environmental groups that declare themselves the guardians of Earth, but offshore drilling is arguably a benefit to the environment.

Nature, not man, is by far the largest contributor of oil into the marine environment. In the Gulf of Mexico, natural oil seeps account for 95% of offshore oil, the National Academy of Sciences reports. In Southern California, they contribute 98% of the crude in the offshore zone. Those same natural seeps are responsible for 60% of the oil found in the North American marine environment.

With these facts in mind, Zonia Pino, writing in August for the Heartland Institute, noted that "drilling would help clean up the coastline" because "removal of oil allows for less natural seepage, hence cleaner beaches and a cleaner marine environment."

The environmental benefits of offshore drilling don't end with the draining of natural seeps. By extracting oil from rich fields off our coasts, we reduce significantly the ecological impact of shipping crude from regions halfway around the world.

While we appreciate the NOAA scientists' concern for the environment, we wish they would broaden their analysis. As professional researchers, they have no excuse not to. With the price of oil now exceeding \$70 a barrel, now is not the time for them to be asking Washington to choke offshore drilling.

9. THE REAL CLIMATE CHANGE CATASTROPHE

In a startling new book, Christopher Booker reveals how a handful of scientists, who have pushed flawed theories on global warming for decades, now threaten to take us back to the Dark Ages

By Christopher Booker, *Telegraph.co.uk* 25 Oct 2009

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/6425269/The-real-climate-change-catastrophe.html>

Next Thursday marks the first anniversary of one of the most remarkable events ever to take place in the House of Commons. For six hours MPs debated what was far and away the most expensive piece of legislation ever put before Parliament.

The Climate Change Bill laid down that, by 2050, the British people must cut their emissions of carbon dioxide by well over 80 per cent. Short of some unimaginable technological revolution, such a target could not possibly be achieved without shutting down almost the whole of our industrialised economy, changing our way of life out of recognition.

Even the Government had to concede that the expense of doing this – which it now admits will cost us £18billion a year for the next 40 years – would be twice the value of its supposed benefits. Yet, astonishingly, although dozens of MPs queued up to speak in favour of the Bill, only two dared to question the need for it. It passed by 463 votes to just three.

One who voted against it was Peter Lilley who, just before the vote was taken, drew the Speaker's attention to the fact that, outside the Palace of Westminster, snow was falling, the first October snow recorded in London for 74 years. As I observed at the time: "Who says that God hasn't got a sense of humour?"

By any measure, the supposed menace of global warming – and the political response to it – has become one of the overwhelmingly urgent issues of our time. If one accepts the thesis that the planet faces a threat unprecedented in history, the implications are mind-boggling. But equally mind-boggling now are the implications of the price we are being asked to pay by our politicians to meet that threat. More than ever, it is a matter of the highest priority that we should know whether or not the assumptions on which the politicians base their proposals are founded on properly sound science.

This is why I have been regularly reporting on the issue in my column in *The Sunday Telegraph*, and this week I publish a book called *The Real Global Warming Disaster: Is the obsession with climate change turning out to be the most costly scientific delusion in history?*

There are already many books on this subject, but mine is rather different from the rest in that, for the first time, it tries to tell the whole tangled story of how the debate over the threat of climate change has evolved over the past 30 years, interweaving the science with the politicians' response to it.

It is a story that has unfolded in three stages. The first began back in the Seventies when a number of scientists noticed that the world's temperatures had been falling for 30 years, leading them to warn that we might be heading for a new ice age. Then, in the mid-Seventies, temperatures started to rise again, and by the mid-Eighties, a still fairly small number of scientists – including some of those who had been predicting a new ice age – began to warn that we were now facing the opposite problem: a world dangerously heating up, thanks to our pumping out CO₂, and all those greenhouse gases inseparable from modern civilisation.

In 1988, a handful of the scientists who passionately believed in this theory won authorisation from the UN to set up the body known as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). This was the year when the scare over global warming really exploded into the headlines, thanks above all to the carefully staged testimony given to a US Senate Committee by Dr James Hansen, head of NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS), also already an advocate for the theory that CO₂ was causing potentially catastrophic warming.

The disaster-movie scenario that rising levels of CO₂ could lead to droughts, hurricanes, heat waves and, above all, that melting of the polar ice caps, which would flood half the world's major cities, struck a rich chord. The media loved it. The environmentalists loved it. More and more politicians, led by Al Gore in the United States, jumped on the bandwagon. But easily their most influential allies were the scientists running the new IPCC, led by a Swedish meteorologist Bert Bolin and Dr John Houghton, head of the UK Met Office.

The IPCC, through its series of weighty reports, was now to become the central player in the whole story. But rarely has the true nature of any international body been more widely misrepresented. It is commonly believed that the IPCC consists of "1,500 of the world's top climate scientists" charged with weighing all the scientific evidence for and against "human-induced climate change" in order to arrive at a "consensus".

In fact, the IPCC was never intended to be anything of the kind. The vast majority of its contributors have never been climate scientists. Many are not scientists at all. And from the start, the purpose of the IPCC was not to test the theory, but to provide the most plausible case for promoting it. This was why the computer models it relied on as its chief source of evidence were all programmed to show that, as CO₂ levels continued to rise, so temperatures must inevitably follow.

One of the more startling features of the IPCC is just how few scientists have been centrally involved in guiding its findings. They have mainly been British and American, led for a long time by Dr Houghton (knighted in 1991) as chairman of its scientific working group, who in 1990 founded the Met Office's Hadley Centre for research into climate change. The Centre has continued to play a central role in selecting the IPCC's contributors to this day, and along with the Climate Research Unit run by Professor Philip Jones at the University of East Anglia, controls HadCrut, one of the four official sources of global temperature data (another of the four, GISTemp, is run by the equally committed Dr Hansen and his British-born right-hand man, Dr Gavin Schmidt).

With remarkable speed, from the time of its first report in 1990, the IPCC and its computer models won over many of the world's politicians, led by those of the European Union. In 1992, the UN staged its extraordinary Earth Summit in Rio, attended by 108 prime ministers and heads of state, which agreed the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change; and this led in 1997 to the famous Kyoto Protocol, committing the world's governments to specific targets for reducing CO₂.

Up to this point, the now officially accepted global-warming theory seemed only too plausible. Both CO₂ levels and world temperatures had continued to rise, exactly as the IPCC's computer models predicted. We thus entered the second stage of the story, lasting from 1998 to 2006, when the theory seemed to be carrying everything before it.

The politicians, most notably in the EU, were now beginning to adopt every kind of measure to combat the supposed global-warming menace, from building tens of thousands of wind turbines to creating elaborate schemes for buying and selling the right to emit CO₂, the gas every plant in the world needs for life.

But however persuasive the case seemed to be, there were just beginning to be rather serious doubts about the methods being used to promote it. More and more questions were being asked about the IPCC's unbalanced approach to evidence – most notably in its promotion of the so-called “hockey stick” graph, produced in time for its 2001 report by a hitherto obscure US scientist Dr Michael Mann, purporting to show how global temperatures had suddenly been shooting up to levels quite unprecedented in history.

One of the hockey stick's biggest fans was Al Gore, who in 2006 made it the centrepiece of his Oscar-winning film, *An Inconvenient Truth*. But it then turned out that almost every single scientific claim in Gore's film was either wildly exaggerated or wrong. The statistical methods used to create the hockey-stick graph were so devastatingly exposed by two Canadian statisticians, Steve McIntyre and Ross McKittrick (as was confirmed in 2006 by two expert panels commissioned by the US Congress) that the graph has become one of the most comprehensively discredited artefacts in the history of science.

The supporters of the hockey stick, highly influential in the IPCC, hit back. Proudly calling themselves “the Hockey Team”, their membership again reflects how small has been the number of closely linked scientists centrally driving the warming scare. They include Philip Jones, in charge of the HadCrut official temperature graph, and Gavin Schmidt, Hansen's right-hand man at GISS –which itself came under fire for “adjusting” its temperature data to exaggerate the warming trend.

Then, in 2007, the story suddenly entered its third stage. In a way that had been wholly unpredicted by those IPCC computer models, global temperatures started to drop. Although CO₂ levels continued to rise, after 25 years when temperatures had risen, the world's climate was visibly starting to cool again.

More and more eminent scientists have been coming out of the woodwork to suggest that the IPCC, with its computer models, had got it all wrong. It isn't CO₂ that has been driving the climate, the changes are natural, driven by the activity of the sun and changes in the currents of the world's oceans.

The ice caps haven't been melting as the alarmists and the models predicted they should. The Antarctic, containing nearly 90 per cent of all the ice in the world, has actually been cooling over the past 30 years, not warming. The polar bears are not drowning – there are four times more of them now than there were 40 years ago. In recent decades, the number of hurricanes and droughts have gone markedly down, not up.

As the world has already been through two of its coldest winters for decades, with all the signs that we may now be entering a third, the scientific case for CO₂ threatening the world with warming has been crumbling away on an astonishing scale.

Yet it is at just this point that the world's politicians, led by Britain, the EU and now President Obama, are poised to impose on us far and away the most costly set of measures that any group of politicians has ever proposed in the history of the world – measures so destructive that even if only half of them were implemented, they would take us back to the dark ages.

We have “less than 50 days” to save the planet, declared Gordon Brown last week, in yet another desperate bid to save the successor to the Kyoto treaty, which is due to be agreed in Copenhagen in six weeks’ time. But no one has put the reality of the situation more succinctly than Prof Richard Lindzen of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, one of the most distinguished climatologists in the world, who has done as much as anyone in the past 20 years to expose the emptiness of the IPCC’s claim that its reports represent a “consensus” of the views of “the world’s top climate scientists”.

In words quoted on the cover of my new book, Prof Lindzen wrote: “Future generations will wonder in bemused amazement that the early 21st century’s developed world went into hysterical panic over a globally averaged temperature increase of a few tenths of a degree and, on the basis of gross exaggerations of highly exaggerated computer predictions combined into implausible chains of inference, proceeded to contemplate a rollback of the industrial age.”

Such is the truly extraordinary position in which we find ourselves.

Thanks to misreading the significance of a brief period of rising temperatures at the end of the 20th century, the Western world (but not India or China) is now contemplating measures that add up to the most expensive economic suicide note ever written.

How long will it be before sanity and sound science break in on what begins to look like one of the most bizarre collective delusions ever to grip the human race?

“The Real Global Warming Disaster” by Christopher Booker (Continuum, £16.99) is available from Telegraph Books for £14.99 or go to books.telegraph.co.uk