

The Week That Was: 2011-07-02 (July 2, 2011)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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PLEASE NOTE: The complete TWTW, including the articles, can be downloaded in an easily printable form at the SEPP web site: www.sepp.org.

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Good News! Fred Singer will be spreading the joyous news that humanity and the environment do not face eminent destruction. The claim of unprecedented and dangerous global warming is scientifically false.

Fred's tentative itinerary includes talks at the following times and locations:

July 14: **Oakland**, CA, Lunch at the Independent Institute

July 15, **Los Alamos**, NM, Lunch at Masa Library (the forest fires may cause rescheduling)

July 16, **Albuquerque**, NM, at 8 am, at the conference of the Doctors for Disaster Preparedness (requires registration)

July 18, **Fort Collins**, CO, at 7:30 pm during a general meeting at FSU (technical meeting at 3 pm)

July 19, **Boulder**, CO, at 4 pm at NIST

For details please contact Ken@sepp.org

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Quote of the Week:

*“Urgent and unprecedented environmental and social changes challenge scientists to define a new social contract...a commitment on the part of all scientists to devote their energies and talents to the most pressing problems of the day, in proportion to their importance, **in exchange for public funding.**”* Jane Lubchenco, NOAA Administrator, 1997 AAAS presidential address [Boldface added, H/t Joe D’Aleo, ICECAP]

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Number of the Week: 6

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THIS WEEK:

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

The Sixth International Conference on Climate Change (ICCC) sponsored by Heartland Institute took place this week in Washington, DC. The ICCC was co-sponsored by 43 other organizations from various countries, including SEPP and VA-SEEE. The one and one-half day event, titled “Restoring the Scientific Method,” was a thought provoking affair for those attending and watching over the internet, and, as expected, was derided by some defenders of the orthodoxy. Please see Article # 1.

The ICCC began on a disappointing note, the featured kick-off speaker, Senator Inhofe, was ill. Newspaper accounts state that the Senator blamed his illness on swimming in a lake during an algae bloom. He jokingly suggested to reporters that any articles describing the illness have headlines similar to “The Environment Strikes Back at Senator Inhofe.”

Even with less than 12 hours notice, Patrick Michaels splendidly filled-in with a brilliant lecture sprinkled with delightful humor. A distinguished senior fellow in the School of Public Policy at George Mason University, Michaels focus was the significant shift in many American scientific institutions from scientific objectivity to meeting the demands of government bureaucrats and government policies, which are often determined by politics contradicting objective science. Michaels presented many examples of this shift taken from his new book *Climate Coup*.

One slide was particularly illustrative of the political lobbying efforts of once vaunted scientific institutions. It was a photo of the office building housing the American Association for the Advancement

of Science (AAAS) taken during ethanol debates. Hanging from the building was a large banner featuring a green gasoline filler assembly. In place of the standard nozzle was a husked ear of corn. The politics was unmistakable.

During lunch, we were treated to a lively debate between Scott Denning, the Monford Professor of Atmospheric Science at Colorado State University and an editor of *Journal of Climate*, and Roy Spencer, a principal research scientist at the University of Alabama in Huntsville and co-developer of the method of measuring atmospheric temperature changes by satellite. Both were excellent, positive advocates of their respective views. Denning supporting the orthodoxy that late 20th century warming was largely caused by emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) and Spencer advocating that the warming was caused by natural phenomena that are not well understood.

During the debate, Spencer introduced his recent work on the mystery of the missing heat. The models used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) project a warming of the earth that is not occurring. Understanding the changing temperatures is vital to establishing the earth's temperature sensitivity to a doubling CO₂. James Hansen of NASA-GISS and others claim that the missing heat is hiding in the deep oceans. Spencer developed a very simple model to explain the changes in observed temperatures of the oceans to a depth of 700 meters over the period 1965 to 2005.

He shows that the observations demonstrate a temperature increase far less than what the most conservative model (lowest climate sensitivity to GHG warming) projects, which is less than the IPCC's official projected range of warming from a doubling CO₂. Using his simple model, which incorporates Hansen's claimed sensitivity, Spencer projects that a doubling of CO₂ will increase temperatures by about 1.3 deg C. Note that Spencer's model does not include any natural processes that he believes are the major causes of the late 20th century warming. Please see the article referenced under "Challenging the Orthodoxy."

That afternoon we were introduced to the main reason for the IPCC – the upcoming publication of an Interim Report of the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change (NIPCC), which will be out at the end of July or the first part of August.

One of the purposes of the Interim NIPCC report is to provide a compendium of recent scientific research in the various fields falling under the broad term climate science. Most of the research is peer reviewed. This compendium will provide a basis for evaluating the upcoming Fifth Assessment Report of the IPCC that will appear around 2013. If, regrettably, the IPCC fails to provide an assessment that is not backed up by rigorous science, as it did in the Fourth Assessment Report (AR-4), then scientists will have a basis for evaluating and challenging the IPCC report for the general benefit of policymakers and the public.

Craig Idso, Chairman of the Center for the study of Carbon Dioxide and Global Change, introduced the contents of the report, which includes studies covering ten broad topics: climate models and their limitations, forcing and feedbacks, paleoclimate, temperature trends, and comparisons of observations and predictions in the cryosphere, ocean dynamics, precipitation, river and streamflows and extreme weather. Other chapters cover terrestrial animals, plants, and soils, aquatic life, human health effects and economic and other policy implications.

Professor S. Fred Singer, Chairman of SEPP and founder of NIPCC, introduced some of his latest research. Singer demonstrated the disparity between the IPCC models and observations as discussed in previous NIPCC reports. Singer rebutted the challenges to this disparity produced by published Santer (a principal author of IPCC reports) and 16 others by pointing out the huge range of error in the Santer study which suggests chaotic uncertainty within the models. The claim by Santer, et al. that the models are consistent with observations is spurious.

IPCC general circulation climate models are chaotic that produce different results with each model run. Singer also pointed out chaotic uncertainty is illustrated by a published study from the Japanese modeling group; it showed a different result for each of the five model runs. There is no way of knowing which one is more correct. The mean of the five runs (called the ensemble mean) may or may not be more correct than any of the runs.

A separate investigation using multiple runs revealed that ten or twenty or even more runs are needed before the ensemble mean approached an asymptotic value. None of the 22 models used by the IPCC have more than 5 runs; many have only one or two runs. Thus, the trends resulting from these models may have huge chaotic error and are of little value. Averaging the 22 IPCC models does not eliminate the chaotic error. Singer proposed that articles discussing model runs should include the number of runs and the results of each run so that independent scientists could have some understanding of the chaotic uncertainty in the model results. Note: even if the chaotic error is eliminated in a particular model, it does not address any bias introduced in unverified assumptions.

Singer also questioned the late 20th century warming shown in surface data between 1979 and 1997. Satellite data, which started in 1979, do not show any appreciable warming until the super El Niño of 1998. Without this questionable warming trend, the claim by the IPCC that late 20th century warming was caused by humans cannot be supported.

Research Professor Robert "Bob" Carter gave an excellent keynote lecture during Friday's breakfast in which he discussed seven hypotheses that can be derived from IPCC's publications and which are critical to claims that human emissions of GHG are the principal cause of late 20th century warming and that the warming is unprecedented and dangerous.

These hypotheses can be tested by observations against the proper null hypothesis – that the phenomena are natural. All the hypotheses fail basic testing. Carter called the failure of the hypotheses to withstand basic empirical testing "black swans." Prior to the discovery of Australia, Europeans considered all swans were white. The discovery of black swans was a complete surprise. The black swan was used to refute 18th and 19th century argument that *a priori* is possible: that scientific knowledge can be derived by deduction. If it is a swan, therefore it is white is a conclusion made with incomplete evidence, and one exception disproves the conclusion. [Note: this logical concept is distinct from the recent financial concept expressed by Nassim Taleb of a black swan that is an unpredictable event that can have a massive impact on financial planning. Taleb gives Google as an example.]

Carter stated that the Prime Minister of Australia, who is advocating a carbon tax, and her advisors have closed their eyes to the black swans and claim that they are 95% certain GHG emissions are the cause of global warming and significant weather events. They have adopted post-modern (normal) science that ignores objective facts.

The above is but a brief summary of a few of the excellent lectures given during the short conference. Heartland Institute will be posting the tapes of all the lectures on its web site. TWTW will keep you informed when these lectures are posted.

AAAS: The board of directors of AAAS issued a press release stating "AAAS vigorously opposes attacks on researchers that question their personal and professional integrity or threaten their safety based on displeasure with their scientific conclusions..." "Scientific progress depends on transparency, the Board said, but "the sharing of research data is vastly different from unreasonable, excessive Freedom of Information Act requests.."

Certainly, physical threats and derision are reprehensible, but such attacks include global warming “skeptics” and “deniers” as well.

The AAAS board expresses laudable goals: to bring civility, transparency, and open discussion on scientific issues. The question is, will it enforce such goals on its signature publication *Science*? This would require a major change in editorial policy. If so, we should expect a public statement that the magazine is accepting competent articles from researchers who question the IPCC. The new policy would announce that those submitting articles must submit their data and computer source code so that other researchers can replicate the results. Any truncation of data must be carefully explained; otherwise, the article will not be published, or, if published, publicly retracted. The fawning review of the recent book by Oreskes and Conway who smeared distinguished scientists without presenting evidence would be publicly retracted with apologies. The rebuttal by Fred Singer, the only one of the scientists still alive, which was rejected due to claimed lack of space would be published.

If AAAS does not make these, and other, changes it will remain an ideologically driven, special interest group promoting certain government policies under guise of science. As the current NOAA administrator, Jane Lubchenco, asserted in her retiring president’s address to AAAS, such is the duty of all scientists to support government policy advocating change in the social contract [Constitution] in exchange for government support. Please the Quote of the Week.

NOAA released a misleading report on global warming. The report was roundly challenged by Roger Pielke, Sr. Please see articles referenced under “Defending the Orthodoxy” and “Challenging the Orthodoxy.”

The New York Times had a two part series questioning the economics of natural gas, particularly fracturing of shale for natural gas (fracking). When the technology for fracturing for natural gas became wide-spread, natural gas prices were very high. Since then, the prices have fallen by more than one-half, disappointing some investors who may have expected that high prices will remain forever. That is not how a market system works.

The reliance of a well to continue to produce without re-working is also an issue, as it has been for over a century. Contrary to the impressions given in the article, the technology is well founded and barring government intervention is a great boon for the economy. Unlike wind generated electricity and other favorites of politicians and the Times, which has no technology for storage, natural gas promises to provide affordable, reliable energy for many decades. Please see Article # 2 and articles referenced under “Oil and Natural Gas...”

The Number of the Week: 6 is the number speakers who signed their recently published books at the ICCC challenging the orthodoxy

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ARTICLES:

For the numbered articles below please see: www.sepp.org.

1. First Ignored, Then Attacked: 6th International Climate Change Conference

By Alan Caruba, Warning Signs, Jun 27, 2011

<http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com/2011/06/first-ignored-then-attacked-6th.html>

2, The Facts About Fracking

The real risks of the shale gas revolution, and how to manage them.

Editorial, WSJ, Jun 25, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303936704576398462932810874.html?mod=WSJ_hp_mostpop_read

3. Why Your New Car Doesn't Have a Spare Tire

Auto makers comply with fuel economy mandates by making cars lighter and more dangerous.

By Sam Kazman, WSJ, Jun 26, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303714704576383954208546170.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Science: Is the Sun Rising?

An inconvenient cooling

Sun's coming quietude burns global warmists

Editorial, Washington Times, Jun 27, 2011

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/jun/27/an-inconvenient-cooling/>

Climategate Continued

IOC Orders UEA to Produce CRUTEM Station Data

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Jun 27, 2011

<http://climateaudit.org/2011/06/27/ico-orders-uea-to-produce-crutem-station-data/#more-13981>

Breaking news: Today probably marks the closing chapter of the longstanding FOI request for CRUTEM station data. The UK Information Commissioner (ICO) has rendered a decision (see [here](#)) on Jonathan Jones' appeal of the UEA's refusal to provide Prof J. Jones with the CRUTEM station data that they had previously provided to Georgia Tech. The decision that can only be characterized as a total thrashing of the University of East Anglia.

Michael Mann and the ClimateGate Whitewash: Part One

By Larry Bell, Forbes, Jun 28, 2011

<http://blogs.forbes.com/larrybell/2011/06/28/michael-mann-and-the-climategate-whitewash-part-one/>

Nature on Renewables and "Natural" Therapies

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Jun 30, 2011

<http://climateaudit.org/>

"As happens far too often, Nature has posed the issue in the wrong way. The problem that Nature should be concerned about is whether IPCC is discharging its duties and responsibilities of providing the public and policy-makers with effective and balanced scientific advice. That's what Nature should be worried about. If it does so, then critics will have less to criticize."

"And if the scenarios prove a fantasy, Nature has abetted the perpetuation of the fantasy by its acquiescence in IPCC WG3 abdicating its responsibilities"

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Rebuttal of A National Strategic Narrative

By Donald Forbes & Donn Dears, June 27, 2011

<http://www.tsaugust.org/images/Final%20NSN%20Rebuttal%2011-06-23.pdf>

[SEPP Comment: Refuting claims of global warming and global ecosystem alarmists in the Pentagon.]

More Evidence that Global Warming is a False Alarm: A Model Simulation of the last 40 Years of Deep Ocean Warming

By Roy Spencer, His Blog, June 25th, 2011
<http://www.drroyspencer.com/>

Continued Bias Reporting On The Climate System By Tom Karl and Peter Thorne

By Roger Pielke, Sr, Pielke Climate Science, Jun 30, 2011
<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/>

"It is disappointing that the media do not properly question the claims made by Tom Karl and Peter Thorne. They are presenting a biased report on the actual state of the climate system."
[SEPP Comment: Please see Climate change study... below]

A Nutshell History of Climate-Change Hysteria

By Anthony Sadar, American Thinker, Jun 30, 2011
http://www.americanthinker.com/2011/06/a_nutshell_history_of_climate-change_hysteria.html

Defenders of the Orthodoxy

AAAS Board: Attacks on Climate Researchers Inhibit Free Exchange of Scientific Ideas
By Earl Lane, AAAS, Jun 29, 2011
http://www.aaas.org/news/releases/2011/0629board_statement.shtml

Climate change study: More than 300 months since the planets temperature was below average

By Staff Writers, AP, Jun 28, 2011
http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/climate-change-study-more-than-300-months-since-the-planets-temperature-was-below-average/2011/06/28/AGd57UpH_story.html

[SEPP Comment: No one doubts that warming occurred in the 20th century, the question is cause. Early this year, monthly temperatures measured by satellite and reported by University of Alabama, Huntsville, dipped below the average for the entire satellite record of 32 years.]

Greenland ice melts most in half-century: US

By Staff Writers, AFP, June 28, 2011
http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Greenland_ice_melts_most_in_half-century_US_999.html
[SEPP Comment: And what about the 1930s?]

Gore's Final Solution

Editorial, IBD, Jun 28, 2011
<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/576742/201106281842/Gores-Final-Solution.htm>

Help Wanted: For an 'Aggressive Program to Go After ... Deniers' of Climate Change

By Michael Chapman, CNS News, Jun 24, 2011 [H/t Catherine French]
<http://www.cnsnews.com/news/article/democrat-senator-climate-change-causes-u>

Poland's EU budget commissioner in climate change controversy

Poland's EU budget commissioner has been forced to recant after he claimed climate change was exaggerated and argued that overambitious EU CO2 emissions targets would hurt his country's economy.
By Bruno Waterfield & Matthew Day, Telegraph, UK, Jul 1. 2011 [H/t Tom Nelson]
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/environment/climatechange/8610998/Polands-EU-budget-commissioner-in-climate-change-controversy.html>

[SEPP Comment: Those who believe that climate change is natural and normal are unfit for public office because they are in climate change denial?]

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Discussion of June All-Time Record Maximum Temperatures in the United States Since 1950 And Possible Effect Of Instrument Changes

By Roger Pielke, Sr, Pielke Climate Science, Jul 1, 2011

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/>

[SEPP Comment: Few records were broken or tied in claimed hottest decade ever recorded. "...1994 bakes the cake."]

The Failure of Al Gore: Part Deux

By Walter Russell Mead, American Interest, Jun 27, 2011

<http://blogs.the-american-interest.com/wrm/2011/06/27/the-failure-of-al-gore-part-deux/>

[SEPP Comment: A long, but insightful article.]

Problems within the Orthodoxy

The U.N.'s climate of desperation

By David Rothbard and Craig Rucker, Washington Times, Jun 28, 2011

http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/jun/28/the-uns-climate-of-desperation/print/?utm_source=CFACT+Updates&utm_campaign=8460356052-CFACT+OpEd+in+Washington+Times+6+29+2011&utm_medium=email

Seeking a Common Ground

Don't ignore climate skeptics – talk to them differently

More scientific data won't convince doubters of climate change. But reframing the debate as one about values could make a difference.

By Andrew Hoffman, Christian Science Monitor, Jun 24, 2011 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/Opinion/2011/0624/Don-t-ignore-climate-skeptics-talk-to-them-differently>

Senator Inhofe Sends His Regrets

By John Broder, NYT, Jun 30, 2011 [H/t Marc Morano]

<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/06/30/senator-inhofe-sends-his-regrets/>

Communicating Better to the Public – Exaggerate?

The Log in the Eye of Greenpeace

By Dennis Ambler, SPPI, Jun 29, 2011

<http://sppiblog.org/news/the-log-in-the-eye-of-greenpeace#more-5344>

Changing Weather

Bastardi- What About Precip? A Look at 2008

By Joe Bastardi, Weather Bell, Jun 25, 2011

<http://www.weatherbell.com/newsletter-6-28-2011-e>

Southern Brazil's coldest weather in a decade comes with snow

By Joesepeh D'Aleo, Weather Bill, Jun 29, 2011

<http://www.icecap.us/>

[SEPP Comment: With much of US corn going to ethanol, the loss of Brazil's crop can affect world prices. Brazil is the world's third largest producer, behind the US and China.]

Are Midwest Floods Caused by Global Warming or Radical Environmentalists?

By Roger Aronoff, Family Security, Jun 28, 2011

http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.9828/pub_detail.asp

Study: Europe snowpack affects U.S. winter

By Staff Writers, UPI, Jun 24, 2011

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Study_Europe_snowpack_affects_US_winter_999.html

Can America Last? Only If We Use the Lessons of the Past

By Joe Bastardi, State College.com, Jun 28, 2011 [H/t Paul Chesser]

<http://www.statecollege.com/news/columns/can-america-last-only-if-we-use-the-lessons-of-the-past-792940/>

Economic cost of weather may total \$485 billion in U.S.

By Jeffrey Lazo, Megan Lawson, Peter Larsen, and Donald Waldman, NCAR, Jun 21, 2011 [H/t Weather Bell]

<http://www2.ucar.edu/news/4810/economic-cost-weather-may-total-485-billion-us#mediaterms>

Global hurricane activity at historical record lows: new paper

By Ryan Maue, WUWT, Jun 26, 2011

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2011/06/26/global-hurricane-activity-at-historical-record-lows-new-paper/>

Changing Climate

An Interesting 1973 Paper “A Preliminary Study On The Climatic Fluctuations During The Last 5000 years In China” By Chu Ko-Chen

By Roger Pielke, Sr, Pielke Climate Science, Jun 30, 2011

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/>

“The world climate during the historical times fluctuated. The numerous Chinese historical writings provide us excellent references in studying the ancient climate of China. The present author testifies, by the materials got from the histories and excavations, that **during Yin-Hsu at Anyang, the annual temperature was about 2°C higher than that of the, present in most of the time.**

[SEPP Comment: About 3300 years ago. Reportedly the last capital of the Shang Dynasty (1766-1050 BC.)

Fossilized pollen reveals climate history of northern Antarctica

By Staff Writers, SPX, Jun 28, 2011

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Fossilized_pollen_reveals_climate_history_of_northern_Antarctica_999.html

Extreme Precipitation Update

By Patrick Michaels, World Climate Report, Jul 1, 2011

<http://www.worldclimatereport.com/index.php/2011/07/01/extreme-precipitation-update/#more-496>

Changing Seas

A new way of thinking as sea levels rise

By Darfryl Fears, Washington Post, Jun 26 2011

http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/a-new-way-of-thinking-as-sea-levels-rise/2011/06/23/AGq96TmH_story.html?hpid=z4

[SEPP Comment: A more accurate headline would be: faulty studies indicate sea levels may rise.]

Litigation Issues

Polar opposites

By Lawrence Solomon, Financial Post, Jul 1, 2011

<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2011/07/01/lawrence-solomon-polar-opposites/>

[SEPP Comment: Frequently reports on litigation reflect the political attitude of the reporter.]

Precedent supports climate skeptics

By Dennis Avery, Canada Free Press, Jun 25, 2011

<http://canadafreepress.com/index.php/article/37896>

Supreme Court ruling is good, bad and ugly

Monday's key US legal decision on emissions regulation was influenced by the unjustified attacks on climate science

By Douglas Kysar, Nature, Jun 21, 2011 [H/t Roger Cohen]

<http://www.nature.com/news/2011/110621/full/474421a.html>

"That the nation's highest court would repeat this misleading refrain, and seemingly endorse Dyson's views as equal to those of the IPCC and the EPA, simply takes the breath away."

Climate Science Disclosures – Freedom of Information or Chilling Effect?

By Hank Campbell, Science 2.0, Jun 29, 2011 [H/t Cooler Heads Digest]

http://www.science20.com/science_20/blog/climate-science-disclosures-freedom-information-or-chilling-effect-80468

NASA Scientist Accused of Using Celeb Status Among Environmental Groups to Enrich Himself

By William Lajeunesse, | FoxNews, June 22, 2011 [H/t Catherine French]

<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/06/22/nasa-scientist-accused-using-celeb-status-among-environmental-groups-to-enrich/?test=latestnews>

U.S. Faces New Suits on Climate From Left and Right

By Eli Kintisch, Science Insider, 23 June 2011 [H/t Toshio Fujita]

<http://news.sciencemag.org/scienceinsider/2011/06/us-faces-new-suits-on-climate.html>

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

An inconvenient fallacy

By Bob Carter, The Age, AU, June 27, 2011

<http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/politics/an-inconvenient-fallacy-20110626-1glmu.html#ixzz1QPvTiCfx>

David Archibald's Speech: Global warming is a litmus test for our politicians

Jo Nova, Her Blog, Jul 1, 2011 [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Depot]

<http://joannenova.com.au/2011/07/david-archibald-global-warming-is-a-litmus-test-for-our-politicians/>

"Belief in global warming cannot be forgiven"

Gillard Says Australia Will Compensate 90% of Households Under Carbon Tax

By Jacob Greber and Gemma Daley Bloomer, Jun 27, 2011 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-06-26/australia-will-compensate-90-of-homes-for-carbon.html>

[SEPP Comment: Will it pay those who lose their jobs?]

Subsidies and Mandates Forever

Corn-ethanol fiction

Federal subsidies cost taxpayers more than they save at the pump

By Ken Glozer, Washington Times, Jun 29, 2011
<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/jun/29/corn-ethanol-fiction/>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

White House: Benefits of EPA rules vastly outweigh costs

By Ben Geman, The Hill, Jun 28, 2011
<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/677-e2-wire/168755-white-house-benefits-of-epa-rules-vastly-outweigh-costs>

[SEPP Comment: What would happen if someone tried similar imaginary accounting on business expenses reported in a company tax return?]

GOP bashes EPA over \$100M in foreign anti-pollution grants

By Andrew Restuccia, The Hill, Jun 28, 2011 06/28/11
<http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/677-e2-wire/168741-house-republicans-bash-epa-over-foreign-handouts>

Clearing the Air

By Paul Driessen, Townhall, Jun 27, 2011
http://townhall.com/columnists/pauldriessen/2011/06/25/clearing_the_air

EPA Delays Rules for Factory Boilers

By Ryan Tracy, WSJ, Jun 25, 2011
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303339904576405971958502248.html?mod=ITP_pageone_1

Grand Canyon area excluded from uranium claims

By Staff Writers, World Nuclear News, 24 June 2011
http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/ENF-Grand_Canyon_area_excluded_from_uranium_claims-2406117.html?utm_source=World+Nuclear+News&utm_campaign=0f35714769-WNN_Weekly_21_27_June_20116_28_2011&utm_medium=email

[SEPP Comment: For photo opportunities, the announcement was made overlooking the Grand Canyon, not at the actual sites which include barren wasteland that may have had reporters asking why.]

Energy Issues

China Has Its Eye on Canada's Oil

Editorial, IBD, Jun 28, 2011
<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article.aspx?id=576739&p=1>

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Shale Gas Neo-Malthusianism: Poor Journalism at the ‘Newspaper of Record’

By Michael Lynch, Master Resource, Jun 28, 2011 [H/t Cooler Heads Digest]
<http://www.masterresource.org/2011/06/shale-gas-neomalthusianism-nyt/>

Insiders Sound an Alarm Amid a Natural Gas Rush

By Ian Urbina, NYT, Jun 25, 2011
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/26/us/26gas.html?_r=1&hp=&pagewanted=all

Behind Veneer, Doubt on Future of Natural Gas

By Ian Urbina, NYT, Jun 26, 2011 [H/t Randy Randol]
<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/27/us/27gas.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha23>

[SEPP Comment: The issue is not quantity, but price – both production price (cost) and selling price. Selling price is determined by the market; production price by technology, and quantity by geology. Also throw in a dose of politics by those who want to shut it down.]

Amid US gas boom, split over 'fracking'

By Staff Writers, AFP, June 26, 2011

http://www.energy-daily.com/reports/Amid_US_gas_boom_split_over_fracking_999.html

France Vote Outlaws 'Fracking' Shale for Natural Gas, Oil Extraction

By Tara Patel, Bloomberg, Jul 1, 2011 [H/t Cooler Heads Digest]

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-07-01/france-vote-outlaws-fracking-shale-for-natural-gas-oil-extraction.html>

Drivers Warm To Natural Gas

By Raghavan Mayur, IBD, Jun 29, 2011

<http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/576827/201106291815/Drivers-Warm-To-Natural-Gas.htm>

Alternative, Green ("Clean") Energy

The Great Corn Con

By Steven Rattner, NYT, Jun 24, 2011

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/25/opinion/25Rattner.html?nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha212>

Lots of Talk, Too Little Action

Editorial, NYT, Jun 27, 2011

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/28/opinion/28tue2.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha211

R.I.P. Tesla

By Eric Peters, American Spectator, Jun 27, 2011

<http://spectator.org/archives/2011/06/27/rip-tesla>

[SEPP Comment: The US Department of Energy is backing this car manufacturer. The estimated distance does not include what will happen if a heater is needed in the winter or an air conditioner in the summer.]

Energy giants want billions for back-up to windfarms

By Tom McGhie, This is Money, Jun 26, 2011 [H/t Mark Duchamp]

<http://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/article-2008055/Energy-giants-want-billions-windfarms.html#ixzz1QSW7V08K>

[SEPP Comment: Surprise, someone has to pay for the needed backup.]

Environmentalists vs. Renewable Energy

By Rael Jean Isaac, Family Security, Jun 28, 2011

http://www.familysecuritymatters.org/publications/id.9830/pub_detail.asp

California Dreaming

California's Green Jihad

By Joel Kotkin, Forbes, Jun 7, 2011 [H/t Tom Sheahen]

<http://blogs.forbes.com/joelkotkin/2011/06/07/californias-green-jihad/>

Polluters Get 1-Year Respite from California Cap-and-Trade

By Tilde Herrera, Greenbiz, Jun 30, 2011 [H/t Cooler Heads Digest]
<https://www.greenbiz.com/news/2011/06/30/polluters-get-1-year-respite-from-california-cap-and-trade>

California's Plan to Electrocute the Automobile Industry

By Bill Frezza, Real Clear Markets, Jun 20, 2011 [H/t Timothy Wise]
http://www.realclearmarkets.com/articles/2011/06/20/californias_plan_to_electrocute_the_automobile_industry_99082.html

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

For a full list of articles see www.NIPCCreport.org

The Productivity of China's Forests: 1961-2005

Reference: Ren, W., Tian, H., Tao, B., Chappelka, A., Sun, G., Lu, C., Liu, M., Chen, G. and Xu, X. 2011. Impacts of tropospheric ozone and climate change on net primary productivity and net carbon exchange of China's forest ecosystems. *Global Ecology and Biogeography* 20: 391-406.
<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/jun/29jun2011a5.html>

*"The two phenomena of atmospheric CO₂ enrichment and **nitrogen deposition** -- both of which are by-products of the Industrial Revolution -- provide powerful antidotes for the negative effects of ozone pollution, land-cover/land-use change and various deleterious climatic phenomena with regard to their impacts on NPP and NCE in China and, by inference, other parts of the world as well." [Boldface added]*

Effects of Elevated CO₂ on Rice Leaves

Reference: Li, J.-Y., Liu, X.-H., Cai, Q.-S., Gu, H., Zhang, S.-S., Wu, Y.-Y. and Wang, C.-J. 2008. Effects of elevated CO₂ on growth, carbon assimilation, photosynthate accumulation and related enzymes in rice leaves during sink-source transition. *Journal of Integrative Plant Biology* 50: 723-732.
<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/jun/29jun2011a3.html>

Live Coral Cover on Australia's Great Barrier Reef

Reference: Osborne, K., Dolman, A.M., Burgess, S.C. and Johns, K.A. 2011. Disturbance and the dynamics of coral cover on the Great Barrier Reef (1995-2009). *PLoS ONE* 6: 10.1371/journal.pone.0017516.
<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/jun/29jun2011a1.html>

Global Warming and the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation

Reference: Zhang, D., Msadek, R., McPhaden, M.J. and Delworth, T. 2011. Multidecadal variability of the North Brazil Current and its connection to the Atlantic meridional overturning circulation. *Journal of Geophysical Research* 116: 10.1029/2010JC006812.
<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/jun/28jun2011a1.html>

"Could the findings of Zhang et al. mean that the projections of "almost all state-of-the-art climate models" are just plain wrong? They sure could, for real-world observations always win out over theoretical projections if they differ; and so far, at least, that's what the observations are doing -- they're winning."

Health, Energy, and Climate

Peat Wildfire Smoke Linked to Heart Failure Risk

By Staff Writers, SPX, Jun 29, 2011
http://www.terradaaily.com/reports/Peat_Wildfire_Smoke_Linked_to_Heart_Failure_Risk_999.html

Food, Risk and Zero Tolerance

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, Jun 30, 2011
<http://www.scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/food-risk-and-zero-tolerance>

[SEPP Comment: An analysis of the foolishness of EU restrictions on genetically modified animal feed. There is no 100% purity.]

Environmental Industry

Plan Issued to Save Northern Spotted Owl

By William Yardley, NYT, Jun 30, 2011

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/07/01/us/01owls.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha23

[SEPP Comment: After destroying communities and the livelihoods of thousands of loggers on the dubious claim that a nesting pair of spotted owls requires two thousand acres of old growth forest, Fish and Wildlife is now recognizing that the main problem may be the barred owl.]

Dirty Dozen debate

Experts say benefits of fruits, vegetables outweigh exposure to pesticides

By Kelly April, LA Times, Jun 22, 2011 [H/t ACHS]

<http://www.latimes.com/health/ct-x-0622-health-pesticide-20110622,0,6385683.story>

"It only means the pesticide levels are within legal limits. It does not mean they are safe," Sara Sciammacco, of the Environmental Working Group, [SEPP Comment: Why not include the naturally occurring pesticides within the fruits and vegetables?]

Other Scientific News

Disturbance and the Dynamics of Coral Cover on the Great Barrier Reef (1995–2009)

Kate Osborne,* Andrew M. Dolman,†a Scott C. Burgess,‡b and Kerry A. Johns, Pub Med Central, Mar 10, 2011 [H/t WUWT]

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3053361/>

"While the limited data for the GBR prior to the 1980's suggests that coral cover was higher than in our survey, we found no evidence of consistent, system-wide decline in coral cover since 1995. Instead, fluctuations in coral cover at subregional scales (10–100 km), driven mostly by changes in fast-growing Acroporidae, occurred as a result of localized disturbance events and subsequent recovery." [SEPP Comment: Direct reference to the study reviewed by NIPCC above.]

Latest research: no, the Reef isn't being killed by warming

By Andrew Bold, Herald Sun, AU, Jun 29, 2011 [H/t ICECAP]

http://blogs.news.com.au/heraldsun/andrewbolt/index.php/heraldsun/comments/latest_research_no_the_reef_isnt_being_killed_by_warming/

Rain? Blame It on the Plane

By Gautam Naik, WSJ, Jul 2, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303763404576417883550164162.html?mod=ITP_pageone_1

[SEPP Comment: May be behind a paywall.]

Other News that May Be of Interest

More Science Journalists, Fewer Science Supporters

By David Whitehouse, The Observatory, Jun 29, 2011

<http://www.thegwpf.org/the-observatory/3334-more-science-journalists-fewer-science-supporters.html>

Across Europe, Irking Drivers Is Urban Policy

By Elisabeth Rosenthal, NYT, Jun 26, 2011

http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/27/science/earth/27traffic.html?_r=1&nl=todaysheadlines&emc=tha2

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Warmer temperatures threaten Northern California vineyards

By Ashlie Rodriquez, LA Times, Jun 30, 2011 [H/t Marc Morano, Climate Depot]

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/greenspace/2011/06/global-warming-wine-vineyards-california-napa-valley-santa-barbara-1.html>

[SEPP Comment: One, start with a model that fails basic hypothesis testing – it is wrong. Two, extrapolate from that failed model trends that are 30 years out. Three by doing so, create a false crisis. Four, declare this to be objective science. Most of California’s wine grapes are grown in hot regions. Hot weather in France produced some of the most famous vintages of Bordeaux.]

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ARTICLES:

1. First Ignored, Then Attacked: 6th International Climate Change Conference

By Alan Caruba, Warning Signs, Jun 27, 2011

<http://factsnotfantasy.blogspot.com/2011/06/first-ignored-then-attacked-6th.html>

In the words of Gandhi, “First they ignore you, then they mock you, then they fight you, then you win.”

Thursday, June 30, will mark the beginning of the Sixth International Conference on Climate Change, sponsored by The Heartland Institute, a free market policy center headquartered in Chicago. The conference will be held in Washington, D.C., an appropriate location considering how much hot air emanates from Congress and the White House.

I attended the first conferences that took place in New York City, just across the river from where I live, so I was “there at the beginning” for conferences that were, in the words of Gandhi, largely ignored by the mainstream media and subsequently mentioned but only as the object of mockery.

When, in 2009, emails exchanged between a handful of scientists who provided the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change with the most specious, deliberately duplicitous “data” to prop up the “global warming” hoax were revealed, the whole house of cards began to collapse.

It has since been propped up by a bunch of media, political, and science dead-enders who had stacked their reputations on pulling off the great hoax of the modern era; that an infinitesimal amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere—0.038 percent—was causing the Earth to heat up, the seas to rise, and Minnie Mouse to announce she was pregnant.

The success of the forthcoming conference, however, has been blessed by the modern form of respect, a preemptory news release attacking it. The Center for American Progress issued a “press call advisory” titled “Climate Deniers Congregate in the Nation’s Capital.”

It began, “The Heartland Institute, a conservative group funded by Exxon Mobil and Charles Koch...” Whoa! Mr. Chairman, we rise to question why the Center for American Progress would engage in an outright lie? Answer: That’s what progressives do because they are immune to the truth.

For the record, neither Exxon Mobil, nor Mr. Koch, has contributed to the cost of the conference. The former has not contributed to the Institute since 2006 and the Kochs have not sent any money in more than a decade.

But let’s finish the Center’s opening sentence that characterized the conference as “boasting a full agenda of notable climate deniers.” The term climate deniers has long been attached to any scientist, academic,

politician, or commentator such as myself who had the temerity to point out that every single claim made on behalf of “global warming” was pure horse-hockey.

Since 1998 we have been discussing the new climate cycle, a *COOLING* one!

The Center for American Progress sought to make light of the conferences’ theme, “Restoring the Scientific Method.” And a damn fine theme it is considering the damage to the entire scientific community that, prior to the global warming hoax, was not famous for deciding what the truth was by “consensus.”

Real science still depends on peer review and the thorough testing of a hypothesis until it can no longer be disputed because it is reproducible. You can say the Earth is flat until you are blue in the face, but it is still round. The “warmists”, however, did everything they could to short-circuit this rigorous process.

The Center for American Progress is concerned that the forthcoming conference asserts that “global warming is not a crisis” and it will be devoted to “ending global warming alarmism” and “disputing that global warming is man-made.”

Would someone please tell the Center that the Earth is now more than a decade into a perfectly natural cooling cycle and that mankind does *not* control the sun, the oceans, the clouds, the volcanoes, or any climate event? Whenever a tsunami, blizzard, or tornado occurs, Mother Nature’s advice to mankind is “Get out of the way!”

Since I am loath to travel further these days than the Bagel Chateau one town over from where I reside, I shall be watching the conference on [streaming video, June 30 to July 1](#). It should be noted that, in addition to a roster of some of the world’s most respected climate scientists who will make presentations, the Institute has routinely invited some of the most prominent alarmists—warmists—to participate.

A recent Forbes article noted that “a virtual Who’s Who of global warming media hounds” had been invited to participate in the conferences over the years. Conference coordinator, James Taylor, the Institute’s senior fellow for environment policy, said that Al Gore, James Hansen, Michael Mann and others “all seem to have some sort of scheduling conflict whenever they have to share the stage with a scientist who will be challenging their evidence.”

Meanwhile, the egregiously misnamed Center for American Progress will hold a conference call on Wednesday to launch an attack on the conference. No longer ignored or mocked, the Heartland Institute and its conference are clearly on the winning side.

Funeral ceremonies for “global warming” will follow with the mourners all wearing green.

2. The Facts About Fracking

The real risks of the shale gas revolution, and how to manage them.

Editorial, WSJ, Jun 25, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303936704576398462932810874.html?mod=WSJ_hp_mostpop_read

The U.S. is in the midst of an energy revolution, and we don't mean solar panels or wind turbines. A new gusher of natural gas from shale has the potential to transform U.S. energy production—that is, unless politicians, greens and the industry mess it up.

Only a decade ago Texas oil engineers hit upon the idea of combining two established technologies to release natural gas trapped in shale formations. Horizontal drilling—in which wells turn sideways after a certain depth—opens up big new production areas. Producers then use a 60-year-old technique called hydraulic fracturing—in which water, sand and chemicals are injected into the well at high pressure—to loosen the shale and release gas (and increasingly, oil).

The resulting boom is transforming America's energy landscape. As recently as 2000, shale gas was 1% of America's gas supplies; today it is 25%. Prior to the shale breakthrough, U.S. natural gas reserves were in decline, prices exceeded \$15 per million British thermal units, and investors were building ports to import liquid natural gas. Today, proven reserves are the highest since 1971, prices have fallen close to \$4 and ports are being retrofitted for LNG exports.

The shale boom is also reviving economically suffering parts of the country, while offering a new incentive for manufacturers to stay in the U.S. Pennsylvania's Department of Labor and Industry estimates fracking in the Marcellus shale formation, which stretches from upstate New York through West Virginia, has created 72,000 jobs in the Keystone State between the fourth quarter of 2009 and the first quarter of 2011.

The Bakken formation, along the Montana-North Dakota border, is thought to hold four billion barrels of oil (the biggest proven estimate outside Alaska), and the drilling boom helps explain North Dakota's unemployment rate of 3.2%, the nation's lowest.

All of this growth has inevitably attracted critics, notably environmentalists and their allies. They've launched a media and political assault on hydraulic fracturing, and their claims are raising public anxiety. So it's a useful moment to separate truth from fiction in the main allegations against the shale revolution.

- *Fracking contaminates drinking water.* One claim is that fracking creates cracks in rock formations that allow chemicals to leach into sources of fresh water. The problem with this argument is that the average shale formation is thousands of feet underground, while the average drinking well or aquifer is a few hundred feet deep. Separating the two is solid rock. This geological reality explains why EPA administrator Lisa Jackson, a determined enemy of fossil fuels, recently told Congress that there have been no "proven cases where the fracking process itself has affected water."

A second charge, based on a Duke University study, claims that fracking has polluted drinking water with methane gas. Methane is naturally occurring and isn't by itself harmful in drinking water, though it can explode at high concentrations. Duke authors Rob Jackson and Avner Vengosh have written that their research shows "the average methane concentration to be 17 times higher in water wells located within a kilometer of active drilling sites."

They failed to note that researchers sampled a mere 68 wells across Pennsylvania and New York—where more than 20,000 water wells are drilled annually. They had no baseline data and thus no way of knowing if methane concentrations were high prior to drilling. They also acknowledged that methane was detected in 85% of the wells they tested, regardless of drilling operations, and that they'd found no trace of fracking fluids in any wells.

The Duke study did spotlight a long-known and more legitimate concern: the possibility of leaky well casings at the top of a drilling site, from which methane might migrate to water supplies. As the BP Gulf of Mexico spill attests, proper well construction and maintenance are major issues in any type of drilling, and they ought to be the focus of industry standards and attention. But the risks are not unique to fracking, which has provided no unusual evidence of contamination.

- *Fracking releases toxic or radioactive chemicals.* The reality is that 99.5% of the fluid injected into fracture rock is water and sand. The chemicals range from the benign, such as citric acid (found in soda pop), to benzene. States like Wyoming and Pennsylvania require companies to publicly disclose their chemicals, Texas recently passed a similar law, and other states will follow.

Drillers must dispose of fracking fluids, and environmentalists charge that disposal sites also endanger drinking water, or that drillers deliberately discharge radioactive wastewater into streams. The latter accusation inspired the EPA to require that Pennsylvania test for radioactivity. States already have strict rules designed to keep waste water from groundwater, including liners in waste pits, and drillers are subject to stiff penalties for violations. Pennsylvania's tests showed radioactivity at or below normal levels.

- *Fracking causes cancer.* In Dish, Texas, Mayor Calvin Tillman caused a furor this year by announcing that he was quitting to move his sons away from "toxic" gases—such as cancer-causing benzene—from the town's 60 gas wells. State health officials investigated and determined that toxin levels in the majority of Dish residents were "similar to those measured in the general U.S. population." Residents with higher levels of benzene in their blood were smokers. (Cigarette smoke contains benzene.)

- *Fracking causes earthquakes.* It is possible that the deep underground injection of fracking fluids might cause seismic activity. But the same can be said of geothermal energy exploration, or projects to sequester carbon dioxide underground. Given the ubiquity of fracking without seismic impact, the risks would seem to be remote.

- *Pollution from trucks.* Drillers use trucks to haul sand, cement and fluids, and those certainly increase traffic congestion and pollution. We think the trade-off between these effects and economic development are for states and localities to judge, keeping in mind that externalities decrease as drillers become more efficient.

- *Shale exploration is unregulated.* Environmentalists claim fracking was "exempted" in 2005 from the federal Safe Water Drinking Act, thanks to industry lobbying. In truth, all U.S. companies must abide by federal water laws, and what the greens are really saying is that fracking should be singled out for special and unprecedented EPA oversight.

Most drilling operations—including fracking—have long been regulated by the states. Operators need permits to drill and are subject to inspections and reporting requirements. Many resource-rich states like Texas have detailed fracking rules, while states newer to drilling are developing these regulations.

As a regulatory model, consider Pennsylvania. Recently departed Governor Ed Rendell is a Democrat, and as the shale boom progressed he worked with industry and regulators to develop a flexible regulatory environment that could keep pace with a rapidly growing industry. As questions arose about well casings, for instance, Pennsylvania imposed new casing and performance requirements. The state has also increased fees for processing shale permits, which has allowed it to hire more inspectors and permitting staff.

New York, by contrast, has missed the shale play by imposing a moratorium on fracking. The new state Attorney General, Eric Schneiderman, recently sued the federal government to require an extensive environmental review of the entire Delaware River Basin. Meanwhile, the EPA is elbowing its way into the fracking debate, studying the impact on drinking water, animals and "environmental justice."

Amid this political scrutiny, the industry will have to take great drilling care while better making its public case. In this age of saturation media, a single serious example of water contamination could lead to a political panic that would jeopardize tens of billions of dollars of investment. The industry needs to establish best practices and blow the whistle on drillers that dodge the rules.

The question for the rest of us is whether we are serious about domestic energy production. All forms of energy have risks and environmental costs, not least wind (noise and dead birds and bats) and solar (vast expanses of land). Yet renewables are nowhere close to supplying enough energy, even with large subsidies, to maintain America's standard of living. The shale gas and oil boom is the result of U.S. business innovation and risk-taking. If we let the fear of undocumented pollution kill this boom, we will deserve our fate as a second-class industrial power.

3. Why Your New Car Doesn't Have a Spare Tire

Auto makers comply with fuel economy mandates by making cars lighter and more dangerous.

By Sam Kazman, WSJ, Jun 26, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303714704576383954208546170.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0

Fewer tires, higher taxes.

That may be what's in store for drivers under the federal government's spiraling fuel economy mandates (known as CAFE, for Corporate Average Fuel Economy). The Department of Transportation is floating 62 mpg as a possible standard for 2025, more than double the current 27.5 mpg standard. How the industry can meet that target, and at what cost, is anyone's guess. A new study in mid-June by the nonprofit Center for Automotive Research in Ann Arbor, Mich. put the tab at about \$10,000 extra per new vehicle, while admitting that even this estimate might be far too low.

And that's not the only bad news; in the past few weeks there have been two other unwelcome developments. First, GM announced that several versions of its compact Chevy Cruze would no longer have spare tires; instead, they'll have vehicle-powered sealant repair kits. This is a major jump in the trend toward eliminating spare tires, a trend due largely to CAFE's drive to shed every possible ounce of car weight.

Some argue that spare tires are unnecessary, given the growing presence of run-flat tires, tire pressure monitors, and roadside assistance systems. But the fact that spares are being eliminated in the name of fuel economy, rather than market demand, demolishes one of the chief claims of CAFE's advocates. For several decades, the need to reduce vehicle size and weight in order to raise mileage has been CAFE's Achilles' heel. Smaller, lighter cars not only hold fewer passengers and less baggage; they're also less crashworthy. CAFE-induced downsizing causes several thousand additional traffic deaths per year.

Proponents of CAFE argue that while vehicle downsizing may once have been needed to raise fuel economy, it has been obviated by new technologies. As a result, they claim, CAFE no longer forces us to give up safety for other car features.

Yet despite this talk of new technologies eliminating trade-offs, here we have GM scrapping the spare tire to comply with CAFE. The station wagon disappeared under CAFE because it was a highly regulated passenger car (unlike SUVs, which were less-regulated "light trucks"). Now, with the spare tire following the same pattern, we have another hard-to-miss symbol of what CAFE hath wrought.

Getting rid of spare tires alone won't be nearly enough to meet the more stringent mandates that are looming. In early June, GM unveiled another strategy—higher gasoline taxes. GM CEO Dan Akerson proposed boosting the federal tax by up to \$1 per gallon to increase small car sales.

This isn't the first time a car maker's chief executive has called for higher gas taxes. In 2009, after gas had dropped to below \$2 a gallon from \$4, Bill Ford made a similar proposal, citing the need for a "price signal . . . strong enough so customers will continue buying smaller, fuel-efficient cars." Mr. Ford joked about his reputation as "something of a Bolshevik" among his industry colleagues. But Mr. Ford's wish for higher gas prices has come true; gas is now in the high \$3 range. And yet even that isn't high enough for GM's Mr. Akerson.

It would be one thing if these gentlemen wanted to replace CAFE with higher gas taxes. That would at least give us a politically honest fuel efficiency regime. Rather than being bamboozled by the smoke and mirrors of CAFE's technological mandates, consumers would learn from a gas-tax hike exactly what government was doing to them. But if that's what Mr. Akerson means, then he'd better say so, because he now sounds like another antimobility environmentalist pushing a sin-tax increase.

Mr. Akerson's stand demonstrates CAFE's real perversity—by forcing mileage standards far above what consumers want, it pits car makers against their customers. Car makers need high gas prices to force buyers into the vehicles that government demands the industry sell. The public hopes for low prices, and if markets push prices down, then consumers ought to be able to enjoy their good fortune.

Two weeks ago the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety released its latest study of vehicle death rates. Like its previous studies, this new report found that larger and heavier models continue to be safer. SUVs heavier than 4,500 pounds, for example, have a death rate less than one-third that of cars under 2,500 pounds. The politics of energy efficiency may have gone insane, but the law of physics remains.

Mr. Kazman is general counsel of the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

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