The Week That Was: 2011-04-02 (April 2, 2011)
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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week:

"To reduce the interpretation of all kinds of climate change and of global warming to one variable, CO2, and to a small proportion of that one variable – human induced CO2- is impossible to accept." Vaclav Klaus, President of the Czech Republic, cited by Lord Turnbull, Article #2

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Number of the Week: 2%

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THIS WEEK:

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

A little more than a week after his trip to Brazil announcing the US would become a major importer of oil from the deep water oil fields being developed off Brazil, in a speech at Georgetown University, President Obama announced that his administration would endeavor to reduce US oil imports by one-third. Ever since Nixon in the early 1970s, such speeches have become standard fare for presidents whenever gasoline prices climb significantly. The nation must become independent from unreliable foreign oil. As usual with such speeches, glowing promises are made, but gave few details given.

According to the latest statistics from the Energy Information Administration, January 2011, the five largest suppliers of oil to the US provide over seventy percent of imported oil. They are, in thousands of barrels per day, Canada (2,149), Mexico (1,216), Saudi Arabia (1,099), Nigeria (968), and Venezuela (951). Iraq is six is with only 470.

Mr. Obama made the usual claim of increasing domestic production, but emphasized conservation (government imposed restrictions), alternative energy, and electric vehicles. In the US, oil is primarily a transportation fuel, with other uses being petrochemicals, heating, asphalt, etc. Less than 1% is used to generate electricity. Thus, electricity from alternative sources will do little to reduce the US "addiction to oil" – a phrase used by Mr. Obama's predecessor Mr. Bush. Since oil is a very valuable commodity that greatly benefits the nation, addiction to oil is a rhetorical term of no significant economic value.

In spite of substantial subsidies, electricity from alternative sources remains expensive and unreliable. Even with producer subsidies and tax credits, electric cars also remain a luxury good beyond the price range of most Americans.

Mr. Obama's claims of seeking to increase domestic production raised many doubts. He repeated the old political slogan that the US has only 2% of the world's oil – ignoring the fact that in the US proven reserves are rigidly defined. Further, the Department of Interior continues to throttle oil and natural gas exploration by grudgingly granting permits, imposing ever stringent conditions, taking lands out of consideration with innovative political claims such as 'wild lands," mandating major coastal regions "off limits," and other techniques. No doubt to justify such actions, the Department of Interior released a report claiming that one-half the leases on Federal lands remain unused -- as if dry holes can be developed to produce oil.

It remains to be seen if the administration is serious in developing the nation's energy resources or will it insist on a very expensive, green energy future that will be economically paralyzing. Please see Article # 4 and referenced articles under "Energy Issues."

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The US Congress continues with its budget battles and the issue of removing from EPA the power to regulate greenhouse gases. Last May, the previous Congress announced that it would ignore its fiscal responsibilities and would not pass an annual budget for the fiscal year starting in October. Since October the US government has operated on a set of continuing resolutions. The House has passed a budget that the Senate refuses to consider. The latest continuing resolution is due to expire on April 8. Political games are being played by all parties.

The battle of stripping from the EPA its claimed powers to regulate carbon dioxide continue. The House of Representatives seems determined to restrict the EPA. The Senate support is questionable. Much of the support for the legislation is along party lines.

Many supporters of the EPA claim the legislation will weaken the Clean Air Act, in general, which it will not. Only greenhouse gases are covered, and those that are toxic are not exempt from EPA control by the legislation. Water vapor and carbon dioxide, which are non-toxic, would be exempt from EPA control.

EPA supporters are falsely advertising that the legislation threatens Americans. These supporters include the American Lung Association (ALA), which is a recipient of EPA funding. Advertising by special interest groups for or against legislation is a common practice by special interest groups. Usually the ads indicate the vested interests of the parties – such as the American Petroleum Institute. The ALA ads do not. Further, billboard ads feature a young girl in a gas mask. Some may find these reminiscent of World War I propaganda posters.

As discussed in the March 12, 2011, TWTW, EPA has tried to justify its actions by making preposterous claims of health benefits and costs savings from the amendments to the clean air act. Increasingly, these claims are coming under scrutiny. As the agency makes unsubstantiated claims to justify its actions, it is possible that the public will cease to believe the EPA, similar to the public distrusting the IPCC and its claims of certainty after Climategate.

Legislation is proceeding slowly against the EPA for its "Endangerment Finding," that greenhouse gases threaten public health and welfare. The Federal court has issued guidelines for additional written pleadings. Those who sued the EPA have been divided into two groups; private entities and public entities, the latter is principally the states of Texas and Virginia. The court significantly restricted the length of the responses to the EPA's rebuttals. A summary of the scientific documentation challenging the EPA is due on May 20. Unfortunately, new evidence cannot be added. Of course, SEPP is involved in the strictly scientific section. A court decision will probably not be forthcoming until mid 2012.

All this serves to illustrate how poorly written law is used in Washington to expand Federal powers over the general public and to build special interest groups to support such expansion. Please see referenced articles under "EPA and other Regulators on the March."
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In an article carried in the February 26, 2011, TWTW, Fred Singer applauded the BEST project headed by Berkley Professor Richard Muller to reconcile the various historic records of global temperature. Singer admires Muller's dedication to science but is skeptical about the quality of the surface temperature records. Further, they do not go to the cause of 20th Century warming.

Showing that no good effort goes unpunished, Congress summoned Professor Muller to testify, even before the work was done. Defenders of the orthodoxy immediately attacked Muller for the sources of his funding. Challengers to the orthodoxy hoped that Muller would demolish the temperature sets from NOAA, NASA-GISS, and Hadley-CRU. There were no fireworks. The temperature sets track consistently, which is well-known, but they have not been fully analyzed. In short, the hearing was

premature. Of particular interest will an analysis of the effect of the removal of the urban heat island effect from the historic record. Please see comments and articles referenced under "Seeking a Common Ground."

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This week's NIPCC review of articles contained two of particular interest. The first is by Houston and Dean who analyzed the historic readings from tidal gauges in the US, mostly since the 1930s. They found no increase in the rate of sea level rise, which is contrary to many claims. Further, they found the rate of rise to be consistent to what Fred Singer suggested in the 2008 NIPCC report, *Nature, Not Human Activity, Rules the Climate*. Yet to be resolved is the disparity between physical tidal gauges and the recent measurements from satellites. It is possible that the satellite instruments have not yet been properly calibrated.

The second article is on the changes in snowfall in the southern Sierra Nevada Mountains of California since 1916 by John Christy and J.J. Hnilo. Several years ago Christy et al., published an article tracking, for most of the 20th Century, the temperature trends in the southern Central Valley of California compared with the temperature trends in the nearby southern Sierra Nevada Mountains. They found "greenhouse warming" but not associated with carbon dioxide. The nighttime lows in the valley rose over time, the daytime highs dropped, with a net rise in temperatures. The mountain temperatures showed no change. The warming of the valley is explained by increases in summer and fall irrigation and urbanization.

In this new study, the authors find no trend in snowfall in the southern Sierra Nevada Mountains. In 2009, Secretary of Energy Chu proclaimed that global warming would destroy agriculture in California because the snow packs of the Sierra Nevada Mountains would disappear. Apparently Secretary Chu was in error. (Actually, most of the water from the snow packs is retained by dams to prevent flooding and permit irrigation – the plants do not care if the water fell as rain or snow.) Please see referenced articles under "The Seas are Changing" and referenced reviews under "Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC."

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The difficulties at the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant continue. As of this writing, the work is focused on, one, continuing to pump water into the reactors and the cooling pools and, two, draining the trenches surrounding the reactors of water with measurements of elevated radioactivity. Fresh water is now being used in the reactors, because sea water, which was used earlier, builds up on the fuel assemblies insulating them from the cooling effects of the water. The reactors that had sea water pumped into them are most likely useless.

Large new pools, away from the reactors, are being constructed to hold the water from trenches surrounding the reactors, which will give workers greater access to the reactors. Reports indicate that the water in the trenches probably came from the tsunami but the source of the increase in radioactive contamination is not fully understood. There is no indication this increase radioactive contamination was from a breach in the reactor vessel or containment structures.

Reports state that the general area has elevated levels of radiation, but not sufficiently high to be considered dangerous by international standards. Also, no workers have been exposed to elevations beyond the international radiation standard for emergency situations.

The willingness of the workers to continue even when many do not yet know the fate of members of their families is a great testament to the workers and the human spirit.

Additional reports show another flaw in the plan for the power plant. Apparently the tanks contain the fuel to run the diesel engines necessary to generate the back-up electricity to run the pumps, once the

power plant was off the grid, were placed sea ward of the power plant. The tsunami wiped them out. Also, it appears that there were several waves, the tallest about 15 meters (49 feet).

Among other revelations not reported in the general press, is the effect that the loss of electricity from Fukushima Dai-ichi has on other parts of the Japan not directly affected. The electrical system of Japan has two different frequencies – 50 Hz and 60 Hz. Thus power from one part of the system cannot be easily transferred to different part of the system that now needs it.

Using this great natural disaster, those criticizing nuclear power, and human construction in general, are claiming that the planners should have recognized from the ancient texts that the area experienced a similar earthquake and tsunami over 1,000 year ago. Disaster planning is important, and a better science of the unexpected is appropriate, but should all human activity be conditioned a once in one thousand year event or the strike of the next asteroid? Please see referenced articles under "Nuclear Fears and Responses."

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Using standard statistics from the World Health Organization, in an article published in the Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons, researcher Indur Goklany calculates that the push for bio-fuels may result almost 200,000 deaths per year in developing nations. Please see referenced articles under "Food for Fuel."

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TWTW Clarification: After last week's TWTW, several readers commented that TWTW failed to recognize the Chinese purchase of Russian nuclear reactors and that it seemed to suggest that the US actively compete with the Chinese nuclear program.

The reason why the Chinese purchase of two Russian BN 800 Beloyarsk 4 commercial fast neutron reactors was not mentioned is that the construction is scheduled for some time in 2013 or beyond. Only reactors under construction or construction start announced were mentioned.

TWTW discussed the great strides that the Chinese nuclear power is making not so much to suggest that the US should join in a race, but to illustrate that those politicians in the US, Australia, UK, and elsewhere who claim their countries are in a race with China for wind and solar power are misleading their citizens if they ignore the advancements being made by China in commercial nuclear power.

For now, natural gas and coal provide less expensive alternatives for producing electricity in many countries, especially in the US. But the US, and other countries, must look at replacing its aging fleet of nuclear power plants with more efficient, better designed nuclear power plants. China appears to be leading the way in exploring the mass production of such power plants.

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NUMBER OF THE WEEK: 2%. The percentage of the world's oil resources that President Obama claimed existed in the United States. However, these are "proven reserves" that have been carefully confirmed to be economically recoverable. If the price of oil increases, the quantity of proven reserves increases. In 2008, the Energy Information Administration reported the proven reserves to be 19.1 billion barrel. According to a November 30, 2010, report by the Congressional Research Service, the USGS and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management estimate an additional 145 billion barrels of "undiscovered" technically recoverable reserves. These do not include the substantial quantities oil in shale formations that are now being developed. Please see articles referenced under "Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?"

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ARTICLES:

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

1. Adventures in Federal Budget Cutting
By S. Fred Singer, American Thinker, Mar 31, 2011
http://www.americanthinker.com/2011/03/adventures_in_federal_budget_c.html

2. The Really Inconvenient Truth
By Andrew Turnbull, GWPF, Mar 27, 2011
http://thegwpf.org/opinion-pros-a-cons/2711-lord-turnbull-the-really-inconvenient-truth.html#ja-content

3. Winning the Argument on Climate Change
By Roger Helmer, MEP, Mar 31, 2011 [H/t Anne Debeil]
http://rogerhelmermep.wordpress.com/2011/03/31/winning-the-argument-on-climate-change/

4. From Nixon to Obama
Editorial, WSJ, Mar 31, 2011
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703712504576233140730614876.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_AboveLEFTTop

5. Wind is no energy panacea
By Charles Battig, Letter, Roanoke Times, Mar 28, 2011
http://www.roanoke.com/editorials/letters/wb/281431

6. Climate-Change Propaganda for the Masses
By Vincent Gray, Book Review, **The Weather Makers** by Tim Flannery.
Previously published in Christchurch Press, November 19, 2005, No URL
[SEPP Comment: Author Tim Flannery is the Climate Change Commissioner for the Australian government. Vincent Gray is a long time expert reviewer of IPCC reports from New Zealand who does not believe everything that IPCC publishes.]

7. Photosynthesis
Poem by Cliff Ollier
No URL

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued
Disinformation from Kerry Emanuel
By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Mar 31, 2011
http://climateaudit.org/2011/03/31/disinformation-from-kerry-emanuel/

Challenging the Orthodoxy
Propaganda Courtesy of the Royal Society and the BBC
By Henry Bauer, VA Tech, Mar 2011
http://aras.ab.ca/articles/scientific/Bauer-Scientism#2

Seeking a Common Ground
Berkeley scientists' climate data review puts them at center of national debate
The head of the study, a longtime critic of the global warming consensus, will testify before a House panel. Leading climate scientists worry that the project, funded in part by an oil billionaire's foundation, has an agenda.
By Margot Roosevelt, LA Times, Mar 31, 2011

http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-berkeley-climate-20110331,0,2472031.story?track=rss

Comments on the Testimony of Richard Muller at the United States House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space and Technology
By Richard Pielke, Sr, Pielke Research Group, Apr 1, 2011
http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/2011/04/01/comments-on-the-testimony-of-richard-muller-at-the-united-states-house-of-representatives-committee-on-energy-and-the-environment/

Expect the BEST, plan for the worst
By Willis Eschenbach, WUWT, Mar 31, 2011
http://wattsupwiththat.com/2011/03/31/expect-the-best-plan-for-the-worst/#more-37009

Berkeley's Muller goes to Washington and another misleading statement by NOAA CCSP author Thorne
By Joseph D"Aleo, ICECAP, Mar 31, 2011
http://www.icecap.us/

The Seas are Changing

Al Gore's seawater swindle
Latest report shows oceans are not rising
Editorial, Washington Times, May 28, 2011
http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/mar/28/al-gores-seawater-swindle/

Sea-Level Acceleration Based on U.S. Tide Gages and Extensions of Previous Global-Gage Analyses
By J.R. Houston and R.G. Dean, Journal of Coastal Research, Feb 3, 2011 [H/t WUWT]
Abstract:
http://www.jcronline.org/doi/abs/10.2112/JCOASTRES-D-10-00157.1
Full Article
http://www.jcronline.org/doi/pdf/10.2112/JCOASTRES-D-10-00157.1

Global groundwater depletion leads to sea level rise
By Staff Writers, Deltares, Undated [H/t Pielke Research Group]
http://www.deltares.nl/en/news/news-item/item/11864/global-groundwater-depletion-leads-to-sea-level-rise

Extreme Weather

Operator of dam 'invented' rain data
By Hedley Thomas, Australian, Mar 26, 2011 [H/t WUWT]
http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/nation/operator-of-dam-invented-rain-data/story-e6frg6nf-1226028379093
[SEPP Comment: If true, appalling. Floods in Australia were intensified by human error.]

Warm Water Causes Extra-cold Winters in Northeastern North America and Northeastern Asia
By Marcus Woo, Press Release, Caltech, Mar 30, 2011 [H/t WUWT]
http://media.caltech.edu/press_releases/13408

The Political Games Continue

Webcast of House Committee Hearings

By Steve McIntyre, Climate Audit, Mar 31, 2011
http://climateaudit.org/2011/03/31/webcast-of-house-committee-hearings/
[SEPP Comment: Amusing comments from Steve McIntyre on the Committee Hearings.]

Disorder in the Court: Will Trial Lawyers and Activist Judges 'Legislate' Climate Policy
By Marlo Lewis, Global Warming.org, Mar 29, 2011
http://www.globalwarming.org/2011/03/29/disorder-in-the-court-will-trial-lawyers-and-activist-judges-legislate-climate-policy/

Lawmakers Urge President To Act On EPA Rulemaking
By Staff Writers, Power News, Mar 30, 2011
http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/3573.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2171912&hq_l=8&hq_v=5e660500d0

Julia Gillard's tax to make no difference to climate
By Andrew Bold, Herald Sun, Mar 26, 2011 [H/t Des Moore]
http://www.heraldsun.com.au/opinion/pms-tax-to-make-no-difference/story-e6frfhqf-1226028353937
[SEPP Comment: The justification for Australia's proposed carbon tax is questionable.]

Coalition romps to victory in NSW
By Staff Writers, Sydney Morning Herald, Mar 26, 2011
http://www.smh.com.au/nsw/state-election-2011/coalition-romps-to-victory-in-nsw-20110326-1cbbt.html
[SEPP Comment: Australia's proposed carbon tax is not popular with voters.]

Power generator InterGen tells Ross Garnaut to drop 'rhetoric'
By Dennis Shanahan, Australian, Mar 28, 2011
http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/power-generator-intergen-tells-ross-garnaut-to-drop-rhetoric/story-fn59niix-1226029075815

Angela Merkel's party defeated by Greens in key vote
Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, suffered a humiliating defeat in a vital election last night in a state that had been in her party's hands since 1953 after a wave of anger over her government's nuclear policy.
By Staff Writers, Telegraph, UK, Mar 28, 2011
http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/germany/8410482/Angela-Merkels-party-defeated-by-Greens-in-key-vote.html

EPA and other Regulators on the March

Happy Birthday EPA?
By Henry Miller, Regulation, Spring 2011 [H/t ACSH]
http://www.cato.org/pubs/regulation/regv34n1/regv34n1-brieflynoted.pdf
["For the foreseeable future, then, American companies and consumers — and our natural environment — will bear the scars of bureaucratic ambition, incompetence, and chicanery."]

The U.S. EPA's Regulatory Clean Air Benefit-Cost Estimates (30 free lunches for the price of 1?)
By Garrett Vaughn, Master Resource, Mar 31, 2011
http://www.masterresource.org/2011/03/epa-clean-air-benefit-cost-estimate/#more-14556
["We know of no professional economist independent of EPA who takes the EPA's estimate seriously," for—if actually true—the sum would equal "roughly the aggregate net worth of all U.S. households."]

Defund EPA's enablers
American Lung Association gets big paycheck for packing agency's agenda
By Steve Milloy, Washington Times, Mar 31, 2011
http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/mar/31/defund-epas-enablers/

And the beat-down goes on
Proposed EPA rules will do more harm than good for human health, especially for minorities
By Paul Driessen, Canada Free Press, Mar 30, 2011 [H/t SPPI]
http://canadafreepress.com/index.php/print-friendly/34983

Hassling Electricity: EPA's Proposed MACT Rules
By Paul Driessen, Master Resource, Mar 30, 2011
http://www.masterresource.org/2011/03/hassling-electricity-epa/#more-14528

How long before Big Green Environmentalists here demand the U.S. ban cars, too?
By Mark Tapscott, Washington Examiner, Mar 28, 2010
http://washingtonexaminer.com/blogs/beltway-confidential/2011/03/how-long-big-green-environmentalists-here-demand-us-ban-cars-too

Energy Issues

Mr. Obama's Energy Vision
Editorial, NYT, Mar 31, 2011
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/01/opinion/01fri1.html?_r=1&ref=opinion

Obama seeks one-third cut in oil imports
Wants more reliance on U.S. oil, natural gas, renewables, nuclear
http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2011/mar/30/obama-seeks-one-third-cut-in-oil-imports/

Obama Sets Goal of One-Third Cut in Oil Imports
By Jackie Calmes and John Broder, NYT, Mar 30, 2011
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/31/science/earth/31energy.html?ref=science

Pump and Circumstance
Editorial, IBD, Mar 30, 2011
http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/567596/201103301828/Pump-And-Circumstance.htm

Former TXU exec said cost too high to build new plants
By Elizabeth Souder, Dallas News, Mar 24, 2011 [H/t Stefan Bjorklund]
http://www.dallasnews.com/business/headlines/20110324-former-txu-exec-said-cost-too-high-to-build-new-power-plants.ece
[SEPP Comment: All forms of power plants are too expensive?]

Nuclear Fears & Responses

On The Verge Of Safe Reactors That Will Revolutionize World
By Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, IBD, Mar 31, 2011
http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/567725/201103311739/On-The-Verge-Of-Safe-Reactors-That-Will-Revolutionize-World.htm

Guest Post By Professor Kiminori Itoh On The Earthquake and Tsunami In Japan On March 11, 2011
Pielke Research Group, Mar 28, 2011
http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/2011/03/28/guest-post-on-the-japanese/

Pass the Plutonium
By William Tucker, American Spectator, Apr 1, 2011
http://spectator.org/archives/2011/04/01/pass-the-plutonium

Japanese Rules for Nuclear Plants Relied on Old Science
By Normitsu Onishi and James Glanz, NYT, Mar 26, 2011
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/27/world/asia/27nuke.html?_r=1&hp=&pagewanted=all
[SEPP Comment: The technology is over 40 years old – it dates back to the age of small screen black and white TV.]

Fukushima: an earthquake for the French nuclear sector
By Yves de Saint Jacob, European Energy Review, Mar 28, 2011
http://www.europeanenergyreview.eu/site/pagina.php?id=2848

Fukushima Makes Case For Yucca Mountain
Editorial, IBD, Mar 29, 2011
http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article/567524/201103291851/Fukushima-Makes-Case-For-Yucca-Mountain.htm

Stop the coal resurgence in its tracks
Editorial, Washington Post, Mar 26, 2011 [H/t David Manuta]
http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/stop-the-coal-resurgence-in-its-tracks/2011/03/24/AFjODTdB_story.html?wpisrc=emailtoafriend

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

U.S. Has Earth's Largest Energy Resources
By Peter Glover, Energy Tribune, Mar 24, 2011 [H/t Jim Rust]
http://www.energytribune.com/articles.cfm/6933/US-Has-Earths-Largest-Energy-Resources

The Secret to Brazil's Energy Success
Over the past 20 years the country increased domestic oil production by a whopping 876%
By Steven Hayward, WSJ, Apr 1, 2011
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703806304576233071178867598.html?mod=djemEditorialPage_h

Oil Dependence: An Unnecessary Security Risk
By Herman Cain, IBD, Mar 30, 2011
http://www.investors.com/NewsAndAnalysis/Article.aspx?id=567597&p=1

Post-oil transport needs 1.5 trillion-euro overhaul: EU
By Roddy Thompson, AFP, Mar 28, 2011 [H/t Toshio Fujita]
http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5izexM77toSosU79Dr2Q5q2pyI5wA?docId=CNG.1091f0ccf7c6b845bf8da18642e61d16.01

BP Oil Spill and Administration Control of Drilling

Full-Throttle Drill, Drill, Drill
By Larry Kudlow, Townhall, Mar 31, 2011
http://finance.townhall.com/columnists/larrykudlow/2011/03/31/full-throttle_drill,_drill,_drill

Alternative, Green ("Clean") Energy

Global Clean Energy Investment Reached Record 243 Billion Dollars in 2010
By Staff Writers, SPX, Mar 30, 2011
http://www.solardaily.com/reports/Global_Clean_Energy_Investment_Reached_Record_243_Billion_Dollars_In_2010_999.html
[SEPP Comment: With such massive investment, why are subsidies and mandates necessary?]

The Green Energy Economy Reconsidered
The last we saw such an economy was in the 13th century.
By Jerry Taylor and Peter Van Doren, Forbes, Mar 29, 2011
http://www.forbes.com/2011/03/28/green-energy-economics-opinions-jerry-taylor-peter-van-doren.html

Offshore Wind Backbone Begins to Take Shape
By Matthew Wald, NYT, Apr 1, 2011
http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/04/01/offshore-wind-backbone-begins-to-take-shape/?ref=science
[SEPP Comment: Will Google put up the money as previously announced, or will it require major taxpayer subsidies?]

Worldwide Annual Solar Cell Production More Than Doubles In 2010
By Staff Writers, SPX, Mar 31, 2011 [H/t Toshio Fujita]
http://www.solardaily.com/reports/Worldwide_Annual_Solar_Cell_Production_More_Than_Doubles_In_2010_999.html
["To put things into perspective, the 27.2 GW of PV cells produced last year are roughly equal in capacity to 27 typical nuclear reactors." SEPP Comment: Except PV cells do not produce electricity 24/7 and cannot be relied upon when needed the most.]

Va. OKs study of wind turbines in Chesapeake Bay
By Scott Harper, Virginian-Pilot, Mar 30, 2011
http://hamptonroads.com/2011/03/va-oks-study-wind-turbines-chesapeake-bay

2 Mass. Utilities make very different power deals
By Staff Writers, AP, Mar 27, 2011 [H/t Glenn Schleede]
http://www.bostonherald.com/business/general/view.bg?articleid=1326439&srvc=business&position=recent
[SEPP Comment: The pricing differences between off-shore and on-land wind are striking.]

Questioning the European Green

UK rejects EU call for city centre ban on petrol cars
By Staff Writers, BBC News, Mar 28, 2011 [H/t Malcolm Ross]
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-12879566

Parking permit surcharge to force diesel cars off the roads
Owners of diesel cars face higher charges for annual parking permits in major cities amid growing concern over their effect on air quality.
By David Millward, Telegraph, UK, Mar 25, 2011

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/8407964/Parking-permit-surcharge-to-force-diesel-cars-off-the-roads.html
[SEPP Comment: The clean answer to gasoline becomes undesirable.]

Bird group calls for end of wind energy due to threats to species
By Caroline May, Daily Caller, Mar 29, 2011 [H/t Timothy Wise]
http://dailycaller.com/2011/03/29/bird-group-calls-for-end-to-wind-energy-due-to-threats-to-species/

California Dreaming

California Assembly Passes 33% by 2020 RPS
By Staff Writers, Power News, Mar 30 2011
http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/3577.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2171912&hq_l=6&hq_v=5e660500d0
[SEPP Comment: How to go bankrupt faster.]

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

Sea Level Rise by the End of the 21st Century
Reference: Houston, J.R. and Dean, R.G. 2011. Sea-level acceleration based on U.S. tide gauges and extensions of previous global-gauge analyses. *Journal of Coastal Research* (in press).
http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/mar/29mar2011a1.html

Changes in Snowfall in the Southern Sierra Nevada of California Since 1916
Reference: Christy, J.R. and Hnilo, J.J. 2010. Changes in Snowfall in the Southern Sierra Nevada of California Since 1916. *Energy & Environment* **21**: 233-234.
http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2011/mar/29mar2011a2.html

Getting to the "Core" of Output Difference as Produced by Climate Models
Reference: Kondrashov, D., Kravtsov, S. and Ghil, M. 2011. Signatures of Nonlinear Dynamics in an Idealized Atmospheric Model. *Journal of the Atmospheric Sciences* **68**: 3-12.
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Global Warming May Reduce the Risk of Heart Attacks in the United Kingdom
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China set to outstrip US in science research output
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[SEPP Comment: A $7,500 tax credit is not good enough for the Chevy Volt; let's make it a $7,500 government rebate.]

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ARTICLES:

1. Adventures in Federal Budget Cutting

By S. Fred Singer, American Thinker, Mar 31, 2011
http://www.americanthinker.com/2011/03/adventures_in_federal_budget_c.html

I have served in five different positions under both Republican and Democrat administrations and have had some modest success in cutting authorized spending. But the experience has been difficult and has

caused me some personal problems. I am afraid this will be the case for anyone who tries to cut spending -- in the face of an entrenched bureaucracy that thrives on ever-increasing budgets.

It may also be a generational problem, shared by many of my age group who have lived through difficult times before WW-2. As a result of such experience and upbringing, I also tend to be somewhat frugal -- unlike most of the younger generations. I turn off lights; my children don't.

My first encounter with government was when I enlisted in the U.S. Navy during WW-2. I think my monthly "salary" was $30. And we were encouraged to buy War Bonds -- which we did.

During the 1950s, at the University of Maryland, I benefited greatly from large government budgets for scientific research in atmospheric and space physics. But in 1962 I became the founding director of the US Weather Satellite Service, part of the US Weather Bureau-Department of Commerce, (now NOAA), and in charge of what was then considered a huge budget, mainly for purchasing weather satellites from NASA.

We started with the low-cost TIROS, a simple spin stabilized satellite, which provided day-time cloud pictures through a television camera. In those years, NASA was developing the much more advanced NIMBUS satellite, which was completely stabilized and carried many other instruments. It was a great scientific effort but much too ambitious for the kind of operational weather forecasting that was needed at the time. We tried to tell this to NASA but they wanted us to commit to use NIMBUS as an operational satellite before it was even flight-tested.

A big fight developed between the Weather Bureau and NASA, which reached all the way to the White House. With the support of assistant secretary of Commerce, J. Herbert Hollomon, I canceled our NIMBUS purchase order to NASA -- something that had never been done before. The Management School of Syracuse University even produced a study (a thesis by Robert Carpenter) that recounted the whole story as an example of technical management in government. I left my government position in 1964 for academia, pleased that I was able to cut the budget in half. I didn't realize at the time that this would come back to bite me; the bureaucracy never forgets or forgives.

My next government job, 1967 to 1970, was as deputy assistant secretary of Interior for water quality and research. It was a rather peaceful job; one of my main tasks was to direct the "National Estuarine Pollution Study," designed to figure out how to harmonize the many uses of valuable estuaries -- ranging from ports and shipping, cooling of power plants, all the way to harvesting oysters and shrimps. We concluded that the common feature was water quality, to be achieved by proper treatment of sewage pollution, agricultural run-off, and control of eutrophication. Yet when our report landed with Congress it became the Coastal Zone Management Act -- yet another large government grant program.

When EPA was set up in 1970, I became deputy assistant administrator for policy. Being young and ambitious, I approached administrator Bill Ruckelshaus and suggested that I might be a good deputy administrator. I pointed out the need for cost-benefit analysis in deciding just "how clean is clean." His answer, as a lawyer, was "Our job is to enforce the law, get after these polluters, and sue them." I decided that EPA was not for me and moved to the University of Virginia.

But in 1974, during the Ford administration, I was interviewed for the job of assistant secretary of State for oceans, environment, and science. OES had not one but three deputy assistant secretaries and lots of staff people, and really did not produce anything except perhaps some briefings for the secretary. I never met Henry Kissinger but I suggested to under-secretary Ingersoll during the interview how the office might be streamlined. I did not get the job; OES was used mainly as a convenient parking place for foreign-service officers who didn't have an assignment. So back to the University of Virginia.

The Reagan years

When Reagan came to the White House, my name was put forward for the position of NOAA administrator. But Lowell Weicker, a Republican senator from Connecticut, put a "hold" on my nomination. Our interview was quite unsatisfactory. It seems he got his information about me from people at the weather satellite center who were unhappy about my earlier budget cut. It taught me an important lesson about how life works in the federal government.

The Reagan White House then appointed me as vice-chairman of NACOA (National Advisory Committee on Oceans and Atmosphere). We were supposed to oversee NOAA and other government activities dealing with oceans and atmosphere, and make recommendations. Our group made several suggestions for privatizing much of what NOAA does, which would have saved a great deal of money and cut federal budgets. NACOA was soon disestablished and funding was cut off for the staff. End of story.

My next adventure was in the Department of Transportation. In 1987 I was appointed as chief scientist and given general responsibility for overseeing the procurement of a new FAA air-traffic control system. The budget of $26 billion was then the largest civilian procurement ever planned. It took a while to figure out what the system was about, but I soon discovered that one could kill the $6 billion program for MSL (Microwave Landing System). A favored FAA proposal for nearly two decades, it had become technically redundant, partly because of improvements in the existing landing system and partly because of the advent of GPS satellites.

I found that it was always easier to cut something than to start something in the federal government -- particularly if one had the support of the secretary, in this case Jim Burnley. But I lost some friends in the FAA.

When Reagan left office, Sam Skinner was appointed as DOT secretary. He bought me lunch and put his arm around me: "Fred, I don't think we need a chief scientist." Apparently, my efforts to cut the FAA budget had become known to him. I left in 1989 and returned to the University of Virginia.

Space and Defense

A special word about the space agency. Though a space scientist, I have never actually worked for NASA, but was considered for the position of chief scientist by NASA heads Jim Fletcher in 1989 and by Mike Griffin in 2001. But perhaps my views about certain NASA programs had become known to them.

I have always considered the International Space Station as a big 'White Elephant' -- and the manned-moon base of George Bush the elder and George W. Bush an even bigger disaster. Needless to say, I did not get the NASA job.

I still consider the space station to be a fairly useless enterprise. And I argue strongly against space colonization. At the same time, there are a very few good applications for "man in space." My particular interest is in setting up a manned laboratory on the Martian moon Deimos and explore Mars solely with unmanned rovers. I view with horror any plan to set up a manned base on Mars itself.

The Climate Battles

My most recent experience dates to 2005, when the White House put forward my name as assistant secretary of Commerce (and deputy NOAA administrator) to supervise the burgeoning federal program of

climate-science research. I passed my interviews with flying colors; but then the White House lost interest. Obviously, my well- known skepticism about manmade global warming had reached the political types and the matter just died.

Too bad. During the last decade, we have spent some $50 billion on climate-related research, much of it through the inter-agency Climate Change Science Program (CCSP). The office I was supposed to direct finally issued 21 reports, which are of dubious value and hardly known. The first and most important of these, CCSP-SAP 1.1, actually demonstrates that nature, not human activity, rules the climate. The 'fingerprints' of observations and greenhouse models disagree completely -- as is evident from the graphs in the body of the report. Yet the Executive Summary, written by political types and approved by NOAA management, manages to gloss over the disparity and maintains the fiction of anthropogenic global warming. Had I been in charge, this Summary would not have been approved.

Currently, Congress is trying to cut some of the more egregious programs that are based on fears about catastrophic climate change. Witness the Energy Tax Prevention Act that would stop the EPA from mandating job-killing emission limits for carbon dioxide. Or the efforts to eliminate a whole slew of subsidies for uneconomic projects for "renewable" energy.

Conclusion

So what's to be done? The political appointees soon get frustrated when they realize how difficult it is to change course. We need lots of mid-level managers who are not afraid to put their jobs on the line. The bureaucracy is steeped in a culture of automatic annual increases -- and new programs. The American public and also the states have become used to government grants, subsidies and services; there are more than 1,000 federal grant-in-aid programs for states, involving education, housing, transportation, etc. Most of these federal services can and should be replaced by locally funded and controlled ones -- closer to the voters and taxpayers, and less costly. However, there is need to take slow steps in cutting the federal budget; withdrawal symptoms can be painful, politically damaging, and could kill the whole enterprise. Remember that "pulling pigs out of the trough causes a lot of squealing."
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2. The Really Inconvenient Truth

By Andrew Turnbull, GWPF, Mar 27, 2011
http://thegwpf.org/opinion-pros-a-cons/2711-lord-turnbull-the-really-inconvenient-truth.html#ja-content

The UK Government takes great pride in its framework for climate change. It sees it as both comprehensive and ambitious, as one of the most an advanced in the world, providing a platform for moral leadership in global negotiations.

What are the components of this framework?

1. A clear vision of the science which is based on the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Driven by man–made emissions of CO2, the CO2 content of the atmosphere has risen from 280 ppm in the pre–industrial era to almost 400 ppm and, unless checked will double to around 550 ppm during the course of this century.
2. This rise in CO2 is the principal cause of the increase in temperature of 0.7°C over the past century. On the business as usual case, temperature will rise by 1–1.5° C within the next 50 years, and by around 3° C by the end of the century
3. If temperature rises more than 2C various adverse consequences will ensue, eg rising sea levels, droughts or floods, increased violence of storms, damage to food production, the spread of disease etc.

4. To limit temperature change to no more than 2C global emissions of CO2 need to be halved, and given their contribution to CO2 to date the developed nations should take the lion's share, ie reducing their emissions by around 80 percent. Taking account of growth in the economy, this means that 40 years from now each unit of GDP must produce only 5 percent of the CO2 it does currently

The UK Government has argued for this in climate change treaty negotiations, but in the absence of any agreement (a legally binding set of limits seems pretty dead) it has set its own limits.

The UK Government has created a powerful structure through the Climate Change Act 2008. Its opening clause creates a legally binding obligation:

" It is the duty of the Secretary of State to ensure that that the net carbon account for the year 2050 is at least 80 percent lower than the 1990 baseline."

The Act then goes on to establish the Climate Change Commission whose job it is the set 5 year targets on the way to the final goal, and to report to Parliament on whether the actions being taken which will deliver those targets.

A wide range of instruments has been introduced. At the EU level there are targets for 2020 to reduce CO2 emissions by 20 percent, with an offer to go to 30 percent as part of an international agreement, and an obligation to produce 15 percent of energy from renewable sources. To achieve this electricity generation will need to be over 30 percent from renewables. The EU has also set up a cap and trade system for carbon, the EUETS; targets for the efficiency of vehicle fleets and a mandatory component of road fuel to come from biofuels.

At a UK level, numerous other schemes have been set in place.

- The Climate Change Levy; the Carbon Reduction Commitment; feed in tariffs, targets for wind energy, a carbon capture and storage obligation for coal fired power stations, and changes in the planning system to speed up replacement of our nuclear fleet.
- In the pipeline are proposals for a carbon price floor, and an energy efficiency Green Deal.

It will no longer be simply larger energy users who are in the business of carbon reduction but every firm, large or small, and every household will be affected.

But there is an Inconvenient Truth, and it is not the same Inconvenient Truth of Al Gore's film. The Real Inconvenient Truth is that this whole structure is built on shaky foundations.

One can analyse this agenda at three levels:

- First, the basic science, i.e. the relationship between CO2 and temperature
- Secondly, for any given rise in temperature the real world impact on sea levels, rainfall, drought etc
- Thirdly, for any given picture of impacts, what are the appropriate policies?

The three tiers correspond to the three working groups in the IPCC structure.

What is described as a consensus is no such thing. There is a huge controversy at each level of the analysis. Let us look first at the science. The IPCC view has been characterized as an ice hockey stick.

For the past thousand years, global temperatures are presented as fluctuating within a narrow range, possibly around a slight downward trend. But since the arrival of industrialization, the output of CO2 has risen sharply, producing the sharp rise in global temperatures, the so-called man-made or Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW).

This has been challenged on a number of fronts:

- Has the back history being correctly described? Many scientists believe that in the IPCC's later reports the fluctuations in the past 1000 years have been wrongly flattened out, underplaying a Medieval Warming Period (1000 -1,350 AD), followed by a Little Ice Age (1350-1850), and the recovery from it over the last 150 years. This alternative view indicates that our climate has been variable long before the recent movements in CO2. Early reports from the IPCC acknowledged these fluctuations, But of course they are inconvenient to the AGW believers, one of whom e–mailed another saying "We must get rid of the Medieval Warming Period."
- Even the history of the last 150 year presents a lot of problems. Over this period the global temperature has risen by 0.7°C But unlike the rise in CO2 which has been pretty steady, there have been markedly different phases. Temperature rose rapidly from 1900–1940 when the CO2 increase was modest, followed by a small drop in temperature between 1940–70 despite the fact that CO2 growth was particularly strong at this time. Between 1970 and the late 1990s both CO2 and temperature increased strongly together, but over the past 12 years or so temperature has been on a plateau. If CO2 were as important as many AGW theorists claim, why has temperature not followed a steady upward path? Immediately it becomes obvious that one needs to bring other factors into the story, especially the sun and the way heat is stored in an distributed around the oceans. So it is very unclear what is the relative contribution of natural forces and what is AGW.
- But principally one needs to look at climate sensitivity, by that I mean the coefficient between CO2 and temperature. No one questions that CO2 has greenhouse properties. A cubic metre of air with 550 ppm in it will retain more heat than one with 280ppm. But most scientists will admit that a doubling of CO2 alone will not produce the 3°C or more that is built into the IPCC models. The pure CO2 effect for a doubling in concentration is probably closer to 1°C. So where do the higher figures come from?
- They come from what is assumed to happen to water vapour which is a much more prevalent and powerful greenhouse gas than CO2. A hotter atmosphere will hold more water vapour. But does this automatically mean that there will be a positive, ie amplifying, feedback effect? Not necessarily. Cloud does have an insulating property but it also has what is known as an albedo effect reflecting the sun back into space, which is why cloudy days are cooler. So the net effect could go either way.
- The IPCC models have assumed but not proven a strongly positive feedback. But this is an area of science that is still poorly understood.

To summarise this part of the argument:

- Global temperature has been rising since the early part of the 19th century, but at a much slower rate than is projected forward. There was a period of sharp rise from 1970 in the late 1990s but this is too short a period on which to base an extrapolation to the end of this century. In the opening decade of this century we have fallen way behind the asking rate to achieve a 3°C increase which is approximately four times the historic rate.
- CO2 has been rising significantly only in the last 60 years while the rise in temperature has fluctuated

I can deal with Level 2 of the IPCC's work very quickly. In my view this is where their work is at its shabbiest. Lots of dramatic claims about sea levels, melting glaciers, ice, crop yields, extinction of

species, especially polar bears. Much of this has been shown to have come from unpeer reviewed material, the so-called grey literature, and worse still some of it was even drawn from material supplied by green NGOs. There has been a consistent pattern of cherry picking, exaggeration, highlighting of extremes, and failure to acknowledge beneficial effects. By and large, humanity has prospered in the more warm periods. Plants grow faster and capture more CO2 in an atmosphere that is hotter, wetter and more CO2 rich. Cold causes more deaths than heat. The main cause of more storm damage has been that we have put more people and property in harm's way. The fears about the spread of malaria are largely discredited.

Let me now turn to Level 3, policy.

- The first problem is that policy has been based on a preponderantly warmist view of the world. Many such as the institution Civil Engineers think that too little attention has been paid to adaptation, i.e. being more resilient which ever way the sum of natural forces and CO2 takes us, up or down. This warmist view of the world may explain why we have been underprepared for cold winters, a phenomenon which is very readily explicable by the state of the 11 year solar cycle where sunspots are at an extreme low.
- The major problem of UK policy is its unilateralism. Our Climate Change Act imposes legal duties, regardless of what ever else other countries do, or do not do. The UK, producing only 2% of world GDP, has minimal effect on the global warming outcome. If we push too hard on decarbonisation by raising the price of carbon through a range of instruments we will suffer double jeopardy. Energy using industries will migrate, and if the climate pessimists are right we will still have to pay to adapt, e.g. by raising our flood defences. In my view we should concentrate on those things which have a clear no regret benefit, and there are many, and advance into the rest of the agenda only as part of international action. There is furious row in the EU Commission on precisely this point. The Climate Action Commissioner wants to adopt the more ambitious 30 percent even in the absence of any agreement, while the Energy Commissioner is strongly opposed.

The logical economic approach is to rank policy responses according to the cost per tonne of CO2 abated and then work through the merit order, starting with the most effective. Or what amounts to the same thing, set a price on carbon and then let the various technologies – gas, coal with CCS, nuclear, wind, tidal, energy efficiency etc, fight it out for market share.

But the EU Renewables Obligation is the denial of this logic. One particular set of technologies, and in particular wind, has been given a guaranteed market share and a guaranteed indexed price, regardless of how competitive it is. The current pursuit of wind power is folly. Its cost per kwh substantially exceeds that of other low carbon sources such as nuclear when account is taken of intermittency and the cost of extending the grid far from where consumers are located. There is a constant confusion between installed capacity for wind and its actual output, which is about 25-30 percent of the former. There is also the problem that the coldest periods in the UK often coincide with low wind speeds.

There has been in this country, initially, a hostility to nuclear power and now at best a half-heartedness. The Secretary of State at DECC has called nuclear a tried, tested and failed technology. It may be that in the UK, historically, it has not been as successful as it might have been, but it has for 50 years provided around 20 percent of our electricity reliably, competitively and safely. Just 20 miles from our coast, France has produced over 2/3rds of its electricity from nuclear and regards this as a great success. Clearly, events in Japan are raising new questions about nuclear power. We cannot yet say whether there is a general lesson about current designs or whether the lesson is about 40 year old designs in seismically active areas.

The feed-in tariff mechanism is fast becoming a scandal. Those lucky enough to own buildings large enough on which to install solar panels, or enough land for a wind farm, have been receiving 30-40p per kwh which is retailed at only 11p. The loss is paid for by a levy on businesses and households. It is astonishing that the Liberals, who attach such importance to fairness, turn a blind eye to this transfer from poor to rich, running to £billions a year. If you live in a council tower block in Lambeth you don't have much opportunity to get your nose into this trough.

There is a major new development which fits the description of a disruptive technology, that is the introduction of new drilling techniques which make it possible to extract gas from shale. This has dramatically widened the geographic availability of gas, has produced a massive upgrading of gas reserves and is decoupling gas prices from oil. Gas has the advantage that it produces about half the CO2 that coal produces. So we face a happy prospect that we can replace a lot of coal burning with gas, reduce energy prices, and make a big reduction in CO2 emissions, albeit not the complete decarbonisation sought by some. Certainly the opportunity cost of renewables has risen, and perhaps that of nuclear power too.

Another defence of the AGW agenda is the so-called green jobs argument, i.e. we should be in the vanguard of adopting green technologies so that we get first mover advantage as a supplier of these technologies. My view is simple. If a technology can justify itself without massive subsidy we should build up our research and our skills. But if a technology exists only by virtue of subsidy, we only impoverish ourselves by trying to build jobs on such shaky foundations.

To summarise on policy:

We should concentrate on those measures which are no regret, which improve resource productivity, and which do not depress living standards. In my book these are stopping deforestation, raising the energy efficiency of our buildings and our vehicle fleet (though the effect of greater energy efficiency on CO2 reduction may be limited if consumption is sustained by lowering the effective price of energy), investment in nuclear power, an expansion of energy from waste and, if we are going to adopt CCS and the economics has yet to be established, it would be better to attach it to new gas-fired stations rather retrofitting old coal-fired stations.. It also means much less wind and solar, an end to current biofuels.

Let me conclude with a few remarks on the sociology and politics of the AGW phenomenon. First, there is the change in the nature of science. Great figures of the past such as Galileo and Darwin were not salaried professors, did not receive large research grants and were not showered with honours. They were driven by curiosity and were prepared to challenge the established order. Nowadays, our environmental scientists have jobs and research ratings to protect as well as celebrity and airmiles. There has been a shameful failure by the grandees of the Royal Society who should have been the guardians of scientific integrity, upholding its motto "Nullius in verba," i.e. no one has the final word. Instead they have become campaigners, spouting nonsense that the science is settled, and failing to review rigorously the Climategate e-mails affair.

There are now plenty of vested interests in the green agenda, whether consultants, suppliers of green technology or those taking advantage of the economic opportunities. It is not just the traditional energy suppliers who have positions to defend.

Uncritical adoption of the green agenda by the Conservatives has helped them push the Blue is Green message as a way of escaping from the nasty party image.

There is a structural flaw in the IPCC. Far from being the distillation of the work of 2,500 scientists to produce a consensus, there is a core of 40-50 at its centre who are closely related, as colleagues, pupils, teachers, reviewers of each other's work. They have managed to define a very simple AGW message and

have sought to prevent alternative voices from being heard. The media have failed in their mission to challenge and have bought into the group think. It has been left to the blogosphere to provide a platform for different viewpoints.

Where does the religious moralising tone come from? It can be traced back to Chapter 3 of the Book of Genesis. Man was born into Eden in a state of grace, but has damaged his environment and now must repent and pay for his sins.

To conclude:

We need to acknowledge that there have always been fluctuations in out climate. Rather that writing natural forces out of the script we need to build them into the analysis.

We have witnessed a warming tend in the last 150 years, but this warming has not followed a steady upward path. We are currently on a plateau. CO2 has probably, ceteris paribus, made a small positive contribution.

Our understanding of the effects of water vapour is still limited and not enough to justify the weight that is put upon it.

We need a more eclectic approach and certainly a more modest one.

In the words of President Klaus of the Czech Republic.

"To reduce the interpretation of all kinds of climate change and of global warming to one variable, CO2, and to a small proportion of that one variable – human induced CO2- is impossible to accept."

From our politicians we need more rationality, less emotion and less religiosity; and end to alarmist propaganda and to attempts to frighten us and our children. Also we want them to pay more attention to the national interest and less to being global evangelists.

Finally we need from our scientists more humility, and a return to the tradition of scientific curiosity and challenge. We need more openness and transparency and an end to attempts to freeze out dissenting voices. There should be more recognition of what they do not know. And acceptance of the Really Inconvenient Truth - that our understanding of the natural world does not justify the certainty in which the AGW views are expressed.

Andrew Turnbull, March 2011

Lord Turnbull was Permanent Secretary, Environment Department,1994-98; Permanent Secretary to the Treasury 1998-2002, Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Home Civil Service 2002-05. He is now a Crossbench member of the House of Lords and a member of the GWPF's Board of Trustees.
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3. Winning the Argument on Climate Change

By Roger Helmer, MEP, Mar 31, 2011 [H/t Anne Debeil]
http://rogerhelmermep.wordpress.com/2011/03/31/winning-the-argument-on-climate-change/
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Earlier this week we had Benny Peiser of the Global Warming Policy Foundation (GWPF) addressing a seminar here in Brux. The GWPF is the think-tank set up by Nigel (Lord) Lawson (find it at

www.thegwpf.org). GWPF publishes information and research on the climate debate. It's not a campaigning organisation, but it's an invaluable resource. Lord Lawson set out his position on global warming in his excellent book **"An Appeal to Reason",** where he made it clear that our current policy approach to the question is ruinous, whether or not the global warming theory is right.

Benny is an old friend, who has previously spoken at events which I have organised in Brux. This recent seminar was courtesy of Godfrey Bloom MEP.

One of the points which Benny stressed in his presentation was the extent to which we are already winning the climate argument.

In America, it is now clear that President Obama will not be able to get Cap'n'Trade, or any other anti-business climate mitigation measure, through Congress. It is also starting to look probable that the Environment Protection Agency will be unable to place draconian restrictions on CO2 emissions. The USA will certainly not accept a new and restrictive global climate agreement unless China and India also do so.

China told a good story at Cancun, and sought to present itself as a player in the global warming policy debate. Yet it is building a new coal-fired every week (and carbon sequestration remains a fanciful dream). The Greens love to talk about China's commitment to green energy, but it seems to me that China is simply committed to making green kit — photovoltaic cells, for example — for the gullible West, regardless of the economics of solar power. As Galsworthy put it, "Rubbish that sells is not rubbish at all". The Chinese are nothing if not pragmatic. The "green jobs" generated by my domestic 2.4 kw PV system were most likely in Shanghai, not Spalding.

Meantime India is close to emulating China in the production of coal-fired power stations. India has an enormous emerging middle class, and it's not about to put that prosperity at risk with green energy.

In Australia, the Australian Labour Party, closely associated with climate mitigation and carbon taxes, received a drubbing from the Liberals on March 26th in New South Wales, with informed commentators saying that a key issue was fear of economic damage from climate measures.

In Germany, predictably, there has been an hysterical anti-nuclear reaction to the Fukujima incident. But there has been another less probable outcome: the German Socialists — yes ***Socialists*** — are calling for a switch to coal.

In the UK, our "Greenest Government Ever" has just announced a fast-track review of feed-in tariffs, which will lead to a cut in subsidies for solar energy — I'm already getting anguished letters from installers. Meantime opinion polls are increasingly showing that in the UK, as in the USA, the public just don't believe it any more — despite the relentless propaganda in schools and in the media. The public are sick of the subject, and resentful at being constantly blamed every time they drive a car or fly to Majorca. We don't believe it, we won't vote for it, we won't pay for it. And the sooner the government catches up with the public mood, the better.

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4. From Nixon to Obama

Editorial, WSJ, Mar 31, 2011

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703712504576233140730614876.html?mod=WSJ_Opinion_AboveLEFTTop

Because every President since Richard Nixon has declared that the country must buy less "foreign oil," the new cliche is for Presidents to mention that fact when they reiterate the same goal. Bill Clinton

invoked it, and so did George W. Bush, and so too did President Obama yesterday in an energy speech at Georgetown.

If this is the moment "we finally get serious," as Mr. Obama explained, it was hard to tell—in particular from his endorsement of a "use it or lose it" law. He told Americans that the oil and gas industry "holds tens of millions of acres of leases where they're not producing a single drop. They're just sitting on supplies of American energy that are ready to be tapped." So gas prices that are once again approaching $4 and stagnant domestic production are the result of Big Oil's desire to buy leases for no reason.

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar released a report to that effect earlier this week, but the reality is that natural resources are not somehow spread equally beneath the ground, or somehow pre-deposited to the plots the government decides to open to exploration. Before an oil company can drill, it must conduct seismic and geological tests to find the oil. This requires time and capital investment.

If oil is discovered that can be economically recovered, many "idle" leases spend years waiting on environmental and other permitting reviews or lawsuits. The industry pays the government for leases that may or may not be valuable at auction, and it then pays royalties on any oil that is eventually produced.

Mr. Obama's "use it or lose it" proposal would increase royalties and reduce the length of leases, which would discourage the domestic production that he claims to favor. Or else it means a return to the hit-or-miss wildcatting that is less efficient than today's methods. More to the point, "use it or lose it" is really about political misdirection, a way of talking about anything besides the fact that deliberate government policy—since Nixon—has tended to increase the costs of U.S. energy.

Leave aside the huge stretches of the outer continental energy frontier that are off-limits to exploration, or the Administration's near-yearlong freeze of Gulf Coast drilling after the BP disaster, even in shallow water. In his speech, Mr. Obama gestured at the Northeast shale boom that perhaps holds decades of natural gas reserves. But typically, he called for more regulation, asking his Energy Secretary to "improve the safety of this process" of shale drilling that the government already has the power to regulate.

Presidents probably can't do much in the short run to reduce the costs of energy. But they can stop making it more expensive.

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5. Wind is no energy panacea

By Charles Battig, Letter, Roanoke Times, Mar 28, 2011
http://www.roanoke.com/editorials/letters/wb/281431

Re: "Declare independence from fossil fuels," March 21 commentary:

To those living in line-of-sight of rotating (not "oscillating," as Richard Rusk states) turbine blades, the health issues are real enough.

"Wind-turbine Syndrome" was coined by Dr. Nina Pierpont in describing the medical impacts on captive neighbors. Ringing in the ears (tinnitus), headaches, insomnia and nausea are health complaints she documented. Citizens in Canada, Britain, Denmark and France have registered similar complaints to their authorities about nearby wind-turbine installations.

The low-frequency thump, thump, thump is relentless and inescapable, save by moving away. Imagine the negative tourist attraction of an array of rotating blades as they slice and dice the sunset into a headache-inducing light flicker. Their slice-and-dicing of wild birds has earned them the name "Cuisinarts of the air."

The Federal Aviation Administration considered the impact of this wind turbine installation. I had hoped it would remember the tragic plane crash and death of my neighbor Peter Sheeran at Roanoke Airport last year. Adding the possibility of radar disruption and light flicker to local strong winds makes for less safe flying.

Peak oil? Over the past 30-plus years, we have consumed three times the reserves known in 1976; known reserves are now double the known starting amount. The U.S. has so much natural gas that it has been crowned the "Saudi Arabia of natural gas."

"The air we breathe is polluted with carbon dioxide," said Rusk. Really? We exhale about 4 percent carbon dioxide with each breath; it is a necessary plant food; it puts the green in our green environment.

Wind and solar are the least efficient forms of energy compared to coal and oil. Wind power is not dispatchable; you cannot count on it 24/7. Where is the gas-fired, backup power plant to be located providing power when the wind doesn't blow? Extensive experience in Spain has shown the loss of two jobs for each new green one.

Taxpayers are forced to subsidize these wind turbine projects, bringing financial gain to out-of-town developers. What they get in return is more expensive, less reliable energy and environmental despoilage -- nothing to celebrate any day.

Battig, of Charlottesville, is a retired physician with an advanced degree in electrical engineering
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6. Climate-Change Propaganda for the Masses

By Vincent Gray, Book Review, **The Weather Makers** by Tim Flannery.
Previously published in Christchurch Press, November 19, 2005, No URL
[SEPP Comment: Author Tim Flannery is the Climate Change Commissioner for the Australian government. Vincent Gray is a long time expert reviewer of IPCC reports from New Zealand who does not believe everything that IPCC publishes.]

Tim Flannery is a fair dinkum Aussie bloke, a best-selling writer, Humanist of the Year, Director of the South Australia Museum, and discoverer of 29 new species of kangaroo. He is also an enthusiastic environmental activist, and, egged on by the likes of Jared Diamond and Bill Bryson, he has now published “The Weather Makers” a propaganda tract in support of the widely accepted belief that human greenhouse gas emissions are responsible for “climate change”. It can be seen as a counterweight to the recent best-selling sceptical novel by Michael Crichton, “State of Fear”.

“The Weather Makers” starts off swimmingly with the foreword by Robert Purvis, who claims that “Quite simply, climate change is a threat to civilisation as we know it” Tim Flannery has rather a hard job living up to this claim, but he does his best.

As one who has tried it (on the sceptical side) it is not easy to master all the scientific and economic disciplines required for this book. . Flannery falls down rather badly in his Physics when on page 23 he claims that the greenhouse effect is due to the heating of the trace gases in the lower atmosphere by the sun, rather than the more orthodox, and widely publicised explanation, that they are heated by radiation from the earth. This correct view does admittedly appear later on. He also considers carbon dioxide to be the chief greenhouse gas when it is water vapour, but many others seem to be afflicted with this blunder. I am glad, however, to find that he understands the Principle of Archimedes which implies that the ocean level will not rise when the Arctic ocean icecap melts.

His view of science is also rather unorthodox, “a theory is only valid for as long as it has not been disproved” (page 2). So it is a scientifically valid theory if I state that Flannery will go to a special monkey heaven when he dies. Who could ever disprove that? No wonder he has trouble assessing the reliability of the theories he discusses.

He also has trouble with predictions. On page 114 we read “not a single species is definitely known to have become extinct because of climate change” Surely by “Occam’s Razor” we should, from this, deduce that future climate change is unlikely to cause extinction. Yet he tries to persuade us, at great length, that the situation has suddenly changed, and future climate change will cause massive extinctions, including those of several beautifully illustrated creatures.

He joins many climate scientists in believing that computer models can be reliably used to predict future climate, and he proves it by showing us (page 157) a successful simulation of the weather for 1 July 1998, obtained by tweaking the many poorly- known parameters in one of the many models to get it to fit. Yet there has never been a successful prediction of any future climate from a model, and until there is, there is no reason to think that any of them could do so..

As one who has recently spent many weary hours, and fifty pages, commenting on the First Draft of the Fourth Scientific Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) I was shocked to be told by Mr Flannery that the IPCC is in the pocket of the large oil producers. He is, admittedly, one of the few I have met who realises that the ”consensus” statements of the IPCC have never actually agreed that there was a proven relationship between greenhouse gases and “climate change”, but I had always assumed that this was because the scientists themselves could not agree. However, I do support Mr Flannery’s view that the IPCC Reports are “dull as dishwater”.

Mr Flannery has refrained from confronting the views of Michael Crichton and the scientists who support him, and has chosen to try and persuade us that the chief sceptic is Fredrick Palmer, a US Coal executive. He does, however, mention the doyen of Email sceptics, Fred Singer, whom he falsely accuses of being a member of the Unification Church of Sun Myung Moon!

The last chapters are almost acceptable. He thoroughly debunks the “hydrogen economy”, supports nuclear energy, and ends by recommending a series of unexpectedly easy ways of evading the coming disasters, involving walking or biking to work and buying solar panels. But he does not yet advocate buying a horse!

Mr Flannery’s book will reinforce the faith of the converted, but it might send many others to read Mr Crichton, if only for the exciting thriller plot.
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7. Photosynthesis

Poem by Cliff Ollier
No URL

CO_2 and H_2O and sunlight
Are the reason we can eat our daily bread
CO_2 and H_2O and sunlight
Without the CO_2 we’d all be dead

For plants store energy by making sugars
And other foods that bring us great delight.
It’s the basis of all life upon the planet
CO_2 and H_2O and light

Photosynthesis is what they call it,
Photo puts the emphasis on light
Synthesis means putting it together
CO_2 and H_2O and light.

The lion has an antelope for breakfast,
and the antelope, before his final fright,
Ate grass, which like all other vegetation,
Fixed CO_2 and H_2O and light.

The mighty whale eats krill to keep its weight up,
And the krill eat tiny plants, near out of sight,
And the tiny plants create the basic food store
From CO_2 and H_2O and light.

The food chain can be very complicated
With formulae to give a student fright,
But the basis of the chain is very simple –
It's CO_2 and H_2O and light.

Now some say CO_2 is a pollutant,
A poison we must always try to fight
But remember if you want to go on living –
You need CO_2 and H_2O and light!

CO_2 and H_2O and sunlight
Are the reason we can eat our daily bread
CO_2 and H_2O and sunlight
Without the CO_2 we'd all be dead

Cliff Ollier, Professor, School of Earth and Environment, University of Western Australia