

The Week That Was: 2012-05-26 (May 26, 2012)

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The Science and Environmental Policy Project

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Quote of the Week:

“As an agency, NASA does not draw conclusions and issue ‘claims’ about research findings.”

Waleed Abdalati, NASA Chief Scientist, April 11, 2012

“Eight days later, at a senate hearing, Dr. Abdalati, did just that, concluding that Sea-Level rise within the next 87 years projects within a range of 0.2 meters to 2 meters, with lower ranges less likely while ‘the highest values are based on warmest of the temperature scenarios commonly considered for the remainder of the 21st century.’” Letter to NASA Administrator Charles Bolden from 41 former NASA astronauts, scientists and senior administrators. May 11, 2012

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Number of the Week: \$2.575 Billion US

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THIS WEEK:

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

Heartland Conference: The three-day Seventh International Conference on Climate Change, Real Science Real Choices, sponsored by the Heartland Institute ran from Monday morning to Wednesday afternoon. Even though the decision to hold the conference was not made until three months ago, it was well conducted. The late decision was probably one reason the attendance was about 300. SEPP was a co-sponsor of the event.

Václav Klaus: Of the many highlights, Monday’s dinner speech by Václav Klaus, the President of the Czech Republic, was particularly memorable. President Klaus left the NATO conference, also being held in Chicago, to deliver his address. He thanked Heartland for holding the conference and keeping the global warming issue alive. He also thanked the bloggers who disseminate important information questioning the orthodoxy.

President Klaus emphasized that, as the globe fails to warm, global warming alarmists have become quieter; but, the idea of human-caused dangerous global warming is heavily engrained in the thinking of many in Europe, as it is in the US, even though the language has morphed into climate change. The basic faulty thinking, and science, still applies. Very simply, governments cannot stop global warming / climate change by controlling carbon dioxide emissions.

To President Klaus, global warming alarmists “have succeeded in establishing the religion of environmentalism as the official religion of Western society – a religion that demands a radical transformation of Western civilization. Skeptics must continue the ideological battles. As he has stated previously, the purpose of this entire issue is to control human behavior – human liberty. “The subtitle of my five years old book was “What is Endangered: Climate or Freedom?” There is no doubt that it is all about freedom. We should keep that in mind.” Please see Article # 1 or <http://www.klaus.cz/clanky/3104>

NASA 49: Another memorable highlight was the breakfast talk given by four representatives of the NASA 49 – former NASA astronauts, scientists, and senior administrators who sent a letter to Charles Bolden, the administrator of NASA, requesting that NASA stop making scientifically unsupported claims about science. “The unbridled advocacy of CO2 being the major cause of climate change is unbecoming of NASA’s history of making an objective assessment of all available scientific data prior to making decisions or public statements.” NASA responded, prompting a second letter from the *NASA 49*. The quote of the week is taken from that second letter. Apparently, the senior scientist of NASA is not made

of “the right stuff.” Perhaps he should be reminded of the Apollo mission motto: “In God we trust; all others bring data!” Please see Article # 2.

Scientific Consensus: As can be expected in any conference featuring independently-thinking scientists studying the physical causes of climate change, there was no general agreement on the causes of the 20th century warming. However, there was general agreement that the hypothesis of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is not supported by the physical science – i.e., that atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the principal cause, while all else is little more than background noise. About 50 supporters of IPCC science were personally invited, but none attended.

Some attendees thought that the principal causes are internal to the earth, such as changes in the ocean oscillation such as the thermohaline circulation (THC), or the Pacific Decadal (PDO), and Atlantic Multidecadal Oscillations (AMO). To some the influence of CO₂ is slight, to others it is fairly significant – a doubling of CO₂ would lead to an increase in global temperatures of about 2 deg C.

Others presented their research suggesting the primary cause is external to the earth. One suggestion is that the primary cause may be the sun alone. Still others suggested the primary cause is high energy cosmic rays, modulated by the sun, hitting the atmosphere and creating changes in cloud cover.

The willingness to discuss and sharply question alternative hypotheses was a refreshing change to the all consuming IPCC hypothesis which simply cannot explain the earth’s climate history or why there has been no warming trend for over a decade.

Collaboration: Several researchers mentioned that prior conferences have led to collaboration on research efforts that probably would not have occurred without the conferences. Given the “group think” that is common in a great deal of climate research, Heartland is providing a valuable service to the public.

Communicating with the Public: Several very useful suggestions for communicating with the public were made during the panel on communication. One suggestion was to request those who agree to spend one or two hours a week expressing their views with their friends and colleagues. A second suggestion was to start public talks off with a relevant question. One example is how much carbon dioxide is there in the atmosphere and how much do humans contribute. A second example is to show one of the photos of power plants emitting what appears to be dark smoke that commonly accompany stories on CO₂ or global warming and ask what color is CO₂. Of course, it is invisible and in the US the photos are taken under special lighting conditions or with special lenses.

The Heartland Controversy: Prior to the conference, the Heartland Institute posted a billboard that offended a number of skeptics. The billboard featured the Unabomber, Ted Kaczynski, emphasizing his belief in dangerous man-made global warming. After objections were raised, Heartland took down the billboard within 24 hours. [For the 50th reunion, the Harvard University Alumni Association directory had an entry by Kaczynski who is a 1962 graduate and listed his occupation as “prisoner” and entered “8 life sentences” under the “Awards” section. http://news.yahoo.com/blogs/sideshow/harvard-apologizes-including-unabomber-alumni-directory-192547071.html?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=feed.]

What clearly comes from the conference and subsequent discussions is that public needs to become more aware that the science is not settled and that there are major issues with the IPCC hypothesis. Whether or not Heartland’s tactic was appropriate is a personal matter. Whether or not it was effective is for Heartland to decide.

Protests: Starting Saturday, protestors of the NATO conference began hitting the streets of Chicago. Several stayed on to protest Heartland. A few conference attendees, including Lord Christopher

Monckton and Marc Morano, walked to the protestors to engage them in a discussion. They refused. Monckton made quite a show at counting the protestors, all 47(?). At least some carried a sign to which all can agree: "Climate Change Is Real."

Conference Videos: Videos of the speeches and from the conference are being posted on the web site: <http://climateconferences.heartland.org/iccc7/> Extensive coverage by the Canada Sun News is found at: <http://blog.heartland.org/2012/05/excellent-sun-news-network-coverage-of-heartlands-seventh-international-climate-conference/>

EPA Testimony: On Thursday, the EPA held the only public hearings on its proposed new rules, "Carbon Pollution Standards on New Power Plants." One hearing was in Chicago and one was in Washington. The Washington hearing was packed with environmental groups, all claiming that coal-fired power plants should be closed down for reasons of public health. A man-of-the-cloth testified that the power plants of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) endanger the health of those living in nearby cities. One wonders if he has an understanding of public health conditions in the southern Appalachian Mountains before there was a TVA.

Though not expecting any positive results from the EPA, Ken Haapala represented SEPP. He pointed out that the proposed rules are based on the EPA's faulty finding that greenhouse gases endanger public health and welfare, which is currently being litigated (Endangerment Finding). Further, the endangerment finding is based on predictions from computer models that have never been validated and verified; thus are speculative. The models are failing because they did not predict the current trend of no warming.

Submitted with the testimony is a table stating the level of understanding of the global temperature forcing factors considered by the IPCC models, from IPCC-AR4. According to the table, the level of understanding of 11 of the 16 forcing factors considered in the models is low to very low. Given the great uncertainty of the inputs to the models, no high level of certainty can be attributed to the products of the models.

Also, the testimony pointed out that the EPA Inspector General has found that EPA failed to perform an independent analysis of the science, as required under the Data Quality Act, and it even failed to consult its own Science Advisory Board. All three NIPCC reports were submitted for the record.

Almost surprisingly, one gentleman approached Haapala after his testimony. Apparently a retired Army colonel, this gentleman stated he had never heard anyone articulately question the science. During the ensuing discussion it became evident the man was fairly well read. This discussion underlined the importance of the work of Heartland and the need to communicate with the public.

Number of the Week: \$2.575 Billion US. Last week TWTW stated that a study from the Congressional Research Service to Senator Inhofe reported that United States government is spending \$68.4 Billion on Climate Change Activities from Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 to FY 2012. Of this amount a total of \$2.575 Billion is classified under "Global Climate Change Initiative (International)." The United States is a major source of funding for the IPCC and associated elaborate international conferences, such as the upcoming Rio+20.

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ARTICLES:

For the numbered articles below please see this week's TWTW at: www.sepp.org. The articles are at the end of the pdf.

1. Notes for the Heartland Institute Conference Speech

By Václav Klaus, President Czech Republic. May 21, 2012 [H/t WUWT]
<http://www.klaus.cz/clanky/3104>

2. Letter to NASA Administrator Charles Bolden

By 41 former NASA astronauts, scientists and senior administrators. May 11, 2012
<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/05/22/nasa-astronauts-announce-second-letter-to-nasa-at-heartland-conference/#more-64104>

3. Scientific Method and Climate Change

NZ Climate Truth Newsletter No 294
By Vincent Gray, May 25, 2012

4. The Market-Driven Energy Revolution

Prices more than policy are driving the U.S. boom in oil and natural gas production.
By Joel Kurtzman, WSJ, May 21, 2012
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304019404577416622669828522.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0

5. Franken-energy can't survive on its own

Dr. Charles Battig, Letter, Richmond Times Dispatch, May 23, 2012
<http://www2.timesdispatch.com/news/letters-to-the-editor/2012/may/23/tdopin01-letters-to-the-editor-ar-1934843/>

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NEWS YOU CAN USE:

Climategate Continued

Climategate Continues

Will a penalty be called for Keith Briffa's excessively curved hockey stick?
By Andrew Montford & Harold Ambler, National Review, May 24, 2012 [H/t GWPF]
<http://www.nationalreview.com/articles/300877/climategate-continues-andrew-montford#>
[SEPP Comment: A clear discussion of the withholding of data to hide the decline – tree ring data show no significant increase in temperatures during the latter part of the 20th century.]

Suppression of Scientific Inquiry

Why Scientists Have Squandered Public Trust

By Steven Hayward, Power Line, May 24, 2012 [H/t GWPF]
<http://www.powerlineblog.com/archives/2012/05/why-scientists-have-squandered-public-trust.php>

Challenging the Orthodoxy

Deal with climate reality as it unfolds

Policymakers have quietly given up trying to cut -carbon dioxide emissions
By Bob Carter, Financial Post, May 23, 2012 [H/t ICECAP]
<http://opinion.financialpost.com/2012/05/23/deal-with-climate-reality-as-it-unfolds/>

Lamb's science to the slaughter

By Verity Jones, ICECAP, May 22, 2012
http://icecap.us/index.php/go/joes-blog/lambs_science_to_the_slaughter1/
[SEPP Comment: A look into the capture of Climatic Research Unit by the "blame humans first" crowd.]

Climate Change of the IPCC is Daylight Robbery

By Tim Ball, A Different Perspective, May 23, 2012

<http://drtimball.com/2012/climate-change-of-the-ipcc-is-daylight-robberyclimate-change-of-the-ipcc-is-daylight-robbery/>

Premonitions of the Fall (in temperature)

By David Archibald, WUWT, May 20, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/05/20/premonitions-of-the-fall-in-temperature/#more-63946>

[SEPP Comment: Climate change knowledge from the past – ignored in the present.]

Sceptic at the Herald [Sydney, AU]

By Des Moore, Quadrant, May 21, 2012

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2012/05/sceptic-at-the-herald>

Each weekend the Sydney Morning Herald's News Review poses a question and invites answers from four people; most recently they asked a climate sceptic to take part.

Defending the Orthodoxy

1,000 years of climate data confirms Australia's warming

By Staff Writers, Melbourne, Australia (SPX), May 24, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/1000_years_of_climate_data_confirms_Australia_warming_999.html

[SEPP Comment: From the Little Ice Age?]

A viable clean-energy bill at last?

Editorial, Washington Post, May 19, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-viable-clean-energy-bill-at-last/2012/05/19/gIAhILcbU_story.html

[SEPP Comment: According to Senator Inhofe this shall not pass.]

Fracking is not the answer to energy crisis, UK Minister admits, as he orders shale gas survey

Ed Davey, the Lib Dem Energy Minister, has hit out at his Tory colleagues for suggesting that fracking for shale gas will solve Britain's fuel crisis.

By Louise Gray, Telegraph, UK, May 25, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/earthnews/9290026/Fracking-is-not-the-answer-to-energy-crisis-UK-Minister-admits-as-he-orders-shale-gas-survey.html>

[SEPP Comment: Shale gas is a plot to undermine "investment" in off-shore wind power – an investment in an extremely expensive source of electricity that will produce meager returns to the public.]

The Heartland Affair

Climate Change Conference marks progress for realists

By Rick Moran, American Thinker, May 25, 2012 [H/t John Dunn]

http://www.americanthinker.com/printpage/?url=http://www.americanthinker.com/blog/2012/05/climate_change_conference_marks_progress_for_realists.html

The Climate Change Debate: Where Are We Now?

The Heartland Institute's climate change conference highlighted progress and issued challenges to the skeptical community.

By Rick Moran, PJMedia, May 24, 2012

<http://pjmedia.com/blog/the-climate-change-debate-where-are-we-now/>

Questioning the Orthodoxy

Death ray: Global warming will kill over 150,000 by 2099

By Paul Bedard, Washington Examiner, May 24, 2012

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/politics/washington-secrets/2012/05/death-ray-global-warming-will-kill-over-150000-2099/649276>

Questioning European Green

UK proposes energy market overhaul to boost nuclear

By Staff Writers, London (AFP), May 22, 2012

http://www.nuclearpowerdaily.com/reports/UK_proposes_energy_market_overhaul_to_boost_nuclear_999.html

The Deepening Crisis of Europe's Climate Policy

By Benny Peiser, EUCLERS, May 17, 2012

<http://thegwpc.org/opinion-pros-a-cons/5741-benny-peiser-the-deepening-crisis-of-europes-climate-policy.html>

Power shift begins to move German industry

By Staff Writers, WNN, May 18, 2012

http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/NP_Power_shift_begins_to_move_German_industry_1805122.html

Leaked Strategy Paper: EU Plans To Phase Out Green Energy Subsidies

By Hendrik Kafsack, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, May 19, 2012

<http://thegwpc.org/international-news/5761-leaked-strategy-paper-eu-plans-to-phase-out-green-energy-subsidies.html>

The economic cost of the expansion of renewable energy could become prohibitively expensive. Subsidies in the EU for solar and wind power should be phased out as quickly as possible. That is what the European Commission says in an internal draft strategy paper that EU Energy Commissioner, Günther Oettinger, will present in Brussels early next month.

Expanding the Orthodoxy

Andre Kuipers: world ambassador

By Staff Writers, Paris (ESA) May 19, 2012

http://www.spacemart.com/reports/Andre_Kuipers_world_ambassador_999.html

[SEPP Comment: World ambassador for the WWF. Is WWF (formerly the World Wildlife Fund) a sovereign state?]

Can the US Military Afford More Biofuels?

By Geoffrey Styles, Energy Tribune, May 25, 2012

<http://www.energytribune.com/articles.cfm/10750/Can-the-US-Military-Afford-More-Biofuels?>

Problems within the Orthodoxy

U.N. Stalemate Risks Unraveling Durban Climate Deal: EU

By Ben Garside and Nina Chestney, Reuters, May 22, 2012 [H/t Hugh Sharman]

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/05/22/us-un-climate-idUSBRE84L0S520120522>

China hits back at claims it is blocking climate talks

By Staff Writers, Bonn (AFP) May 24, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/China_hits_back_at_claims_it_is_blocking_climate_talks_999.html

Climate talks risk sinking 'like Titanic'

By Nina Chestney, Reuters, May 25, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.iol.co.za/scitech/science/environment/climate-talks-risk-sinking-like-titanic-1.1304717>

[SEPP Comment: Efforts for a Kyoto II appear to be failing. It is time to pull the plug.]

Funding Fights

No money for hard physics, but plenty for climate science

By Kenneth P. Green, American, May 23, 2012

<http://blog.american.com/2012/05/no-money-for-hard-physics-but-plenty-for-climate-science/>

The “well funded” climate business – follow the money

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, May 19, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/05/19/the-well-funded-climate-business-follow-the-money/>

[SEPP Comment: Good chart on US government funding from 1989 to 2009.]

Seeking a Common Ground

Time varying trend in global mean surface temperature

By Judith Curry, Climate Etc, May 23, 2012

<http://judithcurry.com/2012/05/23/time-varying-trend-in-global-mean-surface-temperature-3/>

[SEPP Comment: Curry’s view of three competing hypotheses.]

Communicating Better to the Public – Exaggerate, or be Vague?

Pollution teams with thunderclouds to warm atmosphere

By Staff Writers, Richland WA (SPX), May 25, 2012

http://www.terraviva.com/reports/Pollution_teams_with_thunderclouds_to_warm_atmosphere_999.html

[SEPP Comment: The article does not define pollution which may include naturally occurring dust.]

Climate scientists say they have solved riddle of rising sea

By Staff Writers, Paris (AFP), May 20, 2012

http://www.terraviva.com/reports/Climate_scientists_say_they_have_solved_riddle_of_rising_sea_999.html

[SEPP Comment: According to the article, the IPCC report on sea level rise did not consider ice melt from glaciers, Greenland and Antarctica.]

Changing Climate

Are The Tropics Expanding?

By David Whitehouse, The Observatory, May 24, 2012

<http://thegwppf.org/the-observatory/5798-are-the-tropics-expanding.html>

[SEPP Comment: Questioning a pair of papers stating an expansion of the tropics is due to ozone and carbon black. Historically, the monsoon rains once fell upon the Sahara. Would it not be appropriate to assess the current explanation in light of climate history?]

New Paper “Recent Northern Hemisphere Tropical Expansion Primarily Driven By Black Carbon And Tropospheric Ozone” By Allen Et Al 2012

By Roger Pielke, Sr, Pielke Climate Science, May 21, 2012

<http://pielkeclimatesci.wordpress.com/2012/05/21/recent-northern-hemisphere-tropical-expansion-primarily-driven-by-black-carbon-and-tropospheric-ozone-by-allen-et-al-2012/>

Study: Geologic methane seeping from thawing cryosphere

By Marmian Grimes, U. of Alaska, May 21, 2012 [H/t GWPPF]

<http://www.uafnews.com/headlines/study-geologic-methane-seeping-from-thawing-cryosphere>

Changing Seas

Man-made sea level rises are due to global adjustments

By Frank Lansner, edited by Jo Nova, her blog, May 25, 2012

<http://joannenova.com.au/2012/05/man-made-sea-level-rises-are-due-to-global-adjustments/#more-21413>

New Study by WHOI Scientists Provides Baseline Measurements of Carbon in Arctic Ocean

By Staff Writers, Woods Hole MA (SPX), May 25, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/New_Study_by_WHOI_Scientists_Provides_Baseline_Measurements_of_Carbon_in_Arctic_Ocean_999.html

Seagrasses Can Store as Much Carbon as Forests

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), May 24, 2012

http://www.spacedaily.com/reports/Seagrasses_Can_Store_as_Much_Carbon_as_Forests_999.html

[SEPP Comment: Not a surprise for divers in kelp beds.]

Agriculture Issues & Fear of Famine

Food security remains an important issue

By Martin Livermore, Scientific Alliance, May 24, 2012

<http://www.scientific-alliance.org/scientific-alliance-newsletter/food-security-remains-important-issue>

[SEPP Comment: Sustainable agriculture will be a theme at Rio + 20. How many in northern Europe and North America would be willing to be reduced to the diets of their great grandparents which was only foods produced locally? In the winter, the diet was meager – home canned goods and cold weather foods such as roots and cabbage. Forget fresh fruits and vegetables, a recent innovation thanks to transportation.]

Cap-and-Trade and Carbon Taxes

Cap and trade for U.S. water

Lubos Motl, Reference Frame, May 19, 2012

<http://motls.blogspot.com/2012/05/cap-and-trade-for-us-water.html#more>

EPA and other Regulators on the March

FERC Issues Policy on Advising EPA on MATS Compliance Extensions

By Staff Writers, Power News, May 24, 2012

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/4684.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2450308&hq_l=12&hq_v=5e660500d0

Will the Feds Kill America's Future Under a Tombstone of Senseless Regulations?

By Marita Noon, Energy Tribune, May 22, 2012

<http://www.energytribune.com/articles.cfm/10719/Will-the-Feds-Kill-Americas-Future-Under-a-Tombstone-of-Senseless-Regulations?>

[SEPP Comment: Some government regulators have pronounced that poison ivy is to be protected (personal experience).]

Energy Issues – Non-US

EU sanctions on Iran to benefit oil majors: Moody's

By Yadullah Hussain, Financial Post, May 22, 2012

http://business.financialpost.com/2012/05/22/eu-sanctions-on-iran-to-benefit-oil-majors-moodys/?_lsa=98968a53

How Big Oil Benefits From Global Warming Alarmism

By Larry Bell, Forbes, May 22, 2012

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/larrybell/2012/05/22/how-big-oil-benefits-from-global-warming-alarmism/>

As Canada mulls national energy strategy, Asia may look elsewhere for oil, gas

By Jameson Berkow, Financial Post, May 23, 2012

http://business.financialpost.com/2012/05/23/pipelines-politics-and-price-driving-canadas-energy-sector-pwc/?_lsa=a643f026

“The Chinese in particular have been kind of awe-struck in a negative way by how long it takes to build infrastructure in Canada,”

[SEPP Comment: It is not the time involved to build, but the time involved to get the governmental approvals to build.]

Energy Issues -- US

Obama wants the Electric Reliability Corporation to stop assessing electric reliability

By Alec Rawls, WUWT, May 22, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/05/22/obama-wants-the-electric-reliability-corporation-to-stop-assessing-electric-reliability/#more-63670>

America's Oil Boom Gets Louder In Alaska

Editorial, IBD, May 25, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/article/612803/201205251837/america-awash-in-oil-can-achieve-energy-independence.htm>

CO2 Fool's Errand

By Donn Dears, Power for USA, May 21, 2012

<http://dddusmma.wordpress.com/2012/05/21/co2-fools-errand/>

Oil and Natural Gas – the Future or the Past?

Natural gas producers in survival mode

By Yadullah Hussain, Financial Post, May 22, 2012

http://business.financialpost.com/2012/05/18/natural-gas-producers-in-survival-mode/?_lsa=15e80b76

[SEPP Comment: A graph showing the great disparity in natural gas prices around the world.]

Bakken 2? Oil Prosperity Comes to South Kansas; Could Be Largest Economic Impact in State History

By Mark Perry, Carpe Diem, May 24, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://mjperry.blogspot.com/2012/05/bakken-2-oil-boom-comes-to-s-kansas.html>

Oil boom strikes Kansas

By Blake Ellis, CNMMoney, May 23, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://money.cnn.com/2012/05/23/pf/america-boomtown-kansas/>

One Reason Why Oil Prices Will Remain Stable: U.S. Production Reached a 14-Year High in February

By Mark Perry, Carpe Diem, May 24, 2012 [H/t Timothy Wise]

<http://mjperry.blogspot.com/2012/05/why-oil-prices-will-remain-stable.html>

Will LNG Exports Rescue the North American Natural Gas Market?

By Pavel Molchanov & Alex Morris, Energy Tribune, May 21, 2012

<http://www.energytribune.com/articles.cfm/10703/Will-LNG-Exports-Rescue-the-North-American-Natural-Gas-Market?>

[SEPP Comment: Four years ago the question was will LNG imports save the US natural gas market?]

Fracking: A Tale of Two States

By Sterling Burnett, National Review, May 23, 2012 [H/t Cooler Heads]

<http://www.nationalreview.com/planet-gore/300847/fracking-tale-two-states-sterling-burnett#>

Return of King Coal?

Coal is here to stay: Denial doesn't work

By Frank Clemente, Energy Facts Weekly, May 22, 2012

<http://us1.campaign-archive2.com/?u=29bc7d5d85828d574f86c157a&id=1716517549&e=>

Nuclear Energy and Fears

Politics and the Nation's Next Nuclear Plant (Georgia Power's boondoggle under construction)

By Jim Clarkson, Master Resource, May 23, 2012

<http://www.masterresource.org/2012/05/politics-and-vogtle-boondoggle/#more-20090>

[SEPP Comment: A provocative post on the first new nuclear plant under construction in over thirty years (Westinghouse AP1000). The post emphasizes the difference between a regulated utility and a company in a competitive market. A regulated utility does not necessarily have an incentive to reduce costs – there are no cost savings to be passed on to shareholders in the form of profits.]

Nuclear Industry Taking It on the Chin in States Across US

By Staff Writers, Washington DC (SPX), May 24, 2012

http://www.nuclearpowerdaily.com/reports/Nuclear_Industry_Taking_It_on_the_Chin_in_States_Across_US_999.html

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Solar and Wind

U.S. Slaps Substantial Tariffs on Chinese PV Producers, Exporters

By Staff Writers, Power News, May 24, 2012

http://www.powermag.com/POWERnews/4679.html?hq_e=el&hq_m=2450308&hq_l=5&hq_v=5e66050d0

[SEPP Comment: More on the solar wars.]

China says US violates WTO on renewable energy

By Staff Writers, Beijing (AFP), May 24, 2012

http://www.solardaily.com/reports/China_says_US_violates_WTO_on_renewable_energy_999.html

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Energy -- Other

Billions For Climate, Not One More Cent For Defense

Editorial, IBD, May 18, 2012

<http://news.investors.com/article/612092/201205181900/defense-billions-to-fight-climate-change-.htm>

[SEPP Comment: The actual cost of the biofuel is about \$27 per gallon. It replaces a fuel that costs about \$4 per gallon – the cost of the blend is about \$16 per gallon.]

Alternative, Green (“Clean”) Vehicles

Tesla to launch electric sedan in US on June 22

By Staff Writers, San Francisco (AFP), May 22, 2012

[SEPP Comment: On the base model the battery options raise the price from \$49,900 to \$59,900 to \$69,900. A \$49,900 auto is hardly an affordable car.]

Huge subsidies give American taxpayers high-voltage shocks

By Mark Perry, Sacramento Bee, May 24, 2012

<http://www.sacbee.com/2012/05/24/4513475/huge-subsidies-give-american-taxpayers.html>

Carbon Schemes

New research centre could hold key to £190bn of oil

By Frank Urquhart, Scotsman, May 24, 2012 [H/t GWPF]

<http://www.scotsman.com/news/environment/new-research-centre-could-hold-key-to-190bn-of-oil-1-2311985>

[SEPP Comment: The use of carbon dioxide to extract more oil from wells is established. But this appears to be a program of crippling development of new oil sources with highly questionable projects such as Carbon Capture and Storage.]

Review of Recent Scientific Articles by NIPCC

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

More Floods for Central Europe in a Warming World?

Reference: Stewart, M.M., Grosjean, M., Kuglitsch, F.G., Nussbaumer, S.U. and von Gunten, L. 2011. Reconstructions of late Holocene paleofloods and glacier length changes in the Upper Engadine, Switzerland (ca. 1450 BC-AD 420). *Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology* 311: 215-223.
<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/may/22may2012a2.html>

Trees and Shrubs at Their Poleward Limits in a Warming World

Reference: Capers, R.S. and Stone, A.D. 2011. After 33 years, trees more frequent and shrubs more abundant in northeast U.S. alpine community. *Arctic, Antarctic, and Alpine Research* 43: 495-502.
<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/may/22may2012a3.html>

[SEPP Comment: A significant portion of the greening may be due to carbon dioxide enrichment, not warming.]

The Fate of Amazonian Forests in a CO₂-Enriched and Warmer World

Reference: Lapola, D.M., Oyama, M.D. and Nobre, C.A. 2009. Exploring the range of climate biome projections for tropical South America: The role of CO₂ fertilization and seasonality. *Global Biogeochemical Cycles* 23: 10.1029/2008GB003357.
<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/may/23may2012a3.html>

The Net Mass Balance of the Community of Karakoram Glaciers

Reference: Copland, L., Sylvestre, T., Bishop, M.P., Shroder, J.F., Seong, Y.B., Owen, L.A., Bush, A. and Kamp, U. 2011. Expanded and recently increased glacier surging in the Karakoram. *Arctic, Antarctic, and Alpine Research* 43: 503-516.
<http://www.nipccreport.org/articles/2012/may/23may2012a1.html>

[SEPP Comment: Positive mass ice balances drive glacier surges –the ice melt observers often fail to comment on the ice balance.]

Health, Energy, and Climate

Low-dose study finds no effects

By Staff Writers, WNN, May 16, 2012

http://www.world-nuclear-news.org/RS_Low_dose_study_finds_no_effects_1605121.html

Mice exposed to low-dose radiation for an extended period showed no signs of DNA damage, said a study from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) that challenges existing radiation guidelines.

[SEPP Comment: Such studies go to the foundation of the EPA linear, no threshold model.]

Regulators' Anti-Chemical Smear Campaigns Will Breed An Unsafe World

By Angela Logomasini, Forbes, May 23, 2012 [H/t ACHS]

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/realspin/2012/05/23/regulators-anti-chemical-smear-campaigns-will-breed-an-unsafe-world/>

Environmental Industry

Environmentalism and the Decline of the West

By Walter Starck, Quadrant, May 17, 2012

<http://www.quadrant.org.au/blogs/doomed-planet/2012/05/environmentalism-and-the-decline-of-the-west>

Most of the leading Western Nations are now experiencing ageing populations, declining industries, chronic trade imbalances, bloated government, punitive taxation, high levels of personal debt, unsustainable government deficits and a rapidly metastasizing regulatory regime that is an increasing impediment to any productive activity.

Other Scientific News

UF study finds logging of tropical forests needn't devastate environment

By Staff Writers, Gainesville FL (SPX), May 22, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/UF_study_finds_logging_of_tropical_forests_neednt_devastate_environment_999.html

Other News that May Be of Interest

2012 Annular Eclipse

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, May 20, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/05/20/2012-annular-eclipse/#more-64004>

[SEPP Comment: Sunning photo from the ground.]

'Natural causes' blamed for Peru dolphin deaths

By Staff Writers, Lima (AFP), May 22, 2012

http://www.terradaily.com/reports/Natural_causes_blamed_for_Peru_dolphin_deaths_999.html

[SEPP Comment: To ward of criticism the report should have been specific as to cause.]

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BELOW THE BOTTOM LINE:

Kenji gets mail, but where's the science?

By Anthony Watts, WUWT, May 24, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/05/24/kenji-gets-mail-but-where-s-the-science/>

[SEPP Comments: Kenji Watts has the papers to be a member of the Union of Concerned Scientists. "The Union of Concerned Scientists is the leading science-based nonprofit working for a healthy environment and a safer world." But can a dog respond to its plea for money?]

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ARTICLES:

1. Notes for the Heartland Institute Conference Speech

By Václav Klaus, President Czech Republic. May 21, 2012 [H/t WUWT]

<http://www.klaus.cz/clanky/3104>

Many thanks for the invitation and for giving me the opportunity to address this distinguished audience. I am not for the first time in Chicago. It is also not for the first time that I am attending a conference organized by the Heartland Institute. But it is for the first time I am with Heartland here in Chicago.

Some of you know that I came to Chicago for the NATO summit. Yesterday and today I was supposed to speak about what to do in Afghanistan, how to keep NATO going in an era of overall indebtedness and budgetary cuts, and about NATO-Russia relations. I am glad to tell you that **we did not discuss the global warming**. It seems that NATO does not consider global warming to be a security threat. But my main preoccupation in the last days was NATO and I am afraid I am not sufficiently prepared to make a serious contribution to your conference. Let me make at least a few remarks I consider relevant now.

The word "now" is important. On Friday evening I attended a music festival in Prague and during the break I mentioned to a group of people that I go to Chicago, among other things to speak at this conference. Their reaction was: "Global warming? Isn't it already over? Does anybody care about it?". That is how they see it. Maybe, it is a European perspective.

Let me, therefore, start by **thanking you for keeping the global warming issue alive**. This is an important achievement in a moment when it has already become half-forgotten. It has not happened accidentally, it was and is planned. It is a part of a carefully prepared tactic of global warming alarmists how to – once and for all – win their case. In the past two decades, they tried to do the opposite. They wanted to be as loud as possible **to arouse our fears**, now – when the whole issue becomes more and more suspicious – it is in their interest to stop any public discussion. This is the reason why they try to pretend that “the science is settled”, that the debate is over. We should not let them do it.

Some of you may have a different experience. You may feel to be permanently under a very aggressive attack, but we have to admit that something has changed. Last time I was asked to speak about global warming was in July 2011 in Australia. Of course, one possible explanation is that the audiences are no longer interested in my views on this topic (which is something I am ready to accept); the other explanation is that this experience of mine is not unique. The topics have undoubtedly changed. I am more often asked to speak about the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis than our global warming. It may also be the symptom of the victory of global warming fundamentalists who try to make the global warming debate forgotten. That gives this conference a special importance.

The undeniable fact is that almost from one day to the next the global warming debate ceased to be fashionable. It disappeared from the headlines. It may weaken the position of the global warming fundamentalists but it makes it more difficult for us, the “deniers” or “skeptics”, as they call us, to motivate people to think about this issue and to openly and politically express their views about the irrational, human freedom curtailing, human prosperity undermining measures and policies introduced by the political establishments in most of the countries of the world in the last two decades, not to speak about the measures prepared for the future. We have to keep repeating that our planet is determined not only by anthropogenic influences but dominantly by long term exogenous and endogenous natural processes and that most of them are beyond any human control.

The alarmism has subsided, they want to make it “low profile”. Declarations such as the one in Dr. Pachauri’s manifesto from 1989 that “global warming is the greatest crisis ever faced collectively by humankind” are no longer popular. The former radical alarmists, even the scientists connected with the IPCC, changed their tactic. More and more often we hear carefully worded statements that “some environmentalists, supported by the media, exaggerated the conclusions that had been carefully formulated by scientists”. We know that they were not “carefully formulated”. These “conclusions” were very easy to reformulate.

Again, I see this development as a mixed blessing. The earlier apocalyptic warnings succeeded in creating the overall belief in the undeniable existence of a dangerous, man-made global warming. This belief has become deeply rooted in the heads (and hearts) of people all over the world. I agree with Professor Plimer when he sees the main danger in the fact that the children have already been indoctrinated. For that reason we have to keep the global warming debate alive.

How to make a change? I dare say that science per se will not make it regardless of its achievements. Serious scientific research continues bringing new and new pieces of knowledge almost on a daily basis but it has not brought and will not bring any decisive breakthrough in a public debate on this topic in any direction. That is not the role of science or of one scientific discipline. Climate is a complex system which means that – in spite of the dreams of believers in general systems theory – any scientific discovery concerning this topic will always be only a partial one. The course of the world-wide global warming debate more or less confirms this elementary methodological argument.

Can a decisive change come as a result of new empirical data? I doubt it as well. **It is evident that the current temperature data confirm neither the GWD alarmist and apocalyptic views, nor their quasi-scientific hypotheses about the exclusivity of relationship between CO₂ and temperature.** The world has not warmed up very much since the end of the last century but a period of twelve years is too

short to shatter the whole carefully built edifice of the GWD. We shouldn't forget that we have been arguing in the past that a century in climatology is too short to prove the global warming as a long term trend. That is why, to my great regret, we have to – symmetrically – accept that a decade is not sufficient to do the opposite.

There is no doubt that most of the true-believers in the GWD remain undisturbed in their views. Some individuals leave the bandwagon (the most recent well-known case is James Lovelock) but those people who have vested interests (and there are many of them now) together with the men and women who innocently and naively sympathize with any idea which is against freedom, capitalism and markets are still “marching on”.

Discussing technicalities is not sufficient, because the supporters of the GWD are not interested in them. We are not dealing with people who are authentically interested in science and in incremental changes in temperature and their causes. For them, the temperature data are just an instrument in their plans to change the world, to suppress human freedom, to bring people back to underdevelopment. **Their ideas are the ideas of ideologues**, not of scientists or climatologists. Data and sophisticated theories will never change their views.

We have to accept that **they have succeeded in establishing the religion of environmentalism as the official religion of Western society**, as the religion which asks for a radical transformation of the whole Western civilization. We – at least some of us – have to play with them in the arena chosen by them.

There are probably more and more people around us now who do not buy the alarmism of the GWD but we have to accept that they are not sufficiently motivated to do anything against it. And they don't know how. Politicians and political activists, bureaucrats in the national and international organizations, and representatives of the subsidized businesses are organized and due to it are able to push this doctrine further ahead because to do so is in their narrowly defined interests. Ordinary people are not organized and do not have politically formulated interests. They are also not helped by the existing political parties because these parties are not raising this issue either. They are already – almost all of them – more or less captured by the Greens.

To sum up my today's simple message: empirical data are important; scientific discoveries are important; the disclosure of malpractices in the IPCC and other “bastions” of the GWD are important; but we have to take part in the undergoing ideological battle. The subtitle of my five years old book was “What is Endangered: Climate or Freedom?” There is no doubt that it is all about freedom. We should keep that in mind.

Václav Klaus, the Heartland Institute's Seventh International Conference on Climate Change, Chicago, Hotel Chicago Hilton, May 21, 2012

2. Letter to NASA Administrator Charles Bolden

By 41 former NASA astronauts, scientists and senior administrators. May 11, 2012

<http://wattsupwiththat.com/2012/05/22/nasa-astronauts-announce-second-letter-to-nasa-at-heartland-conference/#more-64104>

May 11, 2012

The Honorable Charles Bolden, Jr. NASA Administrator
NASA Headquarters
Washington, D.C. 20546-0001

Dear Charlie:

In our letter of March 28, 2012, we, the undersigned, respectfully requested that NASA and the Goddard Institute for Space Studies (GISS) refrain from including unproven remarks in public releases and websites.

On April 11th, Dr. Waleed Abdalati responded, holding that: “As an agency, NASA does not draw conclusions and issue ‘claims’ about research findings.”

Eight days later, at a senate hearing, Dr. Abdalati, did just that, concluding that Sea-Level rise within the next 87 years projects within a range of 0.2 meters to 2 meters, with lower ranges less likely while “the highest values are based on warmest of the temperature scenarios commonly considered for the remainder of the 21st century.” Abdalati added: “The consequences of a 1 meter rise in sea level by the end of this century would be very significant in terms of human well-being and economics, and potentially global socio-political stability.”

The range and imprecision of this conclusion is astounding!

“Commonly considered?” Is this science by poll? If hard data points to a provable rise, it should be stated with its probability. Can you imagine one of your predecessors, Dr. Thomas Paine, declaring, “Our Apollo 11 Lunar Lander’s target is the Sea of Tranquility, but we may make final descent within a range that includes Crater Clavius”?

We are not trying to stifle discourse, but undisciplined commentary, lacking in precision, is wholly inappropriate when NASA’s name and reputation is attached.

This letter should end the discussion, as a protracted discourse on this topic is not in NASA’s interest, but a commitment from you to equal or exceed the agency’s reputation for careful reliance upon rigorous science and accurate data most certainly is!

Join us, please, in encouraging your colleagues to achieve the level of excellence the world has come to expect from America’s National Aeronautics and Space Administration!

Waiting to do so is not an option!

[signed 41]

PS Waiting to send was not an option either –we have fewer signatures than the first, as not everyone was reachable and only one opted out.

3. Scientific Method and Climate Change

NZ Climate Truth Newsletter No 294

By Vincent Gray, May 25, 2012

The so-called "science" that is currently practised by many climate sciences violates most of the principles of the scientific method

The scientific method begins with an hypothesis. "Observations" are then made to try and confirm the hypothesis ...As Karl Popper has pointed out, the main object of an observation is the attempt to falsify an hypothesis. If it succeeds in doing so, the hypothesis is false, but if it fails, it means the observation is compatible with the hypothesis but does not prove that it is right..

But first, it is necessary to confirm that the observation is correctly reported.

I was a forensic scientist for a number of years and I appeared in court on behalf of the New Zealand police. Much effort was exercised to confirm any piece of evidence. When I gave my examination on a police exhibit I had to confirm that this was the item I received. The officer involved gave evidence that this was the item he removed from the crime scene. All evidence has to be checked. Hearsay evidence is not acceptable.

Many "observations" that are used in climate science do not have a known observer who can confirm the observation and many observations are not made by a person at all but by some instrument remote from the human "observer". The instrument may even apply some "correction" of amalgamation procedure which is not always revealed or justified.

A scientific observation is not valid unless it can be repeated by another, unbiased observer. When somebody recently announced the discovery of "cold fusion" there were immediate attempts to repeat the observation which falsified it.

It is not possible to repeat any observation on the climate. All observations are therefore unconfirmed and thus unreliable. If you wish to study climate science you have to abandon the scientific method altogether and seek some other means of making use of unreliable observations without expecting to prove any hypothesis.

The science of meteorology has had to face this limitation from the beginning. It has had to adopt an approach which is essentially unscientific, but which may be practically useful..

This approach is called "validation". In order to validate a hypothesis the observations must explain all observations that are considered to be reliable. If there are any that disagree they falsify the hypothesis unless the observations can be questioned. In order to be useful, the hypothesis must successfully predict a range of future observations to a satisfactory degree of accuracy. If this is successful, then the hypothesis can then be usefully employed over this range, but not outside it.

This technique has been adopted by traditional meteorology. It has developed a series of hypotheses about the behaviour of the climate based on measurements of air pressure, wind speed and direction, temperature, relative humidity, precipitation, sunshine hours, cloud formation and a range of other parameters. It is a system of cyclones, anticyclones, high and low air pressure, wind patterns, and precipitation, combined with diurnal and seasonal variations. It is noteworthy that these have not included an influence of atmospheric composition.. The results of the hypotheses which have failed to be falsified are the basis of weather forecasts which began locally, but which now cover the entire climate..

These forecasts, which are vital as a guide to our daily existence, are frequently wrong, and become less so over a fairly short period. There are many reasons progress has been relatively modest. The observations cannot be repeated, the system is extremely complex, many aspects of the climate are little understood, and much of the basic science is incomplete, A major problem is our poor understanding of the behaviour of fluids, whose performance over an extended period is so unpredictable that it is considered "chaotic"

The climate pseudo scientists start by throwing out all the scientific results that meteorologists have spent over 200 years accumulating. There is no air pressure, precipitation, wind movement, or cyclones and anticyclones any more. Instead everything now depends entirely on the property the meteorologists found to be useless, atmospheric composition. ..

They provide a so-called model of the climate which seems to violate most of the laws of physics.

It assumes that the earth is flat, the sun shines with constant intensity, day and night, that all energy exchanges are due to radiation, and the radiant energy entering equals that emerging.

The idea that the energy is currently "balanced" is essential to justify the claim that this idealised climate will be destroyed by increases in greenhouse gases.

There is no part of earth, at any time when input radiation equals output radiation and also never for the entire earth. Every geologist knows that the earth passes through many fluctuations of temperature, over every time scale.

The energy figures in the model are assumed to be constants, whereas each concept is in reality uncertain and variable over every time scale. The latest version of their model is actually unbalanced, with a positive surplus. This fact alone means that the greenhouse hypothesis is falsified from the start. You cannot even study a supposed "equilibrium with varying averages with large uncertainties.

The concealment of uncertainty pervades all the information about the climate. Every piece of "data" is treated as if it were a constant, when it is usually a multiple average that uses an arithmetic mean for populations of individual observations that are far from symmetrical or are so irregular that averages depend on scale and on start and end points. "Trends" are claimed from inadequately characterised "data" which vary unpredictable over time.

Even if their grossly oversimplified model were genuine, it could not comply with the first, or second laws of thermodynamics because the climate depends on an assumed constant energy supply from the sun, and thus resembles other similar systems like a refrigerator or the human body. It is a perpetual motion machine.

Models are "evaluated" by people with a conflict of interest, but never "validated". No effort is made to check whether they are capable of prediction.

The whole process is supported by governments, electorates, national scientific societies, and even by meteorologists.

It is about time that we returned to the genuine science of meteorology.

4. The Market-Driven Energy Revolution

Prices more than policy are driving the U.S. boom in oil and natural gas production.

By Joel Kurtzman, WSJ, May 21, 2012

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304019404577416622669828522.html?mod=ITP_opinion_0

Those who doubt that market forces still have the power to transform the world aren't paying attention to America's revitalized energy sector.

Four years ago, oil prices climbed to about \$145 a barrel world-wide. The impact on the U.S. economy was devastating. Consumers who paid between \$2.50 and \$3 for a gallon of gas in 2007 paid as much as \$5 a gallon in 2008. For many Americans, the high cost of commuting to and from work meant choosing between paying the mortgage or paying for gas. Many chose the latter.

But eventually prices did what they're supposed to do in a market economy—they prompted the development of new sources of oil as well as oil substitutes. Some companies began drilling new oil wells

using new technology including 3D seismic imaging and directional drilling. In 2002, when oil prices were in a trough, there were roughly 800 oil-drilling rigs operating in the U.S. Today, there are roughly 2,000. The last time we had that many rigs drilling for oil was 1985. In addition, energy companies went after and found more offshore oil, and far more "unconventional" oil from shale, tar sands and long-abandoned wells than most people thought possible.

The results of these efforts have been impressive. Since 2008, domestic oil production has increased 12%, while imported oil has fallen to 45% of total consumption from 61%. Four years ago, when prices were high, the U.S. was on track to spend nearly \$1 trillion on imported oil each year. Lower prices and falling demand mean we are likely to spend \$350 billion this year—still high, but falling.

Not surprisingly, companies also sought opportunities developing cheaper alternatives to oil. Chief among these fuels is natural gas, which is a cleaner fossil fuel than oil and coal. In 2008, estimates were that the U.S. had just 12 years of natural gas reserves left. Plans were being put in place to import liquefied natural gas from the Middle East, perhaps even Russia, to meet future demand.

But high energy prices prompted companies to develop new technologies. Hydraulic fracturing—drilling deep vertical wells then drilling horizontally to release natural gas from shale rock—was perfected. Because of that, natural gas reserves increased dramatically while prices fell. In 2008, natural gas sold for about \$12-\$14 per thousand cubic feet. Now it sells for about \$2 per thousand cubic feet. Instead of supplies lasting only 12 years, there is now sufficient natural gas for at least 100 years.

Rather than importing natural gas, the U.S. may begin exporting it. Since natural gas is sold in local rather than global markets, price differentials between countries are high. Average futures prices are about \$9.50 per thousand cubic feet in Europe and about \$16 per thousand feet in Asia, versus \$2 in the U.S. Pricing differences this big will make exporting natural gas lucrative, perhaps even balancing our perennially in-the-red trading account.

Right now, natural gas is so abundant and cheap that some worry the U.S. and Canada, which has large reserves north of those in the U.S. Midwest, may soon run out of storage capacity. Some companies have even announced plans to curtail drilling due to falling prices and oversupply.

But here the price-mechanism is again at work. Trucking companies and fleet operators, wanting to take advantage of low natural-gas prices, are looking into converting trucks from diesel to natural gas, cutting their fuel bills by half. Passing the bipartisan Natural Gas Act (HR1380 in the House and S1863 in the Senate) would facilitate and accelerate this process by providing tax credits for the cost of conversion and for building natural-gas fuel stations, increasing demand even further.

High energy prices have transformed the American energy landscape. A study released last December by the Congressional Research Service indicates that new oil and gas finds, combined with traditional sources of energy, including cheap-but-dirty coal, has transformed the U.S. from an energy has-been to a heavyweight. According to the CRS, total U.S. energy reserves now exceed those of all other countries, including those in the Middle East. The U.S. is so energy rich there's little to prevent us from achieving energy independence.

Prices more than policy are driving these remarkable changes. Other problems to be fixed, rising CO2 emissions, for example, will also yield to the indomitable pressure of price, if carbon is taxed. While Washington squabbled over which energy direction to take, and which energy bill to kill, the markets moved us in exactly the direction the country should go—toward cheap, plentiful energy.

Mr. Kurtzman is executive director of the Center for Accelerating Energy Solutions at the Milken Institute.

5. Franken-energy can't survive on its own

Dr. Charles Battig, Letter, Richmond Times Dispatch, May 23, 2012

<http://www2.timesdispatch.com/news/letters-to-the-editor/2012/may/23/tdopin01-letters-to-the-editor-ar-1934843/>

Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" is considered one of the first examples of science-fiction literature. Today, "franken-energy" — more commonly known as renewable energy — and large-scale, financially self-sustaining, renewable energy projects are modern-day examples of science-fiction.

Frankenstein's creation received its life-force via lightning. Franken-energy receives its life-force via political mandates and taxpayer funding. Shelly's monster needed recharges from the skies; renewable energy needs financial recharges from the government — it withers away if left to survive on its own. The monster has spawned some 37,000 job dependants, according to the American Wind Energy Association.

Ongoing attempts by trade groups and politicians to persuade Congress to renew the life-sustaining Production Tax Credit for wind power demonstrate that this creation is not cost-effective, and otherwise unable to survive. Decades of taxpayer funding have not produced viable offspring; success is repeatedly just another federal subsidy-cycle away.

Like a Frankenstein monster, the wind-turbine monster flays out blindly at birds, killing hundreds of thousands yearly. It scars the beauty of mountain tops, consumes vast quantities of natural resources, requires rest time and provides useful work a fraction of the time.

Frankenstein's creation met its fate at the hands of an outraged mob. The franken-energy is falling victim to enraged taxpayers, but it has friends in high places. President Barack Obama and Gov. Bob McDonnell include it in their "all of the above" energy menus. McDonnell upped the ante by dedicating \$500,000 for research and development in Virginia Wind Energy, even as Spanish wind-power giant Gamesa scrapped plans to build a wind-turbine test facility in Chesapeake Bay.

Fate has provided the Franken-energy creation with its own namesake protector. Minnesota Sen. Al Franken is a leading advocate.

Charles Battig,
President, Piedmont Chapter,
Virginia Scientists and Engineers for Energy and Environment.

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