

Global Warming Is Not About the Science

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The dirty secret is that global warming is driven more by the search for funding than the search for scientific truth. “Big science” was adrift in the early 1990s, like many other beneficiaries of the Cold War, and was desperate to sustain its federal funding. Global warming had all the key attributes of the next big cause. It could be used to frighten the politicians and the public, using threats of catastrophic consequences to extract billions of dollars for research to prevent it. The science was immature, and the door was wide open to all sorts of proposals and projects by scientists promising solutions. High-performance computers were the tools, and the projects promised to be long-term and career-sustaining. Getting funds was easy. As MIT Professor Lindzen has noted, “saving the planet” had a nice ring to it and seemed to portend big bucks at the end of the global warming rainbow.

By the early 1990s, there was a convergence between the proponents of big science and the left-oriented activist community. Many of the Left’s old myths and socialist dreams had collapsed with the demise of the Soviet Union, and many seized on global warming as another path to reining in Big Business and reducing the standard of living and comfort level of the average American. Global warming also offered another avenue for leftists to continue their “blame America first” campaign. Advocacy groups constantly reminded citizens that it is the U.S. that is largely to blame for greenhouse emissions. For example, a newly released study by Environmental Defense blames the U.S. for generating 25% of the world’s carbon dioxide and says that American cars and light trucks alone emit more carbon dioxide than almost all the other nations of the world combined. Environmental Defense says that driving a car, especially an SUV, is the most egregious sin one can commit from a pollution standpoint. Since Americans have demonstrated they won’t cut emissions on their own, big government will have to step in and impose curbs and controls on autos and industry in general. Clearly, advocacy groups and lobbyists had found a new hot-button issue to support their fund raising.

Global warming fanatics found powerful allies in the Democratic Party, and especially then Senator Al Gore. Government control and public opinion were the levers needed to implement the global warming

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agenda. Activists would need to capture key policy jobs in those federal agencies with science portfolios, like the Energy Department, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA). Once secured, these jobs would give activists control of the key levers of influence over the scientific community—research grants and federal funding of national labs and universities. They knew that they could always buy scientists who would turn out scientific studies and research reports that would help them shape and mold public opinion.

The Clinton/Gore Legacy

The Clinton/Gore victory in 1992 opened that door. President George H.W. Bush's refusal to personally attend the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, and his reluctance to accept binding agreements on carbon dioxide curbs gave the Clinton/Gore team another issue in their campaign to show that "President Bush was out of touch with the people and their daily concerns."

Once in power, Al Gore, a strident environmentalist, began to remake the government bureaucracy in his image. His life experience in Washington had taught him the value of the old Washington truism, "personnel is policy." He established a White House Climate Change Task Force and placed his former legislative aide, 29-year old Kathleen McGinty, in charge of a new White House Office on Environmental Policy. He put her on the National Security Council, the new National Economic Council, and the Domestic Policy Council as a symbol of the importance of environmental policy in the Clinton White House. McGinty would be in charge of seeding the government bureaucracies with "greens" and was reputed to have an enemies list of Bush holdovers. Former NASA chief scientist Robert Watson, a Gore favorite, became associate director in the White House Office of Science and Technology (OSTP). Gore brought in other "green" lawyers and lobbyists to populate the new White House positions.

He installed his former legislative director, Carol Browner, as the new EPA administrator in 1993. Under Browner, EPA became the central coordinator of the federal global warming campaign, dispensing funds through a variety of inter-agency committees and programs. At the Defense Department, the position of Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Environmental Security was established, and the CIA established a task force to apply national technical means (satellite collection platforms) to monitor world environmental issues. Tim Wirth, a former Democratic senator from Colorado, became Undersecretary for Global Affairs at the State Department. He led all U.S. negotiations on climate

change. As a senator, Wirth had proclaimed that it didn't matter if the science of global warming was right or wrong, the economic and environmental policies would be right for America.

Naysayers Not Wanted

The fate of Bush appointee William Happer, a highly respected Princeton physicist, is symptomatic of Gore's remaking of the bureaucracy. Happer had been asked to stay over until a new Assistant Secretary of Energy could be appointed, but he quickly ran afoul of Gore and his climate control group in the White House. Happer had initiated a research program to test the various ozone depletion theories then in vogue and had found that the empirical results were not matching the theory's predictions. When he told a House committee that "there probably has been some exaggeration of the dangers of ozone and global climate change," White House officials promptly fired him. Gore had already decided that ozone depletion would damage crops and increase the rate of skin cancer.

Robert Watson had predicted that an ozone hole would open up over Kennebunkport, ME, President Bush's vacation home. Happer had publicly ridiculed Watson's suggestion and so Happer was almost certainly on McGinty's enemies list. Happer, in a later interview, correctly identified the Clinton/Gore approach as "politically correct science." The huge amounts of funding made available by Clinton/Gore ensured that the new administration would get the "answers" on global warming it was seeking. Happer said that science was being turned on its head. Instead of science driving policy, policy now determined the results it wanted and then paid scientists to come up with them.

Also, at the Energy Department, a staff lawyer from the Natural Resources Defense Council, another Washington-based environmental advocacy group, became Secretary Hazel O'Leary's chief of staff and then went on to become an assistant secretary, with control of over \$1.3 billion annually in climate-change funding. The Energy Department doled out billions of dollars in global warming funding to its National Laboratories, which had convinced the department that many of its computer models used to develop nuclear weapons were applicable to climate modeling. In addition, the Department funded university research grants and scholarships in the various climate-change academic disciplines.

The largest Energy project is the Atmosphere Radiation Measurement (ARM) project, run by Scandia National Laboratory along with the other nuclear weapons design laboratories. The ARM program even has its own air force; it uses a fleet of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles

(UAVs) and propeller-driven aircraft to collect cloud data at three sites: Oklahoma, the western Pacific Ocean, and Alaska's North Shore. The Department recently signed an agreement with Australia to begin data collection at Darwin. Congressional skeptics have wondered what, if anything, these programs have to do with nuclear weapons, but they continue to fund them nonetheless.

Over its two terms, the Clinton administration pumped nearly \$20 billion into global warming science and technology initiatives. By 2002, the EPA website advertised that more than a billion dollars was still available for grants for the purpose of reducing greenhouse emissions.

Scaring the Public

As part of its campaign to mold public opinion, the EPA sponsored regional conferences throughout the United States to dramatize the potential impacts of climate change. In May 1999, for example, the EPA visited South Florida and the Florida Keys to warn local residents of the potential impacts for their region of global warming. Local EPA officials, area activists and outside speakers told attendees that global warming is real and that their area would be particularly hard hit. One local activist told the conference that global warming represents "the largest single threat to our planet that we know of, including a nuclear holocaust." A professor of environmental health from Columbia University predicted an outbreak of water-borne diseases like malaria as the sea level rises in the wake of global warming. A "hurricane expert" predicted a 50% increase in hurricanes in that year alone. (In fact, the number of hurricanes decreased in 1999 in comparison with past years.) Others predicted that the Everglades would disappear, as would safe drinking water and clean air.

Global warming advocates also had a reliable ally in the mainstream media. In most cases, the media simply report research findings and results handed to reporters in government news releases and interviews. The more provocative and alarming the reports, the more likely they are to find their way onto the front page. The Alaska report on the dramatic impact of warming was funded by NOAA, Department of Interior and National Science Foundation grants. Rarely do reporters challenge the "science," and rarer still do they present global warming as anything other than an accepted fact among scientists.

The media have helped create the false impression that the vast majority of scientists agree that global warming is a serious threat that calls for drastic action. Agreement with this seems to be a litmus test for Times reporters covering science. One such reporter, Kenneth

Chang, answered a question on the Times Internet site about global warming by saying that it's a complicated subject, but 97% of all scientists think it is real and is caused by CO₂ emissions. He said there are uncertainties in the science, but he admitted that he tries to write his articles on global warming from the majority viewpoint. Nevertheless, he had a good article in the Times last April that corrected the impression given by an earlier story by another reporter that global warming was affecting Antarctica. Chang reported that the interior of Antarctica is actually cooling, and he gave credit to the satellites that provided this information. Such news is rarely mentioned by the Times and other media.

