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Merchants of Doubt Deny Climate Change Connection to Hurricane Sandy

Many serious, thought-provoking post-mortems have ensued in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, which recently tore through the heart of the financial capital of the world. The disaster will cost the city roughly \$60 billion to repair, according to an Associated Press report.

Figures such as New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, former President Bill Clinton, writer and activist Bill McKibben, environmental reporter Mark Hertsgaard, and numerous others all have connected the dots between the tragedy in New York City and its exacerbation at the hands of climate change.

On the other side of the spectrum, no matter how bad the tragedy, it seems, climate change denial will continue apace by the "merchants of doubt." Hurricane Sandy was no exception this time around.

Patrick Michaels of the Koch-funded Cato Institute - who recently authored a report described by Greenpeace USA's Connor Gibson as a "Counterfeit Climate Report to Deceive Congress" - denied any connection between climate change and Sandy, going so far as to raise the specter of "global cooling."

"It's also consistent with a planet with colder temperatures as well as one with warmer ones," he told Andy Revkin of The New York Times. "More important, events like this are inevitable on a planet that has an ocean with the geography of the Atlantic (meaning a Gulf Stream-like feature), a large north-south continent on its western margin without a transverse mountain range to inhibit the merger of tropical warmth with polar cold, and four seasons in the temperate latitudes."

Revkin neglected to mention that Michaels told CNN in August 2010 that 40-percent of his salary comes straight from the coffers of the oil and gas industry, which fuels the climate change denial echo chamber. In similar fashion, back in 2006, Michaels denied any connection between climate change and Hurricane Katrina.

Marc Morano - a climate change denier who gleefully lauded President Barack Obama as "George W. Obama" for his inaction on tackling climate change in any meaningful way at last year's United Nations' COP17 in Durban - also inserted his own polemical take on Hurricane Sandy, stating:

These new 'Tabloid Climatology' claims by activists attempting to link any weather event to man-made global warming are disgusting. The 'new normal' for climate activists is their ever shifting claims as they morph the entire AGW argument to focus on extreme weather. They are exploiting any weather event to promote their religious like cause and a storm like Sandy is shamelessly used to gin up fear.

Fox News, as always, served as a key piece of the climate change denial machine's echo chamber. This time around it gave denier Joe Bastardi the megaphone on The Sean Hannity Show, where he denied any connection between climate change and Hurricane Sandy:

Let me tell you, this storm was long overdue...Get used to it along the east coast...We are in a perilous time because the Atlantic's warming, the Pacific's cold, it's the 1950's all over again. The next 5-10 years we're probably going to see several more storms along the eastern seaboard. It has nothing to do with global warming, it has everything to do with nature and then we'll go back to where we were in the '60s and '70s.

Above and beyond this trifecta denying any connection between Hurricane Sandy and climate change, Climate Depot has compiled a long list of statements from the denier world. Media Matters also showed that Fox News repeated the "no connection" trope on multiple occasions.

If one thing's for certain, Sandy has made evident that no climate change-amplified catastrophe is too tragic for the tobacco playbook team to deny the ongoing climate crisis.

Desmogblog (<http://s.tt/1rypS>)