

Opinion

TRENTONIAN EDITORIAL: Activist agenda taints science

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Until an unknown saboteur threw a wrench into it, the global-warming hysteria machinery worked like this:

-- The Climate Research Unit (CRU) at the University of East Anglia in England pipelined scary data to the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

-- The IPCC then cranked out scary scenarios of imminent climate-change disaster based on the CRU's data.

-- Eco-activists and politicians looking for pretexts to levy new energy taxes and fees and expand the regulatory authority of government seized upon the IPCC reports to promote their agenda.

A gladly credulous media played an important role, too, as a cog in the global-warming hysteria machinery. The media, in both their news and commentary functions:

-- Gave the scary reports and calls for action uncritical, one-sided top billing.

-- Spread the myth of an overwhelming "scientific consensus" on the proposition that greenhouse gas emissions have put the planet on the abyss of cataclysmic climate change.

-- Disseminated ad-hominem attacks on skeptics as science-rejecting "deniers" or corporation-corrupted shills for polluters.

The hysteria machinery advanced like a mighty juggernaut until recently — until the wrench was tossed into it by an anonymous whistleblower.

The exposed e-mails revealed influential players in the "climate community" (as global-warming hysteria adherents grandiloquently speak of themselves) sneakily discussing ways to manipulate or hide data and silence dissenters by freezing them out of the scientific journals.

No actual misconduct on their part has been proved as a result of the exposed e-mails, as apologists in eco-activism, academia, the media and politics have been quick to point out in rallying to their defense. Certainly, however, an unscientific frame of mind has been revealed on the part of key "climate community" figures.

Culprit Numero Uno is one Phil Jones, until recently the head of the Climate Research Unit that pipelines data to the U.N. climate panel.

The telltale e-mails spotlighted Jones blustering about his efforts to stifle the views of skeptical scientists. "Recently rejected two papers from people saying CRU has it wrong," he crowed in an e-mail to an apparently sympathetic colleague at Penn State University. (Who, incidentally, has been the recent beneficiary of an Obama "stimulus" distribution to fund his continuing, scare-scenario "research.")

Those words “are not ambiguous,” said MIT climate scientist Richard Lindzen, a skeptic who has served as an IPCC participating scientist himself. “They’re talking about suppressing other scientists.”

In one of the e-mails, Jones expressed fears that skeptical scientists would learn that England has a new freedom of information law and might demand that he turn over his data under that law. “I think I’ll delete the file,” he said.

This was something of a shocking revelation, but not the first of its kind involving the Climate Research Unit’s Jones.

In their book “Climate of Extremes” (Cato Institute, 2009), climate scientists Patrick J. Michaels and Robert C. Balling Jr. revealed an exchange an Australian climate scientist, Warrick Hughes, had with Jones in 2005. (Michaels and Balling aren’t “deniers,” by the way. They believe emissions are contributing to a “moderate warming trend,” which they say some activist scientists are cutting corners to exaggerate.)

Hughes requested Jones’ backup data on how he had calculated his alarming temperature trends.

Jones refused to share the data, posing the astoundingly unscientific question: “Why should I make the data available to you, when your aim is to try to find something wrong with it?”

Michaels and Balling commented in their book: “Normally, science thrives on the free exchange of data.”

Science, yes — but not “science” (in quotation marks) with a political agenda.

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