

## CLIMATE SCEPTICISM: A letter to the open-minded

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### HOW I BECAME A SKEPTIC:

When I left Ampleforth (July 1939) a questioning attitude had been nourished. Their approach to education was that knowledge should be drawn out of the brain of a pupil after transformation of information supplied by teachers.

September 1939 I became a medical student (Manchester). Wood Jones, the Professor of Anatomy encouraged us to query what was taught. His lectures were so popular that we were crowded out by staff. Later when we saw patients the same attitude prevailed. Those who followed an experimental approach were admired, for example Richard Asher who challenged bed rest for coronary thrombosis.

Recently Christopher Booker (Sunday Telegraph) was a major influence. He covered various subjects, notably a critical one about the Common Market. He referred to the blogs 'Climate Audit' and 'Watts Up With That' and 'Number Watch', now almost obsolete, but still worth consulting. His book 'The Real Global Warming Disaster' is a classic.

### 'HOCKEY STICK' GRAPH

The 'Hockey stick' graph, invented by Michael Mann was used widely, especially on the front cover of the IPCC AR4 in 2007. It was based on using historic trees as proxies for temperature change. It 'abolished' the inconvenient well-documented Medieval Warm Period and Roman Warm Period, so as to present a flat 'handle', with an allegedly unprecedented and rapid warming 'blade' at the end of the last century.

This was demolished by Steve McIntyre, a Canadian retired mining consultant who had impressive mathematical and statistical capabilities, who became interested when a pamphlet was sent to all householders in Toronto explaining the dire catastrophes ahead, with the hockeystick graph on the front. Wondering how the graph had been worked out he wrote to Michael Mann to

ask for the data so he could check it out himself.

Michael Mann refused to send him anything, assuming that McIntyre was out to make trouble. So he had to work out what had happened rather like working on a jigsaw with 5000 pieces with no picture to guide him. He soon realized why Mann was so unco-operative – his statistical methods were totally flawed or 'creative' - the hockeystick was an artifact of the methods rather than the data. When he tried to engage with him and the other members of the self named 'Hockey team' they became ever more defensive and offensive. He created his Climate Audit website to discuss and analyse their papers and most often to refute them aided by a very able clientele of fellow scientists and statisticians. The book 'The Hockey Stick Illusion' by Andrew Montford, an English blogger (Bishop Hill website) is a readable summary of his work and the struggle to get published in hostile journals. It was written before, but published at about the same time as the Climategate emails came out in November 2009. They endorse the story as disclosed in a book published a month after the event 'Climategate The CRU tape Letters' by Steven Mosher and Tom Fuller. Climate Audit (CA) is a very technical blog, but WattsUpWithThat (WUWT) run by Anthony Watts, a meteorologist and entrepreneurial character, who went along with the 'global warming' story until, being a true scientist (even if he doesn't have 'official' qualifications), he decided to check out some of the hypotheses, and soon realized that the claims didn't hold up. His expertise is bringing the science to laypeople, including McIntyre's work – he helped McIntyre with the technical side of CA website, especially when it crashed after Climategate due to the number of people visiting CA to find out what was happening. WUWT runs many stories, not exclusively climate related, and is hugely popular, winning the Bloggies awards year after year.

Watts also did an analysis of the surface stations in the USA, and found serious siting problems, affecting the data, and this has led to NOAA's overhaul of the sites. WUWT also has a wealth of reference pages that can be accessed for up-to-date

information on ocean, sea ice, solar data, ENSO, and many more.

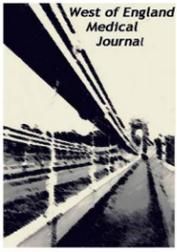
These two sites, plus Joanne Nova (an Australian website), - she, like Watts, was also initially a global warming believer until she and her husband started looking at the data for themselves, and realized the data did not support the CO<sub>2</sub> hypothesis (she has scientific credentials and wrote a free downloadable handbook for skeptics) became a daily ritual – and more so during Climategate and the Copenhagen November/December 2009 talkfest.

Bishop Hill (Andrew Montford's blog) is another good resource, mainly focusing on policy implications of the UK government's suicidal economic and energy policies which continue after Ed Miliband's appalling Climate Change Act, due to the malign influence of the Lib Dems and the green NGOs that wield great influence over DEFRA and DECC and the Government. Andrew Montford has also written some special reports for the GWPF which was created by Nigel Lawson as a resource for policy-makers. It is a cross-party organization that provides an up-to-date account of the skeptical arguments published world wide.

There are of course numerous websites both warmist and skeptical; a recent good resource is Uclimate.com, which continually updates information of new stories on both sides of the argument. You will soon learn that the warmist blogs generally do not like to have skeptical comments made, and either 'disappear' them or edit them – very like the Guardian 'Comment is Free' (or as James Delingpole calls it 'Komment macht Frei'). The skeptical blogs on the whole allow both sides to speak, only snipping over the top comments.

### HEATING AND COOLING

I became a skeptic because of the data; the rate of warming in the late 20th century was just the same as the rate of warming in the first part of the century (with a cooling period around the 1950s-70s) and since that is generally attributed to natural causes, there is no reason to treat the recent one any differently. The fact that the upward curve happened to coincide with the rising rate of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for about 20 years is



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no reason to attribute it to that cause – and as the last 15 – 18 years have not shown further increase in temperature (in fact there has been cooling since 2000) despite ever-increasing emissions shows that it was merely ‘correlation, not causation’. The climate has always changed, with warming and cooling periods, which are part of its ‘thermostat’. The models have been shown to have about a 97% failure rate in their projections. It makes no sense to demonise CO<sub>2</sub>, a gas which at the current 400ppm (or 0.04% of the atmosphere) is absolutely vital to all life on earth – indeed it has been noted that crop yields are up, and deserts are greening, and the Amazon burgeoning (where it’s not being raped for biofuels). It could be argued that in fact we have been starved of CO<sub>2</sub> in recent earth history – historically it has been up to 5000 ppm or more.

### IPCC

The IPCC was created specifically to investigate the anthropogenic causes of global warming which rather biases it to find humans guilty. Thus a penalty (or penance) can be applied in the form of various carbon taxes, emissions trading schemes, which the cynical might say are just what the Greens want for us all in their misanthropy – a cessation of the evil capitalistic industrialized society which has made our lives so much better and healthier and longer. James Delingpole’s book ‘Watermelons’, which is scrupulously researched shows indeed that the Greens are indeed ‘watermelons’ – green on the outside and red inside.

Donna LaFramboise, a Canadian journalist (blog ‘NoFrakkingConsensus’) has researched the IPCC documents with a fine-tooth comb, and her books ‘The Delinquent Teenager who was mistaken for the World’s Top Climate Expert’ and ‘Into the Dustbin’ are an eye-opener into shoddy and politicized work that has gone into their reports. Further cynicism can cause one to follow the money and see who exactly benefits from these green policies – Al Gore, bankers and insurers, and all involved in renewables, with healthy profits going to landowners with wind turbines and solar panels, paid for by our vastly increased electricity bills, and the UN and all the incestuous NGOs who gain grants and lobby for and from one another – with us footing the bill of course.

### IMPROVEMENT EQUALS DISASTER

The so-called environmental improvements are a disaster – for people: especially in the developing world, who are denied new coal powered electricity, and so continue to suffer from poor living conditions and poor health and all the other lacks that go with it; and the poor in developed countries who are finding the cost of living too high, and are being forced to choose between heating and eating, - and for the land: vast swathes of forests are being annihilated to provide biofuels (which ironically produce even more CO<sub>2</sub>), and biomass for power stations (Drax in N Yorks imports wood pellets from the USA to power it!), and to provide acreage for the bird and bat chomping wind-turbine industries (the numbers killed vastly exceed anything caused by ‘Big Oil’, not to mention the health effects on people and animals who live in their vicinity). Solar farms also take up valuable land, and in desert areas also kill birds by burning them as they fly over them. This all might just possibly be justifiable if the electricity provided was relevant, but due to the small amount provided, the inability to store it, and the unpredictability, which means that conventional power has to be continuously run as a back-up, means that it is totally inefficient and generates even more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions anyway.

In 2014 there have been meetings organized by the rabidly warmist Bristol University Cabot Institute, and its Chair of Cognitive Psychology Stephan Lewandowsky. One was during Bristol Big Green Week when he gave a lecture on his widely discredited paper ‘NASA faked the moon landing – therefore, (climate) science is a hoax’. My daughter (Caroline K) shares my beliefs so went to it, just to see if he was as unpleasant in person as he was in his papers and blog ‘Shaping Tomorrow’s World’. He was. I quote from Caroline’s report:

*“I did manage to ask a question, even though I had not had the slightest intention of asking one, but it did seem the right one to ask at the time: ‘Have you ever actually talked to any climate sceptics, or is your knowledge of them confined to the blogosphere?’ He answered shortly ‘Yes’ and stopped, but I gestured to him to expand on this, so he started talking about how it’s not worth the effort because their minds are closed and you’re never going to change them, At which point I said ‘I see, so you don’t actually talk to or with them, you*

*talk at them.’ He then realized that I was a dreaded ‘denier’, so asked for another question hurriedly.”*

Lewandowsky also organized for his cronies and collaborators Michael Mann (U Penn) and John Cook (U Queensland) to give talks in September at the Victoria Rooms. These talks had the advantage of being free. Caroline K booked tickets and through contacts on Bishop Hill arranged for some skeptics to meet up at the Channings Hotel prior to the first talk by John Cook, and ensuing from these arrangements transpired the unlikely invitation for Anthony Watts, Andrew Montford, and several other notable skeptics including James Delingpole to meet at our home prior to the talk by Mann. This meeting was very convivial and enjoyable, and we benefited from brief talks by Anthony Watts and Nic Lewis on their latest work.

As was widely expected the talks by the warmists were out of date, political and not very scientific; interesting to note was that more people were interested to meet Anthony Watts than Michael Mann or John Cook. The pre and post talk meetings (at the Channings and at our home) were much more enjoyable. One striking characteristic of the skeptics – certainly those that met at our home - is that they seem to be a cheerful good-natured ‘group’ – though they would probably not like to be characterized as a ‘group’ as they are a very disparate bunch of people, with several scientists, engineers and meteorologists among them, as well as all sorts of other occupations and interests. Indeed they did not agree on everything that was discussed at our house, but still remained polite and friendly. But by and large, on reading sceptic blogs certainly a sense of humour and a genuine environmental awareness and concern seem much more prevalent than on the ‘warmist’ blogs, which are often deeply misanthropic, regarding man as a parasite on the planet.

As this is a piece on how I became sceptical, there are lots of things I have had to leave out due to lack of space – how the climate models have been proved wildly inaccurate by observations with the ‘Pause’ now 18 years old – so no school child has experienced any ‘global warming’; how the polar regions are returning to the previous level of ice cover; how there has been no increase in climate extreme events according to the IPCC no



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less; how ENSO, oceanic currents, cloud cover, the sun and cosmic rays interact and what the feedbacks are.

That climate continually changes is not in question – what is in question is, what actually is man's role in this (changes in land use, real pollution – this does not include CO<sub>2</sub> emissions despite the inevitable pictures of power stations with back lit steam which by implication tries to portray CO<sub>2</sub> as 'dirty'), and do we actually need to do anything about it? In my view money, research and effort would be far better directed to actual problems, like poverty, lack of water, medicine, education and power in developing countries and for local authorities being prepared for all sorts of weather events, as inevitably these effects will be local rather than global.

The medical profession is divided. It is surprising that so few have looked critically at the data that purports to support the warmist side. 'Global Warming and Other Bollocks' attempted this, one of the editors being Professor Stanley Feldman (Anaesthetist). He and Vincent Marks also wrote 'Panic Nation', on health scares. Feldman supported my booklet 'Enjoy Eating Less' (we sing from the same hymn sheet) and as an expert in the use and mingling of gases his opinion on global warming commands respect.

The BMA is profoundly warmist. The BMJ follows the same line. It is regrettable that they have not looked at the evidence now that decisions are being made that affect expenditure on future energy developments.

### WEBSITES:

- Climateaudit.org Steve McIntyre
- Wattsupwiththat.com Anthony Watts
- Bishophill.squarespace.com Andrew Montford
- Thegwpf.com Global Warming Policy Foundation (Nigel Lawson, Benny Peiser et al)
- Joannenova.com.au Joanne Nova
- Nofrakkingconsensus.com  
Donna LaFramboise
- Uclimate.com and Scottishseptcic.co.uk  
Mike Haseler
- Rationaloptimist.com.. Matt Ridley
- RealClimate (warmist) Michael Mann et al

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