

ScareWatch

Gore: Yet another “moment of
fateful decision”

by

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Yet another “moment of fateful decision”

The scare: At the December 2008 UN climate conference at Poznan, held during the coldest commencement of the European winter in 30 years, former vice-president Al Gore said that the human species had arrived at yet another “moment of fateful decision”, because “our home, Earth, is in danger”. He said he would state “a few facts, if only to underscore the urgency of our task”, and “we cannot negotiate with the facts”, the first of which was the “unrestrained dumping of 70 million tons of ‘global warming’ pollution into the thin shelf of atmosphere surrounding our planet every 24 hours”. Scientists had “for several years now warned us that we are moving dangerously close to several so-called tipping points that could within less than 10 years make it impossible to avoid irretrievable damage to the planet's habitability”.

Gore went on: “The glaciers are now melting rapidly in the Alps, in the Andes, in the Rockies, and, most ominously, in the Himalayas, which contain 100 times as much ice and snow as all of the mountains here in Europe. ... 1.4 billion people depend for more than half of their drinking water on the rivers and spring systems that flow from the ice of the Tibetan plateau, which is now melting at an alarming rate.”

Gore said the “climate crisis” had increased evaporation from the soil and concentrated rainfall in shorter bursts, causing “increased desertification and longer droughts”. He said: “Many shallow lakes, including prominently Lake Chad, have disappeared. The Great Lakes of Africa are undergoing dramatic change, the Great Lakes of North America are losing their ice cover, and the water level is dropping dramatically.” He said the Mediterranean was becoming saltier and warmer, “threatening to turn it into a stagnant sea”.

Gore said the oceans were being acidified “along with rising temperature”; “the warming ocean waters are also causing stronger typhoons, cyclones and hurricanes”; “massive flooding has resulted at record rates on every continent”; “heat waves continue”; “Two winters ago was the hottest winter in the history of recorded atmospheric measurements”; “Twenty of the 21 hottest years in recorded history have occurred in the last 25 years”; “With each 1 degree increase in temperature there is a 10 percent increase in lightning”; “We are now seeing record fires”; “The extinction crisis is tearing at the fabric of the web of life”; “The science is clear”; There is an “unprecedented threat posed by the climate crisis”.

Gore went on, “In the United States, dozens of proposed coal firing generating plants have in the last 2 years been canceled because of grassroots opposition and public pressure to adopt renewable sources of energy.”

He said, “We must link poverty reduction with the sharp reduction of CO₂ emissions, including reduced emissions from deforestation, with reform of the clean development mechanism and adequate funding for adaptation that is essential and must be financed.” He added, “Mitigation and prevention are the primary task, because without them adaptation would ultimately prove to be impossible.”

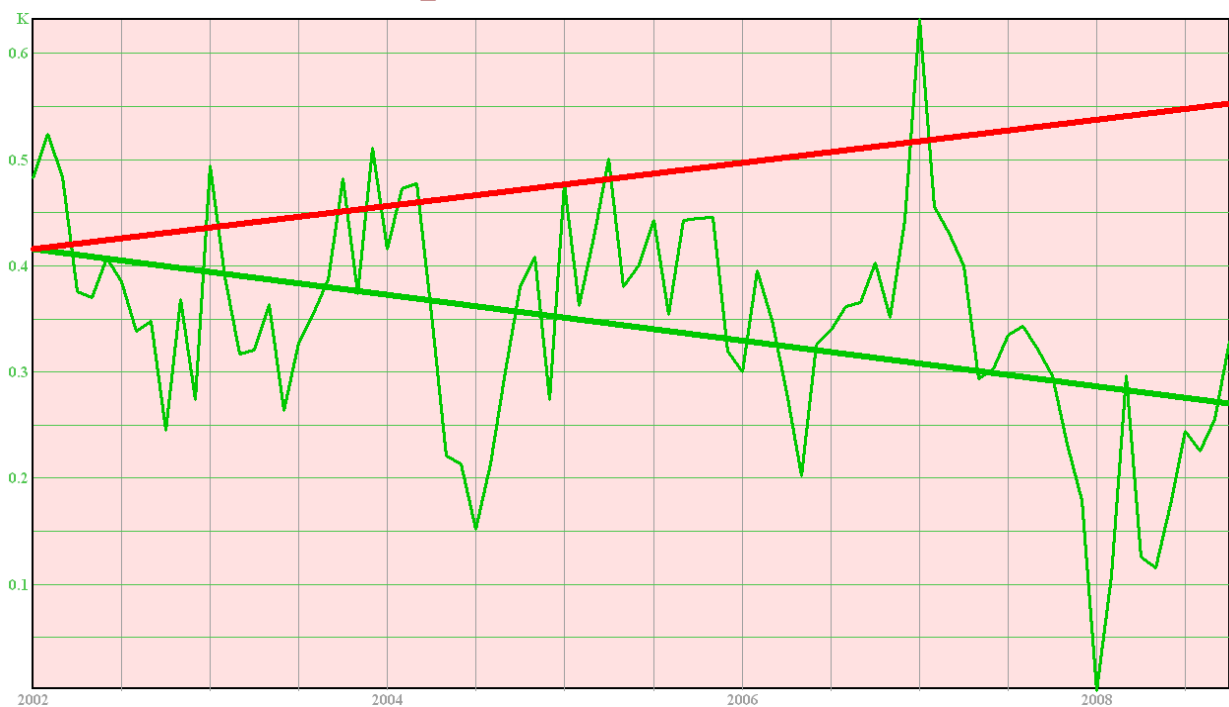
He said that “we have to toughen” the CO₂ reduction target to “350 parts per million”. Millions of new green jobs would be created, and would “improve the standard of living”.

The truth: Al Gore knows full well that he is not telling the truth. In October 2007 a High Court judge in the UK ruled that his fanciful film, *An Inconvenient Truth*, depicted “an Armageddon scenario that ... is not based on any scientific view”. Yet Gore deliberately persists in repeating the errors listed by the judge in that case, who had ordered the UK Departments of the Environment and of Education to circulate corrective guidance to schools before pupils were allowed to be exposed to it. There are now serious discussions afoot to lodge complaints against Gore to the federal financial and legal authorities, in that he fraudulently talks up the imagined “climate crisis” in the hope that he and his “green” investment corporation can profit by the baseless alarm that his falsehoods generate. If that was his hope, it was vain. In the current financial crisis (which, unlike the climate “crisis”, is real), so-called “green” investments have fallen in value nearly twice as far as all other investments. Certainly, it is a serious matter that Gore continues to attempt to profit at the expense of the gullible by peddling falsehoods specifically identified as erroneous by a High Court Judge, who, unlike most of Gore’s audience, had been compelled to hear both sides of the case and had decided that Gore’s side was in at least nine material respects erroneous.

“Moment of fateful decision”: Twenty years ago, the UN’s climate panel said that humankind had “only ten years to avert climate disaster”. Today, Gore says we have “only ten years”. This Messianic tone is calculated to divert his audience from the seldom-reported but readily-verifiable truth, which is that, as Figure 1 shows, for seven years the planet has been *cooling*:

Figure 1

Global surface temperature trend, Jan 2000 – Oct 2008



Going down: The SPPI combined global temperature dataset shows almost seven years of cooling. The green straight line – the least-squares regression line – shows a clear **cooling trend**, almost the mirror image of the **warming trend** wrongly projected by the IPCC in its 2007 report. **Source:** SPPI Monthly CO₂ Report – Arithmetic mean of the monthly global mean land and sea surface temperature anomalies from Hadley Center/Climate Research Unit, University of East Anglia; US National Climatic Data Center; Remote Sensing Systems Inc.; and the University of Alabama at Huntsville.

“We cannot negotiate with the facts”: As this paper will demonstrate, Al Gore prefers to negotiate *without* the facts.

“Global warming pollution”: Gore’s first “fact” is that “70 million tons of ‘global warming pollution’” is being “dumped” into the “thin shell” of the atmosphere every day. This “fact” is wrong on six counts. First, carbon dioxide is not “pollution”. On the contrary, it is a naturally-occurring trace gas that is essential to all life on the planet. Animals breathe it out when they exhale; plants breathe it in, for, together with water, sunlight, and chlorophyll, it is a necessary ingredient in photosynthesis. Secondly, the atmosphere is not a “thin shell”, but a substantial body of air many miles thick. Thirdly, carbon dioxide occupies just three parts in ten thousand of the atmosphere. Fourthly, carbon dioxide occupied up to 25 times as much of the atmosphere in the Cambrian era, but life continued. Fifthly, today’s concentration of carbon dioxide in the air is almost the lowest in 600 million years: trees and plants have been almost starved of it, and are benefiting by increased rates of growth as the atmospheric concentration increases. Sixthly, carbon dioxide occupies just one-ten-thousandth more of the atmosphere than it did in 1750, at the beginning of the industrial revolution.

“Tipping points”: Lorenz (1963), in the climatological paper that founded chaos theory as the newest branch of mathematics, demonstrated that it is impossible to predict the long-run evolution of a mathematically-chaotic object such as the climate “by any method”, because it is not possible for us to know the initial state of the climate at any chosen moment with sufficient precision to identify the moment of onset, the duration, the magnitude, or even the sign of any “phase transition” – a sudden change or bifurcation in what had appeared to be the previously-steady state of the object. Scientists do not, therefore, predict that we are coming close to any “tipping points”, because Lorenz’s formal proof demonstrates that they cannot credibly make any such prediction. Schulte (2008), after examining 539 papers chosen at random by the search phrase “global climate change” published between January 2004 and February 2007, found that not a single paper provided any evidence that any catastrophic consequence would flow from “global warming”, even if it were occurring, which – for at least 13 years – it has not been. There is no scientific basis for the notion that emissions of carbon dioxide will cause “irretrievable damage to the planet’s habitability”.

“Melting glaciers”: Gore says Alpine glaciers are melting, but this winter the snow came earlier than for at least 30 years. Those glaciers that have been melting (for the planet has been warming for 300 years) have revealed mediaeval mountain roads, forests, and even an entire silver mine beneath them, indicating that they had receded before, during the mediaeval warm period, when temperatures were warmer than the present, as they were in the Roman and Bronze Age warm periods. Gore says the Andean glaciers are melting, but Polissar *et al.* (2006) say that, except for the highest peaks, the tropical Andes have been ice-free for most of the past 10,000 years. Gore says glaciers in the Rockies are melting, but – in common with other mountain glaciers around the world – they have been melting since at least 1880, long before humankind could have been responsible. Gore says the melting of glaciers in the Himalayas is “ominous”, because the glaciers contain “100 times as much ice and snow as all of the mountains here in Europe.” He then says 1.4 billion people depend on the Himalayas for their water supply. What he carefully fails to say is that it is not the ice-melt that feeds the rivers of Asia but the snow-melt. There has been no trend in the extent of winter snow cover in the Northern Hemisphere since records began half a century ago. Indeed, there was a record extent of snow cover in 2001/2, but that record was easily surpassed in 2007/8, and may well be surpassed again in 2008/9. Gore also fails to point out that nine-tenths of the world’s 160,000+ glaciers are in Antarctica, which he fails to point out has been cooling for half a century. The Arctic, too, is cooler today than it was in the late 1930s (Figure 2).

Figure 2

The Arctic: warmer in 1938 than today

NEW YORK, MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 1938.

World Climate Growing Warmer, Say Russians, Citing Arctic Data

Two Professors Independently Find Change in Temperatures—They See a Gulf Stream Relation, but Look for Deeper Causes

By HAROLD DENNY
Wireless to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

MOSCOW, Dec. 11.—The findings of Soviet explorers aboard the ice-breaker Syedoff, now drifting within 300 miles of the North Pole, together with earlier observations by other investigators, have caused Soviet scientists to conclude that the Arctic region and, indeed, the whole world is growing warmer.

This conclusion was voiced today in reports published separately by Professor N. N. Zupoff of the Meteorological Institute of the Northern Sea Route Administration, and Professor L. Berg, corresponding member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. They are cautious about deducing causes or prophesying the duration of the change of climate.

Professor Berg recalls that the ice age 3,000 to 5,000 years ago was followed by an epoch in which the average Summer temperature was higher than now.

"Are we witnessing the approach of such an epoch," he asks, "or have we to do here with a climatic fluctuation the period of which is only some decades? No answer can as yet be given."

Both scientists mention the Gulf Stream as a possible cause of the rising temperatures but agree that this can at most be contributory—that other factors are causing a rise in the temperature of the Gulf

water northward. They give considerable credence to the theory that climatic change may be due to increased heat from the sun either because solar radiation has been intensified or because resistance by the earth's atmosphere to the sunrays has been reduced.

The Syedoff's scientists are finding that warmer polar water is hastening the melting of ice and causing a faster flow of ice in the polar basin. The Syedoff is drifting two to three times faster than did the exploring ship Fram when Dr. Fridtjof Nansen made his famous drifting voyage in the icepack across the polar basin in 1895, reaching the northernmost point of 85 degrees 57 minutes latitude. That is the farthest north any ship has ever traveled.

Because her drift is facilitated by warmer waters the Syedoff is likely to exceed this record. The Syedoff was one of many Soviet ships frozen in the polar ice in the Winter of 1937. Her present strange voyage, which may result in another epic of Soviet Arctic exploration, is entirely unscheduled.

After many adventures, including almost capsizing when the ship was being turned far on her side by ice pressure, nearly causing the loss of

TEMPERATURE RISE OVER WORLD SEEN

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her supplies, the Syedoff is now only twenty miles south of the northernmost point reached by the Fram and quite possibly may drift across the North Pole itself.

The Syedoff's experiences are confirming those of Ivan Papanin's ice-floe expedition, which carried into the Greenland Sea two and a half times faster than was expected.

According to Professor Zuboff, the average Winter temperatures along the coasts of Baffin Bay, Greenland, the Bering Sea and the Kara Sea have been steadily rising since 1920. The average temperatures throughout Europe also have been rising. Thus Soviet ships have been able to penetrate ever farther northward, as exemplified by the record-breaking free-sailing voyages of the Sadko in 1935 and the Yermak this year.

Codfish—lovers of relatively warm water—are now appearing along the coasts of Nova Zembla, Spitzbergen and other far northern points, Professor Zuboff reports. Other warm-water fishes have appeared in the northernmost parts of the Bering Sea, to which they were strangers at the beginning of the century. Professor Zuboff adds that the temperature of the Atlantic was a record high last September and that there is no sign of a diminishing tendency in the Arctic temperature rise. The warming process is apparently taking place in the Antarctic, but less is known about it, he says.

Professor Berg's report summarizes the findings of scientists of many countries to prove that average temperatures have risen over the whole world, including Europe, North America, the Southern Hemisphere and the tropics. He cites data from Russia itself, including reports of travelers of a century ago, of frozen ground in Northern Russia many miles below the point at which the soil freezes now.

Meanwhile, it was announced today that Mikhail Vodopyanoff, who won the post of Chief of Arctic Aviation of the Northern Sea Route Administration by brilliant piloting of the Soviet air expedition to the North Pole in 1937, will fly to the relief of the fifteen men drifting across the polar basin on the Syedoff.

There is no suggestion that the Syedoff is in any unusual danger, but the crew and scientific staff have been afloat since the Summer of 1937 and have been frozen fast in the ice for fourteen months. The authorities feel that it is time to send another party to take their places and to continue their polar studies.

Observations are being taken by the Syedoff on the uncertain footing of a grinding ice pack and under great difficulties. Polar bears constitute a minor problem. Every evening a member of the Syedoff party takes magnetic observations some distance from the ship to be free of the ship's iron. Each time a companion goes along with a rifle, taking a post far enough away so that the steel barrel will not interfere with the observations.

Without such precautions the observer, engrossed in his work, might be pounced on and killed. Several bears have been encountered and they have provided fresh meat for the Syedoff party.

The Syedoff has supplies for about a year and a half yet. The supplies are distributed in a number of small depots on the ice in the vicinity of the ship, so if one depot is destroyed by the ice movement the others remain.

Vodopyanoff did not say when he intended to make the relief flight which, presumably, will consist of more than one plane, except that it would be in the "near future."

Vodopyanoff and Georgi Baldukov, another noted flier, have been admitted to membership in the Authors' Union. Vodopyanoff has written several Arctic adventure stories, one of which forecast the first Soviet flight to the North Pole. Baldukov has written extensively of his visit to America.

Vodopyanoff has just written the scenario for a movie entitled "On the Ice Floe," which will be produced next year. The plot concerns a dirigible sent to America over the North Pole by a fascist power. The crew was rescued by Soviet aviators. The scenario, according to a description published today, shows the "bestial face of fascism" and that "all advanced mankind is attracted to Sovietland as to a light-house."

Warmer then than now: A report in the New York Times about the warming Arctic in 1938.

Drought: Gore unblushingly predicts, on no evidence, that "global warming", if it were occurring, would cause both more droughts and more floods. Claims of this kind can at once be put into perspective by reference to the historical record. In the first half of the 20th century, for instance, the American Great Plains was gripped by a savage drought that provided the setting for John Steinbeck's novel *The Grapes of Wrath*. Since then, droughts in North America have been very much rarer. Elsewhere, drought in the Sahara has declined so much that the extent of the desert has shrunk by 300,000 square kilometers in the past 30 years. The greening of the desert has been so widespread that nomadic tribes have returned to settle in lands they had not occupied in living memory. Gore mentions "evaporation from the soil" arising from "global warming", but, since there has been no "global warming" for more than a decade, there is no scientific basis for his claim that the latter caused the former. He also incautiously attributed the drying-up of Lake Chad to "global warming". In fact, Lake Chad has dried up on several previous occasions in the past two millennia, and its current disappearance is known to have been caused by over-extraction of water and an alteration in

farming practices. This was one of the nine specific errors which the High Court Judge had listed: Gore, therefore, knows he is not telling the truth about Lake Chad. It is statements like these on his part that have led to considerations that he should be reported to the authorities.

“Floods”: Extensive flooding has occurred previously in history, as the story of Noah’s Ark, and similar stories from non-Semitic civilizations, attest. For instance, in England the entire county of Norfolk was under several inches of water for six months in the early 18th century. Recent historical research has shown that the city of Derby suffered a catastrophic flood in the late Middle Ages. There is no particular reason to suppose that “global warming” – if it were occurring – would cause significantly greater flooding than at present: floods, like droughts, come and go, and there is no particular reason to link them with “global warming”, particularly during a prolonged period of global cooling. In April 2007 the Met Office in the UK confidently predicted that, because of “global warming”, the UK would have the hottest, driest, most drought-prone summer ever. Six weeks later, the coldest, wettest, most flood-prone summer since records began commenced.

Ocean “acidification”: In fact, the oceans are alkaline, and there has been a very small reduction in that alkalinity over the past century. Gore links this change to “rising temperature”; but, even if there were an established causative link, the *fact* of the warming that has occurred over the past 300 years tells us nothing of its *cause*. Since humankind could not have made any significant contribution to the first 250 years of the 300 years’ warming, we know that most of it was natural.

“Stronger typhoons, cyclones, and hurricanes”: This is another of the errors pointed out by the judge in the UK High Court, who found no scientific basis for linking any hurricane or other extreme-weather event to “global warming”, and criticized Gore for having taken advantage of Hurricane Katrina to make a scientifically-unjustifiable point. In fact, there has been no trend in the incidence of land falling Atlantic hurricanes, which has remained constant for a century. Severe typhoons and tropical cyclones have been declining steadily throughout the 30 years of the satellite record.

“The hottest winter in recorded history” was followed by the coldest winter in 20 years (the coldest in 50 years in China and the US). Taking an isolated event out of context is a regular technique with Gore. In Europe, at the time when he spoke, the winter to date was the coldest for 30 years.

“Twenty of the hottest years have occurred in the last 25 years”: Once again, no perspective is given. Global temperatures have been rising for almost 300 years, since the end of the 70-year-long Maunder Minimum in 1715. During that period, there were almost no sunspots on the surface of the Sun. Temperatures stopped rising towards the end of the 70-year solar Grand Maximum in 1998. During that period, the Sun was more active, and for longer, than in almost any similar period throughout the past 11,400 years (Solanki *et al.*, 2005). After 300 years of warming, during the first 275 of which humankind could not have had anything much to do with it, it is not exactly surprising – still less threatening – that most of the hottest years have occurred recently. Once again, the mere *fact* that the weather has become warmer worldwide does not demonstrate that human activities are the cause.

“A 10 percent increase in lightning”, says Gore, occurs in response to every 1 degree C of temperature increase. Yet the increase in temperatures in the whole of the 20th century was just 0.74 degrees C, and temperatures have been stable or falling since the beginning of 2000.

“We are now seeing record fires”: Even if this statement were true – and there are insufficient records to justify it – most forest fires are caused not by “global warming”, which would tend to increase the moisture in the atmosphere in most parts of the world, but by arson, carelessness, power cables arcing, and other causes unconnected with “global warming”, however caused. Since there has been no “global warming” for 13 years, there is manifestly no scientific basis for saying that the “record fires” (if they are a record) were caused by “global warming”.

“The extinction crisis is tearing at the fabric of the web of life”: This silly and characteristically overblown statement is scientifically groundless insofar as Gore is implicitly attempting to link extinction of species on Earth to “global warming”. This statement, like so many others in Gore’s increasingly repetitive speeches, encapsulates the two central fallacies in his litany of supposed “global warming”-induced catastrophes: the crisis, even if real, cannot have been caused by “global warming” because “global warming” has not been occurring for 13 years; and, even if it were caused by warming, the fact of the warming tells us nothing about what caused the warming, nearly all of which, over the past 300 years, cannot have been caused by humankind. It is not known – perhaps even to within an order of magnitude – how many species exist; how many are coming into being; and how many are becoming extinct. It is, however, known that the vast majority of all the world’s animal, plant, and insect species live in the tropics, which are appreciably warmer than the rest of the planet. If anything, “global warming” – if it were to happen – would, therefore, lead to an increase in the number of species on the planet. There are, of course, many species at risk as a result of our competition for their habitats: but that problem, which, unlike the “climate crisis”, is real, has nothing whatever to do with “global warming”.

“The science is clear”: Insofar as this statement is true, the science tends to establish that we do not face a “climate crisis”. However, as we have seen, the Earth’s climate is – in the words of the UN’s climate panel in 2001 – “a complex, non-linear, chaotic object” whose long-run evolution (i.e. beyond a few weeks) cannot be predicted “by any method”. No credible mathematician, faced with the task of modeling a multi-dimensional, chaotic object whose millions of initial variables are not and can never be known to a sufficient precision to allow successful long-run projection, would say, “The science is clear.” The proposition that “The science is clear” was in fact invented by a Left-leaning pressure-group, the Institute for Public Policy Research, in the UK late in 2006, and it was adopted by the UK Labor Government and, shortly thereafter, by Gore himself. Precisely because the science is not clear and it has been proven that it can never become clear, there is no scientific basis for any prediction that the Earth faces a “climate crisis”, or for any of the predictions or attributions of specific catastrophes that abound in Gore’s speeches. It is for this reason that Schulte (2008) was unable to find a single peer-reviewed paper containing the words “global climate change” that also provided any evidence that “global warming” might prove “catastrophic”. The notion of catastrophe was introduced by rent-seeking environmental campaigners contributing to the UN’s climate assessments; by Gore himself; and by numerous journalists who know that the lie *World To End Shock* sells more copies and more air-time than the truth: *Climate continuing changeable*.

The “climate crisis” poses “an unprecedented threat”: It doesn’t. There is no threat. It is a chilling thought that the Earth is 5000 years overdue for the next Ice Age – an event confidently and imminently predicted by newspapers, and by some rent-seeking scientists, in the mid-1970s. But there is no threat from “global warming”. Enrichment of the atmosphere with carbon dioxide will cause some warming, but the rate of warming will be small, harmless, and generally beneficial (Monckton, 2008; Lindzen, 2008; Schwartz, 2007; etc.). The “threat”

is largely a fiction of computer models programmed to assume that a small change in the atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide will cause a very large increase in global temperature. It will do no such thing.

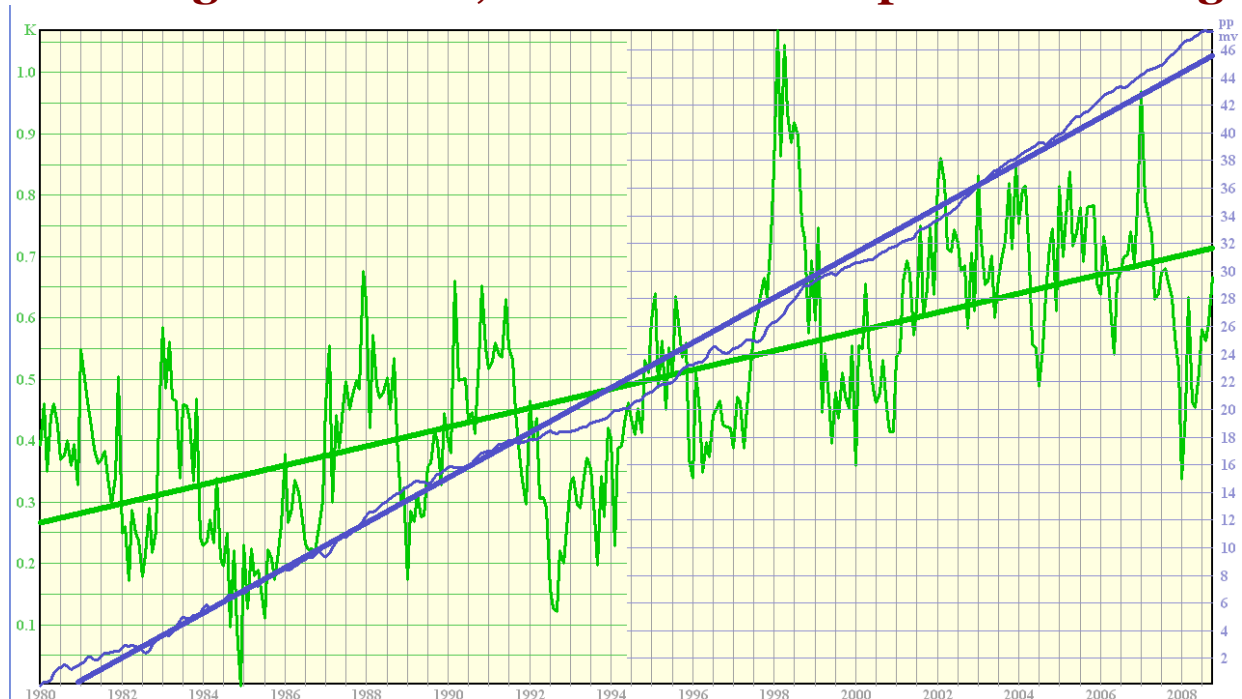
“Dozens of coal-fired plants have been canceled”: So they have – but that is not the good news that Gore imagines. He and President-elect Obama are planning to close down 80% of the industries of the US. Few of the hundreds of millions of jobs that will be destroyed will be replaced by the “few million” green jobs of which Gore and Obama speak. The result, for most of the world’s working people, will be unemployment, poverty, starvation, cold, and death. The working people of America are already struggling as a result of the collapse and nationalization of the financial system, whose ultimate cause was the unsustainable growth in the size, cost, complexity, and intrusiveness of the State. They will have cause to remember who it was that finally brought down America from her position of world economic leadership in the name of Socialist bureaucratic centralism and “global warming”.

Gore and his unthinking followers have, however, made a fundamental error of political judgment: they have assumed that, precisely because climate science is so complex, they can get away with fabricating and then exaggerating the imagined “threat” of “global warming”, because ordinary people will be unable to understand the science, and because young people can be relied upon to favor projects that are Left-leaning and that exploit their idealism.

It is worth explaining the fundamental error that Gore and the international environmental Left have made. All the rhetoric of the 20 years since the foundation of the UN’s climate panel has failed to diminish the rate of increase in atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration.

Figure 3

CO2 rising unchecked, unrelated to temperature changes



In **green**, fluctuations in global temperature over the 30-year satellite era, with the underlying trend shown as a solid green straight line. The **blue** curve – atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration – hugs its solid blue trend-line. **Source:** SPPI Monthly CO2 Report. **Data sources:** HadCRUt3v; NCDC; RSS; UAH monthly global surface or tropospheric temperature anomalies; NOAA monthly global CO2 concentration trend.

Figure 3 shows two things very clearly. First, carbon dioxide concentration is rising, and will continue to rise, in a more or less straight line; secondly, there is no correlation, and hence necessarily no causative connection, between carbon dioxide concentration and global temperature. In these two facts lies a growing and eventually disastrous medium-term political problem for Gore and his allies. For all their rhetoric, the world is not going to reduce its output of carbon dioxide significantly, if at all. Indeed, if America and Europe, dominated by the international Left, carry out their threat to close down 80% of their economies in the name of “global warming”, their workers’ jobs will be taken away and transferred to inefficient, Third-World economies such as China, India, Indonesia, Russia, and Brazil, where the “carbon footprint” per unit of production is considerably higher than it is in the well-regulated West. An increase both in carbon dioxide emissions and in global pollution will be the inevitable and pointless result.

Carbon dioxide concentration will continue to rise. But – as Figure 1 shows – global temperatures will not rise as fast as the UN’s climate panel has predicted; and will certainly not rise as fast as Gore and Stern have predicted. Month by month, from January 2008, SPPI’s Monthly CO₂ Report will update Figures 1 and 3, revealing the ever-growing discrepancy between the UN’s predictions and real-world observed reality, and the ever-growing atmospheric carbon dioxide concentration that will prevent Gore and the UN from being able to take any credit whatsoever for having brought about the slower-than-predicted increase in global temperatures that is likely to occur.

In short, it will rapidly become obvious to everyone that there never was any scientific basis for the “global warming” scare: and the workers and young people who voted for President-elect Obama in such large numbers will be rather more careful with their votes next time. Why should working people ever vote again for the party that destroyed their jobs and their livelihoods in the name of a demonstrable and soon-to-be-demonstrated lie? **End of scare.**

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