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Climate “Calamities” vs. Reality

Anyone who raises questions about the impact of man on climate change is often labeled a denier and is accused of ignoring the “overwhelming scientific consensus that human induced global warming is nearing a crisis stage.” Global warming alarmists will cut off any discussion of the issue so they can push their agenda for extensive legislation to save the planet. I have noted in past Hot Air Reports that for some that agenda is being motivated by economic concerns. **There is a lot of money at stake in “fighting” global warming.**

While contending that science is on their side, global warming advocates often use rhetoric and claims from climate alarmists that not only cannot be proven but are sometimes just plain false. This week we will consider some of the more recent outlandish claims.

Let’s start with last month’s report issued by the Global Humanitarian Forum that claimed 300,000 people are dying each year due to the effects of climate change. The report also stated that 300 million people are seriously affected by “the gradual warming of the Earth” and they expect the number to double by 2030. The Humanitarian Forum’s president warned that the United Nation’s Climate Conference in Copenhagen later this year, organized to develop a post- Kyoto climate agreement, could “well be the last chance to avoid a global catastrophe.” The Forum would also like to see developed countries, such as the United States, increase spending “up to 100 times more” than is currently available to counter the effects of climate change.

Not to be outdone, last week the authors of another report contended that tens of millions of people will be forced to abandon their homes over the next four decades due to a combination of climate change and rising sea levels. Researchers affiliated with Columbia University, CARE International and United Nations University compiled the report and noted that while such climate related migrations have long been predicted, they are likely occurring now.

The writers of these reports forgot to look at recent weather data. Global temperatures have not risen since 1998 and the last two years have shown a downward trend in temperature. One would think the hard evidence would at least give the alarmists pause and cause them to question some of their own assumptions but they continue to produce

reports based on the warmer temperatures of the late 1970s to the late 1990s and on the results of climate computer models that do not have an impressive track record.

These researchers are also ignoring history. Many of the areas they say will be hardest hit by climate change are regions subject to periodic droughts that are marginal for agriculture to begin with. Populations expand during times of sufficient rainfall and then must relocate during times of drought. As tragic as these types of climate related migrations are, they have been going on for a long time and to tie this to recent rises in global carbon dioxide levels stretches the imagination. Recall how the Viking colonies in Greenland were destroyed by climate change. This happened a thousand years ago, long before there could have been any human influence on climate.

And while the climate alarmist are warning of destruction, it is worth noting that fatalities from weather related disasters have been greatly reduced thanks to modern forecasting technology like Doppler radar and weather satellites. The worst weather disaster in the United States was the Galveston hurricane of 1900. More than 6000 people lost their lives. The death toll in more recent but equally strong storms like Hurricane Andrew in 1992 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005 were much lower.

None of this evidence stops those who want to use every unusual weather event and every dire computer prediction to push their agenda. A series on global warming published in the Milwaukee-Journal Sentinel in 2007 suggested that recent low water levels on Lake Michigan were related to global warming and that lake levels are expected to fall by another 2.5 feet by 2030. The authors did not question why water levels were even lower in 1964, nor have they done a follow-up story on why lake levels have risen by about 2 feet in the last two years.

Next week: Global warming alarmists face more contradictions. Access my reports online, at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/assembly/asm23/news/media.htm>.

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