



Cool rationality shatters greenhouse hype at last

The Group of Eight meeting last weekend blew open the global warming scam, writes **Bob Carter**

In both politics and State of Origin footy, timing is everything. But sometimes even impeccable timing can produce a result quite the opposite of that intended – as exemplified by sensational recent developments in the politics of the global-warming debate.

The pre-announcement of climate change as a theme for the G8 Gleneagles meeting last week led to a predictable burst of pressure-group propaganda on global warming.

The apocalypse, it was asserted (time and again) would involve more melting ice, greater rises in sea levels, more and more intense storms, more droughts, dangerous changes in ocean currents, and the destruction of both biodiversity and the global insurance industry.

Bill McGuire of University College London, who should have known better, released a hilarious map of the skeletal “British Isles” archipelago that would result if Earth’s ice caps melted away.

Environmental consultant and author Fred Pearce ran one of his signature fearmongering articles in *New Scientist*, entitled “Climate scientists fear fudge at G8 meeting”.

And here in Australia, SBS and ABC news reinforced Greenpeace’s television advertising propaganda by repeatedly running alarmist news coverage on the warming issue.

That almost all these alarmist claims are based on untestable computer models, or on the misinterpretation of quite natural changes, was judged unworthy of discussion.

And that empirical evidence fails to substantiate these outrageous inferences scarcely rated a mention either. The advice from the warming

evangelists seems to be, after Sir Joh, “don’t you worry your little heads about details like that”.

D-day turned out to be June 7, when Robert May, president of the Royal Society of London, issued a statement on climate change that

claimed to represent the agreed views of 11 scientific academies.

World leaders, including those due to meet at Gleneagles, were urged “to take prompt action to reduce the causes of climate change”, mainly by “minimising the amount of . . . carbon dioxide reaching the atmosphere”.

Containing many erroneous phrases such as “the scientific understanding of climate change is now sufficiently clear to justify nations taking prompt action”, the Royal Society statement does not provide the balanced, dispassionate scientific advice that the public is entitled to expect from such an august body. As

US atmospheric physicist Fred Singer succinctly put it, the statement “is a politically motivated document and scientifically flawed”.

Sensationally, within days both the Russian and United States science academies publicly dissociated themselves from the Royal Society statement. The Russians went so far as to request that their Academy president “repudiate his signature” from it. The US Academy president wrote that “we definitely did not approve the Royal Society press release” which contains “misleading and political statements”, and threatened to cut the Royal Society off from future US science ventures.

It has been left to British commentator Benny Peiser, a social anthropologist at Liverpool John Moores University, to point out that the prize earned by May for his dabbling in political tomfoolery is the infliction of severe damage on

“the repute of the Royal Society and its integrity”.

Topping this off, on the very first day of the Gleneagles meeting, the House of Lords delivered the coup de grace to the naive theory of human-caused global warming. A report from the influential Economic Affairs Committee asserted, among other things, that the Kyoto Protocol was not worth supporting; that the United Nations intergovernmental panel on climate change’s advice was tainted by political interference; that the benefits of global warming were underplayed; and that the science of climate change was uncertain.

Presented with these opinions, *The*

Times was moved to comment that “Britain’s environmental policy is a costly shambles based on dubious predictions about the future”.

That global-warming scaremongering has now been

clearly identified as such, and influentially contradicted, does not, however, mean that climate change is now an unimportant public issue.

Climate change science is so uncertain that we cannot predict accurately even 10 years in advance, let alone 100, whether average global temperatures will rise (as predicted by some computer models) or fall (as predicted by others).

Reduced to empiricism, we can only note that for the past several years, global temperatures have been falling, and also that the geological record contains many examples of sharp temperature changes of a degree or more over periods of time as short as several years or decades. That we are unable to predict the similar climate changes that are bound to occur in the future does not make their unheralded occurrence any less likely.

Our next and most vital task, therefore, is to dismantle the greenhouse propaganda industry that rules non-government organisations and the bureaucracies of developed countries.

In its place, organisations are required that provide balanced risk assessments of the likelihood of future climate changes, be they coolings or warmings, and of the best ways to mitigate the changes when they occur. The structure and mission of such new organisations should resemble audit commissions much more closely than they do our current greenhouse policy offices.

Who said that G8 meetings were self-indulgent talkfests that don’t deliver real results? The signs are that the Gleneagles meeting may yet prove a historic turning point.

Unbelievably, and at long last, global-warming hype has become unfashionable. Let rational discussion of the real climate change issue commence.

■ *Bob Carter is a research professor at James Cook University and a former director of the Australian Ocean Drilling Program secretariat.*



A greenhouse propaganda industry rules non-government organisations and the bureaucracies of rich countries.

Photo: REUTERS