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Open letter to the media regarding modern journalism:

OPEN-MINDED OR MIND-BIAS?

Hi

Remember James Bond's "Tomorrow Never Dies"? Fantasy film with the media mogul who controls the news to the extent that even if there is no news, it is created for the sole purpose of selling copy and keeping the masses hooked.

Well, it might be a fantasy film but every fantasy has a grain of truth: after all, even fantasy is the result of the human brain using its awesome and unique power to conjure up events out of thin air.

After reading the December 1, 2007 article by Joe Bast, President of the Heartland Institute [1], entitled "Is 'Journalistic Ethics' an Oxymoron?" [2] it became clear to me that US journalists face the same dilemma as the UK ones.

By sheer coincidence and in reaction to another Heartland report [3], I had sent out an email to the UK media on December 15, with the subject being "Freedom of Speech?" [4], stating: "Worse than communism ever was - there you *knew* you were not allowed freedom of speech and freedom of thought."

You see, the reason for me writing like that is because I wondered whatever happened to unbiased and free reporting on any and all issues and letting the reading/viewing public decide which is right and what is wrong.

Take a complex issue like man-made global warming. Since its inception it has become an ever bigger no-no to report on scientific research that does not immediately pay homage to the 'science-is-settled-the-debate-is-over' mindset. The assertions dished out by NASA's James Hansen are accepted as gospel and despite having been analysed and found wanting, no notice is taken of that analysis and it is 'business-as-usual'. [5]

During the recent Bali conference, there were several events that should have been reported on by the world media yet, as far as I'm aware, not one of them got a mention let alone a paragraph or, heaven forbid, a whole column in any media other than the original publication. [3] [6] [7]

So here we are, the entire world's media assembled at what could be one of the most important venues for man's continued well-being in the decades ahead and all we hear about are the computer forecasts on global warming as interpreted by a handful of scientists and widely hailed by any and all 'green' pressure groups as portraying the "greatest threat facing mankind". No alternative views are sought nor, much more worryingly, allowed. Any and all real-world events that can be remotely paraded as evidence of man's destructive emissions are presented as irrefutable proof - again with no questions asked, in fact, questioning is strictly 'verboten'.

Citing consensus and peer-reviewed scientific papers as proof of truth, any and all dissent is eliminated with vigor that is more reminiscent of former Communist regimes. Previous similar scenarios throughout our scientific history are conveniently forgotten. One such event at the beginning of the previous century clearly illustrates the issue: the discovery of the nature of the atom. Proposed by just one scientist and his team, it forced the rest of the scientific community to ditch much that they had held as truth during the previous 200 year history of scientific work and in the face of fierce opposition. "Rutherford had great courage as a scientist and was prepared to fly in the face of convention." [8] The entire process of peer reviewing and consensus building as used by the UN IPCC has also been analysed and found wanting, yet again it is 'business-as-usual' and no notice is taken. [9] [10]

In the meantime, out in the world where people and scientists work with real-world events, the story takes on a totally different angle. Nature itself does not utilise computer models and cares nothing for man's thoughts - after all, it's been around for far longer and has had more than just 6 billion people thrown at it during its protracted and violent lifetime so far.

This is not to say that as a species we should ignore any and all actions by mankind. There are definite areas where his destructive power has had more than a passing impact upon the environment. Hence my concern about the apparent journalistic bias of the world's media in this circus of claim and counter-claim.

When the only theme in town is that the "science-is-settled" we should all sit up and take notice of what is being said. One of the few things in life that is actually settled is that the shape of the wheel is best if it is perfectly round but nothing much else is, not even the Sun coming over the horizon tomorrow. Our expectation of that event happening is vested in previous experience - but settled it certainly isn't. Our galactic knowledge is still in its infancy and discoveries about Earth and its relationship with the Sun is an ongoing process. [11]

So why is it that we have ended up with what appears to be a conspiracy of silence and/or ridicule of any news that sheds light on world events that run counter to the declared 'the-science-is-settled' mindset? Even to *think* that there is an alternative to man's carbon dioxide emissions sending us into certain oblivion is unacceptable, to the extent that scientists are forcefully evicted from Press events in Bali. How has it come to that?

Greenpeace wrote to me saying that they are "a bit bored of" climate scepticism queries. Oh really?! Yeah, pretty boring stuff, the 'science-is-settled', the debate is over, so let's just drop the subject! Journalists of the world, the science relating to the effect of an extra 110ppmv of carbon dioxide in our atmosphere is nowhere near settled and the debate is nowhere near over, in fact, it hasn't yet begun. [12]

Many thousands of the world's scientists [13] including top specialists in climatology, meteorology, astrophysics, statisticians and other disciplines directly related to the understanding of our world and of, specifically, our climate have studied all aspects of the phenomena that are paraded in the 'settled-science' mantra of the UN's IPCC and nearly all that is paraded has been found to be far from settled. So far from settled in some areas, that the reported phenomena are actually on the opposite side of the debate.

Sooner or later, the sheer volume of scientific papers that disprove the 'settled-science-mindset' referred to above will topple the ivory tower occupied by those who, just like the mogul in 'Tomorrow Never Dies', wish to control the media and through them the masses. [14]

You, the Media, are responsible for reporting what goes on in the world. So start researching the articles referred to above and ready yourselves to be rid of the mind controllers holding sway over your duty to report the truth and not be complicit in the misrepresentations for the benefit of a few and to the detriment of millions.

For millions are more likely to suffer if you do not report on the true state of our planet and our climate and our collective responsibility to tackle the real problems in our world, of which carbon dioxide emissions reduction is not one.

Yours truly,

Hans Schreuder
Analytical Chemist
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[1] <http://www.globalwarmingheartland.org>

[2] <http://www.globalwarmingheartland.org/article.cfm?artId=22489>

[3] <http://www.globalwarmingheartland.org/article.cfm?artId=22485>

[4] http://www.ilovemycarbondioxide.com/letters/Free_speech.pdf

[5] <http://www.co2science.org/scripts/CO2ScienceB2C/education/reports/hansen/hansencritique.jsp>

[6] <http://www.thejakartapost.com/yesterdaydetail.asp?fileid=20071205.115>

[7] <http://www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html?id=164002>

[8] <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/6914175.stm>

[9] http://www.joelschwartz.com/pdfs/Schwartz_IPCC_SR_analysis_120407.pdf

[10] http://mclean.ch/climate/IPCC_review_updated_analysis.pdf

[11] http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2007/11dec_themis.htm

[12] <http://www.ilovemycarbondioxide.com/letters/openletter.pdf>

[13] http://www.iceagenow.com/Climatologists_Who_Disagree.htm

[14] http://nzclimatescience.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=178&Itemid=1