

Attack the argument, not the man!

Bob Arthy interviews Lord Monckton



Lord Monckton in the Summer-House at his estate in Highland Perthshire

BELIEVERS in catastrophic manmade global warming are finding it ever more difficult to attack the detailed, well-researched scientific arguments of those who have doubts about how much warming Man's activities will really cause.

Increasingly, the True-Believers attack the Doubting Thomases personally. These attacks *ad hominem* rather than *ad rem* – against the man rather than against his argument – have become noticeably more vicious as the science once thought to underpin the New Religion of “global warming” catastrophe unravels.

Perhaps the prime target of today's high priests of climatological illogic is Lord Monckton of Brenchley. Christopher Monckton was science and domestic policy adviser to Margaret Thatcher during her time as Britain's Prime Minister. Yet he is one of the very few senior members of the *classe politique* worldwide who is not frightened to say in public what many of them will only mutter in private: that “global warming” has been oversold.

In recent months, Lord Monckton has become the object of repeated, intense, venomous personal criticism spread over the Internet. I decided to investigate who was behind the criticism, and – more importantly – to what extent the criticism was justified.

Monday morning was quiet at the Reform Club in Pall Mall, London. Enter Lord Monckton, sporting the periodic table of the elements on his tie. “I'll be testing you on this later,” he announced, flashing a smile, his bright eyes seeking a response.

I decided to throw His Lordship what in the US is called a “curve-ball” and in the UK a “googly”. I asked him what he thought of Milankovich.

“The three Milankovich cycles that are thought to cause ice ages to come and go – changes in the eccentricity of the Earth's orbit, the obliquity of the Earth's axis with respect to the orbital plane, and the precession of the equinoxes induced by the libration or wobbling of the Earth's axis – were first proposed by an autodidact physicist called Croll.

Christopher Monckton began to impress with his enthusiasm, intellectual grasp and youthful energy and, as he talked about variations in cloud cover, which had been monitored by satellites, directly affecting surface warming and consequently our weather.

He explained that the human influence on climate was negligible during the first 200 years of the 315 years' warming that began in 1695. It was only within the last hundred years that our influence could have been significant, even in theory. Yet, he said, between 1983 and 2001 there had been a naturally-occurring global reduction in cloud cover, particularly at low altitude in the tropics. And that had caused more warming than humankind

over the period. When the cloud cover returned from 2001 onwards, global warming stopped.

I asked, “So when did you first conclude that global temperature changes were largely a natural phenomenon?”

Lord Monckton replied, “For 4,567 million years, since the Earth and its climate came into existence on a Tuesday (as Professor Ian Plimer puts it), humankind cannot have had any influence on the radical changes in global temperature that occurred. It is only since the Industrial Revolution that we could have had an influence.

“In the mid-1980s, while working for Margaret Thatcher, I began to see global warming mentioned in the scientific press. In those days it was not clear how much warming we might cause. I suggested that we should find out more. But it was my successor at 10 Downing Street, George Guise, who went to Chequers, the Prime Minister’s country residence near London, one bitterly cold October weekend to write the speech that announced the funding for what became the Hadley Centre for Forecasting. George and Margaret chuckled at the irony of throwing logs on the fire to keep themselves from freezing as they wrote about global warming.

“However, like Margaret herself, I have since come to realize that our initial concerns – which were proper, because at that time we did not have enough satellite observations to draw firm conclusions – had been misplaced.”

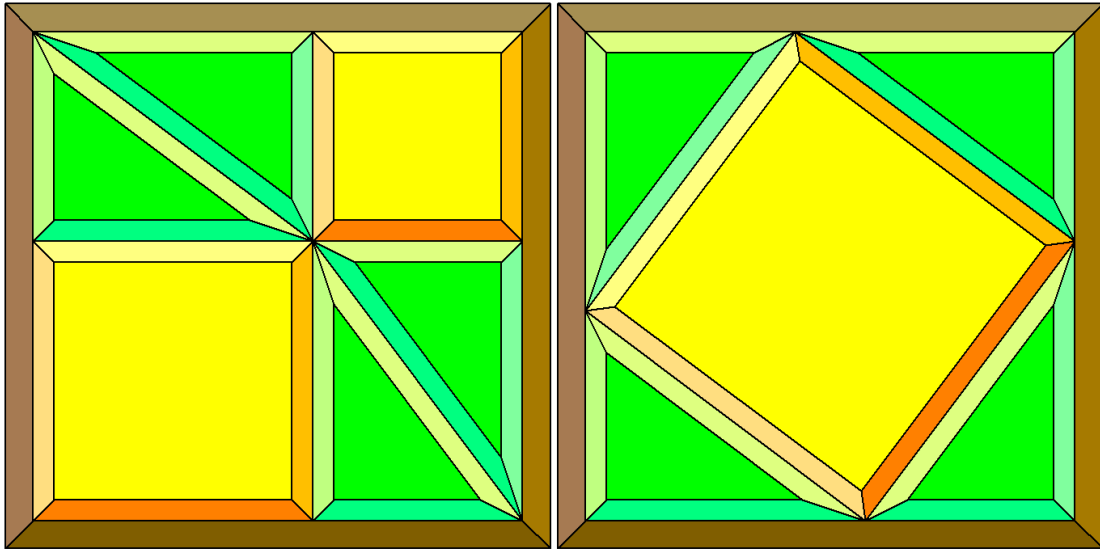
I asked Lord Monckton what qualifications he had to make pronouncements on climate change. “None,” he admitted, cheerfully, “but, then, nor does Al Gore. What is more, most scientists are as unqualified as I am to pronounce on “global warming”. So specialized are the sciences these days that a mere claim to be ‘a scientist’ does not give one the right to claim any expertise in climatological physics – unless, of course, one is a climatological physicist.

“However, one of my obsessions is mathematics and its applications to problem-solving, so I can read scientific papers because mathematics is the language of science. I have applied my mathematical knowhow to the climate problem. Result: as best I can make it out, the climate is not a problem – or, at least, our impact on it isn’t.”

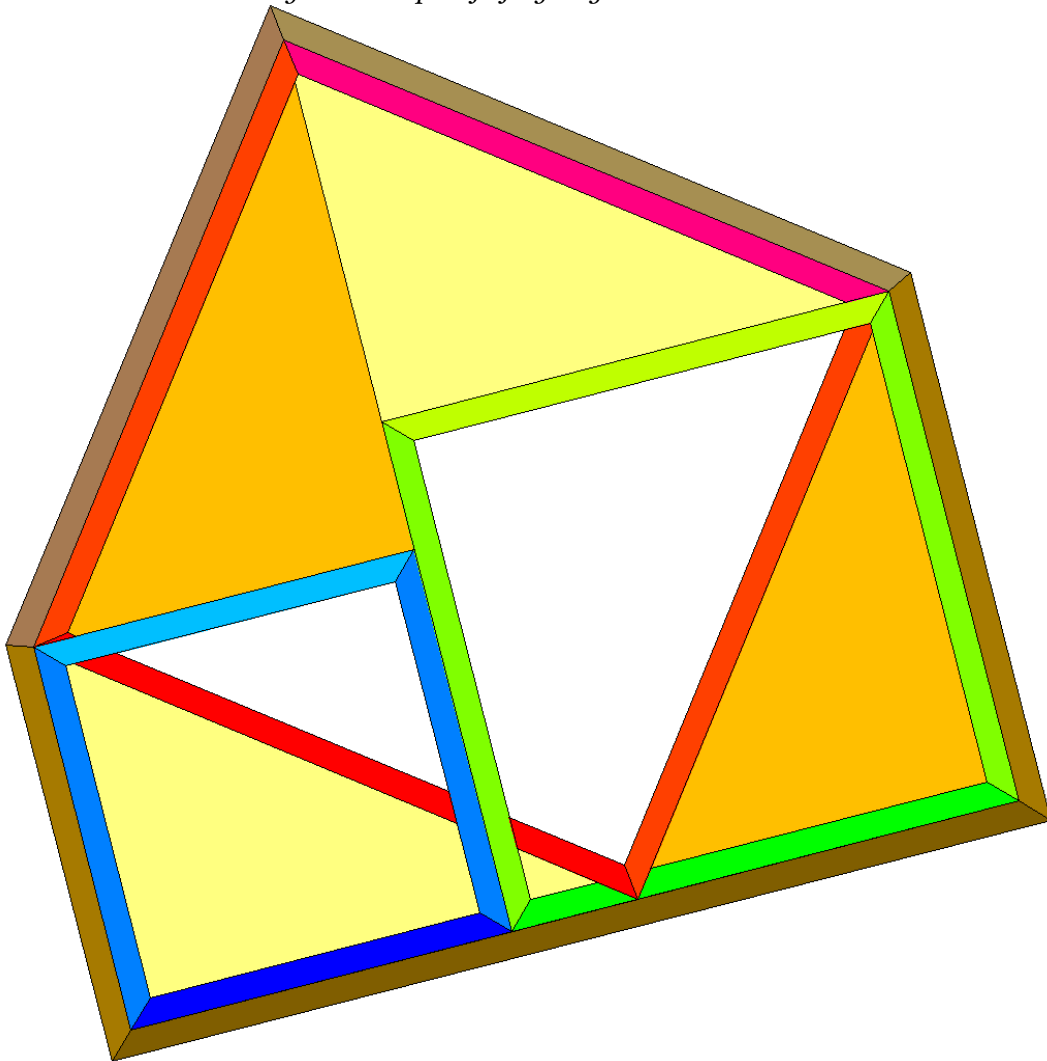
I wondered how it was that a scholar of Latin and Greek came to be interested in mathematics. Lord Monckton replied: “Compare Euclid’s proof of Pythagoras’ theorem with Aryabhatta’s proof. Schopenhauer described the former as ‘a triumph of perversity’: yet a child of eight can understand the latter. Mathematics is the language of the universe, and – used honestly and well – it has the power to make the complex simple, and to elevate the truth out of a mire of lies. It is one of my hobbies.

“The philosopher Santayana once said, ‘England is the paradise of eccentricities, hobbies and humours.’ To have no bees in one’s bonnet is to be

dead. To have only one is to be mad. To have many is to be sane – or at least to have the chance to be sane. I have many hobbies, and mathematics is one of them.”

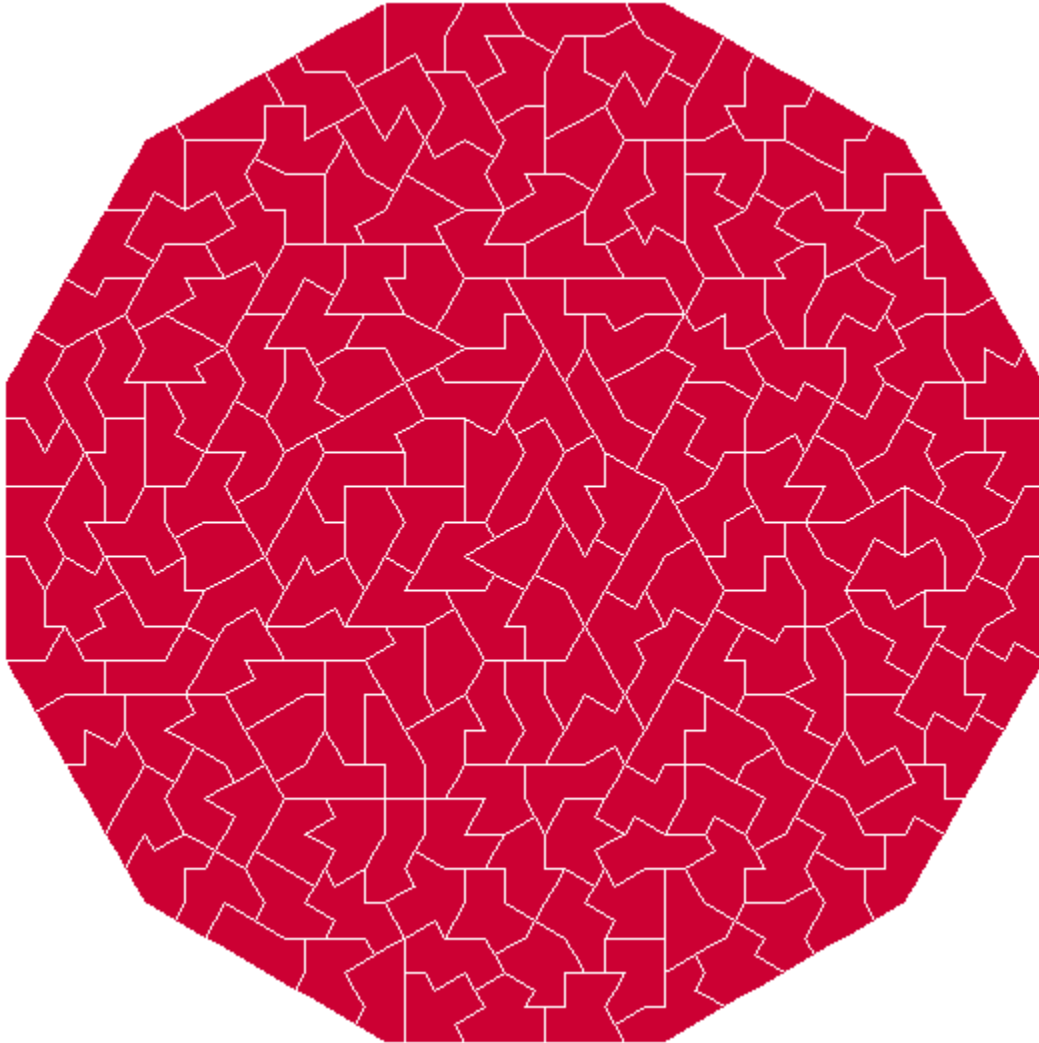


Aryabhata's proof of Pythagoras' Theorem ...



... and Monckton's proof by inclusion

This is the man who made a small fortune out of designing a mathematical jigsaw puzzle with 209 pieces and no picture, and a £1 million prize for the first solver. I asked him whether it was true, as numerous climate-extremist websites gleefully say, that he had once lied to the effect that he had had to sell his house to pay the prize for solving his *Eternity* puzzle.



Solution to the £1 million Eternity Puzzle, found by Oliver Riordan and Alex Selby

“No, it’s not true: or, rather, like so much of the venom that is directed at anyone who refuses to kneel to the Great Demon CO₂, it is maliciously spun. The truth is that without the income from the puzzle, which was substantial but could not last, I couldn’t afford to maintain a 67-room Regency palace with a dozen staff, 200 acres, three gate-lodges, an obelisk, a trout-lochan and a pheasant shoot.

“So I put the palace up for sale, genuinely, and told anyone who cared to listen, accurately, that I was selling it because I expected the puzzle to be solved quite quickly. Publicity stunt? Yes. Lie? No. The entirely honest but substantial publicity that I attracted certainly helped to sell not only the puzzle but also the palace. Only a custard-faced Communist would regard that double

success as objectionable. And it is a matter of record that I did indeed sell the palace, and I did indeed pay out the £1 million prize. Only the climate extremists regard it as somehow dishonourable that I actually met in full, and on time, my obligation to pay that large prize. The first puzzle was solved in 18 months: the second is still on sale after nearly four years, and no one has yet claimed the \$2 million prize.”



Crimonmogate, the Regency palace designed by Archibald Simpson

I wondered what had happened to change Lord Monckton’s mind about global warming. Did this not imply that he had got it wrong either first time around or second time around?

He replied: “No: my initial advice was that this one ought to be carefully watched, since the potential downside was large. However, late in 2006 the CEO of a boutique investment house in the City of London contacted me to ask my opinion about global warming, because his analysts were not sure whether to recommend putting clients heavily into ‘green’ investments.

“I spent a month looking into the question and sent in a 40-page report that concluded there was no longer any basis for alarm. One reason for my conclusion was the very large amount of self-evident tampering with the data by scientists, politicians and the media to try to make matters seem many times worse than they could possibly be. It was easy to prove they were lying, and it was legitimate to infer that the purpose of the lies was financial or

political self-interest, from which it followed that the probability that global warming had been oversold and was really a non-problem was high.

“The CEO telephoned and told me he had consulted a dozen people, and I was the only one who had concluded that any global warming caused by Man would be small, harmless and even beneficial. Why, he said, should he pay any attention to me?”

“I told him he shouldn’t pay the least attention to me. Science is done by rigorous measurement, observation, inspection, thought and mathematics, not by belief in one person or another, or in one viewpoint or another. I said that my report to him had contained all the essential evidence, data, graphs, models, and citations, and that I’d be happy to explain anything that wasn’t clear.”

Lord Monckton smiled. He does that a lot: indeed, one of the dimmer criticisms of him on the climate-extremist websites is that he tells jokes about the ‘serious’ subject of climate change. He went on: “The CEO said, ‘Don’t get me wrong: we’re going with you and not the other 11.’ I asked why. ‘Because you’re the only one of the 12 who provided any evidence whatsoever to back up your conclusions. All the rest simply told me there was a consensus and I simply had to *believe*.’”

“Consensus.” That’s a word that makes Lord Monckton see red. “Science,” he thunders, “is not, repeat *not*, done by consensus. Science is not a belief system. The notion that it is – widespread though it be – is an instance of another Aristotelian fallacy: this time the *argumentum ad populum*, or headcount fallacy. Just because you are told that many people say they think a thing is true, it does not logically follow that they say they think it is true, still less that they actually think it is true, still less again that it actually is true.”

“But surely all those august, respected scientific societies and eminent climatologists ...”

“Bah! That is yet another Aristotelian fallacy, the *argumentum ad verecundiam*, or reputation fallacy. Just because someone has a reputation, he does not necessarily deserve it, and, even if he does deserve it, he may not be speaking in accordance with it. As for Al Gore, who has not the slightest qualification in climate science, the previous British Government’s decision to appoint him as one of its climate change advisers is an instance of the *argumentum ad verecundiam* carried to its most absurd extreme.”

“Take another example of the *argumentum ad verecundiam*. George Monbiot, a zoologist who for some reason is let loose to scribble fashionably ignorant articles about climatology for the British Marxist scandal-sheet *The Guardian*, claims – but lacks – expertise in mathematics and climatological physics. Yet he falsely claims authority to preach about ‘global warming’ because he is ‘a scientist’. In 2006 he wrote a characteristically vicious attack on an article I’d written about the climate in *The Sunday Telegraph*, one of

Britain's biggest-selling Sunday newspapers. His article was partly a lying personal attack on me and partly a lying claim that he understood the fundamental equation of radiative transfer, which he had plainly never understood, even if – which seems doubtful – he had heard of it.

“Under pain of libel proceedings, I compelled *The Guardian* to print a letter of correction, exposing Monbiot for the hapless, canting ignoramus he is, and humiliating him utterly. He has never forgiven me. Until then he had got away with making himself out as knowledgeable about climate physics.

“Ah,” I said, “so that is why Monbiot seems to attack you in public just about every week?”

“Yes,” said Lord Monckton with a sigh, “George Monbiot is a loser, but not a good loser.”

I decided to put some of Monbiot's accusations to Lord Monckton, because my researches had indicated that most of the hostile material about him had originally come from Monbiot's pen. I began with Monbiot's accusation that Lord Monckton had awarded himself the Nobel Peace Prize and had had a prize-pin made for himself.

“The truth,” said Lord Monckton, “is much more entertaining. On the day of publication of the IPCC's fourth and latest Climate Assessment Report, in January 2007, I realized that the IPCC's bureaucrats had inserted a new table of figures that had not appeared in the final draft signed off by the two and a half thousand ‘scientists’ who were alleged to have contributed. As we now know, about one-third of the ‘scientists’ were in fact environmental lobbyists or journalists with no scientific qualifications whatever. But that's by the by.

“The new table – which contained two columns each with just four figures in them – did not even add up to within a factor of two of the right answer. The wretches had decided to give Al Gore a bit of backing by multiplying tenfold the observed contributions of the Greenland and Antarctic ice-sheets to sea-level rise over the previous 40 years. They'd done this by the simple but dishonest expedient of moving four decimal points one place to the right. But, like so many crooks, they failed to make their lie consistent by retotalling the two columns of the table. So I spotted the error at once and contacted four UN officials with a demand that the table – which had not been approved for insertion by the scientific contributors in the first place – should either be removed or at least corrected. It was furtively corrected, the units throughout the table were changed, and the table was then retitled, moved and given a different reference number, and the revised version was secretly put up on the Web a couple of days later, with no acknowledgement that the table had been wrong in the first place and, therefore, no acknowledgement of my contribution.

“I showed the defective table and its replacement during a seminar that I presented on the determination of climate sensitivity at the Physics Faculty of

Rochester University in Upper New York State. Afterwards, David Douglass, the Professor of Physics, shyly pulled out a presentation box from his pocket, opened it and pinned the Nobel Peace Prize badge to my lapel, saying that he had recovered some gold from a physics experiment 35 years previously and had kept it in a drawer, waiting for the right moment to use it. He had made the prize pin itself, and had plated it with the recovered gold. It was a charming gesture – at one level a joke, of course, but at another level quite serious: as David Douglass was kind enough to put it, I had indeed contributed significantly to the 2007 IPCC Report by identifying the error so quickly and by getting it put right, and I deserved to be recognized for it.”

It was only now that I began to realize just how courageous anyone like Lord Monckton has to be, when facing down a political, scientific and journalistic establishment which no longer possesses either the intellectual capacity or the moral fibre to recognize or tell the truth. I said so.

Lord Monckton snorted. “If it were only me they were after,” he said, “I’d begin to worry about whether they were right. But they do it all the time, and they do it to anyone who dares to question the New Religion. They have simply lost the ability to tell right from wrong, and that way lies the road to hell.

“Look up the Climategate emails on the Web, and see how savagely the global-warming profiteers dealt with Professor Douglass when he dared to publish a peer-reviewed paper that showed up their entire theory of catastrophic warming as nonsense. No fewer than 71 emails refer to David Douglass, and they do so in the most hate-filled, unscientific terms. And he is one of the most genuine, meticulous, kindly and well-qualified physicists in the world. They conspired with the editor of a scientific journal, who ought to have known better, and managed to delay David’s paper until they could cobble together a rebuttal – and it was one of the most artfully dishonest scientific rebuttals I have ever read. These people are filth.

“Fred Singer, one of David Douglass’ distinguished co-authors, had been the inventor of the US Satellite Weather Service. He had done real rocket science. Yet Wikipedia, which is totally under the control of a small group of hack “editors” who spend so much time vandalizing the biographical pages of anyone who dares to disagree with the supposed ‘consensus’ about catastrophic manmade global warming that I wonder which global-warming profiteer is paying them, repeatedly described Fred as a believer in the existence of Martians, without the slightest justification in fact.

“Professor Richard Lindzen, who knows more about the atmosphere than anyone else alive, has been harried and hounded by the Monbiots of this world for a third of a century. They say he supports the notion that smoking has no connection with cancer (he doesn’t, and never has), and they say he is paid by big oil (he isn’t, and never has been, but he once accepted modest expenses from the corporate sector to attend a single conference in Washington DC). And his house burned down in mysterious circumstances a

couple of years ago. So I'm by no means the only victim of the climate liars, and I've got off lightly compared to some of their victims."

"And what about Associate Professor John Abraham's astonishing 83-minute personal attack on your talk last October in St. Paul, Minnesota?"

Lord Monckton smiled again. "My lawyers tell me I must be very careful not to call him what I should really like to call him. No doubt he thought he would win some media headlines and some Brownie-points with his little Marxist friends if he had a go at me. And that has backfired on him. Now that I've rebutted his feeble-minded outpourings point by point, he's been forced radically to alter his attack on me, shortening it by ten minutes to take out some of the worst libels. He is now the laughing-stock of his students.

"He made the fatal mistake of lying repeatedly about what I had said in my talk, and then inviting third-party scientists to comment on what I had not in fact said, and then using their understandably hostile responses publicly against me. He did this over and over again, and then failed to withdraw the lies when reasonably and privately requested to do so. This one will have to go to court. We're quietly gathering the evidence. Sometimes a libel action is the only way to make liars face their lies, and pay for them. I've only actually pursued cases to court three times before in my life. I won all three."

"What about Monbiot's highlighting of the claim made by Abraham that you haven't written a single peer-reviewed science paper on any topic?"

"And how many peer-reviewed papers has the zoologist Monbiot written on climatological physics, the subject on which he so dismally and repeatedly erred when presuming to challenge me back in 2006? Zero, as far as I know. How many papers has Abraham published on that subject? Zero again. He's a professor of fluid mechanics, for Heaven's sake, and one or two points in his attack on me show he can't even do elementary arithmetic correctly.

"As for me, I published a substantial, heavily-mathematical 8000-word paper entitled *Climate Sensitivity Reconsidered* in the learned journal *Physics and Society* in July 2008, at the invitation of the editors, who had been given my name by a senior scientist at the Argonne National Laboratory. The paper was reviewed, in detail, by Professor Alvin Saperstein of Wayne State University, who was then the review editor of the journal. I am not going to get into semantics about whether or not Professor Saperstein's detailed review constituted "peer review": but it was certainly the standard reviewing practice of the journal at the time, and I was able to answer every one of the Professor's queries, in detail, which is the point of peer review.

Abstract

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2007) concluded that anthropogenic CO₂ emissions probably caused more than half of the “global warming” of the past 50 years and would cause further rapid warming. However, global mean surface temperature has not risen since 1998 and may have fallen since late 2001. The present analysis suggests that the failure of the IPCC’s models to predict this and many other climatic phenomena arises from defects in its evaluation of the three factors whose product is climate sensitivity:

1. Radiative forcing ΔF ;
2. The no-feedbacks climate sensitivity parameter κ ; and
3. The feedback multiplier f .

Some reasons why the IPCC’s estimates may be excessive and unsafe are explained. More importantly, the conclusion is that, perhaps, there is no “climate crisis”, and that currently-fashionable efforts by governments to reduce anthropogenic CO₂ emissions are pointless, may be ill-conceived, and could even be harmful.

The abstract of Lord Monckton’s paper in Physics and Society

“I have also published papers on climate change in the *UK Quarterly Economic Bulletin*, and in the *Journal of the Chartered Insurance of London*, and I have two further papers – *Global Brightening and Climate Sensitivity*, and *A cost-effectiveness metric for climate mitigation* – currently in draft. I have given university-level lectures and faculty-level seminars on climate sensitivity, and have led international scientific panels on this subject, which is more than can be said for either Monbiot or Abraham. I have thrice testified on climate science and economics in front of the US Congress.

“In August 2010 I shall be addressing the annual seminar on planetary emergencies held by the World Federation of Scientists – one of only a small number of laymen ever to have been invited to make a presentation to that august body on an explicitly scientific subject. This winter I have been asked to give the keynote opening address to a group of climate scientists, politicians and business leaders at a two day high-level briefing on climate change at Downing College, Cambridge. I’m not a climate scientist, and don’t claim to be. So why should I have a string of peer-reviewed papers to my name?”

I moved right along. “Is it true that it was mainly your intervention in publishing ‘35 Inconvenient Truths’ in October 2007, pointing out the errors in Gore’s movie, that bought the Gore bandwagon to a sudden halt?”

Lord Monckton smiled again. “You may think that, but I couldn’t possibly comment. But he was finished, and he knew it, when our High Court found nine inconveniently serious errors in his sci-fi comedy horror movie. He’s still making a lot of money out of it, though. This May, the Singapore government paid him – get this – US\$300,000, as well as first-class air-fares and five-star hotel accommodation, for what they tell me was a rambling, limp, dull, repetitive, inaccurate, uninspiring 45-minute presentation. They’d quite like their money back. I was invited to speak at the same event, provided that I accepted a fee of zero and paid my own way to and from Singapore. If you want to get rich, don’t be a climate sceptic.”

Lord Monckton paused, and looked at me as if straight to camera. “I am still waiting to debate with Al Gore the inconsistencies, exaggerations and

distortions that litter his movie *An Inconvenient Truth*. Al baby, you can run but you can't hide. I'm coming after you, and I'm going to get you."

CHALLENGE DEBATE

GLOBAL WARMING IS
NOT A CRISIS



FOR VS AGAINST

Lord Monckton
Scottish Peer, former advisor
to Margaret Thatcher, and
international business consultant

Al Gore
Vice President of the US
1993-2001, author,
An Inconvenient Truth

For more information about this challenge debate and global warming,
please go to www.globalwarmingheartland.org.

The Heartland Institute is a 23-year-old national nonprofit organization devoted to discovering,
developing, and promoting free-market solutions to public policy problems. For more information
please visit our web site at www.heartland.org.

One of a series of advertisements challenging Gore to debate

This is the measure of the man. For 25 years, until just two years ago, he was suffering from a rare, life-threatening condition that had left him bedridden for years at a time and unable to get upstairs without crawling. Intrigued by what he knew about the climate change debate, he daily focused his mind on applying his love of mathematics and scientific method to rigorously questioning many of the popular anthropogenic assumptions. At the same

time he designed the *Eternity* puzzles to give his beloved wife some capital in case he died, and developed the medication that eventually cured him and may yet cure many of the world's most intractable infections.

He was fortunate to have both the strength of intellect and the personality to defeat the monster that was threatening his life and the bigger monsters that were, before he entered the fray, threatening to inflict upon us the New-Age superstition of anthropogenic global warming, at great cost to the freedom, prosperity, and democracy of the West. And, all the time, he was having to endure the *ad-hominem* lies of the intellectual pygmies who find it more comfortable to stay with the common herd than to jump over the hedge and think for themselves.

Almost 2500 years ago, Aristotle codified the dozen logical fallacies that no rational disputant should use. Among these was the *argumentum ad hominem* – the fallacy of seeking to discredit a man's argument by attacking him personally rather than attacking what he is saying. Over the past few years Christopher Monckton has been badly maligned with baseless or insubstantial allegations, more often than not of a cruelly personal nature – a few of which this interview has put to the sword.

His adversaries have shown themselves to be either charlatans or intellectual inadequates when trying unsuccessfully to counter his research – every personal attack directed at him merely serving to prove his point. The Lilliputians have tried their best to tie him down and silence him, but the Climate Change Giant has arisen. Christopher is made of sterner stuff. He is a man driven to explain the truths that he has found. That is why he is one of the few laymen taken seriously on the climate problem. So, *viva* Lord Monckton!