

The Great Global Warming Swindle

By Jamie Glazov
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Frontpage Interview's guest today is Martin Durkin, the producer of the documentary *The Great Global Warming Swindle*.



FP: Martin Durkin, welcome to Frontpage Interview.

Durkin: Thanks so much for having me

FP: What is the science behind global warming theory?

Durkin: Lousy. If you examine the mountain of IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) literature on this, you'll find the vast majority of it concerns the possible (projected) effects of climate change. Most of this is highly suspect and does not address the central question of whether humans are causing the climate to change. The climate has always changed. Climate change is nothing new. The question of whether we are having anything to do about it, of course, rests on the CO2 question.

FP: Ok tell us about CO2.

Durkin: CO2 is a very small gas in the atmosphere. It is vital of course – without it we wouldn't be here. But it's small. It's not at all the most important greenhouse gas, and greenhouse gases themselves, and the 'greenhouse effect', form only one small part of the earth's climate system (and not a very well understood part either). There is no correlation between CO2 and temperature on any significant timescale, except where you find, in ice core data, CO2 levels being influenced by temperature levels (there's a time lag between the two phenomena). Even global warmers admit that, for CO2 to make any difference, there would need to be some mechanism to amplify its effect in the atmosphere. No such amplifier has been shown to exist. They haven't even been able to demonstrate how one might work in theory (the trouble is the only conceivable amplifier would be water vapour, and water vapour makes clouds, which are rather famous for their cooling effect – at least the low level ones).

So what are we left with? Temperature has risen, slightly, falteringly and gradually for about 150 years or so (even 'warmer' scientists can't claim that this started because of us). The period

before this rise has long been known as a 'Little Ice Age', from which we are evidently making a welcome recovery. We only started pumping out CO2 properly in the postwar boom, but what did temperatures do? In the postwar period they fell, till about the mid-70s. Then they went up again (just like they did at the beginning of the 20th Century, and then for the past ten years they've more or less flat-lined, decreasing slightly. Where is the evidence that humans are changing the climate? This is nothing but prejudice. It is not serious science.

FP: If the science is so faulty, why does the culture at large rely on it so much? What political underpinnings are involved in this scare? Who profits?

Durkin: There are people who profit, and that is part of the story, but I think not the most important part. I have followed green politics for a while now. I was asked to make a documentary series for Channel 4 in the UK more than a decade ago (they got very cross with me) so I've been sucked into it in a way. It is transparently obvious that the greens sit squarely in the tradition of Romanticism. Like the romantics, they hate industry, love nature, idealise peasant life, they think capitalism is wicked, they think people in modern society lead depraved shallow lives and have forgotten the true value of things, they don't like cars or supermarkets or lots of proles taking cheap long-haul holidays, etc, etc.

FP: What is Romanticism?

Durkin: Romanticism is in essence anti-Capitalist. Not in the sense of traditional Marxism. The Marxists wanted to go forwards not backwards. They wanted to build bigger factories than the capitalists, not folksy medieval craft workshops. No. Romanticism was a kind of reactionary anti-capitalism. And it was the ideology and aesthetic worldview of those people who lost most, or gained least from capitalism. I think it's the same today. In Europe, the toffs (Prince Charles and his gang) are green because they have lost their position in society. The intellectuals – teachers, lecturers, scientists are green because they don't have the status they used to. (Not long ago, a professor would have been someone important, had a big house, maids etc). These days, plumbers make more money.

It's not easy to explain this properly in a few lines, but this I think is the real basis for all those anti-modern green prejudices.

They hated all the factories and cars long before global warming came along. The importance of global warming is it linked what otherwise would have been a disparate bunch of prejudices and gave them some moral impetus.

So you can say that scientists profit from global warming (grants etc), but that's the icing on the cake.

You can easily tell that global warming is really a political idea rather than a scientific one. In any gathering in polite society you can tell who will be 'pro-global warming' and who will be sceptical, in the same way as you can guess who will hate George Bush, or who will be sympathetic to Sarah Palin.

Go into a party of lefties in New York and tell them the science on global warming doesn't stack up. They don't say, 'Good Lord, what a relief, I thought we were in for it.' Instead they get very cross with you. They're terribly attached to their apocalypse and don't take kindly to people rocking the boat.

FP: So tell us how you have rocked the boat and what reactions you have received for doing so.

Durkin: It started more than ten years ago when Sara Ramsden, who was head of science programmes at Channel 4 in the UK, asked me to make a documentary series exploring the scientific basis for environmentalist arguments. The result was a thing called 'Against Nature'. The series argued that there was no rational basis for the green attack on industrial society (which is getting cleaner rather than dirtier, in which forests have long been expanding rather than contracting, etc.) or for their loathing and fear of population increases in the developing world, the spectre of 'resource depletion' etc. In short the scare stories were without scientific foundation. They were aesthetic or political rather than rational.

This upset the greens to no end. Then another head of science programmes at Channel 4, a chap called Charles Furneaux, invited me to make a feature-length film about genetic modification. This was in the middle of the green scare about 'Frankenstein food'. Once again, we found there was no scientific basis whatsoever for the scare (everyone knew there wasn't, but no-one seemed to be saying it, at least not on TV). They didn't like this film either.

Then another head of science at Channel 4, Hamish Mykura, suggested I make another feature-length film on global warming. Hamish knew I considered global warming to be yet another daft green scare – perhaps the mother of all green scares.

FP: And it was easy to rock the boat on global warming?

Durkin: Very easy. You just look at the science. It's not there. All the data we have (real life data) contradicts their absurd models. But there was something else that upset them. They like to depict anyone who disagrees with them as corrupt. It was quite obvious in the film that this was nothing more than a very unpleasant attempt at censorship. Worse than this, they like to pose as radicals, with the best interests of poor people at heart. What we did in the film was to mention the fact that a very large section of the world's population still does not enjoy the benefits of electricity. And we described in simple terms what this meant. These people burn wood or dried dung in their homes to cook their food. They have no artificial light or heat in their homes (huts). Their wretched fires give off horrific amounts of smoke and eat up fuel (trees). When it gets dark they must sleep. When it gets cold they shiver (it gets cold in Africa too you know). And of course no electricity also means there are no fancy things like water purification plants.

The death toll from the resulting smoke and bad water is horrendous. With malaria (shall we get into the successful green campaign against DDT?), these are among the biggest causes of death in the world. Several million children under five die each year from dysentery and respiratory diseases, many millions of women too (who do the cooking), all for want of something we in the West take for granted. (No electricity also means you use up a lot of trees – upsetting if you're one of those nasty people who rate trees over humans. Indeed, it's the first world where the forests are expanding so rapidly – which the greens always forget to mention).

Getting electricity is a matter of life and death for about a third of the world's population. Africa has coal and oil, but the greens say these must be left untouched. This is barbaric. To try to restrict the world's poorest people to using the most expensive and unreliable forms of electrical generation (wind and solar) is effectively to tell them they can't have electricity.

I have filmed quite a bit in poor countries. The problems they face are obvious and upsetting. This more than anything makes me feel angry at the green movement. They kill people, they keep them in misery.

This, as much as the sober assessment of global warming theory, rocked the boat.

The greens have hated me ever since Against Nature. It doesn't bother me at all. I regard them as the lowest of the low.

FP: There seems to be a mental illness of some kind, associated with the leftist vision in general. They almost don't care about reality at all, but only their political faith. The moment one cause is discredited they just move on to the next. How do you diagnose it? It's a hatred of one's own society, a hatred of oneself, or what? I know you have already labelled anti-capitalism as one ingredient, but please expand on the mindset here a bit.

Durkin: I remember being young and foolish and a leftie. Reality was always a problem. Communist countries were clearly dreadful. The working class was obviously a heck of lot better off (instead of poorer) and they were not convinced by the arguments of middle-class Marxist-types (very sensibly). In fact the working class has always been a huge let-down to the left ... as it is now to the greens.

Capitalism had delivered on a truly spectacular scale. This called for a bit of fancy footwork in theory terms. Hence reviving 'alienation' as a theme (Marcuse's 'One-Dimensional Man' etc). Yes, we were all richer and healthier and more educated etc under capitalism, but we were more spiritually shallow. This drove the Marxists into the Romantic camp. Peasants are 'whole', whereas industrial workers are alienated from their 'true selves'. It also led to post-structuralism. If Reason told us that capitalism had been a resounding success, then reason itself must be suspect. Rationalism was 'just another narrative'. The overuse and misuse of the term 'narrative' reflects the heavy influence of muddle-headed English professors in this process. The left had lost the argument, so logical argument itself was to be attacked.

It does not upset the left, or the greens at all, that they are proved wrong again and again and again. They are motivated by things other than Reason. Sadly, this is true also of people who, professionally, are meant to be intellectuals.

Capitalism has delivered a descent education to very large numbers for the first time in human history -- despite the state being so incompetent in this area. The market value of intellectuals -- especially post-structuralist English critics -- is not high. No wonder they're not fond of the market. Academic scientists too, I find, are often left-leaning, and you can see this in the complexion of support for 'global warming'.

I think we have a battle on our hands. An intellectual and moral battle -- there is a lot at stake. And, sadly, too few of us recognise it, or understand where the battle-lines are drawn. To fight for the values of the enlightenment properly -- the interlocking values of Freedom, Reason and Progress -- we need to understand fully why they are so desperately important. We also need to understand properly the character and nature of the opposition.

The waters are muddy at the moment. We need make them clear.

FP: What are your future plans?

Durkin: A book. And more films when I can persuade someone to stump up the cash.

FP: Martin Durkin, thank you for joining Frontpage Interview.

Durkin: Thank you again for having me. I've enjoyed myself.

Jamie Glazov is Frontpage Magazine's managing editor. He holds a Ph.D. in History with a specialty in U.S. and Canadian foreign policy. He edited and wrote the introduction to David Horowitz's Left Illusions. He is also the co-editor (with David Horowitz) of The Hate America Left and the author of Canadian Policy Toward Khrushchev's Soviet Union (McGill-Queens University Press, 2002) and 15 Tips on How to be a Good Leftist. Email him at jglazov@rogers.com