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WHY HAVE SCIENTISTS SUCCUMBED TO POLITICAL CORRECTNESS?

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Throughout the world, scientists are prominently involved in seeking solutions to the major global problems such as global climate change and the growing inadequacy of energy supplies. They present their writings in publications ranging from newspapers to refereed scientific journals, but with a few rare exceptions, on one point they all replace objectivity with “political correctness.” In their writings the scientists identify the cause of the problems as being growing populations. But their recommendations for solving the problems caused by population growth almost never include the recommendation that we advocate stopping population growth. Political Correctness dictates that we do not address the current problem of overpopulation in the U.S. and the world.

We can demonstrate that the Earth is overpopulated by noting the following:

A SELF-EVIDENT TRUTH

If any fraction of the observed global warming can be attributed to the actions of humans, then this, by itself, constitutes

clear and compelling evidence
that the human population, living as we do,
has exceeded the Carrying Capacity of the Earth,
a situation that is clearly not sustainable.

As a consequence it is AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH
that all proposals or efforts
at the local, national or global levels
to solve the problems of global warming
are serious intellectual frauds
if they fail to advocate that we address
the fundamental cause of global warming
namely overpopulation.

We can demonstrate that the U.S. is overpopulated by noting that we now (2008) import something like 60% of the petroleum that we consume, around 15% of the natural gas that we consume and about 20% of the food we eat. Because the U.S. population increases by something over 3 million per year, all of these fractions are increasing. Natural gas production in North America has peaked in spite of the drilling of hundreds of new gas wells annually. In a nutshell, the U.S. in 2008 is unsustainable.

Let's look at two prominent examples of this political correctness. The book, "An Inconvenient Truth" (1) was published to accompany Al Gore's wonderful film by the same name. On page 216 Gore writes; "The fundamental relationship between our civilization and the ecological system of the Earth has been utterly and radically transformed by the powerful convergence of three factors. The first is the population explosion..."

It's clear that Gore understands the role of overpopulation in the genesis of global climate change. The last chapter in the book has the title, "So here's what you personally can do to help solve the

climate crisis.” The list of 36 things starts with “Choose energy-efficient lighting” and runs through an inventory of all of the usual suspects without ever calling for us to address overpopulation!

As a second example, in the *Clearinghouse Newsletter* (2) we read the statement, “Human Impacts on Climate” from the Council of the American Geophysical Union. The title recognizes the human component of climate change which we note is roughly proportional to the product of the number of people and their average per capita annual resource consumption. The last paragraph of the A.G.U. statement starts with the sentence, “With climate change, as with ozone depletion, the human footprint on Earth is apparent.” The rest of the paragraph suggests what must be done, and it’s all the standard boilerplate. “Solutions will necessarily involve all aspects of society. Mitigation strategies and adaptation responses will call for collaborations across science, technology, industry, and government.” Etc., Etc., Etc... There is no mention of addressing the overpopulation which the statement recognizes is the cause of the problems.

A few years ago I wrote an article calling the attention of the physics community to this shortcoming.(3) To my amazement, most of the letters to the editor responding to my article supported the politically correct unscientific point of view. (4), (5)

Many journalists look to the scientists for advice. The scientists won’t talk about overpopulation, so the journalists and the reading public can easily conclude that overpopulation is not a problem. As a result, we have things such as the cover story in *TIME Magazine*, April 9, 2007, “The Global Warming Survival Guide: 51 Things You Can Do to Make a Difference.” The list contained such useful recommendations as “Build a Skyscraper,” (No. 9, Pg. 74) but not one of the 51 recommendations deals with the need to address overpopulation!

What's one to do when scientists and political leaders demonstrate their understanding of the fact that overpopulation is the main cause of these gigantic global problems, yet the scientists' recommendations for dealing with the problems never call for addressing overpopulation?

- (1) Al Gore, *An Inconvenient Truth, The Planetary Emergency of Global Warming and What We Can Do About It*. Rodale Press, Emmaus, PA, 2006
- (2) Teachers Clearinghouse for Science and Society Education Newsletter, Winter 2008, Pg. 19
- (3) A.A. Bartlett, "Thoughts on Long-Term Energy Supplies: Scientists and the Silent Lie," *Physics Today*, July 2004, Pgs. 53-55
- (4) Letters: *Physics Today*, November 2004, Pgs. 12-18
- (5) Letters: *Physics Today*, April 2006, Pgs. 12-15