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## **ALARMISM**

Alarmism about the climate seems to be reaching a crescendo with the vaunted United Nations Climate Change 2009 convention in Copenhagen on December 7-18. The buildup to the great event included a countdown. Beginning in August, headlines heralded that there were only *"100 days to save the climate"*. In China, Greenpeace had ice sculptures of children carved. These were set out in the sun to melt, representing the inevitable fate of glaciers. That is unless the conference resulted in a massive increase in taxation and regulation all altruistically designed to "save the planet".

The countdown to prevent disaster continued. Perhaps overwhelmed by emotion, a mid October story headlined: *"50 Days to Copenhagen: The Countdown Has Begun!"*

Other exclamations included: *"Sun Going Down on Climate Skeptics"*, Prime Minister Gordon Brown added to the momentum with *"There are only 50 days to save the planet."*

The "countdown" theater continued into the middle of November as adulation for the leader, Al Gore, soared: *"He's president of the people, he's president of the planet. And the work he is doing is more important than any other work that can possibly be done."* This was a straight report from the Palm Beach Post News of November 14.

With virtually unlimited budgets the days up to "Copenhagen" have been magnificently orchestrated towards the full ambition of authoritarians – one world government, which is mentioned in the pre-meeting literature.

How much will be accomplished remains to be seen, but the wide-publicity (at last) given to "cooking" the books by the CRU-IPCC nexus is causing some concern amongst global taxpayers. But not amongst the faithful. The logic behind the notion that increased atmospheric carbon "causes" global warming has been strained as has been the "evidence" that temps are warmer now than during the Mediaeval Warm Period. Even those inside the movement recently complained that not anticipating the last decade of cooling was a "travesty" of climate research.

On the latter, Mother Nature is saying that the science is "settled" but she does not agree with alarmists. Unfortunately, the movement continues to insist that warming, for the first time in man's history, is a threat.

Bereft of any foundation in science convictions about AGW have become religious catechism. Even if Copenhagen delivered all that the faithful could hope for, there could be a post-mania let down.

Historically, the warming mania is another example of millenarianism, which is described as *"The belief by a religious, social, or political movement in a coming major transformation of society, after which all things will be changed, with the true believers being rewarded."*

There have been a number of examples and a couple in the 19th Century are instructive. The 1840s to the 1860s was a period of social and financial turmoil and one of the world's leading economists, Stanley Jevons, had a personal vision that the Western world was going to run out of coal.

Civilization, as it was appreciated in 1865, would collapse:

The impatience of his persuasion is shown with *"I am convinced that this question must be before long force itself upon our attention with painful urgency."*

Then he flatters his readers with *"This is a question of almost religious importance which needs the separate study and determination of every intelligent person."*

Based upon diligent research, including coal reserve calculations down to the 4000-foot depth, Jevons sold books and gained fame. Grave concerns about threats to civilization soon faded from the front pages as concerns about the "Great Depression" that began in 1873 changed the headlines.

A charismatic leader with more lasting effect was William Miller. Millar had many accomplishments that led him to becoming a militant Baptist fundamentalist. In the 1820s he became convinced that scripture revealed that the *"Second coming of Christ is near, even at the door, even within twenty-one years, – on or before 1843"*. His vision spread such that by 1840 it became known as Millerism, and in the hands of an able and experienced publisher it grew from little-known regional movement into a national campaign.

Eventually his calculations led to an exact date and the New York **Herald**, always in search of sensationalism, asked Miller how the world will end on March 21, 1843. The response was *"By fire"*. This passed without incident and another date was set for April 18, 1844. Thousands of the faithful gathered on hill tops to be nearer for the journey to heaven. With extended deadlines, followers amounted to more than 500,000 and Miller grew prosperous on the lecture circuit as well as by selling tracts and "ascension" robes, designed for Armageddon.

Eventually, the date was set for October 22, 1844, and with the sunrise the day became known as the *"Great Disappointment"*.

This was a time of political turmoil in Europe and in America it was a time of utopian dreams as well as the beginnings of "Manifest Destiny", which included the idea of spreading and defending democracy.

The latter has been eclipsed by Washington's recent urge to participate in a number of statist causes, of which climate change is extremely authoritarian. Underneath the idealism of saving the planet has been demands to impose regulation in exchange for taxation.

Alex de Tocqueville wrote a classic definition of the baseness of political idealism in his **Recollections**: *"Society was cut in two: those who had nothing united in common envy and those who had anything united in common terror."* Other than paying handsome perks to participants the thrust of Kyoto and lately Copenhagen is the god-like compulsion to redistribute someone else's earnings.

Due to the initiative of those with a regard for individual freedom, America and Europe have dealt with totalitarian regimes before. The late 1800s and into the early 1900s was a golden age of classical liberalism.

Then international socialism became the intellectual and political buzz. Through popular reform this was thrown out in the 1980s, as symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Subsequently, socialism could no longer be peddled by intellectuals and control freaks moved into global warming. These forces are now dedicated to building what could be called the Copenhagen Wall at the same time as a voluntary movement of individuals in the U.S. is at last getting in the mood to tear down another political wall.

The Friends of Science site [www.friendsofscience.org](http://www.friendsofscience.org) was started by a few who in a number of forms had studied earth sciences, who had had it with the nonsense of government climate change "science". It is kept going by voluntary donations.

Their "Myths/Facts" section provides a brief review.

<http://www.friendsofscience.org/index.php?id=3>