

Mark L. Melcher Publisher
melcher@thepoliticalforum.com

Stephen R. Soukup Editor
soukup@thepoliticalforum.com

THEY SAID IT

I've never seen anything like this. This is bigger than Kennedy. [Obama] comes along, and he seems to have the answers. This is the New Testament. This is surprising . . . I have to tell you, you know, it's part of reporting this case, this election, the feeling most people get when they hear Barack Obama's speech. My, I felt this thrill going up my leg. I mean, I don't have that too often. No, seriously. It's a dramatic event. He speaks about America in a way that has nothing to do with politics. It has to do with the feeling we have about our country. And that is an objective assessment.

Chris Matthews, MSNBC, February 6 and 12, 2008.

In this Issue

Could Barack Be a Mere Mortal?

Too Important for the Truth,
Redux.

COULD BARACK BE A MERE MORTAL?

In the past couple of weeks, the nation appears to have moved slightly in the direction of an eventual recovery of some degree of political sanity. Now don't break out the champagne quite yet. As we said, this was only a slight forward movement. But, as the saying goes, the longest journey begins with a single step. And if you don't like that one try, even a small candle is welcome on a dark night.

So what is this small step, you ask? Well, we are referring to the possibility that a significant faction of the nation's left wing establishment appears to be entertaining the notion that Barack is, *mon dieu*, not the Messiah. To wit:

On November 19, Democratic insider, columnist, and author Elizabeth Drew introduced the heresy in an article in *Politico*, in which she described "a palpable mood change in Washington that could signify that Barack Obama is in deeper trouble than he was even a week ago."

Expanding on this theme, she noted that a "critical mass of influential people who once held big hopes for his [Barack's] presidency" have begun "to wonder whether they had misjudged the man. Most significant, these doubters now find themselves with a new reluctance to defend Obama at a phase of his presidency when he needs defenders more urgently than ever." Then she added that these people are beginning to conclude that Barack isn't "the person of integrity and even classiness they had thought."

Drew's article was followed on November 22 by a piece in Tina Brown's *Daily Beast* by Les Gelb, a long-time, well respected member of Washington's liberal foreign policy establishment, in which Gelb discussed a "disturbing amateurishness in managing America's power." In explaining this charge, Gelb adds that "on top

of the inexcusably clumsy review of Afghan policy and the fumbling of Mideast negotiations, the message for Mr. Obama should be clear: He should stare hard at the skills of his foreign-policy team and, more so, at his own dominant role in decision-making. Something is awry somewhere, and he's got to fix it."

Then, on November 25, NPR (a.k.a. National Public Radio), the nation's citadel of liberal opinion, chose "Obama's charisma, where did he leave it?" as the topic of the day on its popular "Talk of the Nation" show, hosted by "progressive" Neal Conan. The session opened with Conan asking panelist Fred Barbash, a senior editor for the above mentioned *Politico*, whether the topic of the day was chosen because of Barack's drop in approval rating to 49%.

To which, Barbash replied: "Well, less the approval rating than some of the commentary you're seeing, even from people who are staunch Obama supporters - a couple of columns in the *New York Times*, Maureen Dowd this morning wondering sort of what became of the man who they voted for and who was so inspiring on the campaign trail."

And finally, last Saturday, November 28, the deputy editor of the uber-liberal *Washington Post's* editorial page, Colbert King, spoke of "the fear that is growing among some of the president's most ardent supporters: that Barack Obama, the fresh, think-outside-the-box leader brimming with energy and new ideas, has entered the White House and gone native." Then this Pulitzer Prize winning writer wrote the following syntactically challenged charge: "Suspicion is spreading that Obama has lost some of the character that made him special; that he has taken on the ways of this town, thinking in conventional terms dictated by a brain trust and self-serving, entrenched Washington interests that make this city go 'round.'"

Now, it is important to understand when considering these attitudinal changes about Barack among some members of the left wing establishment that none involve an abandonment of liberalism, or even liberal leanings. In fact, we would be willing to bet the farm that not a single one of these people, or any of the

disillusioned masses to whom they refer, has changed, or is going to change parties or has greatly modified his or her left wing political ideology. Their collective disenchantment has to do with Barack, "the man."

What we are witnessing here is a whole lot of folks experiencing a painful recovery from a mental illness commonly known as willful ignorance, which is defined by Wiktionary, the poor person's reference library, as a "bad faith decision to avoid becoming informed about something so as to avoid having to make undesirable decisions that such information might prompt." We base this supposition on the belief that this crowd's lack of awareness of Barack's incompetence had to have been willful; that these individuals are too smart and too sophisticated to have closely considered the facts and decided, based on these facts, that Barack would make a crackerjack president and commander in chief.

We are two country boys, unstudied and intellectually undistinguished, who have never been exposed to the bright lights of Washington society or to the rarified air of modern journalism. We sit in our basements, in our pajamas, writing for a rapidly diminishing audience, stopping only occasionally to reflect on the unhappy fate of our patron saint, Bartleby, the scrivener. Yet, just 20 days into the Barack presidency we figured out, all by ourselves we might add, that Barack Obama is a loser. We put it this way.

Someone needs to say this, so here goes. This guy in the White House is, to borrow a line from a famous Stevie Smith poem, not waving but drowning. He needs help, and he needs it fast. He needs a Karl Rove, a Dick Morris, a James Baker, a Howard Baker, or some shaman-like gray beard in the mold of Obi-Wan Kenobi, who can teach him the ways of the world, in a hurry. We are not going to try to defend this assertion. As an old advertisement for the *Washington Post* used to say, "If you don't get, you don't get it."

And we repeated the same thought in April.

... that he is simply not intellectually up to the task of being president of the world's last remaining superpower; that his knowledge of history, economics, sociology, political philosophy, and even human nature is so limited, his association with the denizens of the radical left so long-lived, and his disdain for American exceptionalism so deeply-seated that he is incapable of seeing the world as it is; that he, like Plato's "prisoners," can react only to his narrow understanding of shadows on a wall.

It is possible, of course, that some of the fallen angels mentioned above could regain their faith in "the one," in response to even a small gesture by him – a fey wave of the hand, for example, a *bon mot*, or one more heart-felt apology for America's wickedness to a despotic leader of some socialist cesspool of a nation. But we doubt it. Why? Because while it is not unusual for troubled politicians to recover their lost popularity, fallen Gods rarely regain their divine stature. After all, what good are Gods if their performance is no better than that of mere mortals?

Our guess is that these newly enlightened liberals will continue to publicly support Barack and his party, but will begin the search for another Messiah to follow. Who knows, perhaps Hillary will quit the administration in disgust and take her own shot at sending thrills up the legs of these disaffected ones. She was, after all, the subject of a long article by Michael Kelly entitled "Saint Hillary," which appeared in the *Sunday New York Times Magazine* in May 1993.

In the meantime, the growing disenchantment with Obama will hurt the chances for passage of his agenda, which in turn will weaken his attractiveness to the much more important "independents" and "undecideds" who ultimately decide the fate of both legislative initiatives and elections. And this then is the small step in the direction of an eventual recovery of some degree of political sanity of which we spoke in the first paragraph of this piece.

It is worth keeping in mind, as this drama unfolds, that the liberal community will never give up its insistence on mixing the things of Caesar with those of God, for their confusion about the proper roles of these institutions in society is as much a part of American liberalism as it is a part of all of the other utopian ideologies and "isms." The historian Michael Burleigh explained this tendency in his 2005 book *Earthly Powers*, incorporating the thoughts of Oxford scholar Christopher Henry Dawson's 1936 book *Religion and the Modern State*. To wit:

Dawson traced the rise of the modern imperial state which sought to colonise areas of existence that 'the statesmen of the past would no more have dared meddle with than with the course of the seasons or the movement of the stars.' This applied, Dawson claimed, to the benignly soft totalitarianism of the modern bureaucratic welfare state to the malignly hard police states of Communists and National Socialists. Politics replicated the absolutist pretension of religion, enveloping ever wider and deeper areas of life in the political, simultaneously constricting the private. Like a church, such movements orchestrated hysterical enthusiasm and mass sentimentality, while dictating morality and taste, and defining life's ultimate meanings. Unlike Churches, they also tried to suppress religion itself, pushing Christianity into the hitherto unaccustomed role of defending democracy and pluralism.

TOO IMPORTANT FOR THE TRUTH, REDUX.

Clandestine conspiracies are funny things and the rarest of creatures. Real, large scale conspiracies are few and far between, largely because they require complete and unshakeable silence on the part of all participants. Everyone must be on board and remain on board for as long as the conspiracy lasts. Anyone falters; any link breaks, and the whole thing blows up. A true conspiracy requires 100% devotion and a willingness to do whatever is necessary to keep the secret, moral consequences be damned.

Almost fifteen years ago, in the wake of the O.J. Simpson trial, the comedian Dana Carvey, a veteran of stand-up, television (“Saturday Night Live”), and movies, made this point vividly in a bit about O.J. and the strategy employed by his defense team. Imagine how it must have gone down, Carvey begins. The police arrive at the crime scene and one says to another, “We HAVE to frame O.J. This is just too good. We’re framing O.J. Pass it on.” It continues: “We’re framing O.J. Pass it on . . . We’re framing O.J . . . Framing O.J . . . Pass it on . . .” Finally, after the conspiracy has made its way around the police force (and around the world) then-President Bill Clinton is brought into the loop and responds, “Framing O.J.? But I like O.J. Love those Naked Gun movies. But you’re right. It is too good. We’ve got to get that sumb*tch!”

The whole thing is ridiculous. The very idea that that many people – the overwhelming majority of whom are consummate professionals – could or would keep such a preposterous secret, just so they could advance their stupid, groundless, and malicious theory is patently absurd. It would never happen. *Could* never happen. And except for the mental midgets who comprised the Simpson jury, no one would ever believe that something so stupid, so spiteful, so horribly bizarre could be perpetrated – particularly without anyone, anywhere eventually cracking and giving away the game.

Given this, you can probably see why we think that when all is said and done and the madness has subsided, the evidence will show that the “hacking” of the computer files maintained by the University of East Anglia’s Climate Research Unit (CRU) was, in fact, an inside job. Someone cracked. The conspiracy was brilliant and brilliantly constructed. And for years, it was executed flawlessly. But now it’s over. We just wonder if someone will get this message to the political class – and to Barack Obama in particular – before he destroys his presidency trying to put this proverbial genie back in the bottle.

You may recall that we noted the hacking business in our last newsletter and, in the week since, that it has become a huge story, to anyone who is paying the

slightest bit of attention, that is. The mere scandal we saw last week has blown up into a full fledged case of scientific fraud, and the landscape – scientific and political – has been altered immeasurably. A conspiracy has blown up – however belatedly. And the biggest problem now is that no one appears to have told any of the world’s big-shot policy makers, which is to say that they now seem more certain than ever to make complete and utter fools of themselves by defending this now obsolete conspiracy.

Think conspiracy is too hard a word? Well, there was a time when we would have been inclined to agree with you. As we note above, true conspiracies are rare birds indeed. So what makes us so certain that this case is one of the exceptions, rather than the rule?

For starters, there’s the now-much discussed issue of “peer-reviewed” science and its role in this debacle. For years, the global warmists have insisted that the only people whom one could believe about the climate and man’s collective effect on it are those who are academically credentialed and who have published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. That’s all well and good, we guess. Except that anyone who has any dealings at all with “peer-reviewed” journals in any field in which politics plays a role (and who can deny that “climate science” is extraordinarily political) could have guessed how this would end. Badly.

As it turns out, not only was the peer-review process biased from the beginning against the politically incorrect sorts, but the global warmists were unhappy even with *anything* getting by the peer-reviewers that might contradict their world view. So they rigged the game. It was a bit like the war on Fox News by the mainstream press folks. Sure, they control everything else and all other voices, but that dissenter is still a pain in the tuchus. And it had to be delegitimized. Consider the following, penned by the incomparable Mark Steyn:

The trouble with outsourcing your marbles to the peer-reviewed set is that, if you take away one single thing from the leaked documents, it’s that the global

warm-mongers have wholly corrupted the “peer-review” process. When it comes to promoting the impending ecocalypse, the Climate Research Unit is the nerve-center of the operation. The “science” of the CRU dominates the “science” behind the UN’s IPCC, which dominates the “science” behind the Congressional cap-and-trade boondoggle, the upcoming Copenhagen shakedown of the developed world, and the now routine phenomenon of leaders of advanced, prosperous societies talking like gibbering madmen escaped from the padded cell, whether it’s President Obama promising to end the rise of the oceans or the Prince of Wales saying we only have 96 months left to save the planet.

But don’t worry, it’s all “peer-reviewed.”

Here’s what Phil Jones of the CRU and his colleague Michael Mann of Penn State mean by “peer review.” When Climate Research published a paper dissenting from the Jones-Mann “consensus,” Jones demanded that the journal “rid itself of this troublesome editor,” and Mann advised that “we have to stop considering Climate Research as a legitimate peer-reviewed journal. Perhaps we should encourage our colleagues in the climate research community to no longer submit to, or cite papers.”

So much for Climate Research. When Geophysical Research Letters also showed signs of wandering off the “consensus” reservation, Dr. Tom Wigley (“one of the world’s foremost experts on climate change”) suggested they get the goods on its editor, Jim Saiers, and go to his bosses at the American Geophysical Union to “get

him ousted.” When another pair of troublesome dissenters emerge, Dr. Jones assured Dr. Mann, “I can’t see either of these papers being in the next IPCC report. Kevin and I will keep them out somehow — even if we have to redefine what the peer-review literature is!”

Which in essence is what they did.

Need more? Well, then consider this, which unlike the above, is not from one of our fellow right-wing crackpots, but from an actual, *bona fide* climate researcher, one who not only believes that the theory of man-made climate change is potentially valid, but who has also dedicated his life to its study. Here is Eduardo Zorita, a specialist in historical temperature trends at Germany’s Institute for Coastal Research:

By writing these lines I will just probably achieve that a few of my future studies will, again, not see the light of publication. My area of research happens to be the climate of the past millennia, where I think I am appreciated by other climate-research ‘soldiers’ . . .

I may confirm what has been written in other places: research in some areas of climate science has been and is full of machination, conspiracies, and collusion, as any reader can interpret from the CRU-files. They depict a realistic, I would say even harmless, picture of what the real research in the area of the climate of the past millennium has been in the last years. The scientific debate has been in many instances hijacked to advance other agendas.

These words do not mean that I think anthropogenic climate change is a hoax. On the contrary, it is a question which we have to be very well aware of. But I am also aware that in this thick atmosphere -and I am not speaking of

greenhouse gases now- editors, reviewers and authors of alternative studies, analysis, interpretations, even based on the same data we have at our disposal, have been bullied and subtly blackmailed. In this atmosphere, Ph D students are often tempted to tweak their data so as to fit the ‘politically correct picture’. Some, or many issues, about climate change are still not well known.

As Ronald Bailey, *Reason* magazine’s science correspondent notes, even now, even after all of this has been exposed and the perversion of the climate research peer-review process has been exposed for the sham that it is, Zorita nonetheless expects that he will be retaliated against in that very same peer review process. Is there anything more telling? Or more pathetic?

The second aspect of this conspiracy has to do with the actual data that the peer-review superstars used to construct their theories of man-made catastrophe. In short, the data was garbage from the very start. The data bases holding the data were garbage. The programs analyzing the data were garbage. And now, it seems most of the data no longer exists. Is it any wonder that these people were so upset about the intrusion of other scientists into their work? Is it any wonder that they lived in fear of Freedom of Information Act requests?

In any other field at any other time in modern history, all of this would have been enough to get these jokers tossed out of the academy, laughed at, and mocked for decades. In the field of climate science, though, and at this point in time, no one much seemed to care. Indeed other climate researchers did everything they could to keep the secret. After all, it was too good.

As several observers have noted, one of the biggest scandals contained in the CRU documents has nothing to do with the leaked emails but can, rather, be found in the state of the data with which the CRU’s models were created. As computer scientist and writer Charlie Martin notes, the computer codes for the

programs storing the climate data were a mess, to put it mildly. Even the CRU’s own people were unable to reconstruct and rerun the data.

As any schoolboy knows, the ability to replicate any experiment or model construction is a critical and inescapable component of the scientific method, which is to say that the CRU’s research can hardly be classified as “scientific.” Martin concludes:

1. They didn’t want to release their data or code, and they particularly weren’t interested in releasing any intermediate steps that would help someone else.
2. They clearly have some history of massaging the data — hell, practically water-boarding the data — to get it to fit their other results. Results they can no longer even replicate on their own systems.
3. They had successfully managed to restrict peer review to what we might call the “RealClimate clique” — the small group of true believers they knew could be trusted to say the right things.

Fortunately for the world of science, computers aren’t everything, right? Which means that a great deal of the data collected was probably collected before computers became so ubiquitous and might thus be of some value in reconstructing what could otherwise not be reconstructed. Right? Science shall triumph.

Or not. As *The Times* of London reported over the weekend:

Scientists at the University of East Anglia (UEA) have admitted throwing away much of the raw temperature data on which their predictions of global warming are based.

It means that other academics are not able to check basic calculations said to show a long-term rise in temperature over the past 150 years.

The UEA's Climatic Research Unit (CRU) was forced to reveal the loss following requests for the data under Freedom of Information legislation.

The data were gathered from weather stations around the world and then adjusted to take account of variables in the way they were collected. The revised figures were kept, but the originals — stored on paper and magnetic tape — were dumped to save space when the CRU moved to a new building . . .

In a statement on its website, the CRU said: “We do not hold the original raw data but only the value-added (quality controlled and homogenised) data.”

Catch that last bit there, did ya? We don't have the original data, but we do have the manipulated data that we “amended” to prove our point. And anyone who wishes can have access to that. So that he or she can also prove our point.

Yikes.

Frank J. Tipler, a professor of mathematical physics at Tulane University, noted this weekend that the entire climate change community has ignored the first and most basic rule of scientific research, namely that “a theory with hidden data is never to be believed.” The “conspiracy” (his word . . . and ours) to hide the global warming data, which has been exposed, was absurd, scientifically defective, and shockingly disciplined. Until now. Now, thanks to a lone hacker, we know, Tipler concludes, “what many of us had only strongly suspected — that most of the evidence of global warming was simply made up. That is, not only are the global warming computer models unreliable, the experimental data upon which these models are built are also unreliable.”

Folks like Algore have always struggled to explain why their beloved computer models have never been able

to predict anything even remotely accurately. And now we know: because the models were made up out of whole cloth.

We'll add the usual caveats here, and note that none of this means that we can ignore the idea of man-made climate change or other environmental concerns. It doesn't mean that we should just go ahead and burn all the carbon-producing fossil fuels we can get our hands on either. Burning fossil fuels is dirty, at the very least, and there are promising technologies — wind, solar, nuclear — that are cleaner and, in some cases renewable.

That said, the idea that we should stop burning fossil fuels altogether or at least restrict them drastically and, in the process, increase effective taxes and lower effective economic growth rates is simply unsupported by the “science” as we now understand it. And it is also therefore unsupportable by any thinking political actor.

Which brings us to President Barack Obama.

You will note that earlier this month, the President was just too busy to travel to Berlin to mark the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. He was *not* too busy to travel to Copenhagen to make a pitch for Chicago to host the Olympics, of course. And now he's cleared more time on his schedule to go back to Copenhagen to pledge American efforts to cut “Greenhouse gases” — and thereby to stifle economic growth — all in an effort to stave off a problem which may or may not exist and which has only recently been revealed to be based on massive ecological fraud. The conspiracy is dead. It's been blown out of the water. But he's going to act as if it hasn't been. If he closes his eyes, you see, he thinks you can't see him. If he pretends that there's no scandal here with regard to climate change, then he can go ahead and do whatever he wants.

We understand why Algore — who has seen his net worth increase 20-fold in the last ten years, mainly on “environmental” investments — would want to carry

on as if nothing had happened. He has skin in this game. And if it all falls apart, he ends up looking even more stupid than he already looks, or worse.

But Obama's willful ignorance is far more complicated. The only way he can look stupid is if he continues along his current course and endorses a wildly unpopular political solution to a wildly exaggerated and manipulated scientific threat. Yet that's what he appears determined to do.

Obama has committed himself to making a pledge that his own party won't support with legislation, which polls show the public hates, and which would only compound current worries about slow economic growth, unemployment, and future inflation. We thought the guy was shamefully and shockingly out of touch with regard to health care reform. But that pales in comparison to this.

The only way that any of this makes sense is if Obama believes that the power the federal government stands to gain in the name of preventing "climate change" is

worth the short-term political disruptions. Last week, we argued that this entire movement is a cover for a power grab. Apparently, President Obama agrees with us. It was never about the country. It was never about "green jobs." And now, it's clearly not about the science. Power is all that's left.

As we said up top, we're no experts on conspiracies. But we do know that once a conspiracy is exposed, pretending otherwise is a sure-fire method to wind up getting burned at the stake. Or burned by the electorate, in this case.

Writing today for *The Atlantic*, Clive Crook notes that the folks at the U.N. and the world leaders intending to join this august body in addressing "climate change" are engaged in language abuse that is "pure George Orwell." President Obama should be so lucky. At least in Orwell's dystopia, the purveyors of "newspeak" didn't have to worry about the masses catching on and rebelling at the ballot box – less than a year from today, nonetheless.

Copyright 2009. The Political Forum. 8563 Senedo Road, Mt. Jackson, Virginia 22842, tel. 540-477-9762, fax 540-477-3359. All rights reserved.

Information contained herein is based on data obtained from recognized services, issuer reports or communications, or other sources believed to be reliable. However, such information has not been verified by us, and we do not make any representations as to its accuracy or completeness, and we are not responsible for typographical errors. Any statements nonfactual in nature constitute only current opinions which are subject to change without notice.