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A WORD ABOUT PRINTING THIS ARTICLE: These pages are intended to print on legal (8.5 x 14 inch) paper, two pages per sheet, in a horizontal landscape. Pages can also printed onto letter sized paper at a reduced size.

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Inroads

13

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Introducing Inroads 13



PROMOTING INROADS, THE TWO FEATURES OF THE MAGAZINE THAT we mention most often are its ability to bridge the ideological divide between Left and Right and its ongoing commitment to publishing high-quality analysis from Quebec. Other selling points include international coverage, focusing often on development issues, and Aboriginal affairs. All of these themes intertwine in this issue of Inroads.

Inroads has frequently published both Left and Right perspectives – on the family in 1997, on Aboriginal choices in 2001, on health care earlier this year. In this issue, we take a broader look at what the Left and the Right have to offer across a range of issues: North American integration, international development, unions, welfare, school choice. The intent is to provide a sense of what these political tendencies actually mean in practical terms. The

writers – Kenneth Boessenkool, Stephen Clarkson, Alvaro Pereira, Finn Poschmann, Helen Raham, Hugh Segal and Don Wells – approach their task in a spirit of advancing proposals and arguments, not of scoring points. There are some themes, such as personal responsibility, that run through the Right contributions, and others, such as opposition to corporate-led globalization, that run through the Left ones. But there are also a refreshing number of ideas that do not conform to ideological presuppositions.

The second major section deals with Quebec, and specifically with the sudden advance and nearly as sudden retreat of Mario Dumont's Action Démocratique du Québec. Relative to 1998, the party increased its popular vote in the 2003 election but, at 18 per cent, it was at only half its peak in opinion polls of 2002. There is a Left/Right dimension here too. The ADQ ran on a platform of dismantling the interventionist "Quebec model" that both Parti Québécois and Liberal governments have created over the decades following the Quiet Revolution. Did people shy away from the ADQ's right-wing platform once they paid attention to it? Or did the ADQ fail by backing away from the principles enunciated in that platform? Is the ADQ a momentary political phenomenon or does it portend lasting change in Quebec politics? Three knowledgeable and perceptive Quebec writers, Éric Bédard, Gary Caldwell and Jean-François Lisée, examine these questions.

In the third major section, sociologist Frances Boylson, journalist Don Cayo and photographer Julie Oliver look at Hispaniola, the Caribbean island shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic. On one level, the section provides a glimpse of a fascinating corner of the world with which Canada has increasing connections through tourism, aid and trade. On another level, it offers insight into controversial issues of development policy. The Dominican Republic has made modest but encouraging economic and political progress. Haiti has not. Hispaniola serves as an example, in Canada's "back yard," to illustrate the development debates raised by Poschmann and Pereira in the Left/Right section, and by John Richards in his editorial.

Another country featured in this issue is Australia, and here there is a link with Aboriginal issues. Reviewing a recent collection of essays, Stephen Muecke lets us in on a vigorous debate among Australians on how to interpret the history of white-Aboriginal relations in that country, and what Aboriginals' place should be in the national story. This debate has strong resonance for Canadians.

While these themes represent the core of the issue, there is much else:

- On the Inroads listserve, a broadside against the Kyoto Accord on climate change touched off a lively exchange on the merits and demerits of the accord and on environmental questions in general – notably the question of how to make long-term decisions under conditions of scientific uncertainty. Listserv moderator Harvey Schachter provides a selection from this exchange.
- Steve Patten, a longtime observer of the Reform Party/Canadian Alliance, reviews Preston Manning's autobiography and finds consistency in the goals and strategy Manning has pursued from the time he was a "Young Turk" working for his father, then-Alberta Premier Ernest Manning, to his current role as "policy scout."
- Garth Stevenson welcomes a new study of a subject that deserves more attention: Canadian tax policy.
- Jean-Philippe Trotter examines Stephane Kelly's provocative interpretation of Canada's political history since Confederation.
- Finally, Paul Warren, an economic adviser to British Columbia's NDP government, defends the economic record of that government against the critique presented in a previous issue by David Bond. Bond offers a rejoinder.

—Bob Chodos

Some unsolicited advice for CIDA

by John Richards, co-editor



A PHOTO ESSAY IN THE WINTER/SPRING ISSUE OF INROADS, ROSE Murphy and I illustrated the efforts of the Rural Electrification Board in Bangladesh to organize an island of honesty and competence in a country where political corruption has submerged the state-run power companies as effectively as can the monsoon floods. Lurking behind those photos is a vast question: why are some countries poor and others rich? With this issue, we pursue the question a bit further. Amartya Sen, a Nobel laureate in economics, writes of “two general attitudes to the process of development” in a recent book (*Development as Freedom*):

One view sees development as a “fierce” process, with much “blood, sweat and tears” . . . This hard-linocks attitude contrasts with an alternative outlook that sees development as essentially a “friendly” process . . . as exemplified by such things as mutually beneficial exchanges . . . or by the working of social safety nets, or of political liberties, or of social development.

Born in northern Bengal under the British Raj, Sen spent part of his childhood in Dhaka, now the capital of Bangladesh. Despite two civil wars in the region (at the time of partition of Pakistan from India in 1947, and then as East Pakistanis seceded to form Bangladesh in 1971), despite the intractable inefficiency and corruption in Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal, and despite the region’s consistently poor economic performance (even by the undemanding standards of South Asia), Sen strongly identifies with the “friendly” approach.

Joseph Stiglitz is another Nobel laureate in economics who opts for the “friendly”



HAITIAN BOY The status quo is so unsatisfactory in so many countries that something new is required. JULIE OLIVER PHOTO

approach. William Easterly, like Stiglitz, has played a central role in the evolution of World Bank strategy over the last decade. He disagrees: Easterly is among those at the Bank who have emphasized the importance of undertaking “fierce” political initiatives to encourage good governance if foreign aid is to be of much use. Both Stiglitz and Easterly have recently written influential books on development, which form the basis for an exchange in this issue between Finn Roschmann and Alvaro Pereira. At the risk of displaying unwarranted presumption, I add my vote to Easterly’s.

Assessing Aid is an oft-cited study bearing on this debate. Here, the World Bank analyzed the impact of donor aid on 56 developing countries’ per capita annual GDP growth from the early 1970s to the early 1990s. The authors constructed what they labeled an “index of economic management.” The index includes measures of institutional quality, openness to trade, inflation and budget balances.

The key conclusion of *Assessing Aid* concerns the interaction of aid and this index.

However, in countries where the index is low, a 1 per cent increase in aid to per capita GDP *reduced* annual growth by an estimated 0.3 per cent. In other words, where governments are exceptionally corrupt and inefficient, more aid does not mean more and better schools, health centres, and infrastructure; it means an enhanced ability for politicians to operate hierarchies of patronage, and shackle their domestic economies.

As part of his legacy undertakings, Jean Chrétien has committed Canada to a 50 per cent increase in annual aid expenditures via CIDA. More aid will undoubtedly make altruistic Canadians feel better about their occupying a prosperous corner of the globe; it is not certain it will make people in the targeted countries better. Pulling various arguments together, let me offer some unsolicited advice to CIDA managers pondering how to spend their expanded budget:

- *Concentrate aid in a few countries.* Currently, CIDA disburses aid to too many countries, and neither the agency nor most of the Canadian interest groups pro-

moving aid know enough about these countries. A step in the right direction was the announcement in December 2002 that CIDA intends to concentrate increases in its budget on nine countries only: one in Asia (Bangladesh), six in Africa (Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, Tanzania) and two in the Western Hemisphere (Bolivia, Honduras). Why Haiti (portrayed in this issue in Don Cayo's essay and Julie Oliver's photographs) was left out is a mystery.

- *Study in depth the politics of the targeted countries.* Under Clare Short, a senior minister “with attitude” and intelligence, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) has doubled its budget since Labour came to office in 1997. DFID is respected for publishing frank, comprehensive assessments of the politics of targeted countries and the effectiveness, or lack thereof, of UK aid programs.

- *Emphasize trade openness.* Last year, the C.D. Howe Institute published a study entitled “Trade as Aid.” It made the case for Canada to extend free trade to all 49 of the UN-designated Least Developed Countries – something that Canada has now done. This decision was doubly beneficial: it has increased export income in very poor countries, and provided Canadians a greater choice at lower prices of goods such as ready-made garments.
- *Place “quality of governance” as a major development goal, as important as immediate improvements in basic services.* In countries displaying weak governance, two broad strategies present themselves: (1) concentrate aid budgets on the islands of administrative competence, which may entail bypassing government by de-

livery through NGOs; (2) explicitly invest in institutions, such as nonpoliticized universities, with the potential over time to improve the quality of local political administration. While NGOs may be an attractive immediate means to deliver aid, all countries need government that works. It may be more effective to spend less on direct programs and invest more in improving host government effectiveness.

This agenda implies that aid agencies intervene, sometimes aggressively, in the domestic politics of aid-recipient countries. Sceptics worry that donor countries are returning to the logic of a former imperial age. I acknowledge the misgivings, but the status quo is so unsatisfactory in so many countries that something new is required. Hispaniola, which Haiti shares with the Dominican Republic (the subject of Frances Boylston's article), provides an illustration. The citizens of the Dominican Republic enjoy a tolerable quality of government – it could be better – and incomes are rising. Haitians endure miserable government, and average per capita incomes are stagnant at appallingly low levels.

Finally, anyone with a nascent interest in development policy may learn more from *Un dimanche à la piscine à Kigali* than from academic studies. Gil Courtemanche, a prominent Quebec journalist, is the author of this grim novel about the Rwandan genocide. Now available in English translation as *A Sunday at the Pool in Kigali*, it is in the realist tradition of André Malraux and Graham Greene. Not that all developing countries are on the verge of genocidal conflict – far from it. But Courtemanche enables readers to understand how aid can fail and, in too many countries, does. ■

Letter to the editors

The B.C. NDP's economic record

Dear Inroads editors,

IN A RECENT EDITION OF THIS JOURNAL (Inroads 11, pp. 203–13), David Bond highlighted the fact that British Columbia experienced the slowest per capita GDP growth in Canada during the 1990s, and suggested that the province's NDP government was “perhaps the single largest factor in [this] poor performance.” He went on to assert that the NDP “governed as if hellbent on seeing how far they could pressure the private sector before growth was entirely choked off.”

If this was the NDP's aim, it was remarkably unsuccessful. Between 1991 and 2001 British Columbia enjoyed the fastest growth in the number of small businesses of any Canadian province. In addition, corporate profits actually *tripled* in real terms in B.C. between 1991 and 2001, even after adjusting for B.C.'s corporate capital tax and income tax.

Furthermore, while it is true that B.C.'s per capita GDP grew relatively slowly over the 90s, it is important to understand why. David Bond listed several “major external factors” which played a part, including the collapse of Asian markets (on which B.C. was far more reliant than the rest of Canada) in the wake of the Asian financial crisis, and the end of Hong Kong immigration following the peaceful return of that colony to China. Both of these external factors came into play in 1997 – and the consequences for B.C. GDP growth were significant: B.C. GDP grew faster than the Canadian average until 1997, but more slowly afterwards.

Given the size of the external economic shocks buffeting the B.C. economy from 1997 onwards, and the increasing pressure the government faced from B.C.'s corporate elite to emulate the tax-and-expenditure-cutting policies of Ralph Klein and Mike Harris, I would argue that the NDP was ac-

tually remarkably successful in protecting the economic interests of working British Columbians.

B.C. wage-earners continued to benefit from the labour legislation passed in 1993 even if they weren't union members themselves – a reflection of the fact that, as the wages of unionized workers increase, so those of non-unionized workers are pulled up too as employers compete for labour. Analysis carried out in 1998 found that average hourly wages in B.C. were the highest in Canada for both unionized *and* non-unionized workers.

In fact, in every year between 1991 and 2001 British Columbians enjoyed an average hourly wage which was the highest or second-highest in Canada. In addition, by the time the NDP left office in 2001 the B.C. minimum wage was the highest in Canada, the unemployment rate was the lowest in 20 years, and post-secondary education fees were the lowest in Canada outside Quebec. Finally, B.C. had the second fastest rate of job growth of any Canadian province over this period. Taken together, these factors made B.C. arguably the best province in Canada in which to earn a living during the 1990s.

Unfortunately, none of these facts will go any way toward convincing B.C.'s corporate establishment that the NDP may have received a “bum rap” for its economic performance. In their eyes, the NDP government's real failure was its stubborn refusal to participate in a “race to the bottom” with Ontario and Alberta. That is why – profit growth notwithstanding – organizations like the B.C. Business Council grew increasingly frustrated over the course of the decade, and B.C.'s media became increasingly willing to

grant on-air time or column inches to any opinion – so long as that opinion was hostile to the NDP.

In fact, given the relentless hostility they faced from B.C.'s corporate media, it is perhaps surprising that the New Democrats who governed British Columbia from 1991 managed to hold out for as long as they did against the winds of neoconservatism that were sweeping across much of the rest of Canada.

What is less surprising is that – two years after the NDP's electoral defeat – those winds are now blowing across British Columbia with a vengeance.

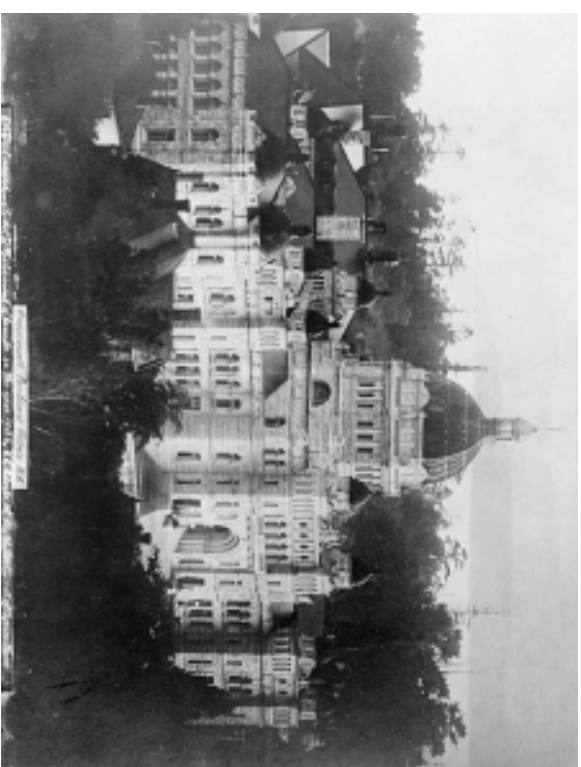
— Paul Warren, Ottawa
Paul Warren is an economist and a former policy adviser in the B.C. Ministry of Finance.

The author replies

Dear Inroads editors,

MR. WARREN CERTAINLY DID NOT LIKE MY article. I wonder, however, if his selective use of data is not aimed at painting a more favourable picture of the NDP government than is actually the case. The fact of the matter is that the NDP left the province in terrible fiscal shape. Private investment had to all intents stopped in any number of fields and that cannot be blamed on sunspots or external influence.

I do have a couple of questions. Why is the growth in the number of small businesses an important statistic? I think it reflects the substantial buildup of de facto unemployment and people becoming “con-



The British Columbia legislature in 1903. How does the economy fare 100 years later? Paul Warren and David Bond disagree. CHARLES EDWARD CLARKE/NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF CANADA PHOTO

If all of this was so beneficial to workers and the B.C. economy, why did the NDP suffer such a disastrous

sultants” rather than listing themselves as unemployed and therefore counted in the StarCan numbers. And what is the source of his statement regarding the tripling in corporate profits?

While I fully agree that the collapse of the Asian economies and the end of Hong Kong immigration had adverse impacts upon the B.C. economy, I also note that the government of the day had no policy to deal with these events and did little to try and offset these realities. And while Mr. Warren takes great pride in what happened to wages in B.C., he forgets the price. The wage rates were too high and contributed to a decade of deficits. The fact that hospital workers other than nurses received wages on average 30 per cent higher than their counterparts on the hotel industry for performing similar tasks is just one example of how the NDP screwed up the economy. And was job growth really greater in B.C. than in Alberta during this period?

showing in the last general election, and why was there such significant out-migration during this period of supposedly remarkable growth? More importantly, while Mr. Warren might argue that there is a conspiracy in the media to discredit the NDP, the voters of B.C. must have some intelligence because in poll after poll the Liberals continue to lead the NDP by a wide margin.

The fact is that the NDP government was inept, shortsighted and destructive. From fast ferries to sweetheart contracts to friends to outright lying in more than one budget, they came close to destroying the B.C. economy, and the people of the province will pay the price of that folly for years to come. Some legacy, Mr. Warren. ■

— David Bond, Vancouver
David Bond, now retired, is a former head of the Association of Professional Economists of British Columbia.

The Kyoto Accord

Prudence or folly?

Selected and edited from the Inroads listserv by Harvey Schachter

In

AUGUST 2002, WELL BEFORE PARLIAMENT GRAPPLED WITH THE issue of the Kyoto Accord, the Inroads listserv exploded with some provocative challenges to the pact – and some staunch defences

Scientifically, what is the best evidence? How can we best make decisions on issues of scientific imprecision? What is prudence? And above all: Would following Kyoto be a sensible, prudent economic and environmental decision or a foolishly expensive act with little positive impact on the environment?

Listen in....

From: Jan Narveson

Canada's attitude toward the infamous Kyoto Protocol is depressing. President George W. Bush was excoriated in our press for refusing to sign the accords and Canada along with many other ultra-politically-correct nations has queued up to be the first off the gangplank.

The people who know about these things estimate that if we all lived up to the terms of the accords entirely, it would make a possible difference of .07 degrees C, which is so little that it would be impossible to tell whether it had in fact been brought about. Other scientists have pointed out that the climatology behind the Kyoto accords was based on obvious and blatant statistical misselection of data. We're talking about imposing major-league costs for the sake of indiscernible benefits (if they are benefits at all since, after all, the world has enormously benefited from such climate change as there has been in these past few years).

Question: Why does the relevant hard science get ignored in matters like this? Jan Narveson is a professor of philosophy at the University of Waterloo.

From: John Furedy

I think points made by Jan, such as the lack of evidence of a clear causal link between the Kyoto recommendations and global welfare, are probably valid. Their evaluation, however, requires expertise in the hard sciences, and a level of disinterestedness in assessing the evidence that is not present in either the pro- or anti-Kyoto advocates.

At a more commonsense level, I note the shift from "global warming" to "climate change" in the claims of the Kyoto advocates. Global warming is unidirectional and is clearly only about temperature. The much broader climate change claim is bidirectional, and can include such non-temperature-related changes as frequency of storms, and even both droughts and floods.

The global warming claim is relatively specific, and has a high degree of falsifiability in Karl Popper's sense of the term. That is a logical advantage over the climate change claim, but a rhetorical disadvantage for Kyoto advocates who now have come to use global warming and climate change interchangeably (the CBC routinely demonstrates this interchangeable usage). In particular, when the global warming claim is criticized by such counterexamples as cooling in some parts of Antarctica, the Kyoto camp switch over to the climate change claim. That claim, in its logical content, is so broad as to be consistent with

almost any observation, especially when one can use the whole globe to confirm a claim that has considerable rhetorical power but negligible specific logical content.

So my answer to Jan's question is that since the hard sciences are essentially a systematic application of common sense and logic (although, of course, hard scientists like other human beings, engage also in rhetoric), the ignoring of evidence based on those sciences is consistent with the rhetorical shift by media like the CBC from the global-warming to the climate-change claim.

John Furedy is a professor of psychology at the University of Toronto.

From: André Payant

Methodks some of you cannot see the forest for the trees. It's really quite simple: The Americans must keep the bubble economy going. George Bush is only doing what he is told to do by big business and by the arms industry – both of which are polluters of the first order in a New World Order.

As an example, car and truck manufacturing plants are closing in Canadian branch plants and as soon as the opportunity presents itself they are closed in the United States. Why? Cheap Mexican labour and almost totally nonexistent pollution control – all in the pursuit of the almighty buck. That's the American Way.

The Inroads listserv began operating in September 1997, as a means to link readers of the journal and others interested in policy discussion. With about 120 subscribers, it offers one of the few chances for people of diverse views to grapple with social and political issues in depth.

To subscribe, send an e-mail note to listserv@post.queensu.ca with your name as in the following example: subscribe_inroads-1_georgewbush@whitehouse.gov

In contrast to both global warming and climate change, the human causation of pollution is clear.
— John Furedy

List members wanting to know the facts of Kyoto (as opposed to supposedly informed opinion) will do well to download an excellent report at the Worldwatch site. The press release on it notes:



“The next critical step in controlling global warming is to bring the Protocol, and its legally binding emissions limits, into force as soon as possible and leave the era of voluntary commitments behind,” says Seth Dunn, author of Reading the Weatherlane: Climate Policy from Rio to Johannesburg. “The first President Bush argued for soft, voluntary commitments in 1992. It was a questionable claim back then, and one that — with a decade of hindsight — we can discard. For the current President Bush to continue recycling his father’s failed policy betrays either ‘policy amnesia’ or willful neglect of the record of the past decade.”

André Payant is a writer and policy management consultant. He may be reached at andre.payant@LaGrenouilleQuirIt.ca

From: Jan Narveson

André has not attempted, so far as I know, to challenge the clear result that I mentioned in my post. Does he think Worldwatch, a notoriously political organization, has done better?

By the way, last I heard, André, forests were composed of trees.

From: John Furedy

To continue with Jan’s aside about trees making up a forest: forests of, say, oaks and pines are different, and the difference that I pointed to (and that André seems to have ignored) is the difference between global warming and climate change. Instead of taking up that distinction, André has introduced yet a third concept, that of pollution, such as the smog in big cities or water contamination — clearly attributable to man-made sources.

In contrast to both global warming and climate change, the human causation of pollution is clear, and in many cases it is also clear that human technology can significantly reduce that pollution (for example, contrast London of the 1950s and 60s with the London of the 1980s and 90s).

That is the main difference between both global warming and climate change on the one hand and pollution on the other. I do note, however, that the CBC adopts the same rhetorical tactic, and talks of pollution as well as global warming and climate change as if they were essentially synonymous. Forests of oaks, pines and weeping

willows are different from one another, but at least they are all forests. Just about the only common feature of global warming, climate change and (man-made) pollution is rhetorical convenience.

From: Jan Narveson

Let me make myself clear. The Kyoto Accords will impose *huge* costs on all of us and give us *no* benefit in return.

In the newspapers and from politicians you will hear comments that implicitly contradict that, but you will detect no sign of awareness, from almost all of them, of the reality of the situation. Only the Bush administration has come out with the very mild statement that we “can’t afford” Kyoto. That statement is actually so mild as to be misleading in the extreme. We can’t afford it, not in the sense that we can’t afford a Rolls Royce, but rather in the sense that we can’t afford a white elephant, or any program of hiring people to go out and destroy every evening what they go out and build all day.

The point about Kyoto is that what it has to offer us is nothing, and the scientific argument for it was (and is) absolutely fraudulent. That argument was taken up by pundits with little time or interest in investigating and by the politically ambitious who were not interested in investigation. The truth of the matter is that any politician who supports the Kyoto Accords shows himself to be an irresponsible demagogue, not a statesman.

The statesman must look beneath the surface, beyond the engaging platitude and the heady cluck clucking of Chicken Little. The statesman should know, for example,

that the document leading up to the accords was doctored after having supposedly been agreed to by the many scientist signatories, and that in fact it reflects a history of much scientific disagreement, rather than the united front claimed. Moreover, the things agreed on had nothing to offer in the way of support for so drastic a measure as Kyoto.

The bottom line is: Kyoto offers at a maximum so tiny a reduction in mean global temperature that it would be impossible to know whether the draconian methods for achieving it had even been successful in achieving it, let alone that a small but at least discernible amount of good would

Kyoto is a fraud, to put it baldly. And the politicians and pundits who go on about it as if it were some kind of paradigm of political virtue need to be told to get stuffed. — Jan Narveson

have been done. Kyoto is a fraud, to put it baldly. And the politicians and pundits who go on about it as if it were some kind of paradigm of political virtue need to be told to get stuffed.

From: Henry Milner

I have a great deal of difficulty knowing how to react to Jan Narveson’s denunciation of the Kyoto accord. What I can say is that invective is hardly convincing. If Kyoto is such a bad idea, what should be done instead? Or, if the argument is that we should do nothing, the possible costs of such inaction also have to be taken into account.

Henry Milner, copublisher of *Inroads*, teaches political science at Vanier College.

From: Raymond Vies

Climate change is a complex issue about which much could be said, but I would like to keep my comments to two points:

1. The consensus of the scientific community, based on the best information available, is that human activity is having and will have an effect on climate.
2. The problem with the Kyoto accord is that it takes a short-term approach to a long-term problem.

It is illusory to think that there will ever be definitive scientific proof of climate change, indeed of almost any environmental problem. Policymakers are faced with uncertainty. Are the increased concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere causing the observed changes in climate,

Most people involved in the climate change issue, including a sizable portion of the business community, have accepted the scientific consensus.

— Raymond Vies

such as the warmer temperatures that have been recorded in the last 10 years? Or are the changes in climate due to natural variations in climate?

Since we do not know the definitive answer, what do we do? Most people involved in the climate change issue, including a sizable portion of the business community, have accepted the scientific consensus. They believe that reducing greenhouse gas emissions is the prudent thing to do, like buying fire insurance for your home. The controversy is over what should be done at what cost and in what time frame.

The Kyoto accord calls for Canada's lev-

els of greenhouse gas emissions to be 6 per cent below 1990 levels in the year 2012. Given that levels of greenhouse gas emissions have risen, that will require roughly a 30 per cent reduction from what emissions would otherwise be in 2012.

Remember, those emissions are not just from "polluting industries." They are also from cars, buses, trains and airplanes. They include methane from landfills. They are from generating the coal-fired electricity that powers televisions, computers, air conditioning and heating. In other words, can each of you imagine reducing your energy use over 30 per cent in the next 10 years? Most Canadians are not aware that Kyoto will require this of them. There is no evidence that they are ready to accept changes in lifestyle (indeed there is much evidence to the contrary).

For business, a major issue is having to replace capital-intensive plant and equipment before the end of its useful life. They are also concerned that investment will go to non-Kyoto countries (primarily the United States, but others as well) rather than Canada. The level of emissions won't change; they will just be emitted elsewhere.

Environmental groups have published reports purporting to prove that Kyoto targets are easily achievable. However, those often rely on dubious assumptions. Take this sentence from the executive summary of the David Suzuki Foundation report *The Bottom Line on Kyoto: Economic Benefits of Canadian Action*, which claims to show net economic benefits from the Kyoto accord: "Taken together, the policies selected for review in this study would reduce emissions by an estimated 123 megatonnes by 2012, or more than half the amount prescribed in the Kyoto Protocol." It is easy to arrive at net benefits

when you only reduce greenhouse gas emissions by half of the required 240 megatonnes. And even for these 123 megatonnes, are the analytical assumptions realistic?

The "ideal" climate change policy, in my view, would focus on reducing emissions over a longer time frame, say 30 to 50 years. That would allow for capital stock turnover. It would also allow for the development of new technologies, such as the fuel cell, that will effectively reduce emissions without asking for unrealistic sacrifices. The climate change issue requires us to modify the technological system in which we live; therefore a systems approach is needed.

Raymond Vies is a consultant on a variety of social and environmental issues (www.vies.ca) and a former executive director of Friends of the Earth Canada.

From: Jan Narveson

Responding to Henry: There was indeed some highly intentional invective in my second screed. In the first one, on the other hand, I pointed out that according to carefully done mathematical calculations, the expected effect on global temperatures from full observation of the Kyoto Accords would be on the order of .07 degrees C, which is, as I pointed out, so tiny an effect that it would be masked by every other known climatological influence and so utterly undetectable. And for that we are being asked to pay something like six trillion dollars.

Henry asks us to count the costs of doing nothing. In effective terms, the costs of doing nothing are zero, while the costs of living up to the accords is several thousand dollars per year per person in the entire in-

dustrial world, for a gain of, in real world terms, *nothing*. Obviously the correct thing to do is nothing.

The point is that the Kyoto accords are a piece of politicized science. The only increase in mean global temperature in the 20th century, so far as climatologists know, occurred in the first half of the century while the greenhouse gases increased in the second half. (There was a blip at the end of the century due to El Niño, which so far as anybody knows has nothing to do with greenhouse effects.)

Also, you should bear in mind that greenhouse gases, in general, have two effects: (1) to trap heat under them, which would cause temperatures to increase; and (2) to keep the heat from reaching us in the first place, which causes them to decrease. In the long run, it is the greenhouse effect that makes the earth livable by people and other living things. Without it, the earth would be like the moon: too cold for life at night, and too hot in the daytime. You will not have noticed any reference to this second effect in the newspapers.

Insofar as greenhouse effects have had real and known influence in the late 20th century, it was to flatten out temperature fluctuations on average – which by the way results in a longer growing season. And indeed, forests and plants generally have done very well in the last few decades of the 20th century, contributing to the record-breaking production of food for people.

It should also be noted that the earth has undergone considerable general climate changes in recorded history – for example the very warm period roughly a millennium ago, followed by a decided cooling period. (Those respectively led to the Scandinavian occupation of Greenland, and then to the

demise of that colony when it foolishly insisted on trying to grow European crops instead of switching to the local natives' dietary habits over the ensuing centuries. The Inuit are still there, and the Europeans went extinct in 1300 or so.)

In both these cases, things got quite a lot hotter than they are now in the warm period, and quite a lot colder in the later part of the cooling period (the “mini-ice age” which we just came out of at the end of the 19th century). The point is that there is ample reason to expect considerable climate change without any man-made inputs of note.

And also, one should point out that the earth is due for another ice age, if all goes according to astronomical Hoyle, somewhere between roughly one and four millennia in the future. Those who wish to start worrying about it may do so now.

Finally, the trouble with Mr. Vles's otherwise sensible reply is that he does not “count the cost” and he does not count the “benefit” of Kyoto. If he has no further information then he must accept that the “benefits” of Kyoto are negative, while the cost is obviously huge. This is not “prudence” in any reasonable sense of the term.

From: Matthew Barlow

Jan, I think you're (intentionally) missing the point in response to the question as to the cost of doing nothing about greenhouse emissions. You know well enough Henry is asking about the long-term environmental and economic costs, as the environment comes to be more hostile to our ways of life.

At any rate, your argument against Kyoto and any attempt to do anything about global warming, climate change, etc. is fright-

eningly reminiscent of those who once argued that the world is flat. To complain about the economic cost of imposing something like Kyoto or something more long-term than that flawed treaty is really the height of shortsightedness, I think.

As Henry noted, what are the long-term costs of doing nothing? And spare me the libertarian notion that it costs nothing. You know as well as I do that eventually the rise in temperatures, the modification of climates, etc. will have real economic effects on us. Indeed, we saw one already in Toronto and Montreal as we lived through a sweltering summer.

You demand hard facts from people who oppose you, but I see little in the way of “hard facts” in your argument, other than a generalized historical account of some degree of climate change on this planet since the last ice age. Sure, fine, there indeed has been a natural evolution/change, but there are also human-made changes, such as that hole in the ozone layer, and the thinning of that layer. Thus, I would like to see some “hard facts” in support of your argument.

Of course, as was recently pointed out, there are arguments based on science for both sides and we will never have definitive proof either way. Nonetheless, I would argue that the cost of doing nothing is far greater than the cost of doing something.

Matthew Barlow is a PhD student in Canadian history at Concordia University.

From: Jan Narveson

Try being specific. Precisely what is our “shortsightedness” going to do that the “longsightedness” of signing a treaty whose known benefits are zero and whose known costs are staggering would not? If there is

no benefit over something like 30 years, why is there any reason to expect long-term benefit? If your wife was found to be spending 10 per cent of the family income on something that had an expected return of zero over 30 years, would you take the view that after all it might have a return in a century or two?

The flat-earth comparison is silly, as you should know – except perhaps in one respect. We can do nothing about the curvature of the earth and likewise of its orbit around the sun, which is varying elliptical, thus roughly accounting, along with the wobble in the earth's tilt, for the recurrent ice ages and most of the major known variation in climate on the globe. (There are other things such as sunspots.)

There is only one really relevant fact in this whole business: What we would get for our money if we bought Kyoto? Kyoto was all about greenhouse gases and their effect on global warming in particular. Well, responsible scientists who know their business have calculated the answer: 0.07 C cooling, maximum.

That calculation is by Tom Wigley, senior scientist at the U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research. However, I did make one mistake of memory: Wigley's calculation is not for 30 years – it's for 50. I don't know whether that's long-run enough for you.

From: André Payant

My earlier comment about not seeing the forest for the trees was another way of saying that some things don't have to be analyzed to death when the evidence is staring you in the face. Where were you people when eastern Canada was hit with the ice storm of the century? I was hit very hard by

that storm – no electricity or telephone for two and a half weeks, couldn't get out of my driveway for a week for the many trees having fallen on it. I had to keep the shotgun – I live in the country where one is indispensable – near the front door to ward off gangs who were going around stealing gas water pumps and generators.

I shook my fist heavenward many times and called out to whoever was in charge to get his/her act together. It's only when I calmed down much later that I realized that nobody was doing this to me (or a million other people) – we were doing it to ourselves. When we burn a hole through the ozone layer (mostly because of the heavily

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industrialized U.S. with its coal burning power plants and its two to three cars per laneway), we allow the sun's ultraviolet rays to warm up the parts of the Pacific Ocean directly hit by the sun sufficiently to cause the El Niño effect, which in turn caused the ice storm of the century.

Now, I know the cynics will reply: if something like this happened a century or so ago, what caused it then? Beats me. I'm no climatologist. I have looked at some websites and there seems to be a consensus among scientists that warm air and/or warm water causes El Niño. But what causes either or both of these cyclical phenomena? Is it caused by the hole in the ozone layer? None of the sites visited venture an opin-

A number of large corporations have committed to the development of new technologies that will be the real solution. — Raymond Vles

ion. But to admit that it could be the cause (nobody discusses causes, only effects) would lead to the question: “Who or what caused the hole?”

From: Raymond Vles

It is unfortunate that Jan Narveson is engaging in the most common sin in environmental debates: cherry-picking scientific information to support a particular opinion and worldview.

Good science means looking at all the evidence in making a judgement. That is what the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has done. They have concluded that, among other things:

- human activity is having and will continue to have an impact on climate;
- changes in climate will have positive and negative impacts on people, economies and the environment;
- the faster the change, the more the negative effects will predominate;
- threats to human health will increase, particularly to poor people in tropical and subtropical countries; and
- populations that inhabit small islands and/or low lying coastal areas (such as Bangladesh) are at particular risk of severe social and economic effects from sea level rise and storm surges.

There is a minority of scientists who disagree with that international panel. If Jan Narveson prefers to believe them it's his choice. But I for one prefer the consensus of the majority of the scientific community.



As for Kyoto, I believe that it is the wrong solution. While the information on costs is no better than the information on science – both are best estimations by the experts – I find the arguments of the business community about the economic impacts of Kyoto to be more credible than those of the pro-Kyoto groups. In addition, Kyoto treats greenhouse gas emissions as if they were a pollutant that can be reduced by adding pollution control equipment to well defined sources. That is not the case. What is required is an approach to climate change that reduces greenhouse gas emissions at an acceptable cost. That means a long-term program with a focus on technological innovation.

Doing nothing about climate change will be bad for both the economy and the environment, as the international panel report demonstrates. Kyoto will likely harm our economy for little environmental benefit. A long-term approach that will provide net benefits for both the economy and the environment is required and is feasible.

From: Jan Narveson

Mr. Vles calls it “cherry-picking.” I in turn refer to what he has listed as flummery.

Regarding sea levels, where are the facts? So far as I know, there has been no significant increase in sea levels in the past century. If Vles knows otherwise, let's hear about it. So far as the Commission and I know, this has nothing to do with the matter of greenhouse gases. Again, if there is real evidence to the contrary, let's hear about that. Meanwhile, concerning those sea levels – which should have been rising if the global warming hypothesis were correct – it looks as though they are not. See the very thorough and careful study, *Testing the Waters – A Report on Sea Levels* by John L. Daly, Greening Earth Society Science Advisor (<http://www.greeningearthociety.org/Articles/2000/sea.htm>). Mr. Daly concludes that there has been virtually no rise in sea levels in the past 160 years, and refutes pointedly and in great detail the exaggerated claims of various agencies to the contrary.

Regarding the “majority” question, note that what they, according to Vles, “agree” on is extremely general. Who ever denies that human activity may have some effect on climate?

The international panel report was an intensely politicized document. It is simply not true that the scientists agreed there was a threat. Further, only some on the panel were in fact expert climatologists. It is the experts who showed that evidence of significant global warming – significant to the point that it is worth doing something about it – is lacking. The figure of .07 degrees was arrived at by one of the top experts in the business and to my knowledge it has not been disputed by any other relevant top expert.

From: Raymond Vles

Jan Narveson makes the point that the science of climate change is uncertain. I agree. But that is not the issue.

The fundamental issue is how much evidence of harm is required before deciding to act on a problem. That is a dilemma common to many environmental issues. In terms of climate change, the concern is that substantial damage may be unavoidable (if not already done) by the time sufficient proof has been established.

In the 25 or so years I have been involved with environmental issues, I have yet to see a clear set of objective decision rules for making a decision whether to act or not under conditions of scientific uncertainty (and the science is always uncertain). Nothing I have seen can satisfactorily replace the subjective judgement of policymakers.

Mr. Narveson is a philosopher. I would be interested in any light that philosophy could shed on how to make policy decisions under conditions of uncertainty, as is the case for climate change.

A final note: Mr. Narveson keeps assuming that doing something about climate change will be very costly. That is not true. A number of large corporations have (a) reduced their emissions and (b) committed to the development of new technologies (fuel cells, clean coal, solar and the like) that will be the real solution. Intelligent government policy is needed to encourage this kind of progress and extend it to other companies, institutions and people. If we are smart about it, we will find win-win solutions. ■