

May 13, 2013

Mark Steyn attributes Benghazi to lack of character.

Shortly before last November's election I took part in a Fox News documentary on Benghazi, whose other participants included the former governor of New Hampshire John Sununu. Making chit-chat while the camera crew were setting up, Governor Sununu said to me that in his view Benghazi mattered because it was "a question of character." That's correct. On a question of foreign policy or counterterrorism strategy, men of good faith can make the wrong decisions. But a failure of character corrodes the integrity of the state.

That's why career diplomat Gregory Hicks's testimony was so damning — not so much for the new facts as for what those facts revealed about the leaders of this republic. In this space in January, I noted that Hillary Clinton had denied ever seeing Ambassador Stevens's warnings about deteriorating security in Libya on the grounds that "1.43 million cables come to my office" — and she can't be expected to see all of them, or any. Once Ambassador Stevens was in his flag-draped coffin listening to her eulogy for him at Andrews Air Force Base, he was her bestest friend in the world — it was all "Chris this" and "Chris that," as if they'd known each other since third grade. But up till that point he was just one of 1.43 million close personal friends of Hillary trying in vain to get her ear.

Now we know that at 8 p.m. Eastern time on the last night of Stevens's life, his deputy in Libya spoke to Secretary Clinton and informed her of the attack in Benghazi and the fact that the ambassador was now missing. An hour later, Gregory Hicks received a call from the then-Libyan prime minister, Abdurrahim el-Keib, informing him that Stevens was dead. Hicks immediately called Washington. It was 9 p.m. Eastern time, or 3 a.m. in Libya. Remember the Clinton presidential team's most famous campaign ad? About how Hillary would be ready to take that 3 a.m. call? Four years later, the phone rings, and Secretary Clinton's not there. She doesn't call Hicks back that evening. Or the following day.

Are murdered ambassadors like those 1.43 million cables she doesn't read? Just too many of them to keep track of? No. Only six had been killed in the history of the republic — seven, if you include Arnold Raphel, who perished in General Zia's somewhat mysterious plane crash in Pakistan in 1988. Before that you have to go back to Adolph Dubs, who died during a kidnapping attempt in Kabul in 1979. So we have here a once-in-a-third-of-a-century event. And at 3 a.m. Libyan time on September 12 it's still unfolding, with its outcome unclear. Hicks is now America's head man in the country, and the cabinet secretary to whom he reports says, "Leave a message after the tone and I'll get back to you before the end of the week." Just to underline the difference here: Libya's head of government calls Hicks, but nobody who matters in his own government can be bothered to.

What was Secretary Clinton doing that was more important? What was the president doing? Aside, that is, from resting up for his big Vegas campaign event. A real government would be scrambling furiously to see what it could do to rescue its people. It's easy, afterwards, to say that nothing would have made any difference. But, at the time Deputy Chief Hicks was calling 9-1-1 and getting executive-branch voicemail, nobody in Washington knew how long it would last. A terrorist attack isn't like a soccer game, over in 90 minutes. If it is a sport, it's more like a tennis match: Whether it's all over in three sets or goes to five depends on how hard the other guy pushes back. The government of the United States took the extremely strange decision to lose in straight sets. ...

IBD Editors on the Clinton intimidation of Gregory Hicks.

The secretary of state in the most transparent administration in history has her chief of staff warn a Benghazi whistle-blower to not spill the beans on Benghazi to a U.S. congressman.

In the course of the career of Hillary Clinton's husband, William Jefferson Clinton, there were handlers delegated to deal with what were famously called "bimbo eruptions," past dalliances that might impede his political career.

Now on her own politically, Mrs. Clinton apparently has her own handlers, paid for by the U.S. taxpayer, to deal with what we'll call "Benghazi eruptions." Those who know the truth and are willing to speak it must be dealt with by intimidation.

One of the things we learned during Wednesday's hearings from Greg Hicks, the deputy chief of mission in Libya and a career foreign service officer for 22 years, is that after he talked to investigators about Benghazi, he received a searing phone reprimand from a very angry Cheryl Mills, who happened to be the chief of staff to his boss, then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

In the State Department, when Cheryl Mills calls, you pick up the phone. She's been one of the Clintons' right-hand men, so to speak, for decades. She worked in Bill's White House legal office, then as counsel to Hillary's presidential campaign, and then became chief of staff at State when Hillary was appointed secretary. She knows how to help handle "eruptions," bimbo or otherwise. ...

Michael Barone says colleges have learned how the market works.

.. Now the higher education bubble has burst. The Wall Street Journal reported this week that that the average "tuition discount rate" offered incoming freshmen last fall by private colleges and universities has reached an all-time high of 45 percent.

At the same time, their "sticker price" tuitions have increased by the smallest amount in the last dozen years. Tuitions for in-state students at public four-year colleges and universities also increased by the smallest amount during that period.

Applicants are negotiating bigger discounts than they used to. Market competition has kicked in.

What has happened is that in a recessionary and sluggish economy potential customers have been figuring out that a college diploma may not be a good investment -- particularly if it entails six-figure college loan debt that cannot be discharged in bankruptcy.

The Millennial Generation that voted so heavily for Barack Obama -- 66 to 32 percent in 2008, 60 to 37 percent in 2012 -- has had a hard time finding jobs, even with diplomas in hand. Especially if their degrees are in gender studies or similar fields beloved of academics.

In even worse condition are those students who never get a degree, a disproportionate number of whom are blacks and Hispanics admitted under affirmative action programs who prove

unable to keep up with the pace of instruction at schools where most students enter much better prepared.

We see in higher education something like what we saw in housing. Government programs aimed at increasing college education and homeownership, particularly among minorities, turn out to hurt many of the intended beneficiaries.

The intentions of the people who created these programs were good. The results? Well, not so much. ...

Der Spiegel tells us about the plight of the African lion.

It's a Sunday in South Africa, and on the green lawn of the Weltevrede Lion Farm, arms reach for a white animal that could double for a cuddly stuffed animal. Visitors are being allowed to pet Lisa, an eight-week-old lion cub with unusual coloring.

Lisa was two weeks old when she was taken from her mother. "To make them manageable you have to do this," explains Christiaan, who is leading visitors on a tour of the grounds.

When cubs are born here, on this lion farm in Vrystaat, a province of South Africa, "each employee is assigned to bottle-feed one of them," says Christiaan. "You can buy a cub for 40,000 rand (€3,400, or \$4,455)." A delighted visitor asks whether she can take a lion baby into her room at night. It can be arranged, promises the guide.

Lisa's father, a grown specimen with a stately mane who lives in the enclosure, can be had for about €20,000. Roughly 2,000 lions are kept in captivity in Vrystaat alone, where they are bred for a practice called "canned hunting." It's a diversion that executives at major German companies have been known to enjoy.

The king of the animals has fallen on hard times in his own kingdom. "In all of South Africa, there are almost as many lions behind bars as in the wild," says Fiona Miles of the Vrystaat chapter of the international animal rights group Four Paws, which has been unsuccessful in its efforts to protest the hunting of animals that are somewhat tame and are sometimes even drugged to keep them calm. "As a first step to ban canned hunting," Miles is calling for a moratorium on the breeding of lions.

Across the entire continent, the large African predator, a symbol of strength and majesty, is threatened with decline. Outside fenced enclosures, there is hardly any room left for Panthera leo. Scientists and conservationists warn that the king of the steppes has lost much of his habitat in the last 50 years. ...

WSJ OpEd defends carbon dioxide.

Of all of the world's chemical compounds, none has a worse reputation than carbon dioxide. Thanks to the single-minded demonization of this natural and essential atmospheric gas by advocates of government control of energy production, the conventional wisdom about carbon dioxide is that it is a dangerous pollutant. That's simply not the case. Contrary to what some would have us believe, increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere will benefit the increasing population on the planet by increasing agricultural productivity.

The cessation of observed global warming for the past decade or so has shown how exaggerated NASA's and most other computer predictions of human-caused warming have been—and how little correlation warming has with concentrations of atmospheric carbon dioxide. As many scientists have pointed out, variations in global temperature correlate much better with solar activity and with complicated cycles of the oceans and atmosphere. There isn't the slightest evidence that more carbon dioxide has caused more extreme weather.

The current levels of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere, approaching 400 parts per million, are low by the standards of geological and plant evolutionary history. Levels were 3,000 ppm, or more, until the Paleogene period (beginning about 65 million years ago). For most plants, and for the animals and humans that use them, more carbon dioxide, far from being a "pollutant" in need of reduction, would be a benefit. This is already widely recognized by operators of commercial greenhouses, who artificially increase the carbon dioxide levels to 1,000 ppm or more to improve the growth and quality of their plants. ...

... We know that carbon dioxide has been a much larger fraction of the earth's atmosphere than it is today, and the geological record shows that life flourished on land and in the oceans during those times. The incredible list of supposed horrors that increasing carbon dioxide will bring the world is pure belief disguised as science

The Benghazi Lie

A failure of character of this magnitude corrodes the integrity of the state.

by Mark Steyn

Shortly before last November's election I took part in a Fox News documentary on Benghazi, whose other participants included the former governor of New Hampshire John Sununu. Making chit-chat while the camera crew were setting up, Governor Sununu said to me that in his view Benghazi mattered because it was "a question of character." That's correct. On a question of foreign policy or counterterrorism strategy, men of good faith can make the wrong decisions. But a failure of character corrodes the integrity of the state.

That's why career diplomat Gregory Hicks's testimony was so damning — not so much for the new facts as for what those facts revealed about the leaders of this republic. In this space in January, I noted that Hillary Clinton had denied ever seeing Ambassador Stevens's warnings about deteriorating security in Libya on the grounds that "1.43 million cables come to my office" — and she can't be expected to see all of them, or any. Once Ambassador Stevens was in his flag-draped coffin listening to her eulogy for him at Andrews Air Force Base, he was her bestest friend in the world — it was all "Chris this" and "Chris that," as if they'd known each other since third grade. But up till that point he was just one of 1.43 million close personal friends of Hillary trying in vain to get her ear.

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Clinton presidential team's most famous campaign ad? About how Hillary would be ready to take that 3 a.m. call? Four years later, the phone rings, and Secretary Clinton's not there. She doesn't call Hicks back that evening. Or the following day.

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What was Secretary Clinton doing that was more important? What was the president doing? Aside, that is, from resting up for his big Vegas campaign event. A real government would be scrambling furiously to see what it could do to rescue its people. It's easy, afterwards, to say that nothing would have made any difference. But, at the time Deputy Chief Hicks was calling 9-1-1 and getting executive-branch voicemail, nobody in Washington knew how long it would last. A terrorist attack isn't like a soccer game, over in 90 minutes. If it is a sport, it's more like a tennis match: Whether it's all over in three sets or goes to five depends on how hard the other guy pushes back. The government of the United States took the extremely strange decision to lose in straight sets. Not only did they not deploy out-of-area assets, they ordered even those in Libya to stand down. Lieutenant Colonel Gibson had a small team in Tripoli that twice readied to go to Benghazi to assist and twice was denied authority to do so, the latter when they were already at the airport. There weren't many of them, not compared to the estimated 150 men assailing the compound. But they were special forces, not bozo jihadists. Back in Benghazi, Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty held off numerically superior forces for hours before dying on a rooftop waiting for back-up from a government that had switched the answering machine on and gone to Vegas.

Throughout the all-night firefight in Benghazi, Washington's priority seems to have been to do everything possible to deny that what was actually happening was happening at all. To send "soldiers" on a "mission" to "fight" the "enemy" was at odds with the entire Obama narrative of the Arab Spring and the broader post-Bush Muslim world. And so the entire U.S. military was stood down in support of the commander-in-chief's fiction.

As Mr. Hicks testified, his superiors in Washington knew early that night that a well-executed terrorist attack with the possible participation of al-Qaeda elements was under way. Instead of responding, the most powerful figures in the government decided that an unseen YouTube video better served their political needs. And, in the most revealing glimpse of the administration's depravity, the president and secretary of state peddled the lie even in their mawkish eulogies to their buddy "Chris" and three other dead Americans. They lied to the victims' coffins and then strolled over to lie to the bereaved, Hillary telling the Woods family that "we're going to have that person arrested and prosecuted that did the video." And she did. The government dispatched more firepower to arrest Nakoula Basseley Nakoula in Los Angeles than it did to protect its mission in Benghazi. It was such a great act of misdirection Hillary should have worn spangled tights and sawn Stevens's casket in half.

The dying *Los Angeles Times* reported this story on its homepage (as a sidebar to “Thirteen Great Tacos in Southern California”) under the following headline: “Partisan Politics Dominates House Benghazi Hearing.” In fact, everyone in this story is a Democrat or a career civil servant. Chris Stevens was the poster boy for Obama’s view of the Arab Spring; he agreed with the president on everything that mattered. The only difference is that he wasn’t in Vegas but out there on the front line, where Obama’s delusions meet reality. Stevens believed in those illusions enough to die for them. One cannot say the same about the hollow men and women in Washington who sent him out there unprotected, declined to lift a finger when he came under attack, and in the final indignity subordinated his sacrifice to their political needs by lying over his corpse. Where’s the “partisan politics”? Obama, Clinton, Panetta, Clapper, Rice, and the rest did this to one of their own. And fawning court eunuchs, like the ranking Democrat at the hearings, Elijah Cummings, must surely know that, if they needed, they’d do it to them, too. If you believe in politics *über alles*, it’s impressive, in the same way that Hillary’s cocksure dismissal — “What difference, at this point, does it make?” — is impressive.

But the embassy security chief, Eric Nordstrom, had the best answer to that: It matters because “the truth matters” — not least to the Libyan president, who ever since has held the U.S. government in utter contempt. Truth matters, and character matters. For the American people to accept the Obama-Clinton lie is to be complicit in it.

Investor's Business Daily - Editorial [Hillary Clinton's Shameful Intimidation Of Gregory Hicks](#)



Cheryl Mills in '10: Longtime Clinton "eruption" handler.

Scandal In Libya: The secretary of state in the most transparent administration in history has her chief of staff warn a Benghazi whistle-blower to not spill the beans on Benghazi to a U.S. congressman.

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In the State Department, when Cheryl Mills calls, you pick up the phone. She's been one of the Clintons' right-hand men, so to speak, for decades. She worked in Bill's White House legal office, then as counsel to Hillary's presidential campaign, and then became chief of staff at State when Hillary was appointed secretary. She knows how to help handle "eruptions, " bimbo or otherwise.

When Rep. Jason Chaffetz, R-Utah, visited Libya after the attack, Hicks said his bosses told him not to talk to the congressman. When he did anyway, and a State Department lawyer was excluded from one meeting because he lacked the necessary security clearance, Hicks said he received the angry phone call from Mills.

Hicks, who is no member of the "vast right-wing conspiracy" that Hillary imagined hounded her husband, soon learned the hard way what happens when you tell the truth and a Clinton is involved. The once-deputy chief of mission in Libya found himself demoted to desk officer. A long string of glowing performance reviews morphed into criticisms of his management style and leadership.

Hicks also said that Beth Jones, acting assistant secretary of state for Near Eastern affairs, dressed him down shortly after he criticized the lie-agreed-upon narrative repeated by U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice on five Sunday talk shows that the attack stemmed from a spontaneous demonstration prompted by a YouTube video.

"Jones counseled me on my management style, she said staff was upset," Hicks said. "(She) delivered a very blistering critique of my management style and said, 'I don't know why (Libya charge d'affaires) Larry Pope would want you back.'

"I asked her why the ambassador said there was a demonstration when the embassy reported there was an attack," Hicks said. "The sense I got is that I needed to stop my line of questioning." When Hicks was asked whether he'd ever been told before not to meet with a congressional delegation: "Never."

Far from wanting to find out what happened, Hillary Clinton and the State Department she ran sought to suppress the truth and punish those, like Hicks, who would speak the truth. She would even stand in front of the coffins returning from Benghazi and lie to the parents of the dead.

Charles Woods, whose son Tyrone died in the attacks, told Fox News' Sean Hannity Wednesday night: "When I was approached by Hillary Clinton at the coming-home ceremony of the bodies at Andrews Air Force Base, and she said, 'We're going to go out, and we're going to prosecute that person that made the video,' I knew that she wasn't telling the truth, and I think the whole world knows that now."

Thanks in large part to Gregory Hicks, the man she tried to shut up, we also know that now.

Examiner

College bubble bursts after decades of extravagance

by Michael Barone

Markets work. But sometimes they take time.

That's the uncomfortable lesson that proprietors of America's colleges and universities are learning.

For many years market forces didn't seem to apply to them. There was a widespread societal consensus that a college education was a good economic investment.

Politicians gave lip service to the idea that everyone should go to college. No one should be stopped by a lack of money.

There was historic precedent. The G.I. Bill of Rights vastly expanded college populations and helped build prosperous post-World War II America. Putting even more through college would make us even more prosperous.

So Congress passed student loan and grant programs to make it easier for people to pay for college and university tuitions. That increased potential higher education revenues.

Surprise! Over the last three decades, tuitions rose faster than the economy grew.

For a long time that didn't seem to be a problem. College still seemed like a good investment during the quarter century of low-inflation economic growth from 1982 to 2007. You could pay off those loans with earnings increased by your degree.

Meanwhile colleges and universities -- and not just the highly selective ones -- competed for students whose test scores would improve their ratings in the U.S. News College Guide by giving "scholarships" that actually were discounts on the tuition list price.

To attract these students, the educational institutions built fancy dormitories, gymnasiums and student centers. And they vastly increased the number of administrators to the point where colleges and universities had more administrators than teachers.

Government helped to produce an ever-increasing demand for higher education. So higher education administrators saw no need to compete on price. Higher tuitions just gave your school more prestige.

Now the higher education bubble has burst. The Wall Street Journal reported this week that the average "tuition discount rate" offered incoming freshmen last fall by private colleges and universities has reached an all-time high of 45 percent.

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We see in higher education something like what we saw in housing. Government programs aimed at increasing college education and homeownership, particularly among minorities, turn out to hurt many of the intended beneficiaries.

The intentions of the people who created these programs were good. The results? Well, not so much.

Home ownership is a good thing generally, but it's not good for everybody. The young and transient, for example, are often better off renting.

Higher education is a good thing generally too, but again not for everyone. People whose talents are more artisanal than academic are often better off getting a job or vocational training than seeking a degree that guarantees them student loan debt but not a job.

College and university administrators are not used to being disciplined by market forces. For years they thought they were above all that.

Many got into the habit of producing a product that didn't serve their consumers' interests well. In a prosperous and growing economy there seems to be no penalty for doing so.

In more straitened circumstances they are discovering that, sooner or later, markets work. Their old business model is no longer working.

Colleges and universities have been doing a good job of meeting their administrators' needs. Now in the new normal economy they're scrambling to serve society's needs as well.

Der Spiegel

[King No More - The Tragic Plight of Lions in Africa](#)

Lions are becoming a threatened species. Trophy hunters and the loss of savannah grasslands have drastically reduced the number of prides. Scientists and conservationists are calling for improved protections for lions -- even if that means fenced-in enclosures.

By Renate Nimitz-Koester

It's a Sunday in South Africa, and on the green lawn of the Weltevrede Lion Farm, arms reach for a white animal that could double for a cuddly stuffed animal. Visitors are being allowed to pet Lisa, an eight-week-old lion cub with unusual coloring.

Lisa was two weeks old when she was taken from her mother. "To make them manageable you have to do this," explains Christiaan, who is leading visitors on a tour of the grounds.

When cubs are born here, on this lion farm in Vrystaat, a province of South Africa, "each employee is assigned to bottle-feed one of them," says Christiaan. "You can buy a cub for 40,000 rand (€3,400, or \$4,455)." A delighted visitor asks whether she can take a lion baby into her room at night. It can be arranged, promises the guide.

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The king of the animals has fallen on hard times in his own kingdom. "In all of South Africa, there are almost as many lions behind bars as in the wild," says Fiona Miles of the Vrystaat chapter of the international animal rights group Four Paws, which has been unsuccessful in its efforts to protest the hunting of animals that are somewhat tame and are sometimes even drugged to keep them calm. "As a first step to ban canned hunting," Miles is calling for a moratorium on the breeding of lions.

Across the entire continent, the large African predator, a symbol of strength and majesty, is threatened with decline. Outside fenced enclosures, there is hardly any room left for *Panthera leo*. Scientists and conservationists warn that the king of the steppes has lost much of his habitat in the last 50 years.

Natural Threats

The main reason is the gradual disappearance of the savannah. With shrinking African grasslands, lion populations have declined dramatically. Of about 100,000 lions that roamed the continent's dry grassy plains in the 1960s, there are no more than 35,000 left today, says Stuart Pimm, a professor of conservation ecology at Duke University in Durham, North Carolina. "That's a real collapse in populations."

Pimm and an international team of scientists have just published the alarming results of a new study. "Land use and the transformation of land through tremendous population growth have chopped up and destroyed the savannah," Pimm explains. Only a quarter of an ecosystem that was once larger than the United States still exists today, he says, noting that this shrinkage is almost as severe as rainforest loss.

"It's bitterly shocking," says Thomas Lovejoy, an ecologist at George Mason University in Virginia and a member of the Big Cats Initiative, whose goal is to preserve the world's big cats.

"First we have to know what needs to be protected," says Pimm. To obtain more precise figures on the population of African lions, he and his team compiled the most comprehensive collection

of data on African lion populations to date. Both the local population and hunting organizations assisted in the effort. The results were published in the journal *Biodiversity and Conservation*.

Whereas older satellite images depicted a largely intact savannah, higher-resolution imaging technology enabled the scientists to pinpoint small fields and settlements scattered throughout the environment. "Lions can't show up there," says co-author Jason Riggio.

The scientists identified 67 individual savannah zones in which human populations are small enough to allow for the survival of the big cats. Only 10 of them, six in South Africa and four in East Africa, proved to be "bastions" that still offer lions a good chance of survival. Most of these habitats are in protected areas like the Kruger and Serengeti National Parks.

The decline of the lion began long ago. In fact, German zoologist Alfred Brehm began observing it more than a century ago. "The days when 600 lions could be brought together to fight in an arena were thousands of years ago," he concluded. During the reign of the Roman Emperor Hadrian, up to 100 lions died in a single event. Pompey the Great exhibited 600 lions, while up to 400 were sent to the arena under Caesar. "But it wasn't until the invention of guns" that the animal, a dangerous threat to livestock herds, was "pushed back and eventually exterminated" everywhere, Brehm writes in his book "Brehm's Life of Animals." Hunters, like the legendary Jules Gérard, had rid North Africa of the supposed plague of Berber lions, and Morocco's last lion was shot to death in 1920.

Trophy Hunting

South of the Sahara, man also proved to be a relentless foe of the tawny-coated predator. To this day, nomadic tribes like the Massai retaliate against the hated killers of their livestock by shooting the animals or setting out poisoned bait.

But the hunt engaged in by former colonial rulers and their successors also has other dimensions. Over a period of three years, his great-grandfather Harold "shot over 400 lions as well as numerous leopard," boasts Simon Leach, who operates Eagle Safaris in Harrismith, South Africa. On his website, Leach bills himself as a "hunter and conservationist," and notes: "Eagle Safaris continues this proud tradition and draws on the skills and expertise gained over the years." Inexperienced hunters, including those who require multiple shots to kill an animal, are just as welcome as professionals, and a hunting license is not necessary.

International conservation groups are sharply critical of trophy hunting, which they say is partly to blame for the acute plight of the lion. The business, which is booming in South Africa and Tanzania, in particular, is hastening the decline of the big cat, they warn in a petition to the United States Department of the Interior. Commenting on the extensive studies, Jeffrey Flocken of the International Fund of Animal Welfare (IFAW) says: "Many people will be shocked to know how quickly the numbers have fallen."

Flocken and his allies want to see the African lion listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), a US law designed to protect endangered animals. US citizens make up by far the largest number of trophy hunters. The lion currently has limited protection under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Americans are especially fond of bringing home stuffed lion heads, paws and tails from Africa. Other important importers include Germany, along with Spain and France. Lion parts are also sent to other countries from the United States. The animal's bones are prized in China to make "tiger wine," which the Chinese believe has healing properties, and are used as a replacement for tiger bones, which have now become rare.

According to the petition, the body parts of at least 5,660 killed lions were traded internationally between 1999 and 2008.

The consequences of hunting tourism are often fatal for the entire pride. Hunters covet the magnificent mane and therefore primarily target older, dominant males, which leads to a rise in deadly attacks within the pride. To sire their own offspring, other male lions kill the cubs of their former rival, and sometimes even the mothers, when they try to defend the cubs.

To avoid this additional killing of lions, trophy hunters must be taught to correctly estimate the age of their prey, says wildlife biologist Craig Packer of the University of Minnesota in St. Paul. But his appeals apparently fall on deaf ears. "Mr. Lion," as the renowned lion expert is known, is not against hunting in principle, he says, but notes that quotas need to be drastically reduced.

A Disaster for Africa

If we don't act now, the African lion could become extinct, conservationists warn, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service appears to be taking them seriously. The agency is said to be reviewing the possibility of adding the lion to the ESA list, to the consternation of the African hunting and tourism industry. Such action could result in the loss of 60 percent of the trophy market, Alexander Songorwa, director of wildlife for Tanzania's tourism ministry, wrote in the *New York Times*. It would be a disaster for his country, he added.

At its convention in April, the organization Wildlife Ranching South Africa (WRSA) characterized efforts to list the lion under the ESA as "sabotage." The country's roughly 10,000 private farmers are proud of the "the tremendous growth in the South African wild animal industry," WRSA notes. The industry produces and offers what its trigger-happy customers covet: Kudu, buffalo, impala and other antelopes, and the more costly lions for well-heeled hunters.

Because they value tourists who prefer to shoot wildlife with their cameras over big-game hunters, lion countries Zambia and Botswana are now trying to save their main attraction. Although it generated \$3 million (€2.3 million) in annual revenues, Zambia has now outlawed the hunting of lions and leopards. And in Botswana, the country's final hunting season has just begun.

Experts disagree over the best ways to help the beleaguered animal. Pimm stresses cooperation with local inhabitants, saying that they need to learn how to protect their herds more effectively, and that children should be taught how to behave around the predators while still in school.

"Mr. Lion," on the other hand, has lost patience, after 35 years of field research. He no longer believes in the peaceful coexistence between man and lion. Packer argues that it would be more effective to separate the two species by creating more fenced-in sanctuaries.

Packer fears that populations remaining outside such enclosures will be reduced by half in 20 to 40 years. To conduct their study, he and his 57 co-authors determined that it would be much cheaper to establish protective enclosures in 11 African countries than to create management programs for people. Besides, he adds, this approach is measurably far more beneficial to the threatened animal. Lion populations in enclosures, he says, have proved to be "larger and more dense."

In Vrystaat, Four Paws has erected one such enclosure to create a 1,200-hectare (2,965-acre) sanctuary for big cats. A family has just found refuge there. After being released from their shipping containers, a male lion, his lioness and two cubs are able to feel grass under their paws and the African sun on their pelts for the first time.

The four new arrivals came from a Romanian zoo, which had violated a European Union guideline that would have required it to provide the animals with 500 square meters of space by providing them with only 40. More than 80 lions that had been living a miserable existence in European circus cars and small zoos can now lead a humane life in Lionsrock. But after being raised in captivity, the animals would be lost in their ancestral habitat, says Hildegard Pirker, the attendant in charge of the animals. "Releasing them into the wild isn't an option." Their bleak existence in captivity has made the animals incapable of living in the wild.

Pirker, who is also a veterinarian, performs vasectomies to ensure that the powerful cats don't reproduce. "The surgery makes the lions infertile," says Pirker, "but it preserves their sex drive and growth of the mane."

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[In Defense of Carbon Dioxide](#)

The demonized chemical compound is a boon to plant life and has little correlation with global temperature.

by Harrison H. Schmitt and William Happer

Of all of the world's chemical compounds, none has a worse reputation than carbon dioxide. Thanks to the single-minded demonization of this natural and essential atmospheric gas by advocates of government control of energy production, the conventional wisdom about carbon dioxide is that it is a dangerous pollutant. That's simply not the case. Contrary to what some would have us believe, increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere will benefit the increasing population on the planet by increasing agricultural productivity.

The cessation of observed global warming for the past decade or so has shown how exaggerated NASA's and most other computer predictions of human-caused warming have been—and how little correlation warming has with concentrations of atmospheric carbon dioxide. As many scientists have pointed out, variations in global temperature correlate much better with solar activity and with complicated cycles of the oceans and atmosphere. There isn't the slightest evidence that more carbon dioxide has caused more extreme weather.

The current levels of carbon dioxide in the earth's atmosphere, approaching 400 parts per million, are low by the standards of geological and plant evolutionary history. Levels were 3,000 ppm, or more, until the Paleogene period (beginning about 65 million years ago). For most

plants, and for the animals and humans that use them, more carbon dioxide, far from being a "pollutant" in need of reduction, would be a benefit. This is already widely recognized by operators of commercial greenhouses, who artificially increase the carbon dioxide levels to 1,000 ppm or more to improve the growth and quality of their plants.

Using energy from sunlight—together with the catalytic action of an ancient enzyme called rubisco, the most abundant protein on earth—plants convert carbon dioxide from the air into carbohydrates and other useful molecules. Rubisco catalyzes the attachment of a carbon-dioxide molecule to another five-carbon molecule to make two three-carbon molecules, which are subsequently converted into carbohydrates. (Since the useful product from the carbon dioxide capture consists of three-carbon molecules, plants that use this simple process are called C3 plants.) C3 plants, such as wheat, rice, soybeans, cotton and many forage crops, evolved when there was much more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere than today. So these agricultural staples are actually undernourished in carbon dioxide relative to their original design.

At the current low levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide, rubisco in C3 plants can be fooled into substituting oxygen molecules for carbon-dioxide molecules. But this substitution reduces the efficiency of photosynthesis, especially at high temperatures. To get around the problem, a small number of plants have evolved a way to enrich the carbon-dioxide concentration around the rubisco enzyme, and to suppress the oxygen concentration. Called C4 plants because they utilize a molecule with four carbons, plants that use this evolutionary trick include sugar cane, corn and other tropical plants.

Although C4 plants evolved to cope with low levels of carbon dioxide, the workaround comes at a price, since it takes additional chemical energy. With high levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, C4 plants are not as productive as C3 plants, which do not have the overhead costs of the carbon-dioxide enrichment system.

That's hardly all that goes into making the case for the benefits of carbon dioxide. Right now, at our current low levels of carbon dioxide, plants are paying a heavy price in water usage. Whether plants are C3 or C4, the way they get carbon dioxide from the air is the same: The plant leaves have little holes, or stomata, through which carbon dioxide molecules can diffuse into the moist interior for use in the plant's photosynthetic cycles.

The density of water molecules within the leaf is typically 60 times greater than the density of carbon dioxide in the air, and the diffusion rate of the water molecule is greater than that of the carbon-dioxide molecule.

So depending on the relative humidity and temperature, 100 or more water molecules diffuse *out* of the leaf for every molecule of carbon dioxide that diffuses *in*. And not every carbon-dioxide molecule that diffuses into a leaf gets incorporated into a carbohydrate. As a result, plants require many hundreds of grams of water to produce one gram of plant biomass, largely carbohydrate.

Driven by the need to conserve water, plants produce fewer stomata openings in their leaves when there is more carbon dioxide in the air. This decreases the amount of water that the plant is forced to transpire and allows the plant to withstand dry conditions better.

Crop yields in recent dry years were less affected by drought than crops of the dust-bowl droughts of the 1930s, when there was less carbon dioxide. Nowadays, in an age of rising population and scarcities of food and water in some regions, it's a wonder that humanitarians aren't clamoring for more atmospheric carbon dioxide. Instead, some are denouncing it.

We know that carbon dioxide has been a much larger fraction of the earth's atmosphere than it is today, and the geological record shows that life flourished on land and in the oceans during those times. The incredible list of supposed horrors that increasing carbon dioxide will bring the world is pure belief disguised as science.

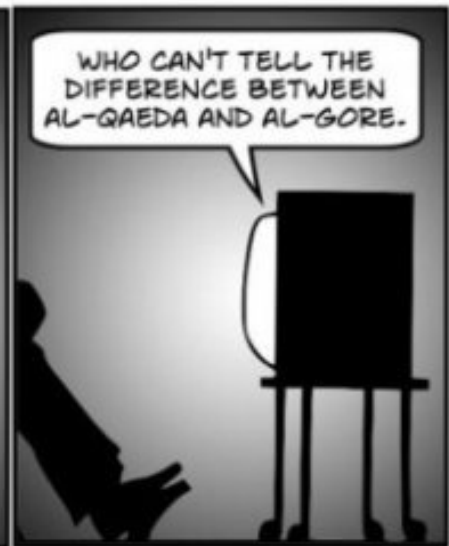
Mr. Schmitt, an adjunct professor of engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, was an Apollo 17 astronaut and a former U.S. senator from New Mexico. Mr. Happer is a professor of physics at Princeton University and a former director of the office of energy research at the U.S. Department of Energy.

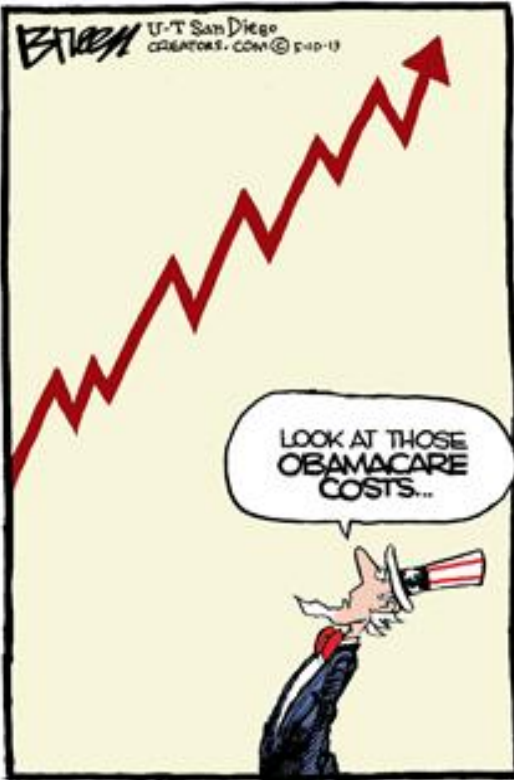




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HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

