

May 12, 2014

Michelle's tweet for the Nigerian girls gets the [Mark Steyn](#) treatment.

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But then what isn't? The blogger Daniel Payne wrote this week that "modern liberalism, at its core, is an ideology of talking, not doing". He was musing on a press release for some or other "Day of Action" that is, as usual, a day of inaction:

Diverse grassroots groups are organizing and participating in events such as walks, rallies and concerts and calling on government to reduce climate pollution, transition off fossil fuels and commit to a clean energy future.

It's that easy! You go to a concert and someone "calls on government" to do something, and the world gets fixed.

Time to have a look at the recent climate foolishness. [David Harsanyi](#) is first.

... Have you noticed that we're always at the cusp of a cataclysm, yet the deadline to act always moves to a politically convenient not-too-distant future? I guess when the time to act runs out – it will at some point, right? — we can begin thinking about defunding all these panels and reinvesting in something more productive: like figuring out how we can adapt to the future.

For now, though, the congressionally mandated report claims we're no longer merely dealing with impending disaster. The United States, it asserts, has already incurred billions of dollars in damages from severe weather-related disruptions due to climate change. The political hope is that some of this ugly weather will generate more urgency to do something. President Obama will use the report to bolster his case for unilaterally enacting carbon dioxide regulations, neglecting, one imagines, to mention that while there is consensus regarding anthropogenic climate change, there isn't much agreement on whether severe weather has actually gotten worse over the past years, or, if it has, that climate change is the cause.

Nevertheless.

"We're committed to moving forward with those rules," John Podesta said in a bit of an anti-democratic rant the other day. "We're committed to maintaining the authority and the president's authority to ensure that the Clean Air Act is fully implemented." Don't worry, though. Podesta says this is "actionable science" so separation of powers and consent of the governed and other trifling concerns are no longer applicable. ...

Salena Zito writes on a Georgia congressional candidate who might know what the country is thinking.

... One thing Dutton already has won is the sentiment of a country dumbfounded that President Barack Obama last week defined climate change as the most pressing issue facing the country. Obama did so as part of a huge public relations campaign — yes, campaign — that included asking people to pressure Washington to act on the issue.

Not jobs. Not the economy. Not rebuilding our aging infrastructure. Not gang violence, or education.

Climate change.

And he and his party ridiculed anyone who disagrees.

A couple of things about all of this smack the sensibilities of regular folks.

First, most people know Earth's climate always has changed; everyone knows about this little thing called the Ice Age. What most people don't care for is the issue being used politically to slice and dice the country, the same way the minimum wage, gender, race, immigration and religion have been used by this administration.

This is why folks do not look toward Washington, D.C., to solve problems anymore. This is why young people — the Millennials — are so turned off by the brands of both political parties, a one-time advantage that Democrats have completely squandered.

And this is why we have wave-election cycles. ...

Editors of the Boston Herald have thoughts.

The Obama administration is trying to scare us with totally unverifiable projections of a disastrous global warming. We trust that most people are not going to fall for this outrageous scare-mongering.

The ballyhooed third National Climate Assessment, released last Wednesday by several agencies, alleges first, the world has warmed over the last century and second, it's going to get much worse.

This is supposed to convince us of the wisdom of President Obama's plans to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, the chief gas said to be warming the planet. ...

Frank Beckmann of the Detroit News writes on the president's climate obsession. *The Obama administration's war on affordable energy ramped up a major notch this week with release of the government's latest guess about future weather events, something it calls the "National Climate Assessment."*

The administration, anxious to continue taxpayer-provided subsidies to politically-favored green energy firms that return the favor with campaign contributions to Democrats, claims it used the expertise of hundreds of "experts" to come up with the findings.

A cursory glance of the participants shows no participation by climate realists but leading report authors from environmental political action groups like Second Nature, The Nature Conservancy, Planet Forward, and the misnamed Union of Concerned Scientists, a group that is not made up of scientists at all and which also advocates for unilateral U.S. nuclear disarmament.

The government's report is full of alarms claiming America is already experiencing the effects of "climate disruption" — the newest name created by this crowd of hucksters — in the form of records for higher temperatures, more severe storms, rising seas, droughts, floods and melting polar ice.

In each case, their claims are disputed by observable facts and the historical record, a willful flaw for this bunch of amnesia victims. ...

The Wall Street Journal reviews a book on a real weather event. It caused a year without summer. T. Jefferson was afraid his poor crops would cause him to lose Monticello.

... Tambora's was an almighty explosion. Four thousand feet were instantly lopped off the volcano's summit and thrust high into the stratosphere by the blast: Few eruptions in recorded history have been so massive. Sir Stamford Raffles, the founder of Singapore, was on scene as governor of Java and, well aware that what he experienced was powerful juju indeed, commissioned the collection of eyewitness reports. Mr. Wood makes a very good case in his persuasively entertaining book that what Raffles noted during that East Indian spring was indeed a volcano like no other in modern human history.

Not that his book is by any means the first to remind us of the broad outlines of the story. That 1816 came to be known as "the year without summer." That the terrible post-eruption weather in Switzerland prompted Mary Shelley to write "Frankenstein" and Byron to compose gloomier-than-usual poetry. That during the two following years of lowering gloom, mid-latitude snows, failed crops and general distemper, there were all kinds of economic disasters in America, in India, in Ireland, in China. Mr. Wood is not the only one to claim that these can be put down to the trillions of tons of sun-shrouding Tamboran dust hurled into the air on that moonless April Tuesday two centuries ago.

If not the first, Mr. Wood's book is by far the best on the subject, and the most comprehensive. What Mr. Wood has achieved in "Tambora" is to uncover, collect and collate a great deal of new scientific evidence to bolster his case. He is, incidentally, the English professor of most students' dreams—a man with a powerful environmental bent who is totally up-to-date and who reads far beyond his remit. From his studies and attention to the work of chemists and zoologists and

epidemiologists and historians (combined with adventurous travels to the region, including a risky trek up to the Tambora crater edge), he has built with this slim book a far more plausible case for cause and effect than has ever been made before.

Purple rainfall in Kunming, ruining western China's 1818 broad-bean crop? Tambora's fault. A typhus epidemic in County Cork, adding to the miseries of an Ireland swamped in rain and blighted potatoes? Chalk it up to the mighty eruption far off in the East. Thomas Jefferson fretting over the future of his beloved Monticello? His crops were failing precisely because of the sulfurous aerosols from Sumbawa Island and the icy weather they brought. Just about everything presented in these pages fits together like a gigantic intercontinental jigsaw puzzle, with the grand image emerging just as the final piece is slipped onto the board: Tambora. ...

Steyn on Line [#BringBackOurBalls](#)

by Mark Steyn



It is hard not to have total contempt for a political culture that thinks the picture above is a useful contribution to rescuing 276 schoolgirls kidnapped by jihadist savages in Nigeria. Yet some pajama boy at the White House evidently felt getting the First Lady to pose with this week's Hashtag of Western Impotence would reflect well upon the Administration. The horrible thing is they may be right: Michelle showed she cared - on social media! - and that's all that matters, isn't it?

Just as the last floppo hashtag, #WeStandWithUkraine, didn't actually involve standing with Ukraine, so #BringBackOurGirls doesn't require bringing back our girls. There are only a half-dozen special forces around the planet capable of doing that without getting most or all of the hostages killed: the British, the French, the Americans, Israelis, Germans, Aussies, maybe a couple of others. So, unless something of that nature is being lined up, those schoolgirls are headed into slavery, and the wretched pleading passivity of Mrs Obama's hashtag is just a form of moral preening.

But then what isn't? The blogger Daniel Payne wrote this week that "[modern liberalism, at its core, is an ideology of talking, not doing](#)". He was musing on a press release for some or other "Day of Action" that is, as usual, a day of inaction:

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It's that easy! You go to a concert and someone "calls on government" to do something, and the world gets fixed.

There's something slightly weird about taking a hashtag - which on the Internet at least has a functional purpose - and getting a big black felt marker and writing it on a piece of cardboard and holding it up, as if somehow the comforting props of social media can be extended beyond the computer and out into the real world. Maybe the talismanic hashtag never required a computer in the first place. Maybe way back during the Don Pacifico showdown all Lord Palmerston had to do was tell the Greeks #BringBackOurJew.

As Mr Payne notes, these days progressive "action" just requires "calling on government" to act. But it's sobering to reflect that the urge to call on someone else to do something is now so reflexive and ingrained that even "the government" - or in this case the wife of "the government" - is now calling on someone else to do something.

Boko Haram, the girls' kidnappers, don't strike me as social media types. As I wrote [last year](#):

The other day, members of Boko Haram, a group of (surprise!) Muslim "extremists," broke into an agricultural college in Nigeria and killed some four dozen students. The dead were themselves mainly Muslim, but had made the fatal mistake of attending a non-Islamic school. "Boko Haram" means more or less "Learning is sinful," this particular wing of the jihad reveling more than most in the moronic myopia of Islamic imperialism.

~Arguments about why Hillary Clinton refused to put Boko Haram on the State Department terror list are about as useful as an Obama hashtag right now. But it is worth remembering that the group's first terrorism attack was as recent as 2011. They are, therefore, part of the same metastasization of jihadist violence throughout the northern half of the African continent as the Benghazi assault and the Kenyan shopping-mall attack. This growth of al-Qaeda affiliates went on throughout almost the entirety of Obama's first term, but because Joe Biden had a cute line ("bin Laden is dead and General Motors is alive") nobody paid any attention to it.
#NothingToSeeHere.

~My former *National Review* colleague Charles C W Cooke has got himself in a bit of hot water with a column arguing that schools should teach Holocaust denial [and be proud of it](#). This isn't just a whimsical fancy conjured out of thin air, but Charlie's reaction to the news that a California public school had given their Eighth Graders an essay assignment arguing that the Holocaust didn't happen. They have now backed down.

I thought Laura Rosen Cohen had the best response to Cooke, and I [urge you to read it](#). I have my own problems with his piece. I think no subject should be off-limits, and I regard the laws in many Continental countries criminalizing Holocaust denial as philosophically repugnant and practically useless - in that they confirm to Jew-haters that the Jews control everything (otherwise why aren't we allowed to talk about it?) and they enable Muslims and other groups to

go around arguing that, if you're prepared to pass restrictions on free speech protecting Jewish sensitivities, why can't we have some, too?

But my main objection to the *National Review* post is that it's a debater's point. And in that sense it has no more impact upon what's really happening in our world than Michelle Obama's hashtag. I am always astonished at how little American middle school students know, or are required to know. The idea that, in an educational culture that barely teaches the history that actually happened, there should be room to teach Holocaust denial as an intellectual exercise is ridiculous.

Secondly, Charlie seems unaware of what's going on in schools around the world. In that post about Boko Haram from last year, I also wrote [this](#):

Up north, in the crucible of liberal social democracy, [City Hall in Copenhagen held hearings](#) earlier this year about the bullying of Jews in heavily Muslim public schools. Seventeen-year-old Moran Jacob testified:

"In eighth grade, his teacher told him to say that he was Palestinian and that his mother was Russian. "I had to lie about who I was," he recalls. But it didn't work. They knew. Eventually, a group of his classmates ganged up on him and stabbed him in the leg. "You can't go here anymore," his teacher said. "I have scars," he told the hearing. "Not on my body, but on my soul . . ."

"Jews have learned to keep a low profile," Max Mayer, president of the Danish Zionist Federation, told the hearing. "To not exist in the city..." And they teach their sons to do the same: wear the skullcap at school, but take it off when you leave. This, Mayer said, has become standard practice for Danish Jews: "Don't see us, don't notice us."

This is liberal, multicultural Europe in the 21st century. As part of his thanks for raising the subject, young Moran Jacob was subsequently set upon by "Arabic kids" on Strøget, the main pedestrian street in Copenhagen, and forced to move away from the neighborhood in which he's lived all his life. He's now considering leaving Denmark...

Listen to how cowed the school principals sound in the Copenhagen story and then figure the chances of anyone addressing the issue honestly. Boko haram, indeed.

To the people who drove that Jewish boy out of his school, arguing that the Holocaust never happened is not a dazzling virtuoso display of Oxbridge-level intellectual gymnastics but just business as usual. As I wrote [seven years ago](#):

*Over in London the other day, there was an interesting story in *The Mail On Sunday*, which began as follows:*

"Schools are dropping controversial subjects from history lessons--such as the Holocaust and the Crusades--because teachers do not want to cause offence, Government research has found . . . Some teachers have even dropped the Holocaust completely from lessons over fears that Muslim pupils might express anti-Semitic reactions in class."

Indeed. This was from a study for the Department of Education, which reported: "Teachers and schools avoid emotive and controversial history for a variety of reasons, some of which are well-

intentioned. Staff may wish to avoid causing offence or appearing insensitive to individuals or groups in their classes. In particular settings, teachers of history are unwilling to challenge highly contentious or charged versions of history in which pupils are steeped at home, in their community or in a place of worship."

I felt vaguely I'd read this story before, and I had: different country, same discreet closing of the door on awkward corners of the past. In the Netherlands, schoolteachers are reluctant to discuss the Second World War because "in particular settings" pupils don't believe the Holocaust happened, and, if it did, the Germans should have finished the job and we wouldn't have all these problems today.

When these stories crop up in the papers, official spokespersons rush to reassure us that no formal official decision has been made. The Holocaust remains on the national curriculum, no plans to change anything, nothing to worry about. It's just isolated schools here and there where it's become a subject more honoured in the breach, and only in the interests of "avoiding causing offence." Which, let's face it, is what most of us want to do, because if you're "causing offence" it can get pretty exhausting. In the Middle East, for example, I'm like those British and European schoolma'ams: on the whole, I avoid bringing up the Holocaust--in part because in the Muslim world it's a subject impervious to reason, but also because it's very disheartening to meet folks who are bright, witty, engaging, perceptive and then 40 minutes into the conversation you mention the Jews and discover that your bright, witty, engaging, et cetera companion is, at a certain level, nuts.

That's the problem a lot of European teachers are facing. If a large percentage of your class has a blind spot, it's easiest just to move on to something else. Hizb ut-Tahrir, a prominent voice among European Muslims, tells its adherents that "the Jews are a people of slander . . . a treacherous people" and that Islam commands believers to "kill them wherever you find them." Last year, a poll found that 37 per cent of British Muslims agreed that British Jews are a legitimate target "as part of the ongoing struggle for justice in the Middle East." Who wants to argue with that every time you mention the Second World War? Best just to drop the subject.

In 1984, George Orwell wrote, "Who controls the past controls the future. Who controls the present controls the past." The Muslim community in Europe does not yet "control" anything: they are, relatively, small in numbers, though big in certain cities and bigger still in the schools of those cities. Nevertheless, it is significant that, though still quite a long way from formal "control," they are already determining the shape of the future, and thus of the past. The Holocaust did happen. Millions did die. "Facts," said John Adams, "are stubborn things." But not in the Europe of 2007. Faced with serving a population far more stubborn than any mere fact, Continental teachers are quietly putting reality up for grabs.

That's never a smart idea. The California schools superintendent who wanted his Eighth Graders to turn in essays arguing that the Holocaust didn't happen is called Mohammad Z Islam. That's why they got the assignment, not because they wanted to turn themselves into the Oxford Union. As Laura Rosen Cohen pointed out, there are all kinds of lively topics Mr Cooke might propose for our schools: Did Mohammed exist? What's the deal with his nine-year-old bride? But in the real world even mild questioning of whether Islam is a "religion of peace" is beyond the pale, and across the Continent the Holocaust is disappearing from school curricula.

That's the problem. There's no point winning an Oxford debate if the other side win everything else.

The Federalist

The Climate Change Debate Is Over, And Environmentalists Lost

by David Harsanyi

The bloodcurdling National Climate Assessment is here and it [portends catastrophe](#); floods, clouds and other assorted weather events are imminent! ... *but*, says the report, “there is still time to act to limit the amount of climate change and the extent of damaging impacts.”

Have you noticed that we're always at the cusp of a cataclysm, yet the deadline to act always moves to a politically convenient not-too-distant future? I guess when the time to act runs out – it will at some point, right? — we can begin thinking about defunding all these panels and reinvesting in something more productive: like figuring out how we can adapt to the future.

For now, though, the congressionally mandated [report](#) claims we're no longer merely dealing with impending disaster. The United States, it asserts, has already incurred billions of dollars in damages from severe weather-related disruptions due to climate change. The political hope is that some of this ugly weather will generate more urgency to do something. President Obama will use the report to bolster his case for unilaterally enacting carbon dioxide regulations, neglecting, one imagines, to mention that while there is consensus regarding anthropogenic climate change, there isn't much agreement on whether severe weather [has actually gotten worse over the past years](#), or, if it has, that [climate change is the cause](#).

Nevertheless.

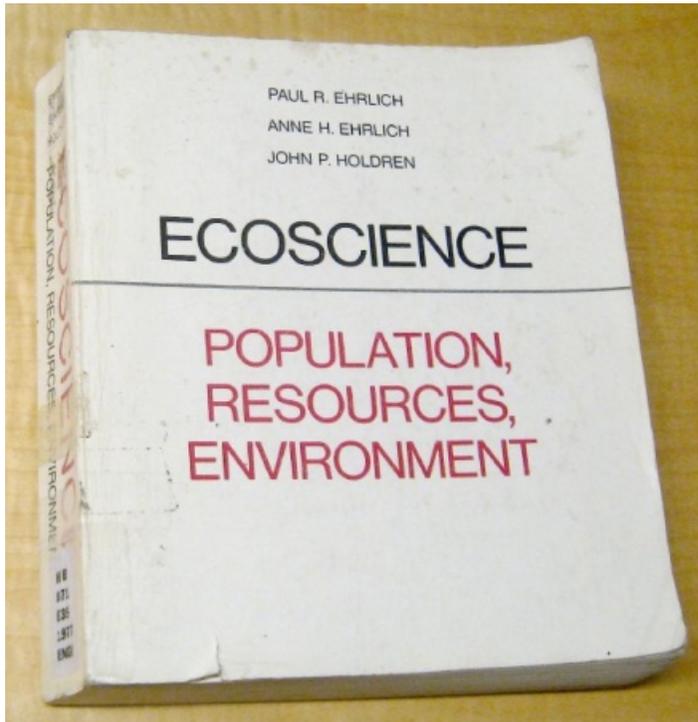
“We're committed to moving forward with those rules,” John Podesta said in [a bit of an anti-democratic rant](#) the other day. “We're committed to maintaining the authority and the president's authority to ensure that the Clean Air Act is fully implemented.” Don't worry, though. Podesta says this is “actionable science” so separation of powers and consent of the governed and other trifling concerns are no longer applicable.

But really, after all these years, admitting that executive power is the only way to move (tepidly) forward on environmentalist policy is basically admitting defeat. Has there ever been a movement that's spent as much time, energy and treasure and gotten so little in return? I suspect there are three reasons for this failure: 1. It's difficult to fight basic economics. 2. On energy, Americans, despite what they say, have no desire to try (nor should they.) 3. It's getting more difficult, not less, to believe environmental doom and gloom.

“There will always be people in this country who say that we've got to choose between clean air, clean water and growing the economy, between doing right by the environment and putting people back to work,” President Obama [said a couple of years ago](#). “I'm here to tell you that is a false choice.” Well, actually, we already have cleaner air and water and we (typically) have a growing economy. The thing is there is *consensus* among economists that regulations do have a cost. Sometimes the price tag is worth it. Oftentimes it's not.

We already have a test case for Obama's proposition in California, the state with the most aggressive renewables portfolio standard. A mandated 33 percent of its power must be [renewable energy by 2020](#). According to the Energy Department, residential electricity prices

have already [spiked](#) 30 percent between 2006 and 2012 (when adjusted for inflation), and studies show that cost of electricity is [likely to jump 47 percent over the next 16 years](#). Those are real-world costs that every Californian has to divert from their health care or groceries or education or investments to pay for artificially inflated energy prices.



The truth is that even if Americans believed that scientists had seer-like abilities and [the models were accurate](#), they would still be hesitant to embrace 19th century technology because they simply can't afford it. Though I suspect most people instinctively understand that [the environment has gotten better by almost every measure over the past 40 years](#), climate change activists ignore the massive benefits of carbon emitting fuels and technology that helps us become more productive and increasingly efficient.

Now, you can try and guilt trip everyone into compliance. You can batter them with distressing hypothetical scenarios. You can "educate" them on the issue from kindergarten onward, you can mainstream an array of Luddite ideas, you can browbeat society so they never utter a word of skepticism, but we still want to drive our cars everywhere. This is probably why over-the-top warnings and [preposterous analogies](#) have hit peak levels of absurdity.

And that's saying something. Dr. John Holdren, Obama's Science Czar, who was on media call for the National Climate Assessment release, once predicted global warming could cause the deaths of 1 billion people by 2020 and that sea levels [would rise by 13 feet](#) by the end of the century (not to mention, he co-authored a [book](#) with Paul Ehrlich in which he [explained](#) that "population-control laws, even including laws requiring compulsory abortion, could be sustained under the existing Constitution..."). Malthusians never admit they're wrong, they simply push the apocalypse out a couple of decades. I just don't think people believe them anymore.

Yes, when asked, Americans perfunctorily tell pollsters that climate change matters to them. A recent Pew Research Center [poll](#) found that 40 percent of Americans believe that climate change is a major threat. A Gallup poll [survey](#) found that around a third of Americans personally worry about climate change. But when they're not asked specifically about global warming,

voters never bring the topic up. Their most [important concerns](#) are the economy, jobs and debt. There is always strong support for the abstract idea of environmental regulation and “clean energy,” but when it comes some concrete policy it is nearly always unpopular. [Few people](#) want to stop the Keystone XL Pipeline. Few people [support](#) new emissions regulations. And I doubt another scaremongery study will change that reality.

Pittsburgh Tribune Review **[Climate gravest threat only in D.C.](#)** by Selena Zito

Delvis Dutton shuts the door of his white-and-blue utility truck and walks up to the camera.

“The other guys are running for Congress,” he says. “Well, me, I am running against Congress. If you want more of the same, I am not your guy. But if you want to send a message, I am your man.”

Smiling, dressed in a blue short-sleeved shirt, one arm leaning on his truck, he ends his ad: “I am Delvis Dutton and I am running against Congress.”

Rarely have 15 seconds so captured the sentiment of most of America beyond Washington.

It doesn't matter what team jacket you wear: This guy says what everyone else is thinking, that Washington is broken.

Most campaign ads tell no story; most can compel even the calmest viewer to contemplate hurling the television into the yard of the candidate in the ad — and that's what we want to do to the ones we like.

Sometimes, though, political ads define the moment.

Dutton is a young man with a wife and two kids; he grew up on the family farm, attended Georgia Southern University and, at age 22, started a small water-well drilling business, General Pump and Well. In 2010 he decided that the way to make more of a difference in his community was to run for state representative in Georgia.

No one knows yet if Dutton will win his bid for Congress; he is just one candidate in a five-person Republican primary in Georgia's 12th Congressional District, fighting to face U.S. Rep. John Barrow, an Augusta Democrat.

One thing Dutton already has won is the sentiment of a country dumbfounded that President Barack Obama last week defined climate change as the most pressing issue facing the country. Obama did so as part of a huge public relations campaign — yes, campaign — that included asking people to pressure Washington to act on the issue.

Not jobs. Not the economy. Not rebuilding our aging infrastructure. Not gang violence, or education.

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And he and his party ridiculed anyone who disagrees.

A couple of things about all of this smack the sensibilities of regular folks.

First, most people know Earth's climate always has changed; everyone knows about this little thing called the Ice Age. What most people don't care for is the issue being used politically to slice and dice the country, the same way the minimum wage, gender, race, immigration and religion have been used by this administration.

This is why folks do not look toward Washington, D.C., to solve problems anymore. This is why young people — the Millennials — are so turned off by the brands of both political parties, a one-time advantage that Democrats have completely squandered.

And this is why we have wave-election cycles.

Also, most folks who don't live in the privileged enclaves of high society or high academia or high government would argue that other, more pressing crises — most of them hidden in plain sight — should be considered the gravest threat to our country in our lifetime.

Things such as subpar graduation rates in our inner-city schools, or the 90 million people who have left the nation's workforce in the past six years, or our economy being less entrepreneurial now than at any point in the last three decades — or that a Brookings study showed, between 2009 and 2011, small businesses were collapsing faster than they were being formed.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka cautioned Obama and Democrats to consider how millions of livelihoods outside of D.C. would be impacted: “We are prepared to ... make sacrifices, but not while the most privileged in our society stand on the sidelines and expect our poorest communities to bear the costs.”

A wave election is building beyond Washington — not a tsunami, but a wave — yet most experts don't see it because they define an electoral “wave” as a large flip to the party in power; Republicans already control the House and probably will add more seats to their list.

Those experts should review the results of November's races for state legislatures, governors' mansions and the U.S. Senate, and then rethink their definition of a wave.

And Democrats should rethink what really constitutes a “pressing issue.”

Boston Herald - Editorial **Dubious climate dogma**

The Obama administration is trying to scare us with totally unverifiable projections of a disastrous global warming. We trust that most people are not going to fall for this outrageous scare-mongering.

The ballyhooed third National Climate Assessment, released last Wednesday by several agencies, alleges first, the world has warmed over the last century and second, it's going to get much worse.

This is supposed to convince us of the wisdom of President Obama's plans to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, the chief gas said to be warming the planet.

It has indeed warmed slightly (by at most 1.9 degrees Fahrenheit) over the past 100 years. Saying so ignores an unexplained cooling from about 1940 into the 1970s. It warmed from the 1970s to 1998; there has been no warming since even as carbon dioxide concentrations rose.

Predictions of floods here and heat waves there and falling sky somewhere else are produced by already failed computer models. None can reproduce changes in temperature observed in the past. Relying on such failed prophets is folly.

Unsurprised critics note that the concentrations of water vapor in the troposphere that are supposed to amplify warming simply aren't there.

The assessment rambles about heat and rainfall and other unpleasantness, but pays no attention to the fact that there is no trend in the incidence of tornadoes, or the fact that hurricanes making landfall are at a record low, or the fact that even more emission cuts than Obama wants would lower the temperature in 2100 by one-seventh of a degree.

As Yogi Berra said, it's tough to make predictions, especially about the future. The country needs a devil's advocate, with adequate funds for research independent of the army of alarmists who have built careers on dubious dogma.

Detroit News

[Obama's climate change diversion](#)

by Frank Beckmann

The Obama administration's war on affordable energy ramped up a major notch this week with release of the government's latest guess about future weather events, something it calls the "National Climate Assessment."

The administration, anxious to continue taxpayer-provided subsidies to politically-favored green energy firms that return the favor with campaign contributions to Democrats, claims it used the expertise of hundreds of "experts" to come up with the findings.

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records for higher temperatures, more severe storms, rising seas, droughts, floods and melting polar ice.

In each case, their claims are disputed by observable facts and the historical record, a willful flaw for this bunch of amnesia victims.

Here are just a few examples.

Only last year, the government's own climate observers at NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) reported a record low number of tornadoes and the longest pause ever in the occurrence of big hurricanes.

Meantime, the mild temperature increase late last century has been replaced by 17 years — almost two decades — of pauses and mild cooling, despite increasing levels of harmless CO₂ in the atmosphere and despite the doctored U.S. temperature record created over the past two decades by activist James Hansen of NASA.

Add to that verified scientific observations of increasing polar sea ice and incontrovertible facts showing droughts and floods in the past — as long as a thousand years ago and more, long before our reliance on cheap fossil fuels — were far worse.

The Obama administration points to Hurricane Sandy as the greatest recent climate disaster which supposedly moved Obama to decide on quicker presidential action on the environment — headlined in a way that moved the Benghazi and Obamacare debacles off the front page.

Know this: environmental extremists are trying to attribute every major weather event — regular occurrences since the formation of this violent planet Earth that we call home — to manmade “climate disturbance,” claims that are “not reasonable, not science, and not honest,” according to Walter Starck, environment policy adviser at the Heartland Institute think tank.

These are the same people who earlier protested that individual weather occurrences could not be used in defining wider climate characteristics.

The greatest danger of the latest report from the Obama administration is not the realization that our government is again trying to mislead the American public, like it did on Benghazi and Obamacare, but the cost it threatens to impose on Americans through higher energy costs and job losses, especially in states like West Virginia that rely on coal, and North Dakota which has been booming because of oil exploration.

Again, amnesia takes over because the real evidence is available.

Germany has spent \$140 billion on green energy over the last decade but its CO₂ output has been rising the past three years and the Merkel government is backing off taxpayer subsidies to the previously favored wind energy industry.

Why?

Due to some of the highest utility prices in the world, several German government officials have proposed a cap on electricity prices while Chancellor Angela Merkel warns of “problems in terms of energy supply” if they keep the renewable price surcharges in place.

Similar examples are available throughout Europe and the United Kingdom but our ruling class in Washington either ignores, or isn't aware, of these realities.

Instead, they continue producing their "sky is falling" alarms over global warming/climate change/climate disruption, oblivious to the costs their own plans would place on the American public.

Of course, why should they care?

After all, if Obama follows through on his executive actions in the energy field, the alarmists will receive even more of our taxpayer money through subsidies, and these so-called scientists will continue to receive billions of tax dollars every year to continue their "studies," while we pay the price for a war on the plant food known as CO₂, which makes up about three-tenths of one percent of the world's atmosphere.

Unspoken is the real war here, on America's energy supply and jobs. That is truly alarming.

WSJ

A Once-a-Millennium Blast

by Simon Winchester

Erupting supervolcanoes have a habit of triggering unanticipated consequences, big and small. Santorini effectively signaled the end of the Minoan civilization when it exploded 3,600 years ago. Vesuvius turned Pompeii into a charnel house in A.D. 79 but preserved it for archaeologists. And when a volcano exploded under an Icelandic glacier in 2010, its ash-wafts halted most Atlantic air traffic for a week.

Sometimes it takes a while for the more profound effects to sink in. Consider the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines in 1991. Though there were fairly few civilian losses, there were two colossal institutional casualties: Subic Bay Naval Station and Clark Air Base, the Pentagon's biggest outposts in the western Pacific, were buried by several feet of choking silicate mud, and officials opted to close both of them down for good.

Ruined bases are bad enough, but the unexpected consequence of the closures came later. During the ensuing decade, the Chinese military began to sniff around a corner of the Pacific Ocean suddenly depleted of all the earlier squadrons of watchful American ships and aircraft. Chinese vessels ventured into Philippine waters: began to raise their flags on disputed islands, to claim territories about which they had remained silent for decades, to threaten Japan, to rattle sabers.

A serious threat was suddenly perceived. President Obama famously announced his foreign policy "pivot" away from the Middle East—with the result that the Pacific Ocean is all of a sudden the new theater of global interest; China and its navy the potent new regional force. There are anxious talks about the likely situation in 2049, the centenary of the formation of the People's Republic.

If Beijing ever sails its gunships close by Pearl Harbor, or threatens San Diego, then seismic historians will reasonably argue that it was the eruption of Pinatubo that initially prompted China to imagine doing so. Pinatubo is a volcano that changed the geostrategic complexion of the new century.

Gillen D'Arcy Wood, a professor of English at the University of Illinois, argues in "Tambora: The Eruption That Changed the World" that the massive volcano that let loose on April 11, 1815, on the Indonesian island of Sumbawa achieved much the same in its day, only more so.

Tambora's was an almighty explosion. Four thousand feet were instantly lopped off the volcano's summit and thrust high into the stratosphere by the blast: Few eruptions in recorded history have been so massive. Sir Stamford Raffles, the founder of Singapore, was on scene as governor of Java and, well aware that what he experienced was powerful *juju* indeed, commissioned the collection of eyewitness reports. Mr. Wood makes a very good case in his persuasively entertaining book that what Raffles noted during that East Indian spring was indeed a volcano like no other in modern human history.

Not that his book is by any means the first to remind us of the broad outlines of the story. That 1816 came to be known as "the year without summer." That the terrible post-eruption weather in Switzerland prompted Mary Shelley to write "Frankenstein" and Byron to compose gloomier-than-usual poetry. That during the two following years of lowering gloom, mid-latitude snows, failed crops and general distemper, there were all kinds of economic disasters in America, in India, in Ireland, in China. Mr. Wood is not the only one to claim that these can be put down to the trillions of tons of sun-shrouding Tamboran dust hurled into the air on that moonless April Tuesday two centuries ago.

If not the first, Mr. Wood's book is by far the best on the subject, and the most comprehensive. What Mr. Wood has achieved in "Tambora" is to uncover, collect and collate a great deal of new scientific evidence to bolster his case. He is, incidentally, the English professor of most students' dreams—a man with a powerful environmental bent who is totally up-to-date and who reads far beyond his remit. From his studies and attention to the work of chemists and zoologists and epidemiologists and historians (combined with adventurous travels to the region, including a risky trek up to the Tambora crater edge), he has built with this slim book a far more plausible case for cause and effect than has ever been made before.

Purple rainfall in Kunming, ruining western China's 1818 broad-bean crop? Tambora's fault. A typhus epidemic in County Cork, adding to the miseries of an Ireland swamped in rain and blighted potatoes? Chalk it up to the mighty eruption far off in the East. Thomas Jefferson fretting over the future of his beloved Monticello? His crops were failing precisely because of the sulfurous aerosols from Sumbawa Island and the icy weather they brought. Just about everything presented in these pages fits together like a gigantic intercontinental jigsaw puzzle, with the grand image emerging just as the final piece is slipped onto the board: Tambora.

Maybe amid the welter of circumstantial evidence, some of the knock-on effects Mr. Wood ascribes to the eruption—the financial crashes, the political revolutions—can seem a little far-fetched. And the author's occasional gasconading may be a little robust for some: To declare to readers that your very own book "offers a rich and unique travelogue . . . traversing the hemisphere to trace this epochal eruption's shaping hand on human history" seems more fitting for a publicist than a writer. But these are quibbles: This a fine and well-crafted work.

With which, however, I have one argument. Mr. Wood's intention in writing the story of Tambora, in time for its bicentenary, is to stake the eruption's claim for global primacy—to knock Krakatoa off its long-held pedestal. "The celebrity of [Krakatoa's] more modest eruption in 1883 seems undeserved," he writes. "Only the historical accident of the telegraph's invention allowed news of it to travel instantly across the world."

Well, as the author of a book on Krakatoa, I have a dog in this fight. I have skin in the game.

Krakatoa, a once-in-a-century blast, was the biggest volcanic explosion in what one may call fully recorded human history. Tambora was far bigger, a once-in-a-thousand-years event, but its impact has been dimmed by history, accurately recorded by no one and pieced together only by the application of forensics. Of Krakatoa we know much, and we know it well. It made the loudest sound ever transmitted across the globe. It was the originator of the farthest-traveling volcano-made tsunami. It killed at least 40,000 people. It lowered the planet's ambient temperature. It colored the skies with dust and inspired wildly polychromatic art (the background of Munch's "Scream" among them). It led to the modern understanding of the jet stream. It was studied exhaustively by a raft of new scientific disciplines.

It had a certain geopolitical impact: It contributed to the creation of the Republic of Indonesia, the fourth most populous nation on earth today and the biggest Islamic state. Thanks to the transmission of the news of the occurrence around the world within mere minutes, it helped with the origins of the globally connected village of today. And it had a philosophical impact as well: Consideration of the effects of the cataclysm led ineluctably to the famously pitiless remark ascribed to Will Durant, that "civilization exists by geologic consent, subject to change without notice."

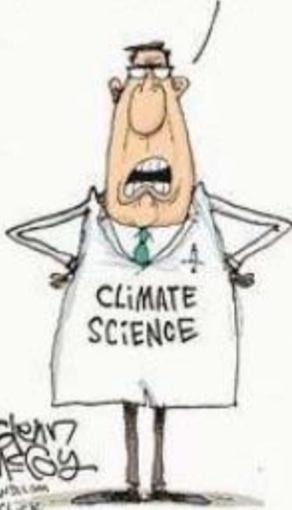
Yes, Tambora was a Goliath of a volcano that may well have triggered sputterings of interesting local events here and there across the globe. Krakatoa, by comparison a cunning David, spawned a colossal and global happening that, most important of all, altered forever humankind's attitude to the overwhelming power of Nature. As such, it deserves a primacy among volcanoes that will not be bested by any earlier rival's brute size and strength alone.

Game on, Gillen D'Arcy Wood: Krakatoa is quite ready for you.

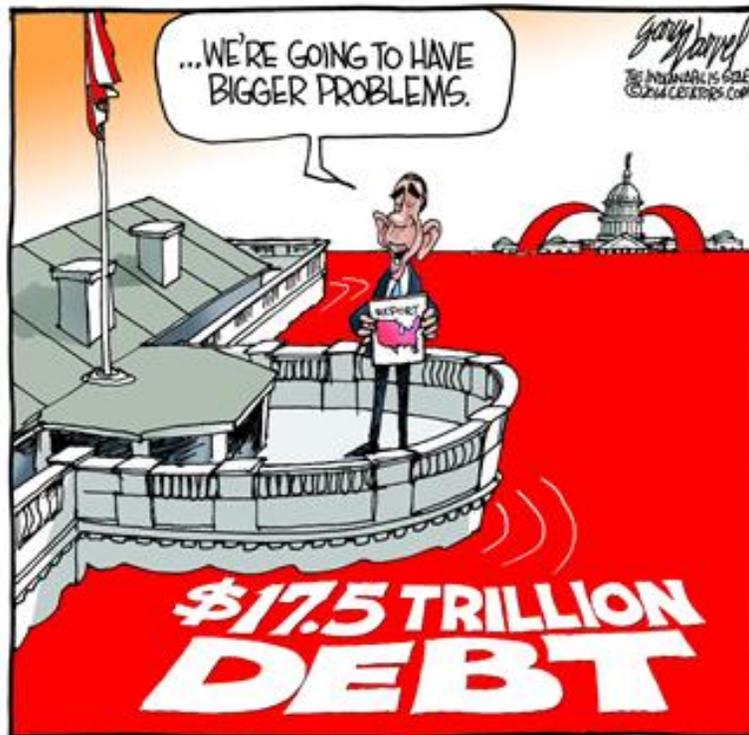
Mr. Winchester's "Krakatoa: The Day the World Exploded, August 27th, 1883" was published in 2003. He is currently writing a biography of the post-1950 Pacific Ocean.



We in the scientific community are really getting fed up with all of these global warming deniers!!



CLIMATE CHANGE IS AN ISSUE THAT IS GOING TO IMPACT OUR KIDS AND GRANDKIDS. IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING...



The Real War on Women



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