

NIPCC Press Release Talk

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Good morning. It is a pleasure for me to be here today. I would like to begin by thanking all those who have assisted in the preparation and printing of this book; to Joe and Diane Bast who spent numerous hours in formatting and editing the volume into the masterpiece that you see before you today, to Dr. Singer who has worked tirelessly and selflessly in organizing the efforts of the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change, and to all the contributors and reviewers who encouraged and assisted along the way. Your efforts have been greatly appreciated and noted, and they will make a difference.

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"Truth in scientific matters is frequently, as in the case of climate change, a matter of judgment and interpretation of a complex body of data and the theory that binds the various skeins of evidence into a rational whole." So wrote Robert M. White, president emeritus of the National Academy of Engineering, in a perceptive Policy Forum article ten years ago in the *Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society*. He followed this definition with the equally astute observation that differences of interpretation within the scientific community often lead to different assertions of "truth,"

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noting that "various 'truths' are marshaled to support political assertions by contending constituencies," and that "to capture political support, political leaders portray the scientific knowledge in ways more positive or negative than the science warrants." So, indeed, it has ever been; as the Preacher observed long ago, "there is no new thing under the sun." And thus, in our day, we are bombarded with myriad claims of truth in the ongoing debate over CO₂-induced global warming.

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One faction of such truth to emerge is that portrayed by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or IPCC, which position has subsequently been mirrored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and other organizations throughout the world, where it is professed that (1) human activities – especially the burning of fossil fuels – are increasing the carbon dioxide content of the atmosphere, which will (2) lead to catastrophic global warming, which will (3) produce all sorts of undesirable consequences, and (4) have little to no positive effects. Aligned against this constituency are the forces that, although willing to concede that humans are causing the CO₂ concentration to increase, contend heartily against the other assertions. The NIPCC report, or the report of the Nongovernmental International Panel on Climate Change that is being released today, occupies this latter end of the climate change spectrum of truth. The IPCC claims to have based its assessment of the truth on the best available science.

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The NIPCC report disagrees with this claim, making the case that many of the IPCC's conclusions far outstrip – or even contradict – the implications of a vast array of real-world data that should have informed its theoretical models, while other of its claims have been reached without consideration of important scientific studies of which its authors were apparently unaware. On topics from Aerosols to Wildfires, and everything in between, *Climate Change Reconsidered* reviews these neglected papers, which come from a broad spectrum of the peer-reviewed scientific literature; and it arrives at conclusions that are either much less ominous in their negative implications or actually positive in nature.

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Referring back to the words of Robert White, "whose truth is to be believed?" Obviously, we believe what we have written in the NIPCC report, but our word should not be sufficient for anyone else, nor should the word of the IPCC. Everyone must ultimately stand on his or her own two feet, studying the evidence and making up their own minds on every aspect of the great overarching subject of global change.

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A quick glance at our book's Table of Contents reveals the enormous diversity of matters that comprise this area of study. This is not to say, however, that we know the truth of all matters related to the global change debate, nor that we will not make a misstep in our interpretation of the available evidence. Indeed, we lay no claim to any special source of knowledge that is not available to anyone else on the planet, nor do we pretend to possess superlative powers of discernment, as do so many of our detractors. No, we just look at the data like everyone else does (*or should*) and do our level best to decide what they mean.

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Also, it was next to impossible to report on all pertinent scientific papers within the limited scope of time and space that was available to us. Hence, there may be other aspects of the topics we wrote about that are not included in this book. We assuage our consciences in this regard by noting that other organizations, books and websites are replete with that information; and we urge you to consider all sides of the controversy before drawing conclusions on these important matters. With so much at stake for humanity and the natural biosphere, to do anything less represents a rush to judgment unbecoming of anyone who professes to be truly concerned about the health of the earth and the variety of life that resides upon it.

With warmest feelings and regards to each of you, I wish you the best as you travel your own path in search of the truth in this most important of global matters. Thank you.

Craig D. Idso
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