

# Science Heresy



Photo: Sophie Reid

## Editorial

*Yet, in holding scientific research and discovery in respect, as we should, we must also be alert to the equal and opposite danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific-technological elite.* - From President Eisenhower's 1961 farewell address to the nation.

Hello. My name is John Reid. I am the editor of this on-line magazine, *Science Heresy*. I am a scientist, a physicist. I have a PhD in upper atmosphere physics from the University of Tasmania.

Politically, I have always been left of centre. I once served on the ALP Tasmania Branch, State Executive in the 1970s. I marched in both Moratoriums back then. I became disillusioned with the ALP because of their promotion of poker machines in working class pubs, their contempt for the Greens and the increasing irrelevance of the branches and rank and file membership.

### **It is evident that:**

- We are consuming fossil fuel at an accelerating rate.
- CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is increasing rapidly
- Global average temperatures increased during the 20th century.
- Fossil fuel will eventually be exhausted - sooner rather than later.
- Peak oil is happening now, peak coal by 2030. These are not the dates at which the fuel runs out but the times of the peaks in the production curves. Coal has a much flatter curve than oil.
- The world faces huge environmental problems: depletion of native forests, depletion of fish stocks, reduction of biodiversity.
- Many parts of the planet are overpopulated.

### **However**

- After extensive studies lasting for 30 years and costing billions of dollars, no causal connection has yet been established between increasing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> and climate variations. On the contrary global warming began well before the industrial age and atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations lag behind temperature changes in ice core records.
- As fuel becomes scarcer and more expensive it will be necessary to move to alternative energy sources and lower energy usage. This transition may be more painful than many envisage. Widespread international conflict is likely and there will be a sharp decline in the standard of living, particularly in those countries which depend on high energy consumption to support their lifestyle, i.e. in the West.
- Alternative energy sources provide energy intermittently and often at remote locations when what is needed is base load power and fuel for transport. The world is not running out of energy, it is running out of fuel.
- During the transition period, alternative fuel for transport of commodities and people will be needed. Rail offers a good alternative since much infrastructure is already in place. Fuel requirements per tonne.kilometer are considerably less than for road vehicles.
- Likewise for international transport shipping is by far the best option. Air transport will become a luxury or a thing of the past.
- As oil becomes prohibitively expensive both rail and shipping can readily be converted to coal-fired systems. To restrict the usage of coal on the basis of a superstition about CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is both misguided and destructive of industry, unnecessarily so.
- The introduction of carbon taxes, carbon trading and so on will do little to remedy real environmental problems. All it does, beside destroying much industry, is let governments off the hook. They can be seen to be "doing something" when in fact they are doing less than nothing. In Australia, the Prime Minister's reference to some of our major industries as "dirty polluters" is nothing more than a cynical ploy to win back Green voters.

Great damage is being done to the reputation of scientists and to science generally by the Alarmist ideology. It is imperative that the Alarmist view of climate being pushed by sections of the media, leftist political groups and by some scientists be discredited. The March 2011 edition of Science Heresy is dedicated to this end

