McCarthyism and Global Warming

Are you now or have you ever been a member of any group or organization advocating the denial of the theory of manmade global warming?

By Louise Butler

From 1947 to 1957, in the midst of post-World War II Communist paranoia, the halls of Congress were darkened by an alcoholic, unstable, miserable excuse for a man: Joseph R. McCarthy. The intellectually-stunted McCarthy, truly an example of mediocrity made manifest, performed in a predictably lackluster way until he decided to become the leading tout for anti-Communistic jingoism.

McCarthy used a nascent fear of the "Red Menace" to acquire the one thing he could never garner through talent or intelligence — power. Suddenly one of life's perennial also-ran's was the center of attention. People who used to treat McCarthy as the occasional electoral mistake deferred to him in the halls of the Senate, seeking out his support and good favor. The toady had become the toad.

The start of McCarthy's reign of misinformed terror began with a speech in Wheeling, W.V., in February 1950. With evidence later proved to be inaccurate — if not deliberately manufactured — he alleged that the State Department had been infiltrated by Communists. When a Senate investigating committee exonerated the State Department, McCarthy took his campaign to the air waves. When he was asked to produce evidence of the charges against the State Department, he not only refused, but, instead, made new accusations.

The media, always more interested in selling copy than ascertaining the truth, did nothing to challenge McCarthy's baseless accusations. Finally, one preeminent reporter, Edward R. Murrow, took him on, but this was only after McCarthy was allowed to ruin lives and affect the direction of the nation for four years.

Where was the due diligence? Where was the skeptical oversight? Why were the voices of moderation ignored, attacked, silenced or implicated? I ask this because the same thing is happening in this country today apropos the discussion of global warming.

First of all, global warming is occurring. We are in an interglacial period of the last Ice Age, known in this country as the Wisconsin Ice Age. There was a time when, had the St. Louis Arch been in existence at the time, you could have stood at the observation windows and seen the toe of the Laurentide Ice Sheet just to the north of St. Louis. Glaciers have come that far south, retreated with warming temperatures exceeding those today, and reappeared. There is no doubt that this planet is warming, and there is no doubt that it is a natural, normal, totally uncontrollable action of nature, impacted more by radiation levels from the sun and long, slow cycles of nature than any man-made causes.

What distresses me is the rampant use of this natural phenomenon by political entities trying to control both money and power. What distresses me is the total lack of scientific veracity required of people who are making these power plays. What distresses me are the lack of media support for good science and the *ad hominem* attacks on those who question the dramatized reports of catastrophic anthropogenic climate change. We, meaning the industrialized, capitalized, civilized and democratized nations of the world, are not at fault for what nature has predetermined. Long before man was more than one small animal form on this planet, the world has been warmer than it is now, or is going to be in the future.

The so-called "settled" or "consensus" science trying to put a human face on global warming is a corruption of science for the sake of politics. Science does not have consensus. Science does not look for "settled" ideas. Science is a self-correcting process that constantly puts its tested hypotheses forward for others to test, criticize and either confirm or deny. The fastest way to make your scientific conclusions suspect is to refuse to put them up for peer review. Here is where the media has decided it would rather deal in sensationalism and political agenda than present the truth.

Take, for example, the popular "Hockey Stick" diagram that is supposed to illustrate the dramatic upward shift in temperature coinciding with the man-made introduction of greenhouse gases (never mind that man-made carbon dioxide makes up only 3 percent of the atmospheric total). The Hockey Stick diagram has been so discredited for its bad science that even the U.N. has removed it from its global warming documentation. Unfortunately, the concepts have become an urban myth for anthropogenic global warming enthusiasts. First of all, Mann and Jones, co-creators of the diagram, tossed out data from the Medieval Climate Optimum (a warm period of about 400 years) when average temperatures were higher than they are now, as well as the Little Ice Age (another 400 years) in an effort to show that our temperatures were stable prior to industrialization. They actually tried to describe these hemispheric, centuries-long phenomena as being regional and, therefore, irrelevant. Then Mann and Jones created a computer model that is so biased that it will produce the same results even if you drop in random data. When the flaws in this model were revealed, and investigators asked for Mann and Jones' data to test its scientific veracity, Phil Jones responded by saying, "We have 25 or so years invested in the work. Why should I make the data available to you, when your aim is to try and find something wrong with it?" This is not the attitude of a scientist.

We are offered few examples of serious, non-hysterical research. The media want stories that will feed the frenzy of catastrophic global warming. For example, a current article in *Nature* credits natural cycles, not man-made causes, for the current warming trend in the Arctic. Yet those preaching catastrophe feel it necessary to point out that this proves global warming. Yes, it does, but it says nothing about *man-made* global warming.

The only defense against meteorological McCarthyism is to be armed with the facts and make them known every time someone tries to use fear as a substitute for logic. What am I doing about global warming? I'm reading — a lot.