

Climategate: the Whitewash Begins

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Breaking news from the splendid [Bishop Hill](#). It seems the AGW establishment has launched an urgent damage limitation exercise in order to whitewash the Climategate scandal in time for Copenhagen.

Here's the (so far unconfirmed) story:

- 1) Lord Rees (Royal Society) to be asked by UEA to investigate CRU leak.
- 2) Foreign Office and government leaning heavily on UEA to keep a lid on everything lest it destabilises Copenhagen.
- 3) CRU asked to prepare data for a pre-emptive release in past couple of days but trouble reconciling issues between data bases has stopped this.

The appointment of Lord Rees, if confirmed, is especially worrying. It's the rough equivalent of appointing King Herod's grand vizier to investigate a mysterious outbreak of mass baby killing in Judaea.

First, Lord Rees – formerly Sir Martin Rees, the Astronomer Royal – is very much of the catastrophist mindset which helped launch the whole AGW scare in the first place. Five years ago, he declared:

"I think the odds are no better than 50/50 that our present civilisation will survive to the end of the present century."

Second, he has previously suggested that there might be certain areas where frank and open scientific enquiry is not a good idea.

"He asks whether scientists should withhold findings which could potentially be used for destructive purposes, or if there should be a moratorium, voluntary or otherwise, on certain types of scientific research, most notably genetics and biotechnology."

Third, he is president of an institution – The Royal Society – which has persistently used its distinguished name (founded 1660); and supposed unimpeachable scientific authority to push AGW theory.

Here is the [Royal Society's most recent statement](#) on the subject, brought out in the

aftermath of the Climategate scandal.

The UK is at the forefront of tackling dangerous climate change, underpinned by world class scientific expertise and advice. Crucial decisions will be taken soon in Copenhagen about limiting and reducing the impacts of climate change now and in the future. Climate scientists from the UK and across the world are in overwhelming agreement about the evidence of climate change, driven by the human input of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere.

As three of the UK's leading scientific organisations involving most of the UK scientists working on climate change, we cannot emphasise enough the body of scientific evidence that underpins the call for action now, and we reinforce our commitment to ensuring that world leaders continue to have access to the best possible science. We believe this will be essential to inform sound decision-making on policies to mitigate and adapt to climate change up to Copenhagen and beyond.

I'm sure that Lord Rees will strive to be as scrupulously unbiased as he is possibly capable. But with a history like this behind him, I can't say I am terribly reassured.

UPDATE: More on Lord Rees's resolutely neutral position on AGW – as posted on the Bishop Hill blog.

Interview with Lord Rees:

“What one single thing convinces you most that climate change is taking place?”

The main reason for concern is that the carbon dioxide level is rising by 0.5 per cent a year and is now at a level that it has not been at for the last half a million years. I think if we knew nothing else than that, there would still be great reason for concern.

What is the most important thing you are personally doing on climate change?

I am becoming more and more conscious of the need to avoid waste. I use a small economical car, for instance.

If you were the Prime Minister, what one thing would you do about climate change?

I think Tony Blair has already played an important role leading the G8 nations on the climate change issue. I think he was right to do this and the issue is now high on the international agenda. The recently published Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change will have an impact internationally as well as help the G8 nations move further on this subject.

Do you agree with the Bishop of London that “making selfish choices such as flying on holiday or buying a large car are a symptom of sin”?

Bishops are experts in defining sins and I am not, but one change that may happen and I hope will happen over the next few years is that it will become socially unacceptable to be conspicuously wasteful.

There's so much noise about climate change, are people in danger of becoming complacent?

It's a difficult issue for the public because the downside is very long-term and is international, unlike pollution for instance, which people are concerned about because it affects their localities. The effects of carbon dioxide emissions are worldwide rather than local and the most severe effects will be far in the future. "

Yep. He's going to come down hard on those CRU scientists all right. Just the man for the job!

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