

SEPP News Release:

TV METEOROLOGISTS PUBLICLY ENDORSE ANTI-CLIMATE TREATY "LEIPZIG DECLARATION"

Backlash Results After White House Prods Weathercasters to Promote Fears of Global Warming "Catastrophe"

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Science & Environmental Policy Project

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FAIRFAX, VIRGINIA, NOVEMBER 11, 1997---The Science & Environmental Policy Project reports a surge in requests for the Leipzig Declaration after television news meteorologists staged a press briefing in Cleveland, Ohio, 10 days ago to publicly add their signatures to the anti-Global Climate Treaty document. In a statement read at the October 30th press briefing, which was broadcast regionally and reported by the Associated Press, the meteorologists said, "we feel the need to bring to the public's attention the full spectrum of data that we work with on a daily, monthly, and yearly basis. Runaway global warming proponents predict cataclysmic consequences as a result of increased CO2. We disagree." [emphasis in original]

The Leipzig Declaration grew out of a scientific conference held in Leipzig, Germany, in November 1995, which critically examined the evidence for global warming. Authored by atmospheric physicist S. Fred Singer, president of The Science & Environmental Policy Project, and now being circulated among climate experts, the Leipzig Declaration has to date been endorsed by 110 climate scientists, including 21 meteorologists from the television news media. It reads, in part:

"There does not exist today a general scientific consensus about the importance of greenhouse warming from rising levels of carbon dioxide. In fact, many climate specialists now agree that actual observations from weather satellites show no global warming whatsoever--in direct contradiction to computer model results." It adds, "based on all the evidence available to us, we cannot subscribe to the politically inspired world view that envisages climate catastrophes and calls for hasty actions. For this reason, we consider the drastic emission control policies likely to be endorsed by the Kyoto conference--lacking credible support from the underlying science--to be ill-advised and premature."

A group of Ohio TV meteorologists contacted The Science & Environmental Policy Project in early October, shortly after the Administration hosted an invited gathering of 100 television meteorologists at the White House and appealed to them to promote global warming to their broadcast audiences. At that gathering, as reported in the *Wall Street Journal* on October 2nd, White House global warming "experts" failed to answer the weathercasters' many pressing questions about the scientific evidence. Said Randy Jackson of WFMY-TV in Greensboro, North Carolina, "You hear them say "we think, we're not sure, maybe if..."; those aren't very conclusive terms." Brian Norcross of WFOR-TV in Miami, Florida, said he and some of his colleagues took a rather dim view of the event's political agenda. "The first question we had was, "What are we doing here?" he said.

Since the White House had broken ground by presenting its political agenda to the TV meteorologists, and since some weathercasters reported being pressured by their news directors to attend, the Ohio group felt a need to make an overt statement to avoid any public misperceptions about their scientific views. Those signing the Leipzig Declaration on October 30th in Cleveland were:

Mark Johnson, WEWS-TV (ABC) Ch. 5, Cleveland, Ohio
Jon Loufman, WKYC-TV (NBC) Ch. 3, Cleveland, Ohio
Dan Maly, WOIO-TV (Fox) Ch. 19, Cleveland, Ohio
Don Webster, WEWS-TV (ABC) Ch. 5, Cleveland, Ohio
A.J. Colby, WICU-TV (NBC) Ch. 12, Erie, Pennsylvania
Also: Prof. Vern Harnapp of the University of Akron
and Prof. Fred Starheim of Kent State University

Other TV meteorologists who have signed are:

Elliot Abrams, Sr. Vice President, Accu-Weather Inc.
Richard Apuzzo, WXIX-TV (Fox) Ch. 19, Terrace, Ohio
Andre Bernier, WJW-TV (Fox) Ch. 8, Cleveland, Ohio
Sally Bernier, WJW-TV (Fox) Ch. 8, Cleveland, Ohio
Bob Breck, WVUE-TV (ABC) Ch. 8, New Orleans, Louisiana
Neil Frank, Ph.D., KHOU-TV (CBS) Ch. 11, Houston, Texas, former director, National Hurricane Center, Miami

Dick Gantz, Weather Forecasting Inc.
Dick Goddard, WJW-TV (Fox) Ch. 8, Cleveland, Ohio
Shane Hollett, WJW-TV (Fox) Ch. 8, Cleveland, Ohio
Mark Koontz, WJW-TV (Fox), Ch. 8, Cleveland, Ohio
Roy Leep, WTVT-TV (CBS) Ch. 13, Tampa, Florida
James T. Moore, KSWO-TV (ABC) Ch. 7, Lawton, Oklahoma
Brad Sussman, WEWS-TV (ABC) Ch. 5, Cleveland, Ohio
Brian Sussman, KGO-TV (ABC) Ch. 7, San Francisco, California
Anthony Watts, HSL-TV (CBS) Ch. 12, Chico, California
Brian Westfall, Weather Forecasting Inc.

Note: Each person listed represents only him or herself. Affiliations are included for identification purposes only.

The Science & Environmental Policy Project, a non-profit education and policy research organization based in Fairfax, Virginia, was founded in 1992 to foster greater reliance on sound science in decisions affecting health and environment. Signed copies of the Leipzig Declaration continue to come in to the Project. For the full text of the Leipzig Declaration, with a complete list of signatories, and the text of the TV meteorologists' press briefing statement, contact Candace Crandall at (703) 503-5064.

