EARTH DAY CRASHES TO EARTH

Last Sunday (4/22) was Earth Day. If it passed without your notice, don't feel bad. Most other Americans ignored it, too. "Thousands" had been expected for the heavily hyped Earth Day rally in Washington, D.C., but only about 40 attended, a fact which Washington Post reporter Tara Bahrampour did her utmost to conceal.

It was a far cry from the first Earth Day, in 1970, when, according to news reports, about 20 million Americans took part in Earth Day rallies.

The percentage of Americans who worry "a great deal" about environmental problems has declined substantially since 2000, according to Gallup's annual Environment poll.

This is partly because times are tough. People who worry where their next meal is coming from tend not to worry much about polar bears or the rainforest. But it's due mostly to the collapse of hysteria about anthropogenic (man made) global warming.

Of seven issues Gallup polled, Americans worried least about Global Warming. In 2000, 40 percent said they worried about this a great deal. This year, just 30 percent said they do.

Because of "greenhouse gases" we emit when we burn fossil fuels, the planet is warming at an unprecedented and alarming rate, say believers in AGW. Skeptics agree some warming has taken place, but is due mostly to natural factors, and is within the bounds of natural fluctuations.

As recently as 2006, former Vice President Al Gore could claim that as a result of melting polar and glacier ice, sea levels could rise as much as 23 feet in a century, and draw a respectable audience. That's inconceivable now.

Alarmist predictions were based on computer models. The models were wrong, said Dr. James Lovelock, perhaps the most prominent scientist among the alarmists.

"We were supposed to be halfway toward a frying world now," said Dr. Lovelock, author of the 2006 book, The Gaia Hypothesis, in an interview last week. But "the world has not warmed up very much since the millennium."

Journalists largely remain true believers. But even they are losing interest. Since 2009, coverage of "climate change" has declined by 72 percent on the evening news programs of the three broadcast television networks and Fox News, according to Media Matters, a left-wing public interest group.

The Climatic Research Unit at the University of East Anglia in Britain maintains the database of world surface temperature measurements upon which the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on

Climate Change (IPCC) principally relies.

In March, the CRU said a study it has completed for Britain's Met(eorological) Office indicates global temperatures have risen just 0.75 degrees Celsius (1.35 degrees Fahrenheit) since 1900.

There's been no statistically significant warming in 15 years, Dr. Richard Lindzen of MIT, citing CRU data, told Parliament in February.

Weather satellites are more accurate, but the satellite record goes back only to 1978. It shows warming of 0.82 F (0.46 C) during that time, Dr. John Christy said in December.

Because satellites measure temperatures in the lower atmosphere, where the greenhouse effect takes place, they should show more warming than do surface stations. But they show less.

The raw data collected from surface stations corresponds to the satellite measurements, said Dr. Roy Spencer, Dr. Christy's partner in the satellite thermometer project. "Virtually all" of the warming since 1973 is a result of adjustments, he said.

Even with those adjustments, the amount of warming has been trivial. So what was the fuss all about?

"Alarmism over climate is of great benefit to many, providing government funding for academic research and a reason for government bureaucracies to grow," 16 prominent scientists wrote in the Wall Street Journal Jan. 28. "Alarmism also offers an excuse for governments to raise taxes."

"In truth most scientists who are paid to support Global Warming do and most who are not do not," said Dr. Gordon Fulks, a professor of physics.

Supporters have been paid about 3,500 times more. The U.S. government spent $79 billion on policies related to "climate change," the Science and Public Policy Institute estimated in 2009. None of it has gone to skeptics.

Americans have caught on. In a Rasmussen poll last August, 69 percent of respondents said it was at least "somewhat likely" some scientists have falsified global warming research.

The truth eventually overtakes even the best funded hoaxes. This Earth Day, that was something to celebrate.

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