

## No more double standards

Government officials and grant recipients must also be held accountable for fraud

Paul Driessen

False, misleading or fraudulent claims have long brought the wrath of juries, judges and government agencies down on perpetrators. So have substandard manufacturing practices.

\* GlaxoSmith Klein has agreed to plead guilty and pay a \$750-million fine for manufacturing deficiencies at a former pharmaceuticals plant. Even though there was no indication of patient harm, said the US attorney, the fine was needed “to pressure companies to follow the rules.”

\* Johnson & Johnson was recently slapped with a \$258-million jury verdict for allegedly misleading claims about the safety and superiority of an antipsychotic drug. J&J’s actions “defrauded the Louisiana Medicaid system,” prosecutors argued. (The company intends to appeal.)

\* The Feds have also prosecuted baseball players for lying to congressional investigators about using performance-enhancing steroids. Said a prosecutor: “Even when you’re just providing information to the Legislative Branch, you need to be truthful.”

Who could oppose following the rules, making quality products and being honest? But shouldn’t these values apply where far more is at stake than a few companies, pills, baseball records or bad role models? Shouldn’t we demand that these rules apply to people and actions that have unprecedented impact on lives, livelihoods, liberties and communities throughout the country?

Can we afford to continue having double standards that let government officials violate basic standards of honesty and accountability that they apply “vigorously” to citizens and companies? Why should legislators, regulators and investigators be exempt from rules they devise and impose on everyone else? Shouldn’t we teach our kids that government officials mustn’t lie to us, either?

Few examples are as immediate, costly and far-reaching as the new ozone, dust, mercury and carbon dioxide rules that EPA regulators are trying to impose, under the guise of protecting air quality, planetary climate and human health. Few corporate executives or citizens are as exempt from basic legal standards as the energy and climate czars, czarinas, bureaucrats, and government-funded scientists and activists who seek to inflict their anti-hydrocarbon agenda on us, regardless of the science – or the impacts on jobs, prosperity, families and civil rights progress.

The Environmental Protection Agency’s new mercury, ozone and soot rules alone would eliminate up to 76,000 megawatts of generating capacity by 2015, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation calculates. That’s 7% of total US electric generating capacity – enough to power 38,000,000 homes under normal conditions. It’s 1.2 times the all-time peak electricity demand record for the entire state of Texas.

Credit Suisse estimates that compliance with these new standards will cost the power generation industry (ie, electricity consumers) \$150 billion by 2020, to retrofit coal plants or replace them with natural gas-fired units. NERA Economic Consulting calculates that meeting EPA’s proposed new 60 ppb ozone standard alone would impose an annual cost of \$1-trillion per year and cumulative losses of 7.3 million jobs; create hundreds of new air quality non-attainment areas; require millions more car inspections and repairs; and block numerous highway, residential and commercial construction projects.

The costs are monstrous – the benefits negligible, illusory or fabricated. The ozone rules would send power plant emissions almost to natural background levels in many areas. That’s just for starters.

EPA claims coal-fired power plants release “40% of all domestic human-caused mercury emissions.” But only a quarter of this is deposited in the contiguous United States. The National Center for Atmospheric Research says total mercury emissions from U.S. power plants are roughly equivalent to what comes from trees burned in forest fires. (Natural mercury in soils is taken up by trees through their roots.)

Some 30% of mercury that lands in the US comes from other countries. And according to data collected by the Science and Public Policy Institute, when emissions from volcanoes, oceanic geothermal vents and other natural sources are also factored in, US power plants may account for as little as 0.5% of total annual US mercury emissions and 0.002% of global emissions.

Worse, these huge energy, employment and economic impacts do not include the far more massive costs and intrusions associated with EPA's scheme to slash carbon dioxide emissions, supposedly to safeguard "human health and welfare" from "dangerous" plant-fertilizing carbon dioxide and the manmade global warming that CO<sub>2</sub> allegedly causes.

The Brookings Institute, Congressional Budget Office, Charles River Associates, Heritage Foundation and other analysts have documented the economic impacts. Delaware Senate candidate Chris Coons may "earn" millions if cap-tax-and-trade passes or the EPA rules are implemented. The rest of America will pay big-time. America's #1 priority is fixing the economy and jobs. EPA's seems to be killing them.

As to the "science" behind what the White House now calls "global climate disruption," the ClimateGate emails underscored how deceptive, manipulated and even fraudulent the supposed evidence actually was. The IPCC's headline-grabbing climate "disasters" turned out to be based on environmentalist press releases, casual email comments, anecdotal stories, student theses, studies that had absolutely nothing to do with climate change, and almost anything except honest peer-reviewed science.

On October 6, highly respected physicist Harold Lewis resigned from the American Physical Society. He had believed the climate chaos claims – but kept studying the science, pro and con, for years. He still saw a small human element in climate-forcing mechanisms, but no longer believed the alarmist hysteria. Finally, he'd had it, and said so bluntly in his resignation letter to APS President Curtis Gallan:

"[T]he global warming scam, with the (literally) trillions of dollars driving it, has corrupted so many scientists, and has carried APS before it like a rogue wave. It is the greatest and most successful pseudoscientific fraud I have seen in my long life as a physicist. Anyone who has the faintest doubt that this is so should force himself to read the ClimateGate documents, which lay it bare. I don't believe any real physicist, nay scientist, can read that stuff without revulsion."

As for EPA, instead of conducting its own analysis of competing climate change claims, the agency simply adopted the bogus IPCC conclusions. Even in the face of the unfolding ClimateGate and IPCC scandals, Administrator Lisa Jackson proudly and pointedly refused to alter her position or plans. While the Glaxo whistleblower stands to get \$96 million for turning in his company, EPA research analyst Alan Carlin got sent to bureaucratic Siberia for issuing an independent analysis that disagreed with his agency.

Now we face another monumental federal power grab, this time of the hydrocarbon energy that powers 85% of the American economy. The looming seizure of our money, jobs and liberties is based on shoddily manufactured "evidence," fraudulent data and science, good-old-boy peer reviews, and false or misleading reports and testimony that would earn any citizen or company exec major fines and jail time.

When Republicans take control of the House of Representatives, their first order of business should be investigating the "manmade climate disaster" industry. They should subpoena federal employees and grant recipients, question them under oath regarding their funding and activities, and hold robust, public, expert debates on the science, economics, costs and supposed benefits of cap-tax-and-trade, carbon dioxide "endangerment," ozone, and other punitive government policies that are strangling our nation's energy and economic future.

They need to ensure that basic rules of honesty, transparency and accountability are finally applied as forcefully to regulators and taxpayer-funded scientists and activists, as to the rest of us.

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