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[Climate Change] Letters Sent to Agencies

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agencies, H.I., NGO's,
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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 1, 2000

Dear Interested Party:

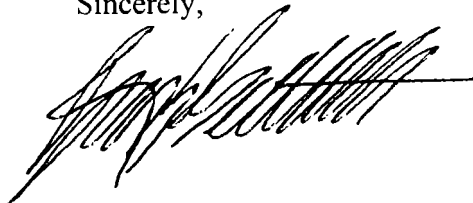
As the new year and the new millennium arrived, so did increasing recognition that global climate change will be among the most important environmental issues of the new century. I want to take this opportunity to send you some updated information on this pressing global issue.

You may have noticed the steady stream of new scientific studies suggesting that global warming is not only occurring, but occurring more rapidly than previously thought. Reports by the World Meteorological Society and the National Climactic Data Center, among others, found that since 1976 the planet has been warming at a rate of .35 degrees Fahrenheit per decade. Attached are summaries of some key studies and associated news stories that may be of interest to you.

Some say that we should not take any action until we have absolute, incontrovertible certainty about global warming and its causes. We believe, however, that the risks of inaction are too great and that balanced, prudent steps are called for now. Fortunately, the initiatives we are working on also create strong economic opportunities. The investments we are already making have helped produce new technologies to begin to address the problems of climate change. For example, new hybrid cars that get more than 80 miles per gallon of gas recently debuted at the Detroit Auto Show. This new breakthrough did not happen by accident. It was a result of the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles (PNGV) program created by the President and Vice President -- a joint public-private research and development initiative to produce more environmentally sound and economically viable vehicles. Fuller descriptions of this and of other recent energy technology developments follow.

The Administration will soon announce additional initiatives to fight global warming. You can expect a detailed presentation of these initiatives to reach you in the next several weeks, as part of my commitment to keep you informed of the latest information, news, and events related to global climate change.

Sincerely,



Roger S. Ballentine
Deputy Assistant to the President
for Environmental Initiatives

Climate Update

January 31, 2000

Science News

- The National Climatic Data Center released data near the end of 1999 showing that in the last quarter-century, the rate of warming has been more than double that of the 20th century average, and since the mid-1970's, the global temperature has risen at a rate of about 0.35 degrees per decade, or 3.5 degrees per century. (Complete text of a front page *New York Times* story about the findings is attached.)
- The National Academy of Sciences released a major new study on January 13, which was reported on by *the Washington Post*, *LA Times*, *CNN*, *CBS* and other outlets. The study found that the warming trend over the past two decades "...is undoubtedly real and is substantially greater than the average rate of warming during the 20th century." The report also downplayed a long-standing dispute over temperature data (while ground monitors have shown a sharp increase in Earth's temperatures, satellite and weather balloon observations have shown little or no warming), noting that while this discrepancy cannot yet fully be explained, it "in no way invalidates the conclusion that the Earth's temperature has been rising."
- 1999 will be the fifth warmest year on record, according to a British Meteorological Office study released December 15, 1999. Seven of the 10 hottest years on record occurred in the 1990's, which was the hottest decade of the millennium, the report said. Furthermore, the report suggested a "high probability" of 2000 being even warmer, as the cold Pacific (La Nina) warms again naturally.
- New satellite data released by NASA January 19, 2000 shows that part of the Pacific Ocean may be undergoing a cooling which could influence U.S. weather patterns over the next years and even decades. This newly identified climate pattern, known as Pacific-Decadal Oscillation (PDO), is a natural oscillation of northern hemisphere Pacific Ocean temperatures that occurs over decades, similar to the international El Nino-La Nina cycle in the tropical Pacific. The research suggests that the U.S. entered the "cool" phase of the PDO (similar to the La Nina phase) about 2 years ago. The tendency of this phase is to cool some regions of the earth, and while this could serve to "mask" or "dampen" global warming signals, it is not evidence that global warming is not occurring. For example, 1998 and 1999 set records as the warmest and 5th warmest years this century during the same period that scientists believe a "cool" PDO phase may have been starting.

Industry and Technology Update

- Following the lead of Ford in December 1999, DaimlerChrysler Corp. this January withdrew from the Global Climate Coalition (GCC), the major business lobbying group opposed to the

Kyoto climate treaty. This leaves GM as the only American carmaker still in the GCC. BP/Amoco, Sunoco and Shell all left the GCC within the last two years.

- In first week of January, a coalition of 42 religious and environmental organizations in 17 states unveiled “Campaign ExxonMobil” (CEM), an effort aimed at pressuring ExxonMobil to reform corporate practices that contribute to global warming, to acknowledge that human activity is causing global warming, and to quit anti-Kyoto lobbying groups such as the Global Climate Coalition. The religious and environmental groups’ primary tactic is shareholder resolutions. In addition to ExxonMobil, they are also targeting GM, Cinergy, Goodyear, Duke Power, CSX, Southern Co., Chevron, Texaco, and Allegheny Energy.
- At the Detroit Auto Show the first week of January 2000, virtually every major manufacturer unveiled prototype hybrid cars that get better than 70 mpg. Ford’s entry, the Prodigy, is “a family car that gets nearly 80 mpg without sacrificing performance or functionality,” according to company documents. GM’s Precept has similar qualities. Both were developed under the Partnership for a New Generation of Vehicles program. Chrysler is slated to display their entry later this year.
- A new hybrid gas and electric car which gets more than 60 mpg arrived at Honda dealers in the U.S. in December, 1999, the first such vehicle priced under \$20,000 to be available to American consumers. Drivers fill it with unleaded gas and an electric motor is charged by the car’s brakes so it never needs to be plugged in—one of the big drawbacks to cars that are entirely electric. Toyota will release a similar vehicle in 2000, selling for \$17,000 and getting 66 mpg.
- Cargill Inc. and Dow Chemical announced in mid-January a \$300 million program for full-scale commercial production of a new kind of plastic made from plants instead of petroleum. The new product is being called “Natural Plastic.”

International Developments

- The World Bank in mid-January announced the creation of a fund to finance a market for greenhouse gas emissions. Four governments—Finland, Norway, Sweden and the Netherlands—and nine companies have committed \$85 million so far to the fund, which will begin operating in April 2000. Reports in the *Washington Post* and *Wall Street Journal* speculated that the initiative reflects the World Bank’s concern about the vulnerability of poor, low lying nations to coastal flooding as a result of global warming.
- France unveiled a program to fight global warming containing 96 measures, including an energy consumption tax on industries due to take effect in 2001, proposals to encourage vehicles to economize on fuel, the development of new public transport, reduction of energy consumption in buildings, and the promotion of research into renewable energy sources. The proposal, announced the week of January 17 also includes a domestic emissions trading system, despite the European Union’s strong criticism of trading systems.

Recent Editorials

- January 9, 2000—*The Washington Post*
“Warming to Reality” (complete text attached)
- January 15, 2000—*The Courier-Journal*
“Global Warming”
- Headline: January 16, 2000—*The Detroit News*
“Global Warming?”
- January 17, 2000—*The Indianapolis Star*
“Still Not a Crisis”
- January 17, 2000—*The Washington Post*
“More Hot News”
- January 18, 2000—*The Atlanta Constitution*
“Global Warming Facts Ignored at Our Peril”

Other Media Coverage

- *CBS News* aired six separate global warming stories over three nights the week of January 10-16 featuring clips from President Clinton’s January 11th statement at the Grand Canyon, two interviews with Dr. James Baker of NOAA, and an interview with White House Chief of Staff John Podesta. All the stories emphasized that global warming science is becoming conclusive, and included impacts as diverse as farming problems in the Central Valley of California and increased incidence of jellyfish blooms worldwide. On Wednesday, January 12, Dan Rather began the CBS lead story with this statement: “A CBS News Exclusive: a new study finds global warming is real and getting worse as the White House plans to unveil an ambitious new program to fight it.”
- *NBC Nightly News*, devoted an “In-Depth” segment on January 4, 2000 to the latest global warming data, indicating that since the mid-1970’s global temperatures have risen .35 degrees Fahrenheit a decade. The following week, NBC ran two additional stories emphasizing the increasing certainty in the science of global warming.

The New York Times

1 SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1999

1999 Continues Warming Trend Around Globe

By WILLIAM K. STEVENS

At the New York Botanical Garden in the Bronx, fragrant white blooms with a pink blush are breaking out on specimens of a popular landscaping shrub called the Koreanspice viburnum — four to five months early. Snowdrops, among the earliest bulbs to send up shoots when winter ends, have already poked up their noses. In some New York suburbs, yellow forsythia blossoms have brought a premature touch of spring to December.

"There's a little confusion out

there," said Wayne Cahilly, an arborist at the botanical garden, and he expressed no doubt as to the reason: abnormal warmth. Or is it so unusual? "I think this warm weather is becoming normal," Mr. Cahilly said.

Certainly it seems that way of late. Last month was the warmest November in 105 years of record-keeping in the contiguous 48 states, and the fourth-warmest in the Northeast. The trend continued into December in most of the country; as of Friday, the average temperature for the month in New York, for instance, was 5.7 degrees Fahrenheit above normal.

But that is almost the least of it. Federal scientists reported last week that in the contiguous 48 states and on other global land masses, including Europe and Asia, 1999 is certain to join 1998 as one of the two warmest years on record, continuing a

Continued on Page 18



Richard L. Harbus for The New York Times

Warmer and Warmer

For 1999 . . .

105=Warmest. 1=Coldest

December
1999 estimated

December
1999 estimated

Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

*Predictions for January, February and March of 2000
based on statistical analysis of past climate and
current trends.*

A map of the United States showing predicted precipitation for the 1997-98 season. The map is divided into three regions: 'NEAR NORMAL' in the northwest, 'NO PREDICTION' in the central and upper midwest, and 'ABOVE NORMAL' in the southern and eastern half of the country.

The New York Times

The United States experienced record-breaking warmth in both of the two most recent winters, said scientists at the government's Climate Prediction Center in Camp Springs, Md. The center predicted last week that on average, most of the country would be warmer than normal over the January-through-March period just ahead.

In a La Niña winter, the jet stream typically plunges down through Montana and the northern Plains and then into the central part of the country before curving northeastward. This curve would normally take place in the East, but in a La Niña year it tends to take place farther west, leaving the Eastern Seaboard on the warm side of the warm-cold division marked by the jet stream.

pens repeatedly. Sometimes in a La Niña regime, the course of the jet stream temporarily flattens out and whisks warm Pacific air all the way across the continent. Mr. Gadomski said he would not be surprised if such a nationwide warm spell developed after the upcoming cold snap passes.

*The warmest decade
in a century of
record-keeping.*

If this so-called North Atlantic oscillation is in one mode, typified by low atmospheric pressure over the ocean, the East tends to be warm. If high pressure dominates, said Vernon Kousky, a research meteorologist at the prediction center, the jet stream tends to follow a southerly course into the ocean in the vicinity of Virginia and North Carolina. North of that, big snowstorms can develop, Mr. Kousky said, as happened in 1995-96, a La Niña winter in which a January blizzard dropped

The North Atlantic oscillation's effect "never makes itself felt till the end of December or early January," Mr. Kousky said, adding that forecasters at this point cannot predict its behavior this winter.

"We're trying to alert people to that possibility," he said.

Last summer's drought established records for dryness in the Northeast, the Middle Atlantic and the Ohio Valley, Mr. Karl's group reported last week. The April-to-July period was the driest or second-driest in all states from West Virginia to Maine. The drought was followed by record rainfall as hurricanes Dennis and Floyd struck the East Coast. Intensified drought and heavier rain are both expected to result from global warming, although no particular weather event of any kind can be attributed to it.

The Washington Post

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

Warming to Reality

BIT BY bit, industry is facing up to global warming. Last month Ford Motor Co. withdrew from the Global Climate Coalition, a lobbying group opposed to the Kyoto climate treaty. On Thursday DaimlerChrysler Corp. quit too; British Petroleum, Shell Oil and Dow Chemical left a while back. But as corporations move on, some politicians are lingering behind. On the campaign trail, Sen. Orrin Hatch routinely denounces the Kyoto accord, and Gov. George Bush has said that he opposes it. In Congress an ostrich caucus still insists that the scientific evidence for global warming is inconclusive.

For most of the world, 1997, 1998 and 1999 were the three warmest years on record. That is no mere blip: Since the mid 1970s, the world seems to have been warming at a rate of 3.5 degrees per century. Given that the world warmed by less than 10 degrees in the 20,000 previous years, the current rate is alarming. The unpleasant consequences may well include more extreme weather, a disruption to agriculture and rising sea levels that cause coastal flooding.

This warming is at least partly the consequence of human behavior: Cars, factories and coal fires produce carbon dioxide and other gases that accumulate in the atmosphere and

alter climate patterns. A serious effort to reduce such emissions is therefore needed. Last year the administration promised to cut the federal government's fossil fuel emissions by 30 percent by 2010, and to triple national production of non-greenhouse "biomass" fuels derived from farm products.

But there is a limit to what the administration can do without the cooperation of Congress. For the past four years, Republican budget riders have prevented the administration from raising fuel-efficiency levels for vehicles. Congress has killed tax credits for fuel-efficient vehicles and air conditioners. The Senate has made it clear that it will not ratify the Kyoto climate accord. It will not even pass modest versions of the Kyoto idea, which would give industry an incentive to reduce greenhouse emissions.

The oil industry claims that compliance with the Kyoto accord would cost the average American family \$1,500 to \$3,000 a year. The Clinton administration declares that the extra cost of fuel-efficient machines is largely offset by the savings from reduced fuel purchases, rendering compliance all but free. The truth may lie somewhere in between. But reckless inaction in the face of global warming is the costliest of all options.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

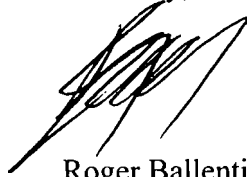
July 27, 2000

Mr. Dan Reicher
Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy
Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, Room 6C016
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Mr. Reicher:

Janet Anderson is currently an agency representative to the White House Climate Change Task Force from your office. Her excepted service authority appointment expires on 28 October. Janet is the lead for the Task Force on industry policy and outreach and her work continues to be very important to the Administration's domestic climate change program. She will also part of the team to represent the US at the Conference of the Parties negotiations in the Hague in November. I request that the Department of Energy extend her appointment through 20 January 2001.

Sincerely,



Roger Ballentine
Chairman White House Climate Change Task Force

Cc: Deputy Secretary Glauthier

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 8, 1999

The Honorable Frank Loy
Undersecretary of State for Global Affairs
2201 C Street NW
Room 7250
Washington, DC 20520

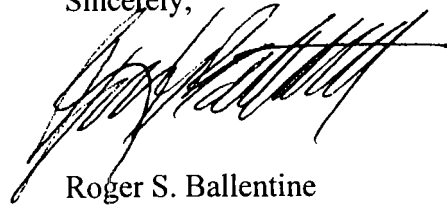
Dear Frank:

I had the distinct pleasure today of forwarding a report to the President on our negotiations in Bonn. That report included a description of the very real progress we made toward a workable – and ratifiable – Kyoto Protocol.

That report also included well-deserved accolades for you and the entire State Department team. The talent and professionalism of your people was certainly the single greatest reason we enjoyed the progress we achieved. It was clear that your team was held in high esteem by our counterparts from around the world.

Thank you again for your leadership and for the fine work of the State Department staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger S. Ballentine', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roger S. Ballentine
Deputy Assistant to the President for
Environmental Initiatives and White House
Climate Change Director

cc: John Podesta
White House Chief of Staff