



Obama: Coast Guard Has “Urgent Need” to Combat Climate Change

In his commencement address at the United States Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut, on May 20, President Obama elaborated on “the challenge I want to focus on today — one where our Coast Guardsmen are already on the front lines, and that, perhaps more than any other, will shape your entire careers — and that’s the urgent need to combat and adapt to climate change.”



Prior to mentioning climate change, Obama listed several other important responsibilities of Coast Guard personnel, including some directly related to our national defense and well-being, such as safeguarding our ports against all threats, including terrorism, and responding in times of disaster or distress by leading rescue teams. Other challenges reflect the increasingly interventionist U.S. foreign policy that has prevailed during the past seven decades, such as missions in the Caribbean and Central America, the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, West Africa, and the Asia Pacific, “to help our partners train their own coast guards to uphold maritime security and freedom of navigation in waters vital to our global economy.”

Despite all these important challenges that the president mentioned (some authorized by the Constitution, others not) he maintained that combating climate change might shape the careers of the graduating cadets more than any other.

As he warmed up his climate change pitch, Obama placed it on equal footing with terrorism, stating that “even as we meet threats like terrorism, we cannot, and we must not, ignore a peril that can affect generations.”

That peril, he went on to say, is climate change.

Before proceeding further, it must be noted that practically everyone recognizes that there is, and always has been, climate change. Even during the brief segment of the Earth’s history that has been recorded by mankind, there have been ice ages and other periods where glaciers have receded and brought balmy conditions to the northernmost reaches of North America and Eurasia. For example, during the last ice age, glacial ice covered all of Canada and extended approximately to the Missouri and Ohio Rivers and eastward to New York Harbor. Centuries later, during what is called the Medieval Warm Period (approximately AD 950 to 1250) the climate was sufficiently warm for the north of Newfoundland to support a European settlement and led to the area being called “Vineland,” for the grapes grown there. Yet no one has suggested that this warm period was in any way caused by human activity. It was a natural climatological phenomenon.

During his address, Obama stated: “Now, I know there are still some folks back in Washington who refuse to admit that climate change is real.”

However, that statement is a red herring. No one has asserted that climate change is not real. What



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those who object to the agenda that radical environmentalist and their allies in government are trying to impose on the rest of us is the assertion that climate change — more specifically “global warming” — is anthropogenic — or caused by human activity.

The distinction has obvious implications. If climate change is a natural phenomenon, then we must adapt and prepare for it in the same manner that we would prepare for any other climatic condition, such as blizzards, hurricanes, or droughts. But if it is caused by human activity, then the “solution” is to regulate human activity — regulation that can only be imposed by government. One of these scenarios suggests voluntary preparation, while the other can be used to justify an increase in government power.

During his talk, Obama repeated the preferred language of the “global warming” doomsayers:

The science is indisputable. The fossil fuels we burn release carbon dioxide, which traps heat. And the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are now higher than they have been in 800,000 years. The planet is getting warmer. Fourteen of the 15 hottest years on record have been in the past 15 years. Last year was the planet’s warmest year ever recorded.

Our scientists at NASA just reported that some of the sea ice around Antarctica is breaking up even faster than expected.

As we reported the same day Obama made that statement, while it is true that a NASA study released on May 14 stated that an ice shelf in Antarctica will likely disintegrate completely in the next few years, contributing to rising sea levels, other NASA data released in May indicated polar sea ice is approximately five percent above the post-1979 average. Therefore even NASA has issued contradictory reports about something that Obama cited as factual.

Another statement that the president made is quite revealing:

Here at the Academy, climate change — understanding the science and the consequences — is part of the curriculum, and rightly so, because it will affect everything that you do in your careers.

If our service academies have made “climate change” part of their curricula, and our cadets are being taught in conformity with the position taken by our federal governmental agencies, that global warming is caused by human activity, then the outlook may be worse than many of us have feared. It means that our future military leaders are being schooled from a one-sided perspective that ignores dissenting scientific opinions about climate change.

In his address, Obama proposed the standard “solution” to climate change proposed by the global warming crowd: “The world has to finally start reducing its carbon emissions — now. And that’s why I’ve committed the United States to leading the world on this challenge.”

Though the global warming doomsayers and advocates of stricter governmental regulations on carbon output may claim otherwise, there are respected members of the scientific community who take exception to their claims.

One of the most prolific scientists refuting the global warming propagandists has been Dr. S. Fred Singer, who wrote *Global Climate Change* (1989), *The Greenhouse Debate Continued* (1992), and *Hot Talk, Cold Science* (1997). He also co-authored *Unstoppable Global Warming: Every 1,500 Years* (2007) with Dennis Avery, and *Climate Change Reconsidered* (2009) with Craig Idso.

Singer said in an interview with the *British Telegraph* in 2009:

We are certainly putting more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. However there is no evidence that



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this high CO₂ is making a detectable difference. It should in principle, however the atmosphere is very complicated and one cannot simply argue that just because CO₂ is a greenhouse gas it causes warming.

There has even been doubt cast about whether global warming — whether one believes it is natural or manmade — is even continuing. Steven Goddard, an independent analyst at Real Science (who served as senior scientist for climate studies at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center before joining the faculty at the University of Alabama in Huntsville), cited satellite data indicating that by 2008, U.S. temperatures, far from increasing, had actually cooled down below 1980s and '90s levels.

And the United Kingdom's National Weather Service, known as the Met Office, released a report in 2012 indicating that there had been no noticeable increase in global temperatures between early 1997 and mid-2012.

There has been climate change on the Earth since before recorded history, and there will always be climate change. But mankind has always been innovative in dealing with natural climatological phenomena. The difference today is due not so much to the Earth's natural climate, but to our changing political climate. A clique of environmental extremists and big government proponents has combined to use "global warming" as a pretext for increasing the size and reach of government.

The sensible approach would be to allow reputable scientists on both sides of the debate equal access to the public forum, so our policies can be based on scientific evidence, not hysteria.

Photo of President Obama at Coast Guard Academy: AP Images

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