

 **LETTER TO THE EDITOR**
**DON'T PERMIT
CONTROL OF
THOUGHTS AND
OPINIONS!**



By Stephen L. Bakke  June 30, 2014

Here's what provoked me:

I came across a letter to the editor that basically told “armchair scientists” to “HUSH-UP” their comments about the climate change controversy until they have all the facts. First, we “amateurs don’t have the facts because of a culture of manipulation, misinformation, and even fraud. Given how poorly these characters have behaved, we are entitled to comment about things that affect our lives so directly and extensively. Considering the arrogant approach many progressive spokespersons take towards common citizens, I thought I should point out some very good reasons we are entitled to be skeptical.

Here's my response:

Don't Permit Control of Thoughts and Opinions!

Re: “Armchair scientists are weak on the facts” – June 28. Science professor John Abraham criticizes non-scientists for opining about climate change without having all the facts. My reply: then give us the facts! We get manipulation and contradiction from many scientists. Given facts, we wouldn't use what you consider flawed information for constructing opinions. Consider:

- Experts in congressional hearings can't predict the cost and effectiveness of anti-CO2 policies.
- When comparing model projections to actual climate observations, we see significant divergence.
- When we worry about the melting Antarctic ice sheets and do research, we find that the extent of total Antarctic ice is at record high levels.
- We read about the email scandal in which sincerely skeptical climate scientists are blocked from publishing legitimate research and “contrary” opinions.
- We hear about the “97% consensus” statistic, and then discover its inaccuracy.
- And a climate warming report substituted projections for actual observations, creating misleading results.

“No wonder we wonder” and set out on our own to decide for ourselves.

Professor Abraham's comments bring back memories of Micah Zenko's article of February 26, “Real Experts Don't Tweet.” He took the elitist position that common citizens should hush up and let the quiet, thoughtful experts decide what information is needed and opinions to hold. And don't forget about Kurt Vonnegut's “Harrison Bergeron,” the story about a society in which no one is permitted to think, much less have an original thought.

Sometimes sincerity combines with good intentions to give us occasional peeks at subtle tyranny.