

Rallying Believers to *Pax Gaia*

If you're pro-God, you must be Green, suggests Yale's Forum on Religion and Ecology

By Neil Maghami

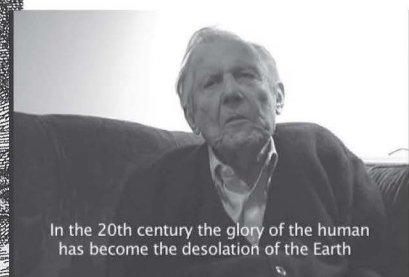
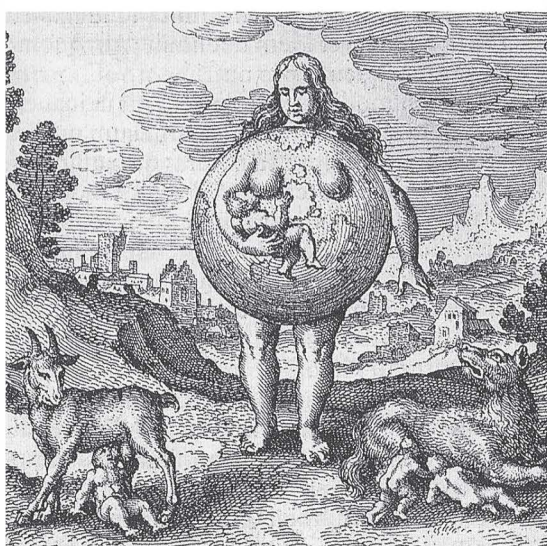
Summary: *The Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale University calls itself the "largest international multireligious project of its kind." Its organizers characterize it as an academic initiative, but a careful inspection reveals that it is more of an effort to proselytize—with a specific goal of rallying religious believers to Big Green's banner.*

Wealthy foundations, together with the organizations funded by those foundations, make up the infrastructure of the environmentalist movement. Without that infrastructure, the movement would be just another vocal special-interest group.

Leveraging foundation grants to fuel its network of tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations, Big Green wields enormous power. It influences government regulation, intervenes in political campaigns, lobbies elected officials, and alters, often directs, public policy—not just in Washington, D.C., but through international bodies like the United Nations.

Yet that isn't enough. For Big Green, it isn't sufficient to have influence over policy and policymakers. Big Green wants to create a climate in which its ideas predominate. Some parts of the environmentalist coalition are trying to achieve the movement's goals piecemeal, one lobbying success or election victory at a time, but some audacious thinkers on the environmentalist Left believe they can accomplish those goals must faster by changing the terms of the debate—by promoting Green-tinted theology: environmentalism as religion.

This under-the-radar, religion-focused initiative—this effort to co-opt religious believers into warriors for the environmentalist cause—is fueled by grants from foundations. The leading example: the Forum on Religion and Ecology (FORE) at Yale University. [For



Mother Earth; Grim and Tucker; and a scene from a YouTube video featuring Thomas Berry.

more on religious environmentalism, see the December 2013 *Green Watch* and the June 2009 issue of our sister publication *Organization Trends*.]

Watch out for FORE

The article on "Spiritual Ecology" in the online, purportedly objective encyclopedia Wikipedia, outlines the Green religionists' way of thought:

Despite the disparate arenas of study and practice, the principles of spiritual ecology are simple: In order to resolve such environmental issues as depletion of species, global warming, and overconsumption, humanity must examine and reassess our underlying attitudes and beliefs about the earth, and our spiritual responsibilities toward the planet. U.S. Advisor [sic] on climate change, James Gustave Speth, said: "I used to think that top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change. I thought

that thirty years of good science could address these problems. I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy, and to deal with these we need a cultural and spiritual transformation."

Speth, by the way, was founder of the World Resources Institute and co-founder of the Natural Resources Defense Council and an advisor to Presidents Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton. The Wikipedia article goes on to praise the leading lights of the Spiritual Ecology movement.

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According to Wikipedia:

Among scholars contributing to spiritual ecology, five stand out because of their exceptionally high creativity, productivity and impact: Steven C[.] Rockefeller, Mary Evelyn Tucker, John Grim, Bron Taylor and Roger S. Gottlieb.

Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim are the dynamic forces behind Yale University's Forum on Religion and Ecology, an international multi-religious project exploring religious world-views, texts, ethics and practices in order to broaden understanding of the complex nature of current environmental concerns.

Steven Clark Rockefeller is an author of numerous books about religion and the environment, and is professor emeritus of religion at Middlebury College. He played a leading role in the drafting of the Earth Charter.

Roger S. Gottlieb is a professor of Philosophy at Worcester Polytechnic Institute and is author of over 100 articles and 16 books on environmentalism, religious life, contemporary spirituality, political philosophy, ethics, feminism, and the Holocaust.

Bron Taylor at the University of Florida coined the term "Dark Green Religion" to describe a set of beliefs and practices centered on the conviction that nature is sacred.

Each of the above has cultivated his or her own niche in this emerging field of academic thought and pragmatic action. Taken together they may be best considered as mutually reinforcing in synergy. There is a very substantial qualitative

difference in the status of spiritual ecology prior to and since their work.

As noted, FORE was founded by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim. They started the organization in 2006 and serve today as its coordinators.

Grim is currently a senior lecturer and senior research scholar at Yale, teaching courses that draw students from the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, Yale Divinity School, the Department of Religious Studies, the Institution for Social and Policy Studies, and the Yale Colleges.

He is editor of the "World Religions and Ecology" series from Harvard Divinity School's Center for the Study of World Religions, which includes such works as *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: The Interbeing of Cosmology and Community*. Grim has been a professor of religion at Bucknell University. At Sarah Lawrence College, he taught courses on Native American (i.e., American Indian) and Indigenous Religions, World Religions, and Religion and Ecology. Grim is president of the American Teilhard Association, named for the philosopher and Jesuit priest Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who promoted a quasi-mystical idea that earth evolved and is evolving: from inanimate matter to a world of biological life to a sphere of human thought.

Tucker is a senior lecturer and research scholar at Yale University where she holds appointments in the Divinity School and in the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. She is also a research associate at the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies at Harvard.

With Brian Swimme (professor at the California Institute of Integral Studies in San Francisco), Tucker created *The Journey of the Universe*, which consisted of a book published by Yale University Press, a PBS film, and an "educational series of interviews." She wrote *Worldly Wonder: Religions Enter Their Ecological Phase* (2003). She is a member of the Interfaith Partnership for the Environment at the United Nations Environment Programme. From 1997-2000, she served on the International Earth Charter Drafting Committee, and is a member of the Earth Charter International Council. The Earth Charter is an attempt to enshrine "sustainable development" as a guiding principle for the global community and "largely blames capitalism for the world's environmental and socioeconomic problems," as

Fred Lucas noted in the August 2013 issue of *Green Watch*'s sister publication *Foundation Watch*.

Working together, Grim and Tucker were contributing editors for the *Encyclopedia of Religion* (second edition), organizing 12 articles on religion and ecology. They describe themselves as "historians of religions." Their specific academic interest lies in the "interconnections" between religions and ethical traditions, their respective sacred texts and rituals, and "the relationships humans have with the natural world." Tucker's specialization is Confucianism, while Grim's is in North American Indian belief systems. Both studied at different points in their career under eco-theologian Thomas Berry.

The Forum grew out of a series of conferences on religion and nature/ecology held in 1996-1998 and organized by Grim and Tucker through Harvard's Center for the Study of World Religions. Some 800 "environmentalists and international scholars of the world's religions participated," according to the Forum's website.

The series touched on every major world faith—Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Daoism (Taoism), Confucianism, Shinto, and "indigenous" religions.

Various foundations funded the conference series, including V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation, Nathan Cummings Foundation, Germeshausen Foundation, Albert and Vera List Endowment, John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, Sacharuna Foundation, Surdna Foundation, and the Winslow Foundation.

The 10 conferences produced 10 academic volumes from Harvard. All 10 books have the same opening essay by Grim and Tucker, including the following statements that provide insight into the views of these "historians of religion":

While in the past none of the religions of the world have had to face an environmental crisis such as we are now confronting, they remain key instruments in shaping attitudes toward nature. The unintended consequences of the modern industrial drive for unlimited economic growth and resource development have led us to an impasse regarding the survival of many life-forms and appropriate management of varied ecosystems. The religious traditions may indeed be criti-

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cal in helping to reimagine the viable conditions and long-range strategies for fostering mutually enhancing human-earth relations . . .

The time is thus propitious for further investigation of the potential contributions of particular religions toward mitigating the environmental crisis, especially by developing more comprehensive environmental ethics for the earth community.

To say that these volumes published following the conferences have a Green ideological tinge is an understatement. The introduction to the volume on Christianity includes this statement, where Green shibboleths are piled on top of one another:

Christian theology played a key role in ecological and cultural malformation by giving impetus to the modern, rational, scientific conquest of nature. Now it can contribute to achieving a sustainable human-earth relationship by utilizing the relationality paradigm of contemporary physics and ecology and connecting it effectively with the eco-justice sensibility of biblical thought.

Current work

In its work, the Forum has all the trappings of a typical Ivy League academic unit. It organizes conferences and speaking events, maintains several websites, publishes academic papers and books (and translates them into various languages), circulates an e-newsletter that reaches approximately 8,000 key academic leaders, and supports an interdisciplinary graduate program at Yale in religious studies.

In their capacity as Forum co-directors, Grim and Tucker keep up a busy schedule that includes public speeches, presentations of academic papers, and advising on the production of videos and films further spreading the views of their mentor, a Catholic priest named Thomas Berry (about whom, more below).

Tucker has publicly acknowledged a distinct political motivation in the Forum's founding. During a March 15, 2016 speech in Berkeley, California at the David Brower Center—named after a founder of the Friends of the Earth and the League of Conservation Voters—Tucker shared part of a conversation she had had years ago with James Gustave Speth (mentioned above).

Speth had told her that, after 40 years, the environmentalist movement's strategy of focusing on making change through "legal regulation" strategies was not working fast enough. "We need something else," Tucker quoted Speth as saying: "We need religion, we need [the] arts, we need [the] humanities." With Speth's apparent help, the Forum found the space it needed at Yale.

Speth, by the way, received the Thomas Berry Award in 2014. The first Thomas Berry Award in 1998 went to Tucker. The award was started by the Center for Respect of Life and Environment, part of the Humane Society of the United States, a radical Green group masquerading as an animal protection group. [Regarding HSUS, see our sister publication *Foundation Watch*, April 2010.] Today, the award is sponsored by the Forum, run by Tucker and Grim. (The Left is skilled at the practice of giving each other such awards, building up each other's credentials, in order to get more attention, increase their credibility and influence, attract more contributions and grants, and raise their salaries and prestige.)

"Moral force"

The Forum's goals go far beyond publishing papers in thinly read academic journals. Tucker and Grim summarized the Forum's objectives as the creation "of a new field of study and a *moral force for transformation* that has implications for environmental policy . . . In collaboration with the ecological sciences, the Forum is helping to identify the ethical and spiritual dimensions by which the religions of the world can respond to the growing environmental crisis." (Emphasis added.)

The source of this "crisis"? Like many conventional environmentalists, Tucker has attacked prosperity, declaring that a rising global standard-of-living is the root cause of global environmental problems. A particular problem, they believe, is the rising standard-of-living *for the world's poor*.

According to Tucker, humans in the 20th Century "exploded from two billion to six billion people and increased the pace of economic development beyond the boundaries of what is sustainable. As the developing world attempts to raise its standard of living with unrestrained industrialization and rapid modernization, there is an inevitable impact on the environment and natural resources. The result is that severe pollution of water,

air, and soil is becoming more widespread in places such as India and China."

The beliefs promoted by Tucker and the Forum line up neatly with those expressed by nonprofits like the World Resources Institute, founded by Speth, and by left-wing scientist-activists like John Holdren, President Obama's science advisor.

The Forum's work goes far beyond the study of academic questions. On its website, in a document written by Grim and Tucker describing the Forum's history, the authors admit that "the Forum on Religion and Ecology . . . has from its inception been concerned with both ideas and practice, changing worldviews and transformative action" to speed up the redefinition of the concept of "economic growth . . . so as to integrate ecology and economy." From the Forum's point of view, "The world's religions can play a role in this redefinition [of economic growth] with an ethical articulation of a path toward a flourishing Earth community." (For more on the effort by the environmental Left to redefine prosperity, see the January 2016 *Green Watch*.) Clearly, the Forum's real agenda is not simply to study the "greening" of the world's religions, but to *actively support, foster, and accelerate* this development. As Grim and Tucker have observed, "religions are key shapers of people's worldviews and formulators of their most cherished values."

The Forum credits itself with "an active role" in emergence of what it calls "a new force of religious environmentalism [that] is growing in churches, synagogues, temples and mosques around the world. Now every major religion has statements on the importance of ecological protection and hundreds of grassroots projects have emerged."

What sort of "grassroots projects"? One example, Tucker said in a March 2016 speech, is the participation of religious leaders in the 2014 U.N. Climate Summit and in the 2014 People's Climate March in New York.

Official sponsors of the People's Climate March included the Socialist Party USA, the Black Rose Anarchist Federation, the Ben Davis Club (an openly Communist group named after a supporter of the mass murderer Stalin), the Communist Party publication *People's World*, and the Communist Party USA. It is important to note that, under Communism, atheism is the state religion, and religious leaders (except those working as shills for the government) are oppressed, imprisoned, and killed.

Tucker claimed that 10,000 religious leaders were involved with the People's Climate March. Thirty religious leaders released a joint statement on the occasion of the march, declaring that "climate change stands today as a major obstacle to the eradication of poverty. Severe weather events exacerbate hunger, cause economic insecurity, force displacement and prevent sustainable development. The climate crisis is about the survival of humanity on planet earth, and action must reflect these facts with urgency." Signatories included Christian leaders representing a variety of denominations, as well as Jewish, Jain, Hindu, and Islamic authorities.

If you "green" the world's religions, you "green" the thinking of faith communities on public policy questions such as Global Warming and environmental rules and regulations. Political questions can be rephrased as ethical and moral questions, turning opponents of Big Green into "bad" people.

Thomas Berry, Green priest

Who was Thomas Berry, the mentor of Tucker and Grim?

Berry was an advocate of "deep ecology," a system of beliefs in which human beings pose a threat to the rights of ecosystems. In this belief system, people can avoid violating ecosystems' rights by engaging in simple living (that is, eschewing modern technology), by preventing the development of wild areas, and by restricting the numbers of humans.

Berry was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1914. According to one biographer, Berry by age eight "had concluded that commercial values were threatening life on the planet." In 1933, he entered a monastery of the Passionist order, and he was ordained in 1942. He received his doctorate in history from The Catholic University of America. He came to call himself a cosmologist (an expert on the origin and fate of the universe) and a geologist ("earth scholar"). "Geologist" is an obsolete term for geologist. For 12 years, he was the president of the American Teilhard Association. He died in 2009 at age 94.

He combined his background in European intellectual history with intensive study of Eastern religious/ethnic traditions, including Confucianism. Over his career, Berry had long-term professional associations with Fordham University and the Riverdale Center of Religious Research, along with the American Teilhard Association. This

work brought him into contact with younger academics who became friends and collaborators—Tucker and Grim among them.

The intersection of religion and the environment figured ever more prominently in Berry's published works, which include *The Dream of the Earth* (1988), *The Great Work: Our Way Into the Future* (1992), *Evening Thoughts: Reflecting on Earth as Sacred Community* (2006), *The Sacred Universe: Earth, Spirituality, and Religion in the Twenty-first Century* (2009) and *The Christian Future and the Fate of Earth* (2009).

Of the above works, perhaps the best introduction to Berry's thought is *The Great Work*. In the book, he argued for a fundamental transformation of the human species' relationship with the Earth. Heaping scorn on corporations for their single-minded pursuit of gain, Berry predicted that "The distorted dream of an industrial technological paradise is being replaced by the more viable dream of a mutually enhancing human presence within an ever-renewing organic-based Earth community." The "Great Work" of the title is therefore the task of engineering the shift to this new form of human organization. Berry singled out "Western cultural expression" as the source of much of the world's ills.

"We need to reinvent the human at the species level because the issues we are concerned with seem to be beyond the competence of our present cultural traditions, either individually or collectively. What is needed is something beyond existing traditions to bring us back to the most fundamental aspect of the human: giving shape to ourselves. The human is at a cultural impasse. In our efforts to reduce the other-than-human components of the planet to subservience to our Western cultural expression, we have brought the entire set of life-systems of the planet, including the human, to an extremely dangerous situation. Radical new cultural forms are needed. These new cultural forms would place the human within the dynamics of the planet rather than place the planet within the dynamics of the human."

If one takes Berry at his word, this is not a call for small-scale reforms, but for a massive, wrenching, wholesale change to civilization as we have known it. Berry once summarized this shift as a move towards a *Pax Gaia*, "the peace of Earth and every being on the Earth." The term evokes Gaia (Mother Earth) worship and the ancient pagan faiths that flourished at one time across the Medi-

terranean region—theologically, a relationship between humans and the earth that is very different from the one in the prevailing beliefs among mainstream Christians, Jews, and Muslims. (Note that the United Nations, under a 2009 General Assembly resolution, refers to Earth Day as "International Mother Earth Day.")

To save the planet from environmental destruction and establish the *Pax Gaia*, Berry invested great hope on the world's universities:

Here I propose that the religions are too pious, the corporations too plundering, the government too subservient to provide any adequate remedy. The universities, however, should have the insight and the freedom to provide the guidance needed by the human community. The universities should also have the critical capacity, the influence over the other professions and other activities of society. In a special manner the universities have the contact with the younger generation needed to reorient the human community towards a greater awareness that the human exists, survives and becomes whole only within the single great community of the planet Earth.

It's unclear what purpose universities would share in a Berry-transformed world. Would they still function as laboratories and research centers, fostering technological progress? Or would all that come to an end, as they concentrated on the urgent indoctrination of the young into a new political consciousness?

Another part of the shift proposed by Berry apparently involves a societal shift towards solar power. As he wrote in *The Great Work*:

Our primary concern must be to restore the organic economy of the entire planet. This means to foster the entire range of life-systems of the planet. All are needed. It means that we must establish our basic source of food and energy in the sun, which supplies the energy for the transformation of inanimate matter into living substance capable of nourishing the larger biosystems of Earth.

He dismissed human interest in space exploration as a signal not of growing technological capability, but a symptom of our species' general immaturity in its relationship to the universe:

Our concern for space exploration, in the expectation that we will have used up Earth and will need to move the human venture out into other planets, is to waste irreplaceable resources and to neglect much-needed research into the organic world of this planet. Our excitement about the possibility of colonizing Mars is something of a child-like delight. We imagine something strange and exciting in some faraway place while we remain insufficiently interested in the wonders in our immediate surroundings and their well-being in the future.

[Editor's note: For the story of how the Left ruined the U.S. manned space program, see this month's issue of our sister publication *Organization Trends*. —SJA]

Forum funders

Closely linked to the Forum at Yale is the tax-exempt Thomas Berry Foundation, which, as stated in its IRS filings, “undertakes its programmatic activity” through the Forum for Religion and Ecology. The Foundation, based in Woodbridge, Connecticut, reported just \$142,000 in net assets in 2014. The Foundation has described this “programmatic activity” at times as representing “direct charitable activities.”

Grim and Tucker are managing trustees of the Thomas Berry Foundation, which they helped found in 1998. There is a separate committee of oversight trustees, and Grim and Tucker appear to collect no salary for their work on the foundation. But almost all of the Thomas Berry Foundation's support to the Forum underwrites the costs of events, books, etc. that raise the profile of Grim and Tucker within the “religion and ecology” field.

The Thomas Berry Foundation appears to exist mainly to pool financial contributions from sympathetic grant-making foundations in support of the Forum's work. Some notable examples:

► **V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation:** This New York City-based foundation memorializes Danish entrepreneur Villum Kann Rasmussen, who made a fortune through his invention of a special form of roof window. Created in 1991, with assets of \$89 million at the end of 2014, the foundation has a special focus on “strengthening environmental research.” Between 2002 and 2006, the foundation provided \$400,000 in grants to the Thomas Berry Foundation. The foundation

has made about \$140 million in total grants to 160 organizations.

Its work is centered on the idea that “human activities lie at the core of most environmental problems, and human creativity and collaboration are at the heart of solving the problems these activities create. The environmental mission of VKRF is to support the transition to a more environmentally resilient, stable, and sustainable planet. We believe best practices for promoting sustainability will be most effectively developed through an integrated systems approach and one that furthers the involvement of an informed public in environmental decision making.”

► **Germeshausen Foundation:** This foundation's support of the Forum amounted to more than \$1 million between 2008 and 2014. Kenneth Germeshausen, an engineer and inventor, and his wife Pauline set up the foundation in 1967. Based in Boston, it is now led by Nancy Klavans, the couple's daughter, and reported assets of \$29 million at the end of 2014. Klavans has also served as an “oversight trustee” at the Thomas Berry Foundation. The foundation's website describes Kenneth Germeshausen as “a prolific inventor” who “held more than 50 patents.”

► **Tides Foundation:** This shadowy organization has been a conduit for contributions to the Thomas Berry Foundation. Records show Tides provided Thomas Berry with \$300,000 in 2004 and \$456,000 in 2005.

The simple life

Myron Ebell of the Competitive Enterprise Institute has noted the connection between the monastic life of Thomas Berry and the eco-leftist agenda of the Forum on Religion and Ecology, which was founded by two of Berry's followers. Berry is credited as the co-founder of the Green Mountain Monastery, located in Greensboro, Vermont. Said Ebell:

Monasteries follow a very simple way of living, including producing their own food and perhaps some small items for sale. There's something admirable there, but . . . the world as we know it cannot [replicate that] model. The productive world, so to speak, provides the space for monasteries to exist. The monastery model isn't going to work for the whole world. That's something we should keep in mind when the Berrys of the world go out and preach the need for more simple ways of living.

I've observed that many people supporting this view don't like to hear counter-arguments; they don't like to hear about how what they are calling for—curbing human access to inexpensive forms of energy, for example—would mean deliberately impoverishing millions of people in developing countries. Where's the “social justice” in that?

The Forum is another example, by the way, of how much funding the environmentalist movement has access to—they have the resources to fill every possible niche, including fashioning Green appeals to religious believers.

The Forum on Religion and Ecology is a cleverly camouflaged effort not to study different religions, but to actively influence faith communities and their views of the environment. Tucker and Grim see in religion, and in religion-based ethics, opportunities to shape public opinion and influence political action.

If the ultimate goal is Berry's *Pax Gaia*, how will the world get there? Tucker has called for a shift from a “western Enlightenment mentality emphasizing radical individualism to an Earth community mentality of a shared future.”

When fully realized, this “Earth community” could move to implement the global Green shift contemplated in Berry's *The Great Work*. A new relationship between the human species and the planet would be consecrated by the world's religions, marrying Green ideology to theological authority. We have to pursue an environmentalist agenda because God (that is, Mother Earth) wants us to.

Then there will be *Pax Gaia*, the sort of “peace” that comes when all resistance is ended.

Neil Maghami is a freelance writer and frequent contributor to Capital Research Center publications.

GW

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**Scott Walter
President**

GreenNotes

A supposed “scientific consensus” was used to promote slavery, white supremacy, and eugenic practices such as the involuntary sterilization of poor **Southerners** (authorized by the **U.S. Supreme Court** in ***Buck v. Bell***). **Prohibition**, the nationwide ban on alcohol, was justified on the ground that, according to scientists, alcohol was the most addictive substance on earth, and consuming it could make a person spontaneously combust in blue flame. Now the ignorant and the greedy are using a (non-existent, in this case) scientific consensus to force the rest of society to accept their claims on Global Warming. One recent example: The school board in **Portland** unanimously approved a resolution banning books and other materials that “deny” or cast doubt on Warming theory.

What does it mean to “cast doubt”? **Bill Bigelow**, a leading proponent of the ban, cited, as an example of improper doubt, the following passage in the textbook ***Physical Science***: “Carbon dioxide emissions from motor vehicles, power plants and other sources, may contribute to global warming.” You might think that that language would satisfy a Warmer, but no: Words like “might,” “could,” or “may” introduce an unacceptable level of doubt, according to Bigelow. By the way, Bigelow is co-author of the textbook ***A People’s Curriculum for the Earth***, which presumably would pass muster under the new rules.

The Portland resolution, introduced by board member **Mike Rosen** (who leads the **NW Ecoliteracy Collaborative**), directed school staff to plan for offering “curriculum and educational opportunities that address climate change and climate justice.” What is “climate justice,” which all kids in the Portland public schools will now be required to study? Type “climate justice” into **Google**, and Google helpfully provides this definition: “Climate Justice is working at the intersections of environmental degradation and the racial, social, and economic inequities it perpetuates.” The website **Peaceful Uprising**, from which Google takes its definition of the term, adds that “climate justice” requires the U.S. to allow unregulated immigration: “To feed the US growth machine, once agricultural self-reliant economies are decimated, their resources depleted, forcing many to migrate from their home. Some of these ‘corporate refugees’ come to the US looking for a better future for their children. And yet, when the economy tanks, our leaders pave the way for these migrants to be scapegoated and blamed for ‘stealing people’s jobs.’”

Anti-scientific claims about Global Warming have always been about “climate justice.” As noted in 2010 by **Ottmar Edenhofer**—co-chair of **Working Group III** of the **U.N.’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change**, professor of the Economics of Climate Change at the **Technical University of Berlin**, and deputy director and chief economist of the **Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research**—“one must say clearly that we redistribute *de facto* the world’s wealth by climate policy. Obviously, the owners of coal and oil will not be enthusiastic about this. One has to free oneself from the illusion that international climate policy is environmental policy. This has almost nothing to do with environmental policy anymore, with problems such as deforestation or the ozone hole.”

The terrorist-supporting **Palestinian Authority** became the 197th party to the **United National Framework Convention on Climate Change** (UNFCCC), the principal international body promoting Global Warming beliefs. (See the April *Green Watch* for more on **Islamofascists’** support for Warmism.) As noted by **Brett Schaefer** and **Steven Groves** in the ***Daily Signal***, the Palestinian admission represents a problem for the **Obama administration**. The administration asked **Congress** for \$13 million for the UNFCCC for 2017, and is seeking much, much more for the UNFCCC-sponsored **Green Climate Fund**. But the law contains two restrictions that prohibit U.S. taxpayers’ money from going to organizations that include the Palestinians. Cutting off the UNFCCC would not be without precedent: The U.S. government cut off **UNESCO** for this reason in 2011.

When the **Environmental Protection Agency** uncovered a child molester among its employees, the agency punished him by *paying* him \$55,000 to retire. According to **Ethan Barton** of the **Daily Caller News Foundation**, the employee was a registered sex offender (for “indecent acts with a minor”) and had been caught twice with emergency lights illegally installed on his vehicle and once with fake badges to impersonate law enforcement, which violated his probation. EPA fired him for the probation violation, but the **Merit Systems Protection Board** reinstated him, leading to the settlement. Other cases of almost-impossible-to-fire employees, recently exposed by the **House Oversight Committee**, included an employee who remains on the job despite stealing thousands of dollars’ worth of office equipment, and an EPA contractor who watched pornography on the job for an hour or two each day for 18 years before being fired. Another employee who watched porn regularly at work was punished with a five-day suspension, a ban on telework, and a ban against attaching external drives to office computers. “Other EPA employees were caught possessing marijuana, illegally deleting federal records, violating transparency laws and stealing federal funds, but were still not fired,” Barton reported. And, as previously noted in this space, there was the case of **John Beale**, a senior policy adviser in the EPA’s **Office of Air and Radiation** making \$200,000 a year, who disappeared for months at a time, claiming falsely that he was doing “intelligence work for the **CIA** in **Pakistan**.” (He was eventually convicted of fraud.)