

Climate Politics and Political Correctness

Contributed by George Landrith
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Political correctness is not a modern phenomena. Those who want to control the terms of debate and the minds of the masses have used political correctness throughout the Ages -- albeit by different names -- to stop debate and demand that everyone agree with their "consensus view." For example, Galileo Galilei, who lived more than 400 years ago and is widely viewed as the father of modern science, fought against political correctness and lost -- at least during his lifetime. His improvements to the telescope permitted him to disprove the almost universally held belief that the Earth was the center of the Universe.

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Instead, Galileo concluded that the Earth orbits around the Sun -- something we now take for granted, but was quite controversial in his time. There were powers that did not welcome Galileo's questions or his scientific research. These early slaves to political correctness labeled Galileo's ideas dangerous and his theories irresponsible. They branded him a skeptic of widely accepted truth. Eventually, Galileo was tried on charges of heresy and he was imprisoned and forced to recant his views and forbidden to defend or teach them.

Today, no serious person would defend the abuse of power used to silence and punish Galileo. Yet, that same political correctness is alive and well today. Prominent politicians, UN backed scientists, and environmental extremists argue that mankind is causing catastrophic global warming and demand that government impose draconian measures to save mankind from a never-ending parade of horrible disasters -- disease, floods, droughts, storms, heat, cold, famine, and pestilence.

But they don't stop at merely advocating their doomsday theories. They work overtime to silence anyone who questions them. Some even advocate prison, professional banishment and violence against those who don't tow the party line. Not much has changed since Galileo's time.

Commentator, Ellen Goodman, recently wrote, "global warming deniers are now on a par with Holocaust deniers..." Currently, the most famous Holocaust denier is Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad who has the curious distinction of simultaneously denying the Holocaust while advocating a second one. According to Goodman, those who question the flimsy science surrounding global warming are no different than Ahmadinejad. So much for civil discourse or serious scientific debate!

Environmental writer David Roberts wrote that for those who question global warming theories, "we should have war crimes trials for these bastards -- some sort of climate Nuremberg." Of course, the Nuremberg trials were held after World War II to bring high-level Nazi war criminals to justice for their systematic torture and execution of millions of Jews and others Nazis labeled as political enemies. To Roberts, ideas contrary to his own and scientific debate are a crime -- a war crime no less!

Columnist George Monbiot, complaining about the airline industry's use of fossil fuels, wrote: "[E]very time someone dies as a result of floods in Bangladesh, an airline executive should be dragged out of his office and drowned." Monbiot apparently believes that there were no floods in Bangladesh prior to the advent of commercial airlines -- a thoroughly silly notion. But his call to violence is revealing. Even Galileo's tormentors did not threaten death.

The Weather Channel's Heidi Cullen called for the American Meteorological Society to revoke the professional certification of any weatherman who does not agree with her about global warming. This would all sound eerily familiar to Galileo.

In a letter, U.S. Senators Jay Rockefeller and Olympia Snowe demanded that an energy company stop supporting scientific research that casts doubt on the UN's global warming agenda. But their letter is far more sinister than a demand to stop funding speech the senators don't like. It was also a not too subtle threat to punish those who don't tow the politically correct line. If one takes the First Amendment seriously, government officials ought not be telling people what they can think or support.

The point of free speech is to encourage debate so that the best ideas rise to the top. Healthy debate is needed. Science is about testing evidence and theories in an open and free debate. But for far too many, science is just another political weapon to maintain power and shut down opposing views. If you don't believe me, just ask Galileo.

George Landrith is the President of the Frontiers of Freedom Institute – a public policy think tank devoted to promoting a strong national defense, free markets, individual liberty, and constitutionally limited government. Mr. Landrith is a graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law, where he was Business Editor of the Virginia Journal of Law and Politics. As an adjunct professor at the George Mason School of Law, Mr. Landrith has taught constitutional law, appellate advocacy, and legal writing. Mr. Landrith appears frequently on television and radio news programs. He has been quoted in many of the nation's leading newspapers. In 2004, Mr. Landrith published a book entitled, *On Politics and Policy: Views on Freedom from an American Conservative*.