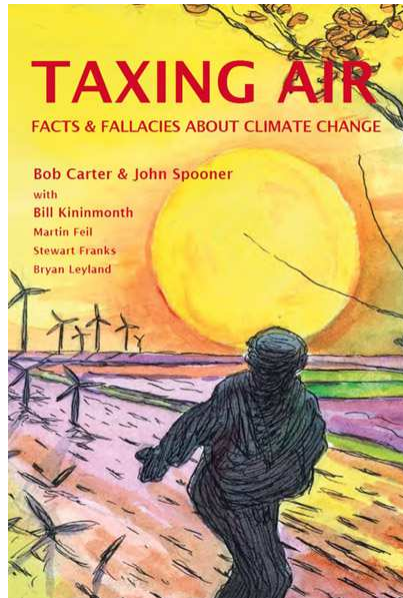


BOOK REVIEW

Climate-change fraud exposed

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TAXING AIR: Facts and Fallacies about Climate Change

by Bob Carter and John Spooner

(Williamstown, Victoria: Kelpie Press)

Paperback: 280 pages

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Reviewed by Peter Westmore

Taxing Air is an unusual collaboration between Professor Bob Carter, a geologist and palaeoclimatologist, and well-known cartoonist John Spooner, with the assistance of the former head of the National Climate Centre, Bill Kininmonth, economist Martin Feil, Newcastle University Professor Stewart Franks, and power systems engineer Bryan Leyland.

John Spooner introduces the book with a thoughtful comment on the oft-repeated statement from people, such as former Prime Minister Julia Gillard, the current PM Kevin Rudd and the government's climate adviser, the economics professor Ross Garnaut, that we must "trust the experts".

Spooner points out that Australia's legal system depends on trial by jury selected from ordinary people who must sift claims and counter-claims advanced by skilled advocates, assess expert evidence, and hand down a verdict based on the jury's assessment of the facts.

Precisely the same approach can be taken to the public debate on climate change, despite the fact that the “scientific consensus” from self-styled climate scientists is that human activity is causing dangerous warming of the atmosphere, increasing floods and droughts, rising sea levels, ocean acidification and widespread species extinctions.

The book’s aim is to examine the climate debate, specifically as it has developed in Australia. In this respect, it differs from *Climate the Counter Consensus: A Palaeoclimatologist Speaks* (2010), written by Professor Carter, and *Climate Change: A Natural Hazard* (2004) by Bill Kininmonth, both of which books examined the scientific evidence for anthropogenic global warming, and found it wanting.

Taxing Air has 12 chapters which deal with the climate change debate in Australia, commencing with a discussion of what the words “climate” and “climate change” mean.

Then the book provides a critical examination of the role of international agencies such as the UN Environment Program and the World Meteorological Organisation in guiding public debate on the issue, and in creating the much-quoted “scientific consensus”.

The authors show that there has always been media concern that the climate is changing for the worse, sometimes through reporting of extreme droughts, heat waves and floods, and at other times through reports of extreme cold weather, snow and icy gales which have caused the loss of many lives and acute economic damage.

Professor Carter, a palaeoclimatologist, uses the historical record to show that, despite increasing levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere, the actual rise in temperatures during the past century falls well within long-established historical variations.

Even the rises which occurred during the two periods of accelerated temperature rise, 1910-1940 and 1970-1998, were neither unusual nor dangerous. “Rather they fall within the typical rates of warming and cooling of up to $\pm 2.5^{\circ}\text{C}/\text{century}$ that have occurred throughout the last 10,000 years,” says Carter.

The authors show that there is no steady upward temperature trend, despite the increased levels of CO₂ measured in the atmosphere over the past century. In fact, global temperatures actually fell during the period from 1940 to 1978, despite rising CO₂ levels in the atmosphere.

The authors reveal how the scientific debate on climate was effectively hijacked by the UN Environment Program, whose *raison d’être* is to examine the risks to climate caused by human activity, and to recommend international action to counter these threats.

By convening international climate conferences focussed on these issues, forming organisations such as the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and co-operating with extreme environmentalists who have a vested interest in climate alarmism, the IPCC ended up effectively controlling the climate debate through much of the Western world.

They have been assisted in this campaign by unreliable computer models of climate, as well as current politicians and ex-politicians such as Al Gore who have used the issue to further their own political agendas.

This book provides factual evidence to contradict all the popular claims of the climate change industry. It shows that the claimed “scientific consensus” in favour of human-induced global warming is not true, and that thousands of scientists (including meteorologists and climate scientists) have publicly rejected the claim.

It demonstrates that temperature measurements from Western Europe — which has the longest period of measured temperature anywhere in the world — show little significant temperature change over a period of three centuries.

It documents no discernible trend in Arctic or Antarctic ice levels over the past 30 years, the period for which polar ice-level records exist.

It shows that the oceans are not acidic. Rather, they are alkaline — and claimed ocean acidification is a myth.

Contradicting claims that Australia’s Murray-Darling Basin faces collapse from climate change, the authors show that water storages in the system are higher than at any time in history. Even during the recent 10-year drought, these storages ensured that fresh water continued to flow down the river.

Taxing Air shows that, contrary to popular claims, sea-level rises around the Australian coastline are very small and, in some places, actually are falling due to earth movement.

In their final chapters, the authors show that the Commonwealth government’s so-called carbon tax will have no significant effect on either carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions or atmospheric temperatures, and that “alternative energies” such as solar and wind power are costly and inefficient alternatives to fossil fuels.

They point out that those who condemn fossil fuels, such as coal or natural gas, are usually equally opposed to nuclear energy which releases no CO₂.

In conclusion, the authors accept that extreme weather phenomena, such as droughts, floods, cyclones and other such events, pose the major climate-related hazards to Australia; but they argue that each of these should be dealt with by policies of mitigation and adaptation, if and when such events occur.

This balanced and highly readable presentation is generously illustrated by dozens of Spooner cartoons which highlight just how absurd the climate debate has become.