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## **APS Comments on Harold Lewis' Resignation of his Society Membership**

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — In a recent letter to American Physical Society (APS) President Curtis A. Callan, chair of the Princeton University Physics Department, Harold Lewis, emeritus physics professor at the University of California, Santa Barbara, announced that he was resigning his APS membership.

In response to numerous accusations in the letter, APS issues the following statement:

There is no truth to Dr. Lewis' assertion that APS policy statements are driven by financial gain. To the contrary, as a membership organization of more than 48,000 physicists, APS adheres to rigorous ethical standards in developing its statements.

*We know that the existing 2007 APS Statement on Climate Change was developed literally over lunch by a few people, after the duly constituted Committee had signed off on a more moderate Statement.*

The Society is open to review of its statements if members petition the APS Council – the Society's democratically elected governing body – to do so.

*We have yet to receive a response to our Petition*

*[http://www.openletter-globalwarming.info/Site/Signatures\\_APS\\_Council\\_Study.html](http://www.openletter-globalwarming.info/Site/Signatures_APS_Council_Study.html), delivered last spring and signed by 260+ members and former members, including nearly 100 Fellows, 17 members of national academies and 2 Nobels. Driven largely by the ClimateGate revelations, the Petition asks that the Society conduct an independent study and assessment.*

*As for democratic membership participation in matters of science, consider the reaction to a grass roots outpouring of APS member opinion on the 2007 APS Statement*

*<http://www.aps.org/publications/apsnews/200912/apscouncilors.cfm>. “[APS Councilor] was uncomfortable with the idea of a membership-wide referendum on statements. He said that he was concerned that having a membership wide vote on controversial issues could lead to the adoption of scientifically unsound statements.” Evidently physicists should be excluded from inputting on a question of physics; only “physics monks” are entitled to do so ex cathedra .*

Dr. Lewis' specific charge that APS as an organization is benefitting financially from climate change funding is equally false. Neither the operating officers nor the elected leaders of the Society have a monetary stake in such funding.

*The chair of the Panel on Public Affairs (POPA) that re-endorsed the 2007 APS Statement on Climate Change sits on the science advisory board of a large international bank*

<http://annualreport.deutsche-bank.com/2009/ar/supplementaryinformation/advisoryboards.html>

*The bank has a \$60+ billion Green portfolio, which it wishes to assure investors is safe...not to mention their income from carbon trading. Other members of this board include current IPCC chief Pachauri and Lord Oxburgh, of Climategate exoneration fame. The viability of these banks activities depends on continued concern over CO2 emissions. Then there is the member of the Kleppner Committee (that reviewed the APS 2007 Statement prior to POPA) who served on that committee while under consideration for the position of Chief Scientist at BP. The position had been vacated when Steve Koonin left to take a post in the administration at DOE. Soon after the Kleppner Committee report in late 2009, this committee member took the BP job. BP had previously funded the new Energy Laboratory at Berkeley, which was headed by current Energy Secretary Steve Chu.*

Moreover, relatively few APS members conduct climate change research, and therefore the vast majority of the Society's members derive no personal benefit from such research support.

*This does not mention the firm expectation by federal government agencies such as the NAS and the Presidential Science Advisor's office that the APS will continue to support the huge funding machine that diverts billions of taxpayer dollars into research that must support the alarmist credo. APS has been silent on the documented practice by some climate scientists aimed at preventing opposing research from being published.*

On the matter of global climate change, APS notes that virtually all reputable scientists agree with the following observations:

- Carbon dioxide is increasing in the atmosphere due to human activity;
- Carbon dioxide is an excellent infrared absorber, and therefore, its increasing presence in the atmosphere contributes to global warming; and

*This passes over the fact that carbon dioxide absorption lines are nearly saturated.*

- The dwell time of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is hundreds of years.

*Well, it depends on what you mean by "dwell time." If it is the conventional half life of an impulse loading of carbon dioxide, the statement is wrong – by a lot.. The IPCC's Bern carbon cycle model*

[http://www.climate.unibe.ch/~joos/model\\_description/model\\_description.html](http://www.climate.unibe.ch/~joos/model_description/model_description.html) gets a 16 year half life. If it is the time for the last molecule to get picked up by a sink, the statement is meaningless. At the very least, the statement is sloppy and hardly befitting a world class scientific society.

On these matters, APS judges the science to be quite clear. However, APS continues to recognize that climate models are far from adequate, and the extent of global warming and climatic disruptions produced by sustained increases in atmospheric carbon loading remain uncertain.

*This is much better than the 2007 APS Statement itself. However, the phrase “climate disruptions” is noteworthy because it is the new buzzword recently introduced by Science Advisor John Holdren <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/jamesdelingpole/100054012/global-warming-is-dead-long-live-er-global-climate-disruption/>, evidently enabling advocates to assign any unusual weather event to human causes. It is curious that that the APS press release happens to echo this new phrase.*

In light of the significant settled aspects of the science, APS totally rejects Dr. Lewis’ claim that global warming is a “scam” and a “pseudoscientific fraud.”

*What we have here is a bait and switch. No one is saying that the greenhouse effect itself is a scam. This passage seeks to transfer the ‘scam’ charge from its real target to the trivial. The fraud/scam is to be found in the continual drumbeat that the science is settled; that the effects will be catastrophic; that it requires draconian economic sacrifices to avoid; and that mandates and subsidies for rent-seeking corporations are justified.*

Additionally, APS notes that it has taken extraordinary steps to solicit opinions from its membership on climate change. After receiving significant commentary from APS members, the Society’s Panel on Public Affairs finalized an addendum to the APS climate change statement reaffirming the significance of the issue. The APS Council overwhelmingly endorsed the reaffirmation.

*Never mind that the Panel on Public Affairs is chaired by an individual whose research funding stream (from BP) depends on continued global warming alarm. And you have to keep your eye on the pea. The dispute was not over the “significance” of the issue; it was over the alarmist nature of the statement. The addendum used more than five times the number of words to try to explain what the original statement meant. Not a good sign that they got it right the first time.*

Lastly, in response to widespread interest expressed by its members, the APS is in the process of organizing a Topical Group to feature forefront research and to encourage exchange of information on the physics of climate.

*Never mind that the Topical Group was proposed in a petition organized by a group of five members that included Dr. Lewis. Also, the Council has not yet approved a TG; therefore it is not in the process of being “organized.” It is being considered. No formal charter or bylaws have been set down. What we have here is the first attempt to co-opt the TG for PR purposes. This before it has even been approved by the APS Council.*

Read the APS Climate Change Statement and  
Commentary: [http://www.aps.org/policy/statements/07\\_1.cfm](http://www.aps.org/policy/statements/07_1.cfm).

*APS should be very reluctant to draw public attention to this Statement, with its infamous phrase, "The evidence is incontrovertible," despite the fact that nothing in science is ever incontrovertible.*

About APS: The American Physical Society ([www.aps.org](http://www.aps.org)) is the leading physics organization, representing 48,000 members, including physicists in academia, national laboratories, and industry in the United States and internationally. APS has offices in College Park, MD (Headquarters), Ridge, NY, and Washington, DC.

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