

From: <SourceWatch contributor's name and email deleted>

Date: Wed, 02 Jan 2008 11:38

To: "Kelly, Doug (National Post)" <email deleted>

Subject: NRSP organized open letter to UN

To: Douglas Kelly, Editor-in-chief, National Post

Dear Mr. Kelly,

I am writing to bring to your attention facts that suggest highly questionable conduct on the part of Financial Post editor Terence Corcoran. The facts show that Corcoran knowingly allowed the National Post to play an active role in a public relations campaign concerning climate change and that he deliberately withheld information about the campaign from readers of the National Post.

On Dec. 13, the Financial Post section of the National Post published an open letter to the UN signed by a group of scientists that discredits the scientific process used by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and arguing against the idea that abnormal climate change is occurring. In an accompanying commentary by Corcoran, headlined "A new call to reason," Corcoran describes this letter as having been "signed by more than 100 specialists" and having been "assembled under Robert M. Carter, a professor at the Marine Geophysical Laboratory of James Cook University in Australia."

In fact, the letter was organized by the Natural Resources Stewardship Project (NRSP), a body dedicated to discrediting the scientific consensus on climate change theory. Carter is not just a concerned "specialist" but is on the NRSP's Science Advisory Committee. And internet documents show that Corcoran agreed to disseminate this letter and allowed the National Post to play a role in the organization's PR campaign.

Here are the details:

On Dec. 6, an e-mail was circulated soliciting potential signatories of the open letter. The text was posted at canadafreepress.com, freedomion.ca and bogotafreeplanet.com. (The text has been removed from the Canadian websites, but remains at bogotafreeplanet.com: <http://www.bogotafreeplanet.com/index.php/article/196>)

The second sentence of the e-mail reads: "It is intended that this [open letter to the UN] ... will also be published by a major media outlet towards the end of the current UN Conference on Climate Change in Bali, Indonesia."

This sentence clearly suggests that a deal had already been struck to have the letter published in the National Post.

The e-mail also states that the open letter is "co-ordinated" by Professor Bob Carter of James Cook University in Australia, and Tom Harris, executive director of the NRSP. Bob Carter, also known as Robert M. Carter or R.M. Carter (the name he used in signing the open letter), is listed on the NRSP's Science Advisory Committee on the "People" page of the NRSP website. In fact, all five of the NRSP committee are also signatories, as are most of the NRSP's 25 "allied scientists." (<http://nrsp.com/people.html>)

After the letter was published in the National Post Dec. 13, the NRSP sent out a press release on the Canada News Wire. The press release does not contain a text of the open letter, but instead links to the National Post online version of the open letter

(<http://www.newswire.ca/en/releases/archive/December2007/13/c2742.html>)

From all this, two reasonable inferences may be drawn:

- a) Terence Corcoran played a key role in an expertly organized and well funded public relations campaign designed to discredit the work of the IPCC and indeed the entire UNFCCC process.
- b) Even worse, Corcoran deliberately withheld information about the role of the NRSP in the open letter, and misled National Post readers about the true provenance of the letter.

It is legitimate for columnists or editorialists to express strongly held beliefs about issues such as climate change, no matter how illogical or ill-informed those beliefs, as Corcoran has in the past. However, this latest behaviour is a clear breach of journalistic ethics and damages the credibility of the National Post.

I urge you to take the following actions:

- 1) Publish a correction clarifying the provenance of the letter and the National Post's role in its dissemination.
- 2) Secure Corcoran's recent e-mail and phone records so you can establish whether he abused his position as editor of the Financial Post to play a role in a public-relations campaign.
- 3) Enjoin Corcoran from any contact with the NRSP, Tom Harris, Tim Ball or Bob Carter pending further investigation.
- 4) Following a complete investigation of the matter, consider appropriate sanctions, including possible suspension or dismissal.

Thank you in advance for your prompt consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,
<SourceWatch contributor's name deleted>

From: <SourceWatch contributor's name and email deleted>

Date: Tue, 5 Feb 2008 15:17:47

To: "Kelly, Doug (National Post)" <email deleted>

Subject: Re: NRSP organized open letter to UN

Dear Mr. Kelly,

I have yet to receive an answer to my e-mail of January 2 (see below).

This is to advise you that I have posted the known facts about the Bali open letter, including the NRSP and National Post roles, on sourcewatch.org. See:

[http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Natural Resources Stewardship Project#Bali open let](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Natural+Resources+Stewardship+Project#Bali+open+let)

[ter to U.N.](#)

I intend to publish my original letter to you in the near future. If you do elect to finally reply, please advise me as to whether or not you wish to have your response published. If you do respond without stating your preference, I will presume that your response is official and may be made public.

As far as I know, the National Post has yet to publish a correction clarifying the NRSP role in the Bali open letter. If you do elect to publish any correction, I would appreciate being advised to that effect.

Sincerely,

<SourceWatch contributor's name and email deleted>

Subject: FW: NRSP organized open letter to UN

Date: Tue, 19 Feb 2008 19:20:44

From: Corcoran, Terry (National Post) <email deleted >

To: <SourceWatch contributor's name and email deleted >

CC: Kelly, Doug (National Post) <email deleted >

Dear <SourceWatch contributor's name deleted>

Doug Kelly passed your note to him on to me, to which I here respond:

As far as I can tell, your facts look to be accurate. As to who organized the letter—well, somebody had to do it, I guess. In this case, you may be right, although I don't really know. Tom Harris did contact me and said that Bob Carter and possibly others — who were at the Bali conference—were organizing this open letter and that Carter et al hoped to stage a press conference in Bali. My only interest was in who signed the letter, which in the event included a number of eminent scientists and others who agreed to a credible statement critical of IPCC climate science and policies. The important point is the statement and the people who signed, not who organized it.

In any case, that the NSRP played a role was hardly a secret since, you point out, they issued a press release with their name on it.

By the way, it's my recollection that the dissenting scientists never got a chance to hold their press conference in Bali as they were barred from holding it by the press-freedom loving open debaters who run the consensus-enforcing IPCC. If you're going to make a big deal of something, how about finding out about IPCC stifling of dissent in Bali. On the other hand, judging by the action calls at the end of your note—seize phone and email records, enjoin, suspend and dismissal--it looks like you share the same level of dedication to open debate as the IPCC.

Furthermore, following your line on publishing, you cannot publish any word of this without publishing all of it.

Best wishes

Terence Corcoran