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# COMMENTARY

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## EDITORIAL

### New movie strikes fear into hearts of Bush fans

You've probably seen it. Huge tidal waves crash down the streets of San Francisco, sweeping away terrified denizens on an otherwise normal day. Tornados tear through buildings. Thunder, lightning, rain — and then, to top it off, a brand new ice age!

It's not an Al Gore campaign speech — it's the newest disaster flick to put the fear of mother nature into every gullible person in America. It's called "The Day After Tomorrow."

But unlike similar ultra-high-budget end-of-the-world movies of recent years — such as "Independence Day," incidentally directed by the same guy — this one has drawn the ire of every policy wonk from NASA to the Bush administration.

Why? Those formidable two words that inspire groans and eye-rolling and are sure to get you kicked out of the next frat party: global warming.

So what's the big deal with this particular movie compared to disaster cinema of old?

That darn government is worried it may affect Bush's reelection campaign. According to many news reports, NASA ordered its scientists in March not to comment to reporters about the film or the off-chance that the world as we know it will meet an untimely end at the hands of those naughty greenhouse gases. They were later permitted to comment.

NASA officials were worried that the movie's topic and in-your-face tactics would, God forbid, inspire viewers to question Bush's environmental policies, as if the American people have reached a point where they are completely unable to differentiate between truth and fiction.

(Incidentally, what seems like the bigger disaster in the movie is the subtle thespian stylings of Mr. Dennis Quaid, but that's a topic for another day.)

Global warming is a lot like the evolution debate: To many people, it's too politically loaded to look at objectively and too scientific to adequately research in a short amount of time. And the issue has become such a he-said-she-said in the political world that nobody except environmentalists and rabid right-wing environmentalist-haters seem to care anymore.

Until now! Suddenly, global warming is, like, totally fetch!

So, to make it easy, here is what science has proved, courtesy the Environmental Protection Agency Web site:

We know for sure that "human activities" have an on Earth's atmosphere in that the levels of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, have increased since the pre-industrial era. We know for sure that the Greenhouse Effect exists; that is, greenhouse gases warm the planet by trapping heat in the planet's atmosphere, and thus the human-controlled buildup of greenhouse gases contributes to the Greenhouse Effect. We know that the temperature has risen about 1 degree Fahrenheit since the 19th century, and that that increase has slightly reduced snow cover around the world and the size of ice caps, among other consequences.

What is disputed is whether these scientifically proven global warming factors will result in a catastrophic disaster that will end human life on the planet.

You may be asking, then, why the movie features a new ice age while global warming asserts new warming?

The accepted scenario among environmentalists is that water coming from the polar ice caps and glaciers, which would be melted by the increased temperature, would flow into the Atlantic ocean, thus shutting down the Gulf Stream and halting warmth for Europe and parts of North America, according to <http://www.commondreams.org>, a progressive Web site. What would result, according to some, is either a full ice age that would doom the world or a "little ice age" that would give us harsh winters and droughts.

In short, there are many other pressing issues that would make a whole lot more sense to worry about right now, including war, the misuse of incidental fee funds and who will win American Idol. This movie, and the issues it raises, is just another topic used by the talking heads to scare the pants off the naive.



Steve Baggs Illustration

## Playing with patriotism

On Friday, ABC's television program "Nightline" devoted its airtime to showing the names and faces of 721 American soldiers killed in Iraq. The conservative Sinclair Broadcast Group censored the program on its seven ABC stations, claiming that Ted Koppel had "a political agenda designed to undermine the efforts of the United States."

Republican Sen. John McCain disagreed, calling the censorship "unpatriotic." But other conservatives blasted "Nightline" — and Democrats in general — for using the war dead as a political tool. Like taking photos of flag-draped coffins, any reporting on the terrible human cost of war is considered partisan journalism.

Now, as of May 4, the number of U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq has grown to 760. By the time you read this article, who knows how many more will be dead.

The last two months in Iraq have been particularly horrific. Nearly 30 percent of U.S. soldiers killed in the war have been killed in the past two months. Nearly 40 percent of those killed in hostile action in Iraq have been killed in the past two months. In April alone we lost 139 soldiers, more than any other month. And so far in May, we are on track to break that record.

Some might see these numbers as proof that the situation in Iraq is deteriorating. Some might see it as proof that the president has botched the war and is not doing all that he can to win the peace and protect American lives.

But Mark Alexander, executive editor and publisher of The Federalist, an online conservative journal, sees things differently. In a May 1 column, he suggests that John Kerry, not George W. Bush, is to blame for the increasing death rate in Iraq.

"The danger, of course, is that (Kerry's)



David Jagernauth  
 Critical mass

protests today have emboldened Iraqi insurgents in places like Fallujah and Najaf — just as his protests more than 30 years ago emboldened the Viet Cong in places like Dong Ap Bia. The cost of Kerry's political folly is tallied not only in Demo-campaign donations, but in flag-draped caskets ...

"In the 15 months since the coalition's invasion of Iraq, 736 American service personnel have been killed. But more than a fourth of those troops have been killed in just the last two months — a period coinciding with the end of the Democrat presidential primary. What, you ask, is our point? Merely that this is precisely the moment when John Kerry's dissenting views on our mission in Iraq became the central focus of his political campaign — as broadcast around the world."

I know what you are thinking. I also thought Alexander was just another right-wing lunatic, but then I did some research. What I found is nothing short of astounding. It is even worse than Alexander imagined. There exists a direct connection between John Kerry's criticism of the war and U.S. casualties in Iraq, suggesting that, like Osama Bin Laden, his speeches are designed to aid the terrorists.

For example, on April 17 we lost 11 American soldiers, one of the bloodiest days in the war. It just so happens that

was also the day that John Kerry delivered the democratic response to the president's weekly radio address. Coincidence? I don't think so.

During the radio address, Kerry made audacious attacks that were clearly meant to provide comfort to our enemies. For instance, he said, "In order to complete our mission, we must review our tactics and change where it is practicable and makes sense."

And: "We must supply our military commanders with the additional troops they have requested."

And this treasonous bit: "By sharing responsibilities with our friends and allies, we can get others to share the burdens and the risks."

Do you still doubt that Kerry is responsible for the increasing deaths of our soldiers in Iraq?

Okay, then how do you explain this: On April 8, Kerry gave a speech in Wisconsin where he said all sorts of anti-American things like, "No matter what our feelings about the war, we support the troops." Then the next day we lost 15 soldiers.

And on April 3 Kerry delivers a radio address; the next day 12 soldiers are killed. The examples go on and on. It is impossible to come to any other conclusion than to say that if it weren't for Kerry and those damn Democrats with their constant pessimism we would have won the War on Terrorism by now.

Oh, and please think of Mark Alexander the next time you hear a conservative accuse the Democrats of playing politics with the lives of our soldiers in Iraq.

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