

Recollections of Bob Carter

I became involved with climate change issues, entirely by accident, at the end of 2002. A year or so after this event, as my acquaintance with the subject broadened, I became aware of Bob Carter's writings, and I was impressed. I marked him down as an author to be followed.

It was not until 2006 that we met, through an initiative on my part. At the end of 2005 the *Stern Review* was published. I felt that it deserved a comprehensive critique, and so far as the economic aspects were concerned a team of potential authors was already to hand. Well before the *Review* appeared, Sir Nicholas Stern (as he then was) had given a public lecture the text of which was published (together with an annex on climate science). I put together a team of nine economists, and we published in the journal *World Economics* (June 2006) a short critical article entitled 'Climate Change: The Stern Review "Oxonia Papers"'. Alongside our piece there also appeared a reply by Stern.

For the *Stern Review* itself, the journal accepted my suggestion that it should publish two critical review articles, separate but linked, one contributed by our team of economists and the other by a corresponding group of scientists. The problem then was to put together this latter team.

It was in this context that I first met Bob. On learning that he was due to attend a conference in Stockholm, I wrote to suggest that we should meet in London during a stopover on his return journey. Happily, it proved possible to fix such a meeting, and over an extended Chinese lunch I explained the situation and invited Bob to join the prospective review group (for which, as I told him, I already had two names). He at once accepted.

Our final scientific team comprised Robert Carter, Chris de Freitas, Indur Goklany, David Holland and Richard Lindzen - three climate scientists and two engineers. They contributed a powerful review article, which appeared, alongside our economists' critique, in the issue of *World Economics* dated December 2006. Not surprisingly, it provoked several highly critical responses, which the journal duly published; and these in turn gave rise to two separate rejoinders by the team which also appeared in the same issue. All three papers - the original critique and the twin rejoinders - read extremely well today.

I next met Bob at a conference in early 2008, and during our conversation he said something that impressed me greatly. He told me that after the climate change debate had opened, he vowed that he would make no contribution to it unless and until he had satisfied himself that he had achieved sufficient understanding of the scientific issues involved. He then asked me: 'How long do you think it took before I felt I was qualified to express views of my own?' As an offhand guess which seemed reasonable, I replied: 'Six months?' 'No', said Bob, 'it took me three years' work.'

In 2009 Nigel Lawson established the Global Warming Policy Foundation; and he then set up for it, principally as a review body for publications, an Academic Advisory Council. Both Bob and I were founder members of this body, and as its chairman I had frequent interactions over the following five years with the more active of my new colleagues among whom Bob

was numbered. His comments and responses were unfailingly prompt and helpful. He also became a GWPF author, in a report (co-authored with Willem de Lange) which Andrew Montford has rated as 'one of the best things GWPF has published'. What he did for the Foundation was the more notable because it represented an additional task: it has to be seen in the context of his continuing major contributions of which others have written.

The last time I was in touch with Bob was in November 2014, when he sent me a kind and much-appreciated note on learning that I had stepped down as chairman of the Council.

I wish I had been able to see more of Bob before his untimely death. I miss him very much.

David Henderson

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