



October 11, 2002

NEWS RELEASE: A new report released today by the Union of Concerned Scientists presents information that the Missile Defense Agency will keep classified in the administration's ground-based missile defense system. The date about the missile

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February 18, 2004

Preeminent Scientists Protest Bush Administration's Misuse of Science

Nobel Laureates, National Medal of Science Recipients, and Other Leading Researchers Call for End to Scientific Abuses



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Washington, D.C.—Today, more than 60 leading scientists—including Nobel laureates, leading medical experts, former federal agency directors and university chairs and presidents—issued a statement calling for regulatory and legislative action to restore scientific integrity to federal policymaking. According to the scientists, the Bush administration has, among other abuses, suppressed and distorted scientific analysis from federal agencies, and taken actions that have undermined the quality of scientific advisory panels.

“Across a broad range of issues, the administration has undermined the quality of the scientific advisory system and the morale of the government’s outstanding scientific personnel,” said Dr. Kurt Gottfried, emeritus professor of physics at Cornell University and Chairman of the Union of Concerned Scientists. “Whether the issue is lead paint, clean air or climate change, this behavior has serious consequences for all Americans.”

“Science, to quote President Bush's father, the former president, relies on freedom of inquiry and objectivity,” said Russell Train, head of the Environmental Protection Agency under Nixon and Ford, who joined the scientists in calling for action. “But this administration has obstructed that freedom and distorted that objectivity in ways that were unheard of in any previous administration.”

The statement notes that while scientific input to the government is rarely the only factor in public policy decisions, this input should be weighed from an objective and impartial perspective. However, the administration of George W. Bush has disregarded this principle.

“The Earth system follows laws which scientists strive to understand,” said Dr. F. Sherwood Rowland a Nobel laureate in chemistry. “The public deserves rational decisionmaking based on the best scientific advice about what is likely to happen, not what political entities might wish to happen.”

In this Section

- [Commentary](#)
- [Experts](#)
- [Positions](#)
- [Press Release](#)

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"We are not simply raising warning flags about an academic subject of interest only to scientists and doctors," said Dr. Neal Lane, a former director of the National Science Foundation and a former Presidential Science Advisor. "In case after case, scientific input to policymaking is being censored and distorted. This will have serious consequences for public health."

In conjunction with the statement, the Union of Concerned Scientists today released a report *Scientific Integrity in Policymaking* that investigates numerous allegations in the scientists' statement involving censorship and political interference with independent scientific inquiry at the Environmental Protection Agency, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Departments of Health and Human Services, Agriculture, Interior and Defense.

One example cited in the statement and report involves the suppression of an EPA study that found the bipartisan Senate Clear Air bill would do more to reduce mercury contamination in fish and prevent more deaths than the administration's proposed Clear Skies Act. "This is akin to the White House directing the National Weather Service to alter a hurricane forecast because they want everyone to think we have clear skies ahead," said Kevin Knobloch, president of the Union of Concerned Scientists "The hurricane is still coming, but without factual information no one will be ready for it."

Comparing President Bush with his father, George H.W. Bush and former president Richard M. Nixon, the statement warned that had these former presidents similarly dismissed science in favor of political ends, over 200,000 deaths and millions of respiratory and cardiovascular disease cases would not have been prevented with the signing of the original Clean Air Act and the 1990 amendments to that Act.

The statement demands that the Bush administration's "distortion of scientific knowledge for partisan political ends must cease" and calls for Congressional oversight hearings, guaranteed public access to government scientific studies and other measures to prevent such abuses in the future. The statement further calls on the scientific, engineering and medical communities to work together to reestablish scientific integrity in the policymaking process.

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Among the statement signers are:

Philip W. Anderson* †

David Baltimore* †

Paul Berg* †

Lewis Branscomb

Thomas Eisner*

Jerome Friedman †

Richard Garwin*

Walter Kohn* †

Neal Lane

Leon Lederman* †

Mario Molina †

W.K.H. Panofsky*

F. Sherwood Rowland †

J. Robert Schrieffer* †

Richard Smalley †

Harold E. Varmus* †

Steven Weinberg* †

E.O. Wilson*

* National Medal of Science

† Nobel laureate

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