

Mike Doyle is the President of the CAGC - the Canadian Association of Geophysical Contractors - representing the business interests of the seismic industry within Canada. The CAGC website may be found at www.cagc.ca.

With the occurrence of the Academy Awards and handing out of the Oscars, environmentalists took the opportunity to run full page ads in a special Oscar edition of the Hollywood trade publication *Variety* linking *Avatar* to the OilSands. In seeing the movie I was reminded of the animated 1992 movie *FernGully: The Last Rainforest*. In that version of Hollywood's Capitalism versus Environmentalism the story was about the Logging Industry (more de rigueur back in the early 90's). In the latest version *Avatar* never goes as far as really picking a specific (earth-based) industry but nonetheless those that do spin well can certainly find parallels to whatever it is they would like to rear up against.

CAPP released a newser saying the coalition needs to stop "blurring the lines" between fact and fiction. "We invite these activists back to planet Earth to discuss the appropriate balance between environmental protection, economic growth and a safe and reliable supply of energy," said Janet Annesley, spokeswoman for the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, in a statement.

In the latest edition of our Trade magazine *The Source* we present Oil Sands Facts assembled from a small info booklet put out by The Oil Sands Developers Group through the Alberta Chamber of Resources. There truly is a need for some clear lines between fact and fiction. Think of the debate topic "Be It Resolved that Capitalists can never be Environmentalists." (This was one of the topics recently used by the Calgary Debate Society in their Regional's for High School debate). For those that may never have judged debate before the intention is for judges to judge on the basis of the debate itself – content, style, strategy, etc – and not on their biases. The trouble here was – that with a Calgary audience – and parents make up the judges – the bias was too strong – and despite the debaters' attempts to keep it at an intellectual level – basically all 30 decisions went to the Opposition! Human nature is too predictable sometimes!

There is a palpable shift in the world's media coverage on the environmental coverage file. Perhaps driven by simply the sentiment of the people, it nonetheless marks the potential for a reversal in the environmentalist sentiment by the general public. Politics in California highlights this. The state is a hub for investment in "cleantech", which could be at risk with any policy change, and has a governor and senior congressional representatives who have led President Barack Obama's push for a U.S. climate change law. The face-off to replace Republican Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in November offers a clear choice on the issue, which for many will come down to whether laws on climate change help the state lead in new 'green' industries or drive firms out of business or out of state in reaction to higher costs. "It's a pivotal race, certainly for California, but for the rest of the country" too, said incoming Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune, echoing the thoughts of many businesses in the U.S. state with the largest population and economy. Former eBay chief Meg Whitman and Silicon Valley colleague Steve Poizner, the Republicans vying for the job, both would put the 2006 landmark air pollution law on hold. State Attorney General Jerry Brown, the unofficial Democratic candidate, would defend it. California's 2006 law begins the experiment of creating a market to price carbon, putting a cap on emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases and letting polluters trade emission permits. It sets new building, automobile and planning rules for efficiency and embraces alternative energy.

An initiative which has just begun gathering signatures to get on the November ballot would suspend the law until the state's double-digit unemployment rate drops to 5.5% or less -- which economists say will be years -- and has won Poizner's support. Field polls show that voters in the state, which has double-digit inflation and faces a new budget gap -- are dissatisfied with legislators and think the state is headed in the wrong direction.

And another....Climate scientists must do more to work out how exceptionally cold winters or a dip in world temperatures fit their theories of global warming, if they are to persuade an increasingly sceptical public. At stake is public belief that greenhouse gas emissions are warming the planet, and political momentum to act as governments struggle to agree a climate treaty which could direct trillions of dollars into renewable energy, away from fossil fuels. Public conviction of global warming's risks may have been undermined by an error in a United Nations panel report exaggerating the pace of melt of Himalayan glaciers and by the disclosure of hacked emails revealing scientists sniping at sceptics, who leapt on these as evidence of data fixing. Scientists said they must explain better how a freezing winter this year in parts of the northern hemisphere and a break in a rising trend in global temperatures since 1998 can happen when heat-trapping gases are pouring into the atmosphere. Kevin Trenberth, head of the Climate Analysis Section at the U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research, attributed the cold winter to an extraordinary weather pattern not seen since 1977 which had curbed prevailing westerly winds across the northern hemisphere, and said that the underlying cause was "one we don't have answers to."

And more - The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) accepted last month that its 2007 report had exaggerated the pace of melt of Himalayan glaciers, and this month admitted the report had also overstated how much of the Netherlands is below sea level. The report shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with former U.S. Vice President Al Gore, and has driven political momentum to agree a new, more ambitious climate treaty to replace the Kyoto Protocol. The IPCC had said that the Himalayas could melt by 2035, but an original source spoke of the world's glaciers melting by 2350, not 2035. The IPCC report had cited the 2035 year from a non-peer reviewed WWF paper, which in turn had referred to a Scientific American article. Public conviction of global warming's risks may have been undermined by the panel's errors and by the disclosure of hacked emails revealing scientists sniping at sceptics, who leapt on these as evidence of data fixing. Pachauri told Reuters on Wednesday that the IPCC stood by its main 2007 finding -- that it was more than 90% certain that human activities were the main cause of global warming in the past 50 years.

The issue of Environmentalism and saving or destroying the Earth reminds me of the book *Life, the Universe and Everything* (the third book in the five-volume *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* science fiction series by Douglas Adams. The title refers to the Answer to Life, the Universe, and Everything. The book took the reader through a bizarre treasure hunt (my synopsis) in an effort to save the universe. Our problems should be so simple....

From the Thursday Files (note the year)

One of the effects of living with electronic information is that we live habitually in a state of information overload. There's always more than you can cope with.

- **Marshall McLuhan, Canadian communications theorist Educator, Writer and Social Reformer, 1911-1980**