

## Obama Negotiates 'Copenhagen Accord' With Senate Climate Fight in Mind

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COPENHAGEN -- President Obama may have improved his chances for passing global warming legislation in the Senate by forging an interim international agreement here that puts both rich and poor countries on a path to curtail greenhouse gas emissions.

During the round-the-clock, raucous negotiations that ended Saturday, Obama and his team worked with the leaders of China, India, Brazil, South Africa and about 20 other countries to commit to emission cuts that will be open to international review.

While much work still needs to be done before the interim Copenhagen Accord (pdf) becomes a legally binding treaty, it won some early praise from some who are key to moving a climate bill through the Senate.

"Home run," said Mark Helmke, a top staffer to Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee. "Satisfied the Europeans. Made China into a major world player, but made them accountable. Elevated India, Brazil and South Africa to world stage. Cut an important side deal with Russians on arms control."

Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska), added, "Whenever you have developing countries, and certainly China and India stepping forward and indicating that they have a willingness to be a participant, I think that's a strong indicator that we'll have opportunities to be working and I think that that is progress."

Obama still has much to do both to sell the Copenhagen Accord internationally and move climate legislation on Capitol Hill.

Conservative Republicans and longtime industry opponents quickly savaged the agreement as a toothless failure. And many other moderates that Obama likely will need to pass a climate bill remained far from convinced the international deal has any merit.

"It's a nothing burger," said Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.), adding that while he had not read the actual language that was slowly emerging from Copenhagen, he had been told by others not to expect much.

In Copenhagen, the Obama administration never strayed from the reality that Congress has not passed final climate legislation. It was a hard-line stance that meant the United States could not go as far as many world leaders wanted in the hope of reaching a legally binding treaty at the conclusion of the two-week, U.N.-led summit. But it may be useful when it comes to perceptions back home.

Obama's negotiators never budged amid calls by Sudan and other poor countries to simply join the Kyoto Protocol -- the 1997 U.N. agreement that was long ago vilified by the Senate. They also resisted pleas from the Europeans, Africans and many other nations to set even stronger emission targets, a move that would have put them at odds with the House-passed climate bill (H.R. 2454 (pdf)) and its still-evolving Senate counterpart.

And the United States also overcame efforts by China and India to ban the use of border tariffs on their export of energy-intensive goods -- a hammer that about a dozen senators see as critical to having before they would even consider voting for climate legislation. Several drafts circulating at the Bella Center proposed stripping any country

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of this right, but the idea never got further than bracketed text that meant no consensus.

Before the Copenhagen visit, Obama aides downplayed expectations for the trip and even talked openly about the prospect of coming home with nothing at all (E&ENews PM, Dec. 17).

But Saturday, the president was able to take credit for achieving some degree of success with the new climate accord while simultaneously relishing in the Senate's progress toward passing health care legislation that has taken top billing on Capitol Hill over global warming and energy.

"Even though we have a long way to go, there's no question that we've accomplished a great deal over the last few days," Obama said. "I want America to continue to lead on this journey, because if America leads in developing clean energy, we will lead in growing our economy and putting our people back to work, and leaving a stronger and more secure country to our children."

Who else will sign up?

The Copenhagen Accord's biggest breakthrough are the pledges that countries big and small are making to curtail their emissions. For the major developing economies, it means they have made first-ever commitments for greenhouse gas reductions that are subject to "international consultations and analysis."

In exchange for working on the details of a transparent new treaty, many of the poorest will gain access to a new \$30 billion short-term Copenhagen Green Fund filled by Japan, the European Union, United States and others. There are trillions of dollars more -- from a mix of public and private financing, including revenue raised from the auctioning of emission allowances under a possible U.S. bill -- if they live up to their commitments (ClimateWire, Dec. 17).

That language is the outcome of years of debate that essentially boiled down to giving Obama and the Senate some degree of

certainty that another nation's pledge can be checked to see if they are doing what they say they will.

Already, the 27 countries and the European Union who negotiated directly with Obama on Friday have signed up with their own pledges. And Maldives President Mohamed Nasheed predicted Saturday that about 120 nations are already engaged in the overall international negotiation process and would sign up before a February deadline to turn in pledges.

Senate Foreign Relations Chairman John Kerry (D-Mass.) said signatures from the United States and China -- which combine for about half of annual global greenhouse gas emissions -- should put pressure on other countries to sign up too.

"Now the proof will be in our willingness to do some things we need to do, and assuming we step up, I think that's going to set an example to a lot of other countries," Kerry said.

U.N. climate chief Yvo de Boer went so far as to say that many of the developing country commitments combine for a reduction in emissions 28 percent below business as usual and thus are stronger than the pledges of the industrialized countries. "You could say developing countries are more on track to responding to science than the industrialized countries are," de Boer said.

Some environmentalists welcomed the Copenhagen Accord as a useful step that can generate more votes on Capitol Hill, even if it did not do everything they would have liked.

"Obama had to have a deal in Copenhagen," said Melissa Carey, a climate change policy specialist at the Environmental Defense Fund. "The Senate absolutely needed to see movement from developing nations, and that's what we got. Was it everything we need to see? No. Was it enough? Thank God, yes. China could have given us the stiff-arm, and it didn't happen."

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Kerry, the principle sponsor of the Senate climate bill, said the interim nature of the agreement does not matter as much as the substance of who signed up for what.

"I think you had to have some deal where the major emitters are beginning to reduce," Kerry said. "Having China at the table was the most critical thing because most of our colleagues are saying, 'Well what about China? What about China? If they don't do it, it won't make any difference.' The less developed countries, the truly less developed countries barely emit. And so we have some time to work with them to bring them to the table."

"Copenhagen helps us in the Senate, if not as much as a more complete result would have," said Carl Pope, executive director of the Sierra Club. "It demonstrated that India and China, along with Brazil, South Africa, Indonesia are committed unilaterally to moving beyond our current carbon based economy."

Still, it is far from clear how Copenhagen translates to Senate votes.

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), Kerry's lead Republican partner, said, "I think it's a mixed bag with Copenhagen. My approach to this is really not that much Copenhagen dependent. Energy independence, there's a lot of votes for."

Several senators harped on the fact the accord keeps the U.N.-led negotiations in a preliminary stage.

"Unless India and China are bound and we know what the details are -- I don't think necessarily that their agreeing to goals or whatever it was they agreed to will have an effect on cap and trade," said Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.). "If there was a binding agreement that tied them into limits that were meaningful, then I think that would have advanced the legislation," he added. "From what I understand of this, it's more of agreeing to goals."

Doubting the Chinese

At Saturday's early morning vote on the Defense spending bill, senators from both parties questioned whether developing countries are serious despite negotiating for several hours with Obama.

"I think that the Chinese are perfectly capable of being on board for something and then not doing it," said Commerce Chairman Jay Rockefeller (D-W.Va.).

"I know for a fact that even though the government of China says they are committed to X and Y, the economy in China is run by the governors of the state," said Sen. George Voinovich (R-Ohio). In the United States, he insisted, "we know that if we commit to something, we will do it."

Sen. Kit Bond (R-Mo.) scoffed at the notion the developing countries would live up to their Copenhagen commitments. "They are going to continue to develop the energy they need," Bond said. "They're not fools."

Climate bill opponents went after all aspects of the Copenhagen Accord and they doubted it would do anything to help Kerry and his allies. "Speed things along?" said Sen. James Inhofe (R-Okla.). "You've got to be kidding me, surely you jest. ... Nothing was done, another total failure, just like all the rest of them."

"I don't think they got anything in Copenhagen that encourages anyone," said Sen. Robert Bennett (R-Utah), who then paused for a moment, before adding, "Except Jim Inhofe."

Off Capitol Hill, longtime climate bill opponents questioned whether Copenhagen led to any substance because of its lack of a legally binding nature.

"Clearly there are significant concerns globally with approving a binding treaty that would effectively impede economic growth worldwide and do little for the environment itself," added Charles Drevna, the president of the National Petrochemical & Refining Association. "With China balking as blatantly as it did, the Senate should step back from this issue and consider the consequences of

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capping our economic growth, as it should anyway."

"It's all over for the near future, and it's back to the drawing board for the alarmists and advocates of energy-rationing policies," said Myron Ebell, a skeptic on climate science and director of energy and global warming policy at the free-market Competitive Enterprise Institute.

David Doniger, policy director of the Natural Resources Defense Council's Climate Center, likened the developing country pledges to being "original cosponsors" of legislation on Capitol Hill. Doniger said he doubted any of the signatories would back away from the table now, especially because the Copenhagen Accord comes with an opportunity for the least developed countries of the world to gain access to a \$30 billion fund through 2012, as well as a medium-term account worth about \$100 billion annually starting in 2020.

"You have to focus more on the web of interest and relationship that binds countries together in a working agreement," Doniger said, citing as an example the 1987 Montreal Protocol that has widespread international support in trying to address the hole in the ozone layer.

"The countries that belong to it are loyal to it," Doniger said. "They own it. And when they build up that sense of ownership, when you come to disagreement on specific issues, they're committed to support it and work it through. That's what we've got to get to in a new climate agreement."

No deadline, no whip

Kerry and company plan to spend next month writing their bill and getting it to U.S. EPA, the Congressional Budget Office and other analysts for a series of modeling runs ahead of a planned floor debate in the spring. In Copenhagen, environmentalists and former Vice President Al Gore called on Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) to set an Earth Day deadline of April 22 to pass the bill. Reid has not responded, and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) said

during his visit that would not be a good idea (Greenwire, Dec. 17).

Early versions of the Copenhagen agreement included a deadline for when diplomats would need to finish their work on the next legally binding climate treaty either in June or November 2010. But the final version dropped it, taking away a whip for Obama, Kerry and other allies to try and get their work done in Washington.

Some Democratic aides said Kerry could have used a deadline to keep the issue front and center for fence-sitting senators, ultimately forcing them to consider an issue they would rather ignore after a tough year of votes on the economy and health care. Conservatives smelled red meat.

"The moderates can only take so many unpopular votes in one Congress and the only thing more unpopular than climate legislation is the health care bill," warned Andrew Wheeler, former GOP staff director to Inhofe.

Lawmakers also may be content to stay away from the climate debate if they see it as being driven by the demands of Europe and the rest of the world.

"Look, I don't succumb to international pressure," said Sen. Ben Nelson (D-Neb.).

"Honestly, I think it's something that we need to work with other countries on, but I don't expect other countries to pressure us." Nelson added, "This is not the United States' responsibility to please the world, secure the world, or enforce against the world with these kinds of requirements. We need to participate to the extent we can and to me that's our role."

Obama's mojo

As for Obama, a whole series of questions emerge now that he has claimed a stake of the climate debate with his performance in Copenhagen.

Where does he place climate and energy during his State of the Union address early

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next year? Does he make a nationally televised prime-time address on climate similar to September's health care speech? What political muscle does he invest on the issue before next November?

In Copenhagen, a wide variety of people from around the globe said Obama had lost some of his luster since the election. But some U.S.-based environmentalists say Obama demonstrated in Copenhagen and the days surrounding his trip here just how much he is engaged on the issue. For example, Fred Krupp, the president of the Environmental Defense Fund, said Obama was able to argue the ins and outs of the domestic and international climate debate during an Oval Office meeting with environmentalists and business officials just before Copenhagen.

"What will drive this bill is presidential leadership, and Obama showed he has the determination and leadership skills to put it all on the line and deliver," said Jeremy Symons of the National Wildlife Federation. "Would you bet against him after pulling off the breakthrough in Copenhagen when the talks had died? Not me."

"I'm sure Senate observers got an sobering assessment of the international dimension of the climate issue -- but they also saw the president's resolve," added Dirk Forrester, president of the NatSource consulting firm and former head of the Clinton-era White House Climate Change Task Force.

Forrester said he expects Obama to remain deeply engaged back in Washington now that Copenhagen is in the rear view mirror.

"Since he's done it on the world stage, he'll likely push hard domestically too, maintaining credibility and leadership," Forrester said. "He came in against the odds, and withstood unbelievable assaults from Sudan and Venezuela, but he and his team stood their ground and forged a compromise that was very broadly supported."

Obama did not directly respond when reports asked about his plans for the Senate bill just before boarding Air Force One. At

the White House, 18 hours later, Obama dropped just one tempting sentence listing his now familiar reasons for soon passing a climate bill. "That's why I went to Copenhagen yesterday and that's why I will continue in these efforts in the weeks and months to come," the president said before taking in his own snow day.

### **Graham: Healthcare fight makes passing energy and climate bill tougher**

The Hill

December 20, 2009

Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) said Sunday that Republican anger over healthcare legislation makes it tougher to pass the energy and climate-change bill that he is working with Democrats to craft.

"I want to work with this administration, but this healthcare proposal has made it very hard for Republicans to sit down at the table with these guys, because of the way they have run over us. But at the end of the day we have more problems than just healthcare," Graham said on CNN's "State of the Union."

"I want to help solve hard problems, but this healthcare bill has made a hard problem worse," he added. Graham has split with the bulk of his caucus to work with Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.) and White House officials on a compromise global warming and energy bill that can reach 60 Senate votes.

Kerry and Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) are planning legislation that would blend mandatory nationwide greenhouse gas emissions reductions with wider U.S. oil-and-gas drilling and expanded federal financing to build new nuclear power plants, among other measures.

President Barack Obama on Friday helped broker a limited international climate-change agreement at United Nations talks in Copenhagen. Supporters of slow-moving climate legislation in the U.S. hope that pledges by nations including China and In-

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dia to slow their emissions of heat-trapping gases will help propel the bill in the Senate.

Graham said his priority in working on the bill is to reduce U.S. reliance on oil imports. "When [Venezuelan President] Hugo Chavez got a standing ovation in Copenhagen it made me sick to my stomach, but the only way he is relevant is because of the oil revenues," he said. Venezuela is a major oil producer.

On the same program, White House Senior Advisor David Axelrod defended the non-binding agreement Obama reached after a frenzied day of ad-hoc meetings with world leaders at the summit. "Let's understand that when the president arrived the talks were collapsing and there was a very real prospect of no progress out of Copenhagen," he said. The agreement included compromise language that allows for outside analysis of nations' implementation of their pledged emissions reductions.

How to address "transparency" was a major sticking point at the fractious two-week Copenhagen talks because China, the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, resisted calls for external verification of its actions. Graham called the accord limited progress. "I think in many ways it is going to be seen as ineffective, but it is some transparency that we don't have today," he said.

Under the overall accord, countries will commit to implementing their national emissions-cutting plans. It sets a global goal of keeping temperature increases below 2 degrees Celsius, the level that many scientists say is needed to prevent catastrophic and irreversible climatic changes. Obama acknowledged Friday the accord would not bring about the needed reductions, but called it a major breakthrough that paves the way for further action.

But Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) on Sunday criticized the outcome in Copenhagen. "I think that the fact it has no binding provisions to it whatsoever is a rhetorical attempt to cover up what was obviously a serious failure," he said on "Fox News Sun-

day." McCain in years past has called for limits on U.S. greenhouse gases and sponsored an early version of "cap-and-trade" plans with Lieberman. But he has been sharply critical of current Democratic climate proposals.

Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) hopes to bring a climate and energy package to the floor in the spring. The House approved a sweeping bill in late June. Kerry and others say China's pledge to slow its emissions and endorse the Copenhagen accord should help ease concerns that U.S. legislation would hand a competitive advantage to manufacturers overseas.

Majority Whip Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) on Sunday said he was hopeful that Democrats would be able to pass a bill in 2010. "We're going to move forward on it. I hope we can get it done this coming year," he said on ABC's "This Week." He called climate and energy legislation a way to provide U.S. jobs in green-energy industries.

### **Copenhagen fizzle won't help bill**

Politico

December 21, 2009

A day after the U.N. climate change conference ended in a fizzle, Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin said Sunday that he hopes the Senate will pass its own climate change bill sometime next year.

But to meet even that not-so-firm deadline, supporters will have to win over critics who say that President Barack Obama promised too much in Copenhagen — and that the international community didn't do nearly enough.

Appearing on ABC's "This Week" on Sunday, Senate Minority Whip Jon Kyl (R-Ariz.) predicted that not even a majority of the Senate's Democrats would stand behind Obama's pledge to provide billions of dollars in U.S. aid to help developing countries deal with the effects of global warming.

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And Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), who is working with Sens. John Kerry (D-Mass.) and Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.) on a bipartisan climate change bill, acknowledged on CNN's "State of the Union" that some of his colleagues will view the Copenhagen deal as "ineffective," even though it adds "some transparency that we don't have today."

Kerry, one of only two senators to attend the talks in Copenhagen, suggested over the weekend that the vague accord reached there should provide some comfort to those who fear the economic effects if the United States were to act alone.

"Clearly, senators and congressmen were not going to do something if other people are not going to do something — so that's a start," he said. But it's only a start — a fact that top U.N. officials conceded over the weekend. U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon called the "letter of intent," reached after an intense two-week session that was once expected to lead to an international treaty, "an essential beginning."

Yvo de Boer, the U.N.'s top climate official, said the letter "is not precise about what needs to be done in legal terms," and that there's still substantial work to be done before it can become "something real, measurable and verifiable."

Until that work is done, supporters of legislation in the Senate will have a hard time overcoming the objections of manufacturing-state Democrats, who don't want to see the United States commit to reducing emissions unless China is doing the same.

"If China will not let us verify, we're going to have a heck of a time here," said Sen. Ted Kaufman (D-Del.). "An agreement's no good if you can't verify."

"The reality for states like Pennsylvania is, even as we move forward with any kind of climate change legislation, there are going to be cost impacts," said Sen. Bob Casey (D-Pa.). "We want to make sure we're not adding yet another cost impact that other countries don't have to shoulder."

If the Copenhagen deal isn't enough to reassure skeptics in the Senate — and it likely isn't — supporters hope that at least the role Obama played in the talks portends more progress ahead. Environmentalists say the president's tough stance toward China in the talks is a sign of things to come — a sign that he's willing to put his shoulder into the work of getting a bill through the Senate.

Administration aides were happy to publicize that Obama burst into a meeting of Chinese, Indian and Brazilian leaders to hammer out a deal, despite objections from a Chinese protocol officer. Obama insisted on meeting with Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, rather than the lower-level climate change officials — "deputy mining minister" types, a senior administration official joked — the premier sent in his place.

Climate activists say Obama's focus on Chinese commitments led to chaotic secret negotiations between the two countries and that poorer nations were effectively cut out of the progress. But supporters hope that what's seen as strong-arming abroad will be viewed as leadership back in Washington.

"That a deal was reached at all is testament to President Obama's leadership — all the more remarkable because of the very weak hand he was dealt," said Carl Pope, executive director of the Sierra Club.

Still, even the authors of the Senate climate bill concede that getting the 60 votes needed to pass the bill won't be easy.

"There's still going to be people who resist, there's still going to be naysayers, there's still going to be people who doubt the science," said Kerry, who briefed a group of Democratic members Thursday after returning from the conference.

Kerry, Lieberman and Graham released a broad blueprint of their bipartisan climate bill earlier this month. Now they're working on turning their loose framework into actual legislation. They're meeting with groups of manufacturing- and rural-state Democrats, and reaching out to select Republicans, to build support for the bill. They aim to re-



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lease more details about their proposal early next year, after members return from the winter recess.

Former Vice President Gore has pushed for the Senate to pass a bill by April 22 — the 40th anniversary of Earth Day — but much will depend on the Senate schedule. Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) has signaled that he intends to finish the health care bill and bring financial reform and jobs legislation to the floor before a climate bill.

Supporters hope to bring their bill to a vote in the spring, fearing that upcoming elections will make it impossible to pass legislation much later than June. "If we don't do it by then, we'll have a hard time doing it," Graham said. But Durbin made no commitments during an appearance Sunday on ABC's "This Week." Pressed twice by anchor George Stephanopoulos to say whether Democrats will pass a cap-and-trade bill in 2010, the Illinois Democrat dodged the question once, then hedged.

"We have a responsibility to deal with this issue," Durbin said. "We have to acknowledge the obvious. China, one of our great competitors in the world, is taking the green leap forward, as they say. They are committing themselves to this new energy-efficient economy, and they are building companies even in the United States that will make those products. Will the United States stand by the sidelines or will we be part of this leap forward? I don't want to lose those jobs."

Stephanopoulos: "So, that's a yes?"

"Well, we're going to move forward on it," Durbin said. "I hope we can get it done this coming year."

### **Copenhagen, and Beyond (Kommentar)**

New York Times

December 20, 2009

The global climate negotiations in Copenhagen produced neither a grand success nor the complete meltdown that seemed almost certain as late as Friday afternoon. Despite

two years of advance work, the meeting failed to convert a rare gathering of world leaders into an ambitious, legally binding action plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It produced instead a softer interim accord that, at least in principle, would curb greenhouse gases, provide ways to verify countries' emissions, save rain forests, shield vulnerable nations from the impacts of climate change, and share the costs.

The hard work has only begun, in Washington and elsewhere. But Copenhagen's achievements are not trivial, given the complexity of the issue and the differences among rich and poor countries. President Obama deserves much of the credit. He arrived as the talks were collapsing, spent 13 hours in nonstop negotiations and played hardball with the Chinese. With time running out — and with the help of China, India, Brazil and South Africa — he forged an agreement that all but a handful of the 193 nations on hand accepted.

Mr. Obama aside, there were two keys to the deal. One was a dramatic offer of \$100 billion in aid from the industrialized nations to poorer countries to help them move to less-polluting sources of energy and to deal with drought and other consequences of warming. The offer had an instant soothing effect on many poorer nations that had been threatening to walk out all week.

The other was China's willingness to submit to a verification system under which all countries would agree to report on their actions and — assuming details could be worked out — open their books to inspection. Transparency is a huge issue in Congress, and Mr. Obama made clear in his opening remarks on Friday that he would not agree to a deal unless China gave ground.

An enormous amount of work lies ahead, both for the president and for the other signatories to what is now being called the Copenhagen Accord. In order to deliver on his promises to reduce America's greenhouse gas emissions by 17 percent by 2020 and provide a chunk of that \$100 billion in aid,



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Mr. Obama must persuade the Senate to approve a cap-and-trade bill — a huge task.

Meanwhile, there can be no letup by the rest of the world's negotiators, no matter how tired and beat up they may be. These talks have been so chaotic and contentious that some people believe the United Nations machinery has outlived its usefulness, and real progress will henceforth be made in smaller gatherings of the big players.

There may be some truth to this, but at the moment it is hard to see how many of the arrangements agreed to in principle at Copenhagen — the verification system, for instance — can be made to work without detailed agreements. There must also be some mechanism that holds all countries responsible for doing everything they can to tackle climate change. As it is, the pledges now on the table, from both rich and poor countries, are nowhere near enough to keep atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide from rising above dangerous levels.

But for the moment it is worth savoring the steps forward. China is now a player in the effort to combat climate change in a way it has never been, putting measurable emissions reductions targets on the table and accepting verification. And the United States is very much back in the game too. After eight years of playing the spoiler, it is now a leader with a president who seems to embrace the role.

#### **Climate folly - Copenhagen conference a sham (Kommentar)**

Las Vegas Review-Journal

December 21, 2009

Has there ever been a more pitiful example of misguided nonsense, aggressive idiocy and functional stupidity than last week's climate change conference in Copenhagen?

The weeklong orgy of excess -- to which most participants arrived in plush, carbon-emitting private jets and were shuttled around in limos -- was nothing more than another leftist shakedown of wealthy na-

tions on behalf of "developing" countries. This time in the name of saving the planet.

Promoting panic in the name of global warming is the Trojan horse for those who seek to overhaul the world economy by subverting capitalism and advancing collectivism. There is absolutely no evidence that mandating strict carbon emission standards will do anything at all to solve the perceived problem. Instead, we were treated to another U.N. gathering at which Third World hacks such as Hugo Chavez are applauded while Western ideals are dismissed and derided.

Unless, of course, those Western nations agree to cough up cash to dictatorial kleptocrats.

The most significant part of the bogus and nonbinding "deal" brokered by President Barack Obama, for instance, is a \$30 billion, three-year program intended to help poor countries address environmental degradation and develop alternative energy. That figure is supposed to rise to \$100 billion a year by 2020.

Suffice it to say that none of that money will go toward providing the citizens of "poor" countries with the means to become freer and more prosperous -- and thus more likely to be good environmental stewards.

Instead of offering more and more handouts, President Obama should have stood tall and explained that wealthy nations are wealthy for a reason: They stand atop political and cultural institutions that respect private property, contract law, individual liberty and capitalism.

Instead of sending cash to Chad, Laos, Guyana and Niger under the guise of mitigating global warming, we should send the works of Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, John Locke and the founding fathers. Then toss in tomes by Ludwig von Mises, Milton Friedman and Ayn Rand.

"Want to know the best way to heal the planet?" asked syndicated columnist Jonah Goldberg. "Create more rich countries. Want

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to know the best way to hurt the planet?  
Throw a wet blanket on economic growth."

Guess which option most of the Copenhagen  
"activists" prefer.

### Better than nothing (Kommentar)

Economist

December 19, 2009

The accord delivered by the Copenhagen  
climate talks is hardly far-reaching

EVEN its biggest fans—if such people exist—would be hard-put to find the Copenhagen Accord on the climate a rousing success. "Many," admits Ban Ki-moon, "will say it lacks ambition." Despite the emotional support and demands of tens of thousands of activists gathered in the Danish capital, expectations of the UN climate conference among participants were not so high that they were hard to meet. But the accord put together on Saturday December 19th by an informal grouping of countries, including America, China, India and South Africa, barely made it over, and was only incorporated into the conference's conclusions after a tense all-night session.

The accord offers to enhance long-term co-operative action against climate change, and recognises the need to provide help to poor countries for adaptation. It provides a way to bring together the offers of emission reductions made by various countries before the conference began—and, should they so wish, to raise them—as long as they are confirmed in the next few months, and gives a special status to the idea of holding global warming to no more than 2°C. It finds words that provide a way forward on the vexed issue of monitoring reductions undertaken by developing countries off their own bat, which is important not least because it is something the American Senate wants reassurance on with respect to China. It offers short-term funding for projects in developing country of \$30 billion, and aspires to a long-term system that would, in principle, provide \$100 billion a year for mitigation and adaptation from 2020 onwards. And, perhaps the component of clearest

value from outside the world of climate politics, it moves forward on REDD, the plan for reducing deforestation.

To many environmentalists, the accord's great deficiency is that it sets no targets for emissions; earlier drafts had room for specific figures for developed-country reductions in 2020 and both developed-country and global reductions by 2050. Such language is seen as important in defining a widespread shift of the world economy away from fossil fuels. The emissions reductions the accord enshrines are, at least so far, significantly smaller than is needed to provide any confidence about the 2°C target, and there is much yet to be sorted out about getting the money it talks about distributed equitably.

Nor does the accord provide a solution to the fundamental flaw of the negotiating process; that the Kyoto protocol, the only instrument with which the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) can act on emissions, imposes obligations only on the developed countries that have ratified it. It requires nothing from developing nations, even China, the world's largest emitter of carbon dioxide. And it requires nothing of America.

The UNFCCC's discussions on "long-term co-operative action", which began in Bali two years ago, are meant to produce a new agreement that does tie in America and the other big developing economies, while maintaining the convention's commitment to "common but differentiated responsibilities". When the accord was announced by heads of government at various different press conferences, many believed on the basis of earlier drafts circulating that the accord would be accompanied by a mandate requiring by this time next year that the ongoing long-term co-operative action talks deliver the text of a legally binding agreement. The leaders then, for the most part, disappeared into the night, leaving their delegations to sort out the details of where the accord fits into the rest of the negotiations. The expected mandate for a legally binding treaty vanished at much the same time, and a concerted effort to keep the ac-

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cord from being adopted by the conference by a small group of countries kept things going all night, very nearly succeeding a few hours before dawn.

Some procedural legerdemain, coupled with the fact that the vast majority of the countries present preferred this accord to no accord, managed to get the text adopted in such a way that it will enter into force. The UNFCCC process, though—quite remarkably fractious and unproductive over the past two weeks—looks in need of some serious attention. Though there was a fair bit of mess involved, and their achievement was far from monumental, the leaders who turned up in Copenhagen seem to have made a difference by finding their way to a suboptimal deal rather than none at all.

#### **We Just Saw the Future (Kommentar)**

Leslie H. Gelb in The Daily Beast! (Blog)

December 20, 2009

Copenhagen showed us the new normal: the U.S. has lost influence, China plays spoiler, and tiny nations veto anything they don't like. Leslie H. Gelb says get used to it.

We have seen the future of international politics and it is Copenhagen. That future holds for monster issues like global warming as well as most bilateral negotiations. Too bad for all of us. The next decade portends at best small accomplishments in world diplomacy; at worst, stalemates festering into disasters, as well as torturous leadership days ahead for the United States, with China increasingly lying in wait as a successful spoiler.

For more than two weeks (it seemed much longer), 192 nations (it seemed like many more) met in Copenhagen under United Nations auspices on climate change. They produced not an elephant nor a donkey, but a three-page mouse. It wasn't a bad mouse. After much predictable wrangling, China, India, Brazil, South Africa, and the United States, led by a desperate President Barack Obama, prompted a nonbinding commitment to limit the increase in world tempera-

tures to 2 degrees Celsius above preindustrial levels by 2050. There was also talk of rich nations providing \$100 billion over 10 years to help poor ones reduce their offending carbon emissions. Most diplomats were glad to go home, except those whose nations could be under water from rising sea levels in 10 or 15 years.

The moral was not that international conferences couldn't please everyone. That goes without saying. The moral was that no one seemed pleased, save for Mr. Obama's aides. Sure, Copenhagen was big, unwieldy, and more complicated than most international tugs of words. Nonetheless, its unhappy moral could become the hallmark of future world affairs, from huge global diplomatic orgies to major nations bickering over economic sanctions to most bilateral encounters. There already is lots of pulling and tugging all over the map with little to show for it. Here's why, and what can be done about it:

First, every nation, from major to the most minor, now possesses some level of veto power. It's as if the world is brimming with the likes of Senators Ben Nelson and Joe Lieberman. These guys can say no to the Senate bill on health-care reform and kill it, much as blocs of even the most inconsequential of nations can say "no" and thereby slow or perhaps even stop the train. Poor nations always want more money to pay for the past sins of the rich. Their never-ending quest is reinforced by the United Nations' fiction that all nations are equal. All their leaders get a chance to speak, and by the time they're finished, there's three minutes left in the conference and no time to get anything consequential done. Besides, it's become far too expensive to buy the poor nations off with bribes; there are now just too many of them. In the Senate, it's only Nelson, Lieberman, and Bernard Sanders. And further, most governments are too weak politically and financially to make concessions and compromises. Everything has tightened up.

Second, African nations in particular seem to have gotten religious about bloc power. At Copenhagen, and for the first time, all of

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them banded together to pressure rich countries to pay for and save them from the scourges of global warming. Instead of taking the conditions of Western economies into account and pocketing the \$100 billion offer of the United States, they insisted on more and risked all. When an Ethiopian leader tried to broker a compromise with the West, his colleagues slapped him down. And the Sudanese leader certainly revealed where many African heads were when he compared the climate change deal to the German Holocaust against the Jews. And African voices are made louder by their new alliance with China, the richest poor nations among them.

Third, China is emerging both as the No. 2 power in the world and as the No. 1 spoiler of multilateral action—from global warming to sanctions against North Korea. China positions itself as the champion of poor nations, and still pretends to be one itself. And the poor and renegade nations of Africa and Latin America let Beijing get away with the pose. As long as China beats up on the United States, most underprivileged nations like Beijing. Never mind that China obsessively focuses on feathering its own economic nest, often at the expense of poor nations. Never mind that China is the second largest economy in the world and the biggest holder of foreign financial reserves, mainly American. Never mind that despite America and Western Europe having been the biggest global warmers in the past, China is today the largest emitter of greenhouse gases. Never mind that the United States guards many of China's economic interests around the world. Never mind that Beijing's leaders drag their feet on cooperating with Washington on issues from climate change to economic sanctions against North Korea's nuclear ambitions. This spoiler role may well protect China's economic interests in the short run, but it won't over time.

Fourth, in addition to China's being stronger than it used to be, the United States is weaker than before and spread thin in military commitments and wars. In particular, America is weaker economically, the weakest it's been comparatively in almost 60

years. It hardly ever was in a position to dictate solutions even at the height of its powers, but today, even its clear position of primacy has been diluted. Presidents can't pay for cooperation or threaten punishments on the economic front as they once did. Americans can't afford it. Besides and importantly, the American economy is no longer the potent image of success that often softened others to Washington's wishes.

That said, everyone but some liberal knuckleheads understands that no world problems of consequence can be solved or managed without America's leadership and power. And everyone but some conservative know-nothings realizes that Washington needs powerful partners today to solve those key problems—and can't get them without compromises. Washington is the indispensable leader in the world, but it needs equally indispensable partners. Even to produce the Copenhagen mouse, Washington needed South Africa, India, China, and Brazil. That's the way diplomacy will work in the future on big and small issues alike, whether we like it or not. The key power variables will not be the resolve and commitment of the man or woman in the White House, but whether the American economy rises again and whether China's slows down.

#### **The green dictatorship (Kommentar)**

Washington Times

December 20, 2009

Last week's Copenhagen summit surrendered all pretense to significance when it turned into a showcase for dictators' attempts to greenwash their bloody regimes. Granting the spotlight to the tyrannical trio of Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez so they could express their profound concern for Mother Earth is like asking former New York Gov. Eliot Spitzer and his prostitute Ashley Dupre to propound upon the state of marriage.

Mr. Mugabe used the opportunity to blame global warming for the deaths of millions of

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his subjects. No doubt his country turned from food exporter to famine because of coal electric plants in Idaho. Of course, driving thousands of farmers from their land, rejecting modern farming methods, confiscating his people's wealth and turning his nation into a police state have little to do with Zimbabwean poverty.

"When we spew hazardous emissions for selfish, consumptionist ends, in the process threatening land masses and atmospheric space of smaller and weaker nations, are we not guilty of gross human rights violations?" Mr. Mugabe asked. In case you didn't recognize him, that's the good dictator, the campaigner for human rights and pollution control.

In Mr. Ahmadinejad's case, he unsurprisingly pushed an agenda of spreading nuclear technology to all nations. In a slight oversight, the misunderstood Iranian president failed to mention his desperate hurry to create a nuclear arsenal. No matter, the good Mr. Ahmadinejad is about saving the environment with a profound commitment to disarmament. "Would it not be better that part of the military funds of some countries be dedicated to improving the welfare of people and reducing pollution?" pleaded the green Iranian dictator.

That's rather an ironic color choice, as Mr. Ahmadinejad recently stole elections from an opposition party using green as its signature campaign color.

Not to be left out is Mr. Chavez as representative of a nation feverishly arming for war with its neighbors, nationalizing whole industries and silencing the opposition press. He believes, "The cause of all this disastrous situation is the destructive capitalist system. ... Capitalism is the road to hell." No doubt the tanks Mr. Chavez is buying from Russia will come with efficient hybrid engines and will be used only to demand that neighboring countries tighten fuel-efficiency standards. Those TV stations he shut down must have refused to use clean and responsible solar energy.

Such deep concern for Western capitalism, consumerism and militarism didn't keep the dictators from joining other less developed nations with their hand out for a \$100 billion bribe to be financed by that awful capitalism. But these green dictators have more in common than a desire for handouts. Iran and Venezuela, in particular, finance their oppressive governments with the export of oil. Now what was it that causes carbon emissions again? Fossil fuels, was it?

To call the eco-friendly posturing of Third World dictators a farce is to understate the scandal. That the audience greeted such self-serving insanity with applause and that Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and President Obama sanctified the gathering with their presence exposes a dark side to the green agenda. Global-warming theology is not just a fraud; it attacks freedom and encourages dictatorship.

### Obama's Copenhagen Deal

The Nation

December 19, 2009

The final deal at the Copenhagen climate summit, which was convened to develop a comprehensive international response to the threat of global warming, came down to a behind-closed-doors conversation among some of the most powerful people in the world about the difference between two terms: "examination and assessment" and "international consultations and analysis."

Then again, there may not have been a final deal. Late on Friday night, President Barack Obama announced that an agreement had been reached, establishing a minimalist accord that would not set a firm schedule with hard-and-fast targets for reducing emissions. But after Obama held a press conference to declare semi-victory--"this is going to be a first step"--and jetted back to Washington, European officials said nothing was in the bag. And Lumumba Stanislaus Di-Aping, the Sudanese chairman of the G77 bloc of least developed nations, claimed there was no deal. "What has happened today confirms what we have been suspicious of that a deal will be imposed by United

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States, with the help of the Danish government, on all nations of the world," he said.

This raised the question, was the Obama deal merely a side deal that would be agreed to by some nations but not all? A convenient bypass of international climate negotiations?

In that short press conference, Obama noted that the pact had come together during an evening meeting he held with the leaders of major developing nations--China, Brazil, South Africa, and India. "Each agreed," he said, "to list national actions and commitments with international consultation and analysis under clearly defined guidelines" and aim to limit the global temperature rise to 2 degrees Celsius. But it wasn't that simple, or clear, according to a participant in that decisive gathering, Brazil Ambassador Sergio Serra.

The meeting, which lasted more than three hours, was hosted by Premier Wen Jiabao, and first began with Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, and South African President Jacob Zuma attending. About an hour into it, Obama arrived, with Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. The participants did not deal with numbers or targets for emissions. Instead, the conversation turned to the knotty matter of verification. Throughout the summit, the United States, Europe, and Japan had been pressing China, which has vowed to reduce the pace of its growing emissions, to accept outside monitoring of its performance. China has resisted, claiming it could audit itself. This remained "the most contentious thing," Serra said. "The Chinese were very reluctant to accept any kind of international supervision or international analysis of the performance of their actions."

As the discussion continued, Obama dropped a term on the table: "examination and assessment." This suggested direct monitoring of Chinese emission curbs by outsiders. Chinese officials in the room pronounced it unacceptable. "We weren't that happy with it, either," Serra noted. So a new description "international consultations

and analysis" was worked out. A "consultation" is obviously less intrusive than an "examination." But what does "international consultations and analysis" soon to be referred to as ICA mean? Asked this, Serra shrugged and said, "Ehhhh." He added, "The definition will be negotiated by a panel of people. They will decide what it means, like everything else." Obama promised to sell this not-well-defined ICA phrase to the Europeans. He also told Wen and the others that he had been asked by the Europeans to push for the below-2 degrees level.

The resolution of that six-word dispute eased the US-China deadlock that had paralyzed the summit, creating space for an agreement that may not be an agreement, christened the "Copenhagen Accord."

Whether or not that title was presumptive, the draft document released is vague. It contains few specific numbers--beyond "recognizing the scientific view" that a global temperature rise should be "below 2 degrees." It dropped language from an earlier draft calling for cutting global emissions in half by 2050. The agreement urges developed nations to implement reductions they have already pledged--without spelling out those numbers or establish baseline years. Developing nations would establish their own emissions curbs. (All these countries are supposed to declare their reductions targets by February.) The China-friendly verification provision rests on that vague "international consultations and analysis clause." The agreement also incorporates the US-European offer to help mobilize \$100 billion a year until 2020 to help poorer nations contend with climate change, and commits \$30 billion for short-term funding for related programs, such as deforestation prevention--without providing details about these financial programs. Most important, the draft says nothing about future negotiations and any pathway toward a legally binding treaty incorporating global cuts.

"The result is not what we expected," said Serra. "It may still be a way of salvaging something and paving way to another meeting or series of meetings next year."

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Announcing this agreement, Obama himself acknowledged a weakness with the proposal: "With respect to the emissions targets that are going to be set, we know that they will not be by themselves sufficient to get to where we need to get by 2050....There are going to be those who are going to--who are going to look at the national commitments, tally them up and say, you know, the science dictates that even more needs to be done." But he contended that this agreement--by encouraging all the major economies (developed and developing) to commit jointly to emissions curbs--marked a "shift in orientation" and insisted that he remained committed to seeking a binding treaty.

US environmentalists split over whether Obama's move was a triumphant save or an act of self-interest. Environmental Defense Fund head Fred Krupp and League of Conservation Voters president Gene Karpinski high-fived each other in a Bella Center hallway. "Obama has delivered the clear breakthrough we needed on climate change," exclaimed Jeremy Symons, a senior vice president of National Wildlife Federation. By rounding up China and India, Obama has improved the prospects for the climate change legislation pending in the Senate, where foes of the bill have used these nations' absence from previous accords as a justification for opposition. And until a bill passes, Obama can't make good on his modest proposed reductions.

But not all the American environmentalists were celebrating. "This is not a strong deal or a just one--it isn't even a real one," said Erich Pica, president of Friends of the Earth US. "The actions it suggests for the rich countries that caused the climate crisis are extraordinarily inadequate. This is a disastrous outcome for people around the world who face increasingly dire impacts from a destabilizing climate."

The Obama agreement was a sly maneuver. The United States sidestepped the official proceedings and found a way to separate major developing nations from poorer ones--while skating past European desires for a more comprehensive and binding agree-

ment. Though European negotiators first declared they were not on board, as the final evening of the summit entered the wee hours, Europe conceded. At a 2:00 a.m. press conference, dour-looking European leaders announced their unhappy support. "This accord is better than no accord, but clearly below our ambition," said European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso. "We have to be honest."

Even one of the diplomats who helped broker the deal was not entirely pleased. Asked if this deal made Copenhagen a success, Serra replied, "There is the perspective that with this agreement we may reach a satisfactory and equitable result next year." Then he paused: "The disappointment is still there."

#### **11th-hour Copenhagen pact better than none, but barely (Kommentar)**

Boston Globe

December 19, 2009

THE AGREEMENT reached in Copenhagen late yesterday among several world leaders is better than a total collapse of the talks, but it still delays any binding international treaty on emission limits until after 2010. At a time when climate scientists are warning that ice caps are melting and sea levels are rising faster than previously expected, this postponement of solid international commitments bodes ill for the countries most vulnerable to global warming. It also deepens the difficulty of keeping the planet's temperature increase from exceeding the danger threshold of 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit above the current average.

The challenge the world's leaders faced in Copenhagen was to somehow find an equilibrium point for the great imbalances of global warming between the rich world and the poor world. The rich countries are responsible for most of the carbon dioxide that is already in the atmosphere, but it is developing countries that will be adding most to that heat-trapping blanket as they industrialize. Moreover, it is the developing world that will suffer most from the rising



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sea levels, floods, and droughts that climate change will cause.

Resolving these conflicting grievances and fears with one formula called for Solomonic leadership long before the world's leaders gathered in Denmark. No one provided it. Instead, the agreement merely makes a loose commitment to future emissions cuts. It promises a fund to help developing countries confront climate change, but exact terms remain unclear.

The task would have been easier if the conference had been held in 2007, before the worldwide recession left the rich countries less able to provide an adequate fund to help developing countries adapt to changes in climate and reduce their own greenhouse emissions. Of course, in 2007 George W. Bush was still president of the United States, blocking any mandatory smokestack emission reductions by Congress, much less an international accord.

China, the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases, has at least agreed to slow the rate at which its emissions rise, but it continues to refuse to accept binding reductions and has been reluctant to permit independent monitoring of the measures it undertakes.

Obama administration officials call the agreement "meaningful" and "an important first step." That is putting the best face on it. In Copenhagen, the world has collectively kicked global warming down the road.

#### **Copenhagen summit: Fighting for survival (Kommentar)**

Guardian

December 18, 2009

Does the human race deserve to survive? It has been a tempting question to ask this week, as the talks designed to prevent the rise in the planet's temperature developing into a life-threatening fever ground to a standstill over what were – on the face of it – arcane procedural issues. The middle of the final week of the Copenhagen confe-

rence was characterised by blame games rather than dialogue, as negotiators engaged in a stale standoff about the rules for writing the first draft of the text to haggle over. By yesterday morning almost all hopes of a deal had been scuppered, but by the afternoon – as ever more leaders arrived – meaningful conversations were once again taking place.

Dire as things are – with little achieved, with leaked documents revealing that current offers will put the world on track for catastrophe, and with only hours left to run – they are not as grim as they might be. The lost time has diminished the level of detail in any prospective agreement. Hopes of a sealed treaty long since gave way to a rough but tough deal, involving all sorts of binding commitments. Ambition could now slip further again, so that all that is agreed is a page or two of warm words that do nothing to stop the world's warming. That, however, need not be the case. So long as negotiators are prepared to sprinkle sufficient numbers in with the verbiage, a short and snappy agreement could still pave the way for the dotting of Is and the crossing of Ts in fresh meetings next year.

The chief grounds to be hopeful are that the rich countries have now recognised the need to work hard to keep the poor at the table. The root cause of this week's (for now resolved) procedural wrangling had been the west's failure to grasp this. Understandably preoccupied with the need to end America's far-from-splendid isolation outside Kyoto, the Danish hosts prepared a draft text that would have put every nation on the same footing by scrapping the protocol and starting over again. The developing countries feared that the Kyoto principle of first-world responsibility was in jeopardy. So the world's south stared the north in the eye, and the north blinked. The process will now continue on twin paths – a Kyoto path which the US will not walk down, and another track on which all nations will tread. It will be messy and – at least for a time – will lock in US exceptionalism. But it embodies the determination to prevent the American tail from wagging the Copenhagen dog.

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Determination, however, may not be enough. The chief grounds to be fearful are that no matter what the world expects, and no matter what the Obama administration might wish to promise, the American political system may prove unable to deliver. Despite the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee pledging to get the legislation through, arcane filibustering rules provide a few dozen senators with the facility to hold the world to ransom. The best way to seal a global deal would be for the US to promise far deeper emissions cuts than the 4% below 1990 levels it has pledged to so far; but the only way to seal a political deal within the US may involve not budging too far from that figure.

The obstacles are formidable, and the odds remain long. But a late-breaking commitment from Washington on financial assistance shows the spirit in which things must be done. The small island states hankering to cap the temperature rises to 1.5C will, sadly, have to understand that 2C is the best they will get; Europe must unilaterally play the improved offer it is still keeping up its sleeve; Beijing must provide a credible yardstick by which its boldly proclaimed intentions can be assessed; and the Americans must respect Chinese anxieties about sovereignty, and understand that they are in no position to lecture. If the assembled dignitaries all stretch themselves to the limit of what they can accept, then they could yet pull off a meaningful agreement. By doing so, they would prove that the human race does deserve to survive – and also improve their collective credentials to lead it.