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GREENPEACE FINDS 'KINGPIN OF CLIMATE DENIAL'

LITTLE-KNOWN US OIL COMPANY HAS SPENT $67M TO FOSTER DOUBT

A LITTLE-KNOWN PRIVATE US OIL COMPANY CALLED KOCH INDUSTRIES HAS BECOME THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND THE CLIMATE CHANGE DENIAL INDUSTRY, ACCORDING TO AN INVESTIGATIVE REPORT FROM GREENPEACE. KOCH FUNNELED $25 MILLION INTO GROUPS OPPOSED TO CLIMATE CHANGE FROM 2005 TO 2008—THREE TIMES AS MUCH AS BIG NAME OPERATIONS LIKE EXXONMOBIL. IT SPENT ANOTHER $5.7 MILLION ON POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS, AND $37 MILLION DIRECTLY LOBBYING LAWMAKERS.

THE REPORT SAYS, “KOCH INDUSTRIES IS PLAYING A QUIET BUT DOMINANT ROLE IN THE GLOBAL WARMING DEBATE,” DUBBING IT A “FINANCIAL KINGPIN OF CLIMATE SCIENCE DENIAL.” IT ACCUSES KOCH OF PAYING FOR BOTH “MISLEADING” SCIENCE AND “PROPAGANDA,” INCLUDING FUNDING FOR ORGANIZATIONS THAT PROPAGATED THE “CLIMATEGATE” SCANDAL. IN KOCH’S RESPONSE, THE COMPANY SAYS IT SUPPORTS SCIENTIFIC DEBATE, WITH THE “OPEN AND HONEST AIRING OF ALL SIDES, NOT DEMONIZING AND SILENCING THOSE WITH WHOM YOU DISAGREE.”

(MY COMMENT: KOCH SUPPORTS ONLY ONE SIDE OF THE SCIENTIFIC DEBATE - THAT WOULD BE THEIR SIDE.

THE "OPEN AND HONEST AIRING OF ALL SIDES" HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE AND THINGS DIDN'T GO THE WAY THAT KOCH HOPED THINGS WOULD GO. THAT IS WHY ONLY THE IGNORANT BELIEVE WHAT KOCH IS PEDDLING.

WHEN YOU ARE PROVED WRONG BY SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE, THAT IS NOT "DEMONIZING," ALTHOUGH I CAN SEE HOW IT MIGHT APPEAR SO FROM KOCH'S PERSPECTIVE.

KOCH HAS NOT BEEN SILENCED BY THOSE WITH WHOM THEY DISAGREE - THEY HAVE BEEN SILENCED BY THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE, AGAINST WHICH THEY CAN ONLY FIGHT WITH DECEPTION AND LIES).

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THE SCIENCE SEGMENT

COMET EATEN BY THE SUN CAUGHT ON CAMERA

THE DESTRUCTION OF A COMET AS IT APPROACHED THE SUN WAS CAUGHT ON CAMERA SATURDAY BY A LONG-LIVED SPACE OBSERVATORY. THE COMET, A STRANGER TO ASTRONOMERS, IS NOW DOOMED TO ANONYMOUS OBSCURITY.

THE COMET'S DEATH PLUNGE WAS RECORDED BY THE SUN-WATCHING SOLAR AND HELIOSPHERIC OBSERVATORY (SOHO) AS THE PREVIOUSLY UNKNOWN ICY WANDERER BARRELED DOWN ON THE SUN FROM COSMIC PARTS UNKNOWN.

THE COMET APPEARED IN SOHO IMAGES ON FRIDAY BUT BY EARLY THIS MORNING IT HAD DISAPPEARED ENTIRELY.

THIS IS THE THIRD COMET TO SWING BY THE SUN THIS YEAR. KNOWN AS SUN-GRAZING COMETS, THE ICY OBJECTS MOST LIKELY COME FROM THE OUTER SOLAR SYSTEM, THOUGH IT IS UNLIKELY THAT ANY SURVIVE THEIR ENCOUNTERS WITH THE SUN.

THE DOOMED COMET SPOTTED BY SOHO THIS WEEK, AS WELL AS THE OTHERS SEEN THIS YEAR, MAY BE PART OF GROUP OF OBJECTS CALLED KREUTZ COMETS – NAMED AFTER THE 19TH CENTURY GERMAN ASTRONOMER HEINRICH KREUTZ.

IT WAS KREUTZ WHO FIRST DEMONSTRATED THAT SUCH COMETS WERE RELATED, AND MAY BE THE SHATTERED REMAINS OF A SINGLE, GIANT COMET THAT BROKE ABOARD SEVERAL CENTURIES AGO.

ASTRONOMERS ESTIMATE THAT THERE MAY BE MORE THAN 1,600 COMETS IN OUR SOLAR SYSTEM THAT SWING THROUGH ITS HEART TO PASS BY THE SUN DURING THEIR TRAVELS. AS OF 2000, THE DEFINITIVE COUNT FOR SUN-GRAZING COMETS PASSED THE 1,000 MARK.

THE SOHO SPACECRAFT IS IN A PRIME POSITION TO CATCH SUN-GRAZING COMETS AS THEY SWING BY OR ARE DEVOURED BY THE SUN. THE MISSION IS A JOINT EFFORT BY NASA AND THE EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY.

SOHO USES A CENTER-MOUNTED DISK TO BLOCK THE BLINDING GLARE OF THE SUN IN ORDER TO OBSERVE SOLAR FLARES, CORONAL MASS EJECTIONS AND OTHER WEATHER, AS WELL AS OBJECTS NEAR THE SUN. IT HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN FINDING SUN-GRAZING COMETS SINCE IT BEGAN STUDYING THE SUN IN 1995.

PRIOR TO THE SOHO MISSION, ASTRONOMERS HAD FOUND ONLY 16 SUN-GRAZING COMETS USING SPACE-BASED TELESCOPES.

EXTRA VEGE WON'T STOP CANCER

AT MOST, FRUITS AND VEGETABLES CAUSE 2% REDUCTION IN DISEASE

EATING YOUR FRUITS AND VEGGIES HAS MANY HEALTH BENEFITS, BUT A DRAMATIC REDUCTION IN THE LIKELIHOOD OF CANCER ISN'T ONE OF THEM, A NEW STUDY FINDS. THE RESULTS DISPUTE CLAIMS MADE BY NUTRITION AUTHORITIES THAT INCREASED VEGETABLE INTAKE COULD SLASH CANCER RATES BY 50%. IN FACT, MOUNT SINAI RESEARCHERS FOUND THAT AN EXTRA TWO PORTIONS OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES WOULD, IN THE BEST CASE, PREVENT 2.6% OF CANCERS IN MEN AND 2.3% OF CASES IN WOMEN.

THE MESSAGE SEEMS TO BE THAT EATING FRUITS AND VEGGIES ARE JUST A SMALL PIECE OF WHAT ONE SCIENTIST CALLED "A MUCH LARGER LIFESTYLE PUZZLE" TO PREVENT CANCER. OTHERS SAID THAT SUCH A REDUCTION IN CANCER SHOULD NOT BE DISMISSED IF IT IS AS EASY AS EATING MORE VEGETABLES. "FOR THE UK, THIS WORKS OUT TO BE ABOUT 7,000 CASES A YEAR, WHICH IS A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER."

BAD NEWS FOR FLYS: SPIDER SILK IS INCREDIBLY STRONG

SPIDER SILK IS YIELDING SECRETS THAT COULD PAVE THE WAY FOR INCREDIBLY STRONG BUILDING MATERIALS. MIT SCIENTISTS FOUND THAT THE SILK USES A UNIQUE CRYSTAL STRUCTURE THAT MAKES IT BOTH STRONG AND ABLE TO BEND WITHOUT BREAKING. THEY BELIEVE IT IS POSSIBLE TO COPY THAT STRUCTURE TO TURN ORDINARY MATERIALS LIKE WOOD OR STRAW INTO FLEXIBLE AND STRONG "SUPER-MATERIALS."

RESEARCHERS FOUND THAT NANOCRYSTALS 3 MILLIONTHS OF A MILLIMETER ACROSS TURNED THE INHERENTLY WEAK BUILDING BLOCKS OF SPIDER SILK INTO A MATERIAL THAT IS, POUND FOR POUND, STRONGER AND LESS BRITTLE THAN STEEL. THEY BELIEVE APPLYING THE SAME PROCESS TO CARBON-BASED BUILDING ELEMENTS WILL CREATE EVEN STRONGER MATERIALS, POTENTIALLY REVOLUTIONIZING THE WHOLE FIELD OF SYNTHETIC MATERIALS.

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ABROAD

YEMENI BRIDE, 13, BLEEDS TO DEATH AFTER BEING MARRIED OFF BY HER BROTHER TO HIS BUDDY

A 13-YEAR-OLD YEMINI BRIDE MARRIED OFF BY HER FAMILY TO A 23-YEAR-OLD MAN HAS DIED FROM BLEEDING FROM GENITAL TEARING. THE GIRL, FROM HAJJA PROVINCE, DIED 4 DAYS AFTER HER WEDDING. HER HUSBAND HAS BEEN DETAINED BY AUTHORITIES. THE GIRL WAS MARRIED OFF AS PART OF A DEAL BETWEEN TWO MEN TO WED EACH OTHER'S SISTERS TO AVOID HAVING TO PAY EXPENSIVE BRIDE-PRICES. HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS ARE BATTLING TO END THE WIDE-SPREAD PRACTICE OF MEN TAKING CHILD BRIDES.

FOLLOW UP STORY

YEMENI CHILD BRIDE WAS TIED UP AND RAPED

TRAGEDY UNDERSCORES GIRLS BEING FORCED INTO MARRIAGE

ACCORDING TO THE CHILD'S MOTHER, POLICE, AND MEDICAL REPORTS A 13-YEAR-OLD YEMENI CHILD BRIDE WHO BLED TO DEATH SHORTLY AFTER MARRIAGE WAS TIED DOWN BY HER 23-YEAR-OLD HUSBAND AND REPEATEDLY FORCED TO HAVE SEX. NIJMA AHMED, WHO HAD TRIED TO PERSUADE HER DAUGHTER TO HAVE SEX WITH HER HUSBAND SO AS NOT TO SHAME THE FAMILY, SAID THAT BEFORE ELHAM ASSI LOST CONSCIOUSNESS AND DIED, "SHE LOOKED LIKE SHE HAD BEEN BUTCHERED."

ACCORDING TO POLICE, HUSBAND ABED AL-HIKMI, UPSET BECAUSE HE COULD NOT CONSUMMATE THEIR RELATIONSHIP, SOUGHT TRANQUILIZERS FROM A LOCAL CLINIC SO SHE WOULDN'T RESIST. WHEN REFUSED, HIKMI OBTAINED PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING PILLS AND THE NEXT DAY, RETURNED TO THE CLINIC CARRYING ASSI BECAUSE SHE COULD NOT WALK. A FORENSIC REPORT SHOWED THAT ASSI'S INJURIES WERE MUCH MORE EXTENSIVE, INCLUDING EXTENSIVE TEARING AROUND THE VAGINA AND RECTUM. ASSI'S MOTHER SAID, "SHE WHISPERED IN MY EAR THAT HE HAD TIED HER UP AND HAD SEX WITH HER VIOLENTLY."

"I SAID TO HER HUSBAND, WHAT HAVE YOU DONE, YOU CRIMINAL?"

(MY COMMENT: ACTUALLY, THAT STORY WAS SO SICK I DON'T THINK A COMMENT IS NECESSARY).

DRUG GUNMEN ATTACK 2 MEXICAN ARMY BASES

DOZENS ATTEMPT TO BLOCKADE SOLDIERS IN GARRISONS

DOZENS OF GUNMEN YESTERDAY MOUNTED RARE AND APPARENTLY COORDINATED ATTACKS ON TWO ARMY GARRISONS IN NORTHERN MEXICO, TOUCHING OFF FIREFIGHTS THAT KILLED 18 ATTACKERS. THE ATTEMPTS TO BLOCKADE SOLDIERS INSIDE THEIR BASES APPEARED TO MARK A SERIOUS ESCALATION IN MEXICO'S DRUG WAR. CARTEL GUNMEN ATTACKED IN UNIT-SIZE FORCES ARMED WITH BULLETPROOF VEHICLES, DOZENS OF HAND GRENADES AND ASSAULT RIFLES.

ELSEWHERE IN MEXICO, FOUR SEVERED HUMAN HEADS WERE FOUND YESTERDAY IN THE WESTERN STATE OF MICHOACAN. RESIDENTS FOUND THE HEADS, WITH EYES STILL BLINDFOLDED, LINED UP AT THE FOOT OF A MONUMENT ALONG WITH A THREATENING MESSAGE. IN THE SAME REGION, POLICE FOUND THE BODIES OF THREE YOUNG MEN WHO HAD BEEN SHOT TO DEATH. THE BODIES HAD MESSAGES STUCK TO THEIR CHESTS WITH KNIVES. AND POLICE IN THE BORDER CITY OF NOGALES REPORTED FINDING THE BULLET-RIDDEN BODIES OF THREE MEN, INCLUDING A CITY TRANSPORT OFFICIAL, ON A RURAL ROAD ALONG WITH THREE BURNED-OUT VEHICLES.

(MY COMMENT: TIJUANA FOR SPRING BREAK ANYONE?)

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FAMOUS QUOTES

POLYBIUS (203–120 BCE) 83 YEARS.

HE WAS A GREEK HISTORIAN OF THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD NOTED FOR HIS BOOK CALLED THE HISTORIES COVERING IN DETAIL THE PERIOD OF 220–146 BCE. HE IS ALSO RENOWNED FOR HIS IDEAS OF POLITICAL BALANCE IN GOVERNMENT, WHICH WERE LATER USED IN MONTESQUIEU'S THE SPIRIT OF THE LAWS AND IN THE DRAFTING OF THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION.

"SINCE THE MASSES OF THE PEOPLE ARE INCONSTANT, FULL OF UNRULY DESIRES, PASSIONATE, AND RECKLESS OF CONSEQUENCES, THEY MUST BE FILLED WITH FEARS TO KEEP THEM IN ORDER.

THE ANCIENTS DID WELL, THEREFORE, TO INVENT GODS, AND THE BELIEF IN PUNISHMENT AFTER DEATH."