

Harvey, Irma and Stevie Wonder

Celebrities got together a few days ago to hold a nationally televised show to raise money for hurricane relief. Good for them. The telethon raised more than \$44 million.

But you're not going to get a bunch of liberal entertainers together talking about hurricanes without a few of them bringing up ... yes ... global warming and climate change.

Stevie Wonder said, "Anyone who believes there is no such thing as global warming must be blind, or unintelligent."

Beyonce said, "The effects of climate change are playing out around the world every day. Just this past week you've seen devastation from the monsoon in India, an 8.1 earthquake in Mexico, and two catastrophic hurricanes. We have to be prepared for what comes next."

Before you write them off as *mere entertainers*, we have to acknowledge that a lot of scientists are also worried about climate change and say we need to be prepared for what comes next.

I'm just not at all sure the mainstream media, which has absolutely no doubts about the dangers of climate change, is the best place to look for reliable information on the subject.

Here's why I say that: A while back I stumbled onto some fascinating research by a conservative media watchdog group called the Business & Media Institute (BMI) that looked into how the media over the years covered climate change. What they found (which I wrote about in my book, *Crazies to the Left of Me, Wimps to the Right*) is eye-opening.

In 1924, the New York Times ran stories about “A New Ice Age.”

But nine years later, in 1933, the same New York Times reported on “the Longest Warming Spell since 1776.”

And then in 1975, the Times, like the weather changed again, this time reporting on “A Major Cooling Widely Considered to be Inevitable.”

There’s more. BMI went even further back in the archives and as I wrote in *Crazies*, “the media have been bouncing between hot and cold for more than a hundred years.”

In the late 1800s, for instance, mainstream papers were running stories about global cooling. On February 24, 1895, The New York Times ran this headline: “Geologists Think the World May Be Frozen Up Again.”

In 1923, Time magazine also fretted about global cooling. “The discovery of changes in the sun’s heat and the southward advance of the glaciers in recent years,” Time reported, “have given rise to conjectures of the possible advent of a new ice age.”

But wait! In 1939, Time told its readers that, “Weather men have no doubt that the world at least for the time being is growing warmer.”

Then in 1974, Time was back to pushing the dangers of global cooling, reporting that experts “are becoming increasingly apprehensive, for the weather aberrations they are studying may be the harbinger of another ice age.”

And in 2001, Time said that, “scientists no longer doubt global warming is happening.”

If you’re not confused you’re not paying attention.

For the record, this is not an argument that climate change is a hoax. I’m not saying Stevie Wonder and Beyonce ought to

stick to music and leave climate change to the experts – especially since, as the media are constantly telling us, something like 95 percent of the experts agree with Stevie and Beyonce.

All I'm saying is that if you're not staying up at night worrying about the end of the world, you're not a hopeless fool who liberals call "deniers" and put in the same deplorable basket as morons who deny the Holocaust ever happened. If you're just not sure – if you believe that the climate changes over long periods of time and the longer out you go the harder it is to predict what the climate will be – you may be onto something.

But here's my handy dandy rule of thumb: Anytime almost all of the media agree on a subject – as they do now about the cataclysmic horrors of global warming – that's a good time to be skeptical. As we've seen, when it comes to reporting on global warming and climate change, journalists over the years have been wrong – a lot.

Editor's Note: In my last column I wrote that CNN's Jake Tapper and Gloria Borger repeated on air a CNN.com mistake – about what former FBI director James Comey would say to a congressional committee. I was wrong. Jake Tapper never repeated the mistake. My apologies to him and to my readers.