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Lord Hall
 Director General
 BBC White City Media Centre
 201 Wood Lane
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Dear Lord Hall

Last week the BBC aired an interview with a recent graduate from the University of Oxford, by chance my own alma mater. This young man, it transpired, represented a covey of similarly minded contemporaries. They were driven by a desire to pressurize the trustees of the university finances to divest its portfolio of shares in fossil fuel extractors across the spectrum. With evident, and rather obnoxiously self-preening, satisfaction, he declared this to be ‘**an ethical issue**’. Given the BBC’s fastidious standards in this regard, no doubt it collectively, as well as you personally, would agree. So, indeed, would I, albeit not be for reasons that would appeal either to your interviewee or to the Corporation.

Let me begin with a simple, and surely an incontrovertible, proposition. It is that the abundant availability of fossil fuels, combined with the wit that has allowed human beings to exploit them, is the greatest blessing ever to have been visited upon the species. After all, without them no BBC at all and no University of Oxford - well, at least not as to be recognisable today. So then, what are the ethical issues that should, but plainly don’t, exercise either this callow youth or the state broadcaster? Here are a few suggestions. In the interests of reasonable comprehensiveness, this may occupy space. On the other hand, the issues are important (*the* defining challenge of the times, according to the BBC and its mentors), so we should not be niggardly.

So when the BBC:

- Routinely ignores its own Editorial Standards (as it happens, legal requirements), **that** is an ethical issue;
- Proceeds in the comforting knowledge that its political masters will not hold it to account, **that** is an ethical issue;
- Subverts the accepted meaning of language in order to generate a spurious justification for institutional bias, **that** is an ethical issue;
- Claims that its much vaunted impartiality has been ‘calibrated’ on the advice of a specially convened assembly of experts, **that** is an ethical issue;
- Subsequently spends large quantities of licence fee payers’ money seeking to avoid disclosing the composition of that convocation, **that** is an ethical issue;
- Has, as it later transpires, lied repeatedly about the accreditation of attendees, **that** is an ethical issue;
- Is in possession of information indicating gross malfeasance within the climate change community, which for weeks it deliberately suppresses, **that** is an ethical issue;
- Rejects the findings of an independent committee, set up by itself, to rule on its own impartiality, **that** is an ethical issue;
- Later, in order to justify its propagandist line, accepts on demonstrably spurious grounds the opposing verdict of a paid lapdog scientist, **that** is an ethical issue;
- Subsequently, and for years, deliberately and willfully ignores rivers of evidence and reports from unimpeachable sources which run counter to its prevailing orthodoxy, **that** is an ethical issue;
- Continues to give currency to demonstrable misinformation generated by vested interests, **that** is an ethical issue;
- By silent acquiescence lends its authority to false and defamatory slurs aimed at eminent scientists who question its prevailing orthodoxy, **that** is an ethical issue;

- Establishes a complaints procedure which, on artificial and synthetic grounds, is carefully designed to reject all objections to its prevailing orthodoxy, however well attested, **that** is an ethical issue.

The list is long. It could be longer.

But let us expand this young man's horizons a little beyond merely the shortcomings of the BBC. He - and, indeed, the BBC - might, for example, consider some/all of the following:

- When scientists, or those claiming to be, concoct evidence, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they 'homogenise' data, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they refuse to expose their data to verification by the wider scientific community, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they refuse to make available details of their methodology to the wider scientific community, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they refuse to engage in debate with their peers, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they willfully skirt contra-indications to an improbable hypothesis, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they actively collude to conceal inconsistencies in their own findings, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they collude to misrepresent evidence, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they invoke the authority of 'peer review' but only allow their work to be assessed by those of like mind, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they are in a position to select their own 'peer reviewers', **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they invoke the supposed authority of 'consensus' in preference to evidence, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they deliberately exaggerate and misrepresent the scale of that alleged consensus, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they deliberately exaggerate the scale or frequency of observed natural/climatic phenomena, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they defame and willfully denigrate the motives of any who have the temerity to question their fraudulent orthodoxy, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they threaten the careers and livelihoods of unpersuaded scientific practitioners, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they monopolise finite resources at the expense of vastly more important areas of scientific investigation, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When they subvert the integrity not only of scientific method but of intellectual rectitude itself, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When the supposed repository of the UN's collective wisdom on climate change, namely the IPCC, is exposed as a practised and persistent liar, **that** is an ethical issue.
- When its Summaries for Policy Makers persistently conflict with their underlying scientific Working Group I conclusions, **that** is an ethical issue.

Again a long, representative but by no means comprehensive list.

Finally, let me revert to the commencement of this letter. When, on the flimsiest of grounds (indeed, no grounds at all), it seeks to deny to the poor and destitute of the earth access to the one essential requirement for their betterment - namely affordable, readily available energy - then most surely

THAT IS AN ETHICAL ISSUE.

Yours sincerely

R.C.E. Wyndham

Cc: Prime Minister Mr. E. Miliband MP Archbishop of Canterbury Archbishop of York
Cardinal Vincent Nichols Vice-Chancellor, University of Oxford As the spirit moves