

Headline: Shockingly cautionary alarm

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Al Gore's 2006 documentary, "An Inconvenient Truth," is credited with having "slapped" clueless and uncaring viewers wide awake with its shockingly cautionary alarm about the escalating scourge of massive climate change and global warming.

Thanks in significant part to its detailed exposition and proffered proofs, it made both world leaders and individuals finally decide to act to mitigate or avert the impending disaster. Their comprehensive initiatives sought to cut down on the polluting use of fossil fuels to generate energy, reduce emissions, lower both land and ocean temperatures, etc.

A decade after the fact, how is our home planet surviving, or hopefully improving? Gore and his co-advocates have come up with a "report card" by way of the sequel to their pioneering and eye-opening documentary, wryly titled "An Inconvenient Sequel."

The intentionally redundant title implies that things haven't changed much. Indeed, the sequel's first half could be a depressing viewing experience for caring and connected viewers.

It goes from one negative report to the next, chronicling the record-breaking storms, polluted environments and other natural and man-made disasters that have hogged the headlines from week to week, all over the wincing and wilting world of late.

But, dismayed viewers should determinedly hang on and not lose heart because the sequel's second half offers a number of good and glad tidings, which indicate that clean energy advocates' efforts are starting to pay off and bear promisingly bountiful fruit, to be harvested by the next generation.

They include cities and even countries that now use mostly or only clean, nonpolluting energy sources, big companies that have radically "gone green," communities that have effectively and even profitably learned to manage waste, and low-lying states that have been able to more proactively deal with the ravages of floods, forest fires, earthquakes, landslides, etc.

These successful and effective initiatives may not be "enough," but they're definitely significant and substantial, and have inspired other communities and countries to be similarly solution- rather than problem-oriented.

Indeed, as Gore points out toward the sequel's end, the "tipping point" may be within sight, as the new plus points and inroads eventually overpower the seemingly "insurmountable" problems and dangers that have been threatening to make life unlivable in the world we all call home.

More to the point, Gore and his documentaries have helped restore people's faith in mankind and its power to do good, and transform its communal existence.

Gore pointedly links the campaign against global warming to other daunting but ultimately successful and transformative initiatives in history—like democracy, the emancipation of blacks and other racial permutations, women's right to vote, gay rights, etc.

They have succeeded, so the even more elemental mission to save our planet and its billions of stakeholders will, too—if we all resolutely commit ourselves to the still rigorous transformative task at hand.

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