A note by John Hollins.

The letter below was sent to a brother-in-law on 24 April 2021.

I have seen no evidence in the following 20 months to change my observation that the governments of Ontario and Canada are still scientifically illiterate.  I dedicate this note to the memory of Robert Hoffman.

Dear Percy,

The Government of Ontario is scientifically illiterate.

The long-established methods in science since Copernicus (1473-1543), Galileo (1564-1642), and Newton (1643-1727) have been observation of natural phenomena and experiments designed to test a hypothesis.  There has been a third method for about 50 years: the use of computer modelling to understand phenomena.  In fact, computer modelling is the only way to understand complex systems.

Public health authorities have been using computer modelling during the COVID pandemic.  Here is a graph for Ontario from the Globe and Mail, 24 April 2021.

In Ontario, which is now in the midst of the worst wave of the pandemic so far, a rapid increase in variant cases was accurately foreseen in epidemiological modelling well in advance.

This modelling was delivered in February (the dotted vertical line).  The solid line surrounded by a pink band on either side provides the results of the reports and the modelling.  The pink band shows the precision of the measurements and the calculations (the same way that opinion polls provide an estimate of precision).  The solid points are history.  The open circles are what the model calculated in February.  [Original chart unavailable.  Ed.]

The Government of Ontario lifted its restrictions (the solid vertical line) in early March as the number of infections dropped below 1,000 a day.  It ignored the modelling that it received and was subsequently obliged to reapply severe restrictions, far too late for the welfare of the citizens of Ontario.

[Link to news coverage at the time.  [Link to | Ford announces new restrictions.](https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/covid-19-ontario-april-16-2021-new-restrictions-modelling-1.5990092)  Ed.]

**Global heating**

Global heating is another complex subject in which computer modelling of energy systems is able to provide equally valid insights, not available in any other way.

The Government of Canada is also scientifically illiterate: it has not used appropriate computer modelling to understand global heating and develop effective energy policy and programs in a timely manner.  It has used only conventional economic tools, which on their own are not fit for purpose.

Cheers,

John