

# OMNI'S NEWSLETTER, SPECIAL NUMBER 4 ON CLIMATE CHANGE, AUGUST 28, 2007, FOR A CULTURE FOR PEACE, JUSTICE, SPECIES, AND THE LAND

Compiled by Dick Bennett

OMNI manifests the Constitutional approach to social change: WE, THE PEOPLE. These Newsletters provide us with facts and arguments for our own writings and actions. Write, call, and VISIT your congressional delegation AND THEIR STAFF, your Party leaders, legislators, newspapers, film a CAT Short Take, forum, or make your own film.

## MEETING THURSDAY NOON AT SENIOR CENTER ON S. COLLEGE

ROBERT'S AGENDA FOR AUG. 30 MEETING

1. Introductions --
2. Background on the Environmental Committee and the Carbon Task Force and Governor's Commission - Kelly
3. What specific actions can we undertake and sponsor NOW to make sure Arkansas supports strong global warming legislation
4. Create a specific rubric for actions to be done, when, by whom and by when.
5. Follow up meetings

Robert McAfee

DRAFT STATEMENT OF OMNI'S ENERGY/CO2 POSITION:

**First and foremost we SUPPORT alternative energy (wind, etc.) and efficiency in response to the climate crisis. We support construction of new nuclear reactors only as a 3rd and last resort. Available renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies are faster, cheaper, safer and cleaner strategies for reducing greenhouse emissions than nuclear power. Above all, we OPPOSE fossil fuels for energy.**

## FAYETTEVILLE

When at a conference in Orlando/Disney, I stayed in a hotel that advertised its "green" innovations. Gullible as I was at the time, I introduced myself to the manager as a writer interested in sustainable practices, and asked to see some details. She assured me they would be forthcoming, but when they were not, and I was soon to leave the hotel, I asked again, but she was "unavailable." And then it dawned on me that "green" and "greener" had already become commodified for deception and profit.

Three major enemies oppose a genuinely "green" planet--i.e. an 80% (Mondiot says 90%) decrease in CO2: ignorant deniers (now negligible); informed, profit-motivated deniers (scam); pretenders, advocates of insignificant change.

Mayor Coody and the City of Fayetteville brought a national conference of cities here to share ideas about climate change and global warming. It was a hopeful beginning. I thought the derisive editorial by *TMN* brought that newspaper to a new low (see my letter below). When the history of Arkansas is written in the future, surely this conference will be listed among the great firsts.

Now let us consider how helpful the conference was, whether the Mayor and City will translate all that information and all those words into actions that significantly reduce the use of fossil fuels. Did I forget to mention that the changes will cause great pain and sacrifice for us all?

In addition to the efficiencies the city has inaugurated (are they significant?), what might follow? A small example: The 15<sup>th</sup> Lights of the Ozarks is being planned. How much electricity will that require? >From how much fossil fuel? Producing how much CO2? And how much will it cost? A big example: XNA is planning a new runway, new concourse, and new approach road. Because flying is a large contributor to CO2, Mondiot in *Heat* urges airport expansions be stopped. Will Fayetteville lead the way? List a dozen other ways the city can significantly reduce its creation of CO2, turning talk into meaningful action. And make your views known.

## CHANGES IN OUR HOMES: QUICK HOT WATER

I visited J&B Supply in Springdale to learn more about instant at the source hot water, a tech. familiar to Europeans and all over the world. I have in my possession the specifications for several methods, but no prices, because J&B is a wholesaler. J&B listed these plumbers who have installed these water heaters: OMNI, Faubus, Sturyvants Mech, Paschal, and Fritz(?). Dick

ARKANSAS <http://www.governor.arkansas.gov/contacts.html>

## ARKANSAS GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

"Do we contribute more than our share to global warming? Of course we do, but as citizens of the State of Denial we don't have to admit it. All we have to do is set up yet another commission to study the problem." Donald Kaul, "Denial Is Our Most Important State," NAT 8-3-07.

The Governor wouldn't get a thousand miles near action on climate change, but, yes you guessed it, appointed a commission to study what every informed person in the world already knows. Now the dilatory Governor still has not appointed his choices for the Commission. What are his priorities? Let's compare the auto industry governors. Back in June auto execs AGAIN (and again) resisted tighter fuel standards, telling Congress AGAIN (and again) fuel economy goals would hurt industry. Justifiable conclusion: The leaders of our special brand of corporate capitalism will not change unless forced to. OMNI and Citizens First tried to gain acceptance of a bill that would have significantly reduced CO2 along the lines of California. Instead we got a Commission not yet functioning. And when the Commission is finally appointed, will it do anything significant, even though a few, informed but outnumbered people are on the committee, UNLESS WE THE PEOPLE MAKE THEM DO IT? We need a systematic campaign and CAMPAIGNERS NOW to inform the public and (at this point) politely ask the Governor and then the Commission what progress they are making for genuinely **reducing CO2**.

## Arkansans, Oppose the Hempstead Coal Plant

**Reminder: You and your friends and acquaintances can still go to <http://sustainablearkansas.info> and send a message to the Arkansas PSC about the Hempstead plant.**

Arkansas was perhaps chosen, instead of Texas for this site, because it would be a pushover, politically, to get it approved. In fact they are preparing the site now before a permit has been issued.

The Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality is currently soliciting public comments on a proposal for a new coal-fired power plant in Arkansas. This your chance to as a citizen and not a dart board to weigh in and stop this plan from getting off the drawing board.

Southwestern Electric Power Co. is proposing a power plant north of Fulton, in Hempstead County, about 15 miles northeast of Texarkana. The proposed plant site includes approximately 2,800 acres of Arkansas' last cypress swamps and old-growth timber.

If built, this plant's environmental impacts would be enormous. Approximately 6,000 gallons of water **per minute** would be withdrawn from Millwood Lake. Hundreds of pounds of mercury -- a potent neurotoxin, especially for children and expectant mothers -- would be emitted into Arkansas' ecosystem annually. Other annual emissions Arkansans can look forward to would be thousands upon thousands of pounds of acid-rain-causing nitrogen and sulfur oxides, and **more than 5 million pounds of**

**climate-changing carbon dioxide.**

go here to enter your comments to ADEQ:

[http://actforchange.workingassets.com/campaign/arkansas\\_coal?rk=Vp2jfoE1RFRNW](http://actforchange.workingassets.com/campaign/arkansas_coal?rk=Vp2jfoE1RFRNW)

" If we don't change our direction, we're likely to end up where we're headed."

Ruben Snake

## COAL CONTINUED

There's a good *Washington Post* article by Jeff Goodall, author of the fine book *Big Coal*, at

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/08/24/AR2007082401206.html?hpi>

. Note especially his last three paragraphs, beginning "But the big issue is global warming." He states: According to climate scientists such as NASA's James Hansen, if we hope to have a chance of avoiding dangerous changes to Earth's climate, **we don't have time to wait**. That's why Hansen, along with former vice president Al Gore and others, has called for a moratorium on new coal plants that do not capture and store carbon dioxide pollution."

This issue--CO2--should be the main focus of the Hempstead plant hearings. (from Art H)

AND OPPOSING COAL IS NOT THE ONLY THING YOU CAN DO:

## REDUCING CO2

## ROBERT MCAFEE'S CHECKLIST FOR INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS TO REDUCE CO2



You can stop Global Ten Things to Do.pdf  
Warming INFO SHEET

## STATE INCENTIVES

The Database of State Incentives for **Renewables & Efficiency** for Arkansas is at the following address. I pasted links from that page below.

<http://www.dsireusa.org/library/includes/map2.cfm?CurrentPageID=1&State=AR&RE=1&EE=1>  
or at this shortened address <http://tinyurl.com/33fshk>

Arkansas Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency (from Chris D)

## ENERGY EFFICIENCY

North Carolina appears ready to institute a key idea that will finally begin to put first things first energywise. **Energy efficiency** is our cheapest and most environmentally friendly form of energy services today, and NC is putting it at the top of its list for the utility (electricity & gas) industry. The idea is also being promoted by Duke Energy (of Charlotte NC) chair Jim Rogers. Amory Lovins of the Rocky Mountain Institute appears to have invented this idea and has promoted it since 1976 (Energy Strategy: The Road Not Taken, in Foreign Affairs, Oct 1976), but NC appears to be the first state to actually do it:

The idea is simple, but takes some getting used to: Public service commissions should compensate utilities for energy efficiency or, to use Amory's term, "negawatts". Example: It's cheaper, and more environmental, to keep a home warm in winter with insulation than with gas or electricity (although of course some basic amount of energy is needed too), so the utilities should take over the insulation process and should then be compensated by rate hikes as justified by energy savings. Because efficiency is such a bargain and new power plants are so expensive, the hikes will be less than they would have been without the added efficiency. By capitalizing on low-cost but under-used efficiency measures, everybody wins: Consumers' pocketbooks (they buy less energy because of the efficiency measures so their bills are less even though rates are somewhat higher), utility pocketbooks (they profit from installing efficiency), and the environment. The key concept is: utilities should be conceived of as providers of energy services (e.g. warmth), rather than providers of electricity or gas. Thomas Friedman, in yesterday's NY Times/International Herald Tribune, has a good account of what's happening in NC: <http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/08/22/opinion/edfriedman.php?page=1>

This is an idea that many of us have supported for decades. It appears that, with the push from global warming and high energy prices, its time has finally come. It needs to be adopted everywhere, including Arkansas. The Gov's Commission on Global Warming should fully consider this. (from Art H)

## USA AND THE WORLD

### CONTACT YOUR CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

You can influence your senators and others in your community by writing a letter to the editor of one of your local newspapers. Congressional staff tell FCNL that most senators read every letter to the editor in the local papers in their state -- especially if the letter mentions her or his name.

## CLIMATE REFUGEES

It has already started.

Climate refugees around the world are fleeing regions beset by violent storms, extreme temperatures, melting glaciers, spreading deserts, swelling oceans.

Environmental stress forced more than 25 million to migrate in 1998, according to the Red Cross, roughly the same number that fled armed conflict.

New Zealand has agreed to accept all 11,000 of the citizens of Tuvalu, which is flooding from the sea.

Bangladesh refugees from drowning coastal land are moving to cities. In 50 years the Bay of Bengal will likely cover 11% of Bangladesh's land.

Much of below sea-level New Orleans remains ravaged from hurricane Katrina, and the city is sinking. Many of that city's refugees now live in Arkansas. Half of New York City's 12 million could be engulfed by the ocean.

What is being done to stop the catastrophes resulting from climate change? What in Arkansas?

Local and federal governments around the world seem paralyzed by callousness or refusal to make hard choices. Officials are tallying the financial cost of acting to prevent warming and have chosen to do nothing. But all must contribute to the drastic reduction of CO2 if all are to survive. Being inland in the "Natural State" won't save us.

## What we can do in Arkansas for Climate Refugees.

**Reduce** your carbon footprint significantly.

**Advocate** the reduction of CO2 production by Arkansas governments and businesses.

**Demand** government officials wake up to the urgent need to reduce CO2. We must dramatically change our energy and consumption practices now.

**Urge** your senators and congresspeople (who are stubbornly ignorant about warming) to support an **international treaty** to recognize and protect the refugee casualties from global warming.

Don't accept deceptive claims by government or corporate officials that they are working for a "greener" world. Ask them: greener than what? Prepare for the refugees if we do not stop global warming.

DICK'S LETTER TO THE MORNING NEWS on **WARMING**

TO: Editor of *The Morning News*

Dear Editor:

Thank you for the opportunity to clarify some details in your editorial of July 19, 2007, critical of

the climate change conference in Fayetteville.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a joint project of the United Nations and the World Meteorological Organization, recently issued three reports presenting the scientific evidence for climate change, as well as the likely consequences and how the most catastrophic effects can be avoided.

The first IPCC report (Feb. 2) focused on the overwhelming evidence that the rise in global temperatures over the last century, and especially during the last decade, derives from human emissions of greenhouse gases. "Warming of the climate system is unequivocal," and there is greater than 95 percent certainty that human activity is to blame. Of that activity, the U.S. is the world's leading producer of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), emitting about 25 percent of the globe's gas despite having just 4.5 percent of its population.

The IPCC's second report (April 6), studied observed effects of global warming as well as the likely effects in coming decades. For example, many ecosystems and species are likely to collapse catastrophically, and millions of people are expected to suffer increased malnutrition, death, and injury on account of heat waves, storms and droughts, and increased exposure to infectious diseases.

The Panel's final report presented recommendations for action to reduce CO<sub>2</sub>, particularly drastic changes in consumption patterns—for example, abandonment of fossil fuels. And the time for turning around is very short. "We don't have the luxury of time."

Are these reports alarmist? The IPCC warned of a global temperature rise of 1.4-2.5 degrees Centigrade, and even to 5.8 degrees. But George Monbiot in *Heat* summarizes reports by scientists who maintain that the temperature this century could rise much further. For example, Nobel laureate Paul Crutzen, estimates the temperature could rise by between 7 and 10 degrees. Monbiot speculates that a rise of 6 degrees could produce the destruction of species that occurred at the end of the Permian period, "the biggest of the mass extinctions."

But even a rise of 2 degrees will likely cause the feedback when "climate change begets climate change." "If we do not greatly reduce our emissions," Monbiot continues, "temperatures are likely to reach that point in about 2030."

Consequently, Monbiot argues, curtailing climate change must be our preeminent project, because "if we fail in this task, we fail in everything else."

It was because of the evidence gathered by the IPCC and other scientists that the mayor and administration of Fayetteville hosted the conference on what cities might contribute to moderate climate change.

#### References:

deMause, Neil. "The Climate Change Gap." *Extra!* (July-August 2007), 22-26.

Flannery, Tim. *The Weather Makers: How Man Is Changing the Climate and What It Means for Life on Earth*. Atlantic Monthly, 2005.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Three Reports.

Monbiot, George. *Heat: How to Stop the Planet from Burning*. South End, 2007 (U.S. edition).

#### FOSSIL FUELS, WARMING, AND WARS

Despite Gore's wonderfully comprehensive campaign against warming, from the world peace point of

view significant issues are omitted that if included will reinforce Gore's campaign against warming.

Fossil fuels have led to militarism and to wars and threats of wars. Oil dependency fuels the U.S. quest for military supremacy; it is a driving fact in U.S. foreign and military policy; it has led to the militarization of U.S. foreign policy and to huge increases in U.S. military expenditures at the expense of massive human needs. The whole world suffers as conflict and war over oil consume vast human and financial resources. These conflicts over oil wealth undermine democracy and human rights in both importing and exporting countries. The U.S. is the leading global consumer of oil, and its foreign and domestic policies are the consequences.

That is, warming and wars are inseparable problems. Educate our Congressional Delegation to act now to confront the twin threats of global climate change and deadly conflicts over oil.

## HOPE IN SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

### NATHAN LEWIS AND SOLAR POWER

Robert McAfee says of this powerpoint: Attached is a presentation which is one of the most dramatic explanations of the current CO2 crisis. We need to focus on the energy issues in this debate.



Powering the Planet Nathan S Lewis.ppt Nathan S Lewis Trans Nathan S Lewis.ppt Nathan S Lewis Trans

**Vote for a Nation Powered by Solar and Wind** (from Sue Skidmore): We have the best opportunity we've ever had to get this country off of polluting energy like oil and coal and onto real clean alternatives. This will not only help curb the climate crisis, but save consumers money and create new jobs. Seems like a slam dunk, right?

But the oil and coal industry are going all-out to stop this bill, and some in Congress are listening to them. We need to tell Congress now to do what's right for the American people, not continue business-as-usual.

Sign a **petition** urging Congress to vote to give **solar and wind** the support they need to assure a clean energy future. Can you join me at the link below?

<http://pol.moveon.org/cleanenergyfuture/>

Thanks!

My comment to Congress:

Right now we should be getting 90% of our energy from Wind and Solar in my opinion. Everyone should be driving a hybrid or electric vehicle. We are way behind the times. Why kill people for oil (or anything)?... as we have the technology to use clean renewable energy of wind and solar power.

It is a very perverse world in which we live that we have appropriate technology but many of our leaders and corporations insist on killing for oil and utilizing dirty and archaic technology. Please get behind the wave of the future and help us create a sustainable and peaceful world by supporting clean renewable wind and solar now.

**Watch David de Rothschild on Good Morning America Tomorrow (Friday 8/10)!**



Proceeds from the book will be given to the Alliance for Climate Protection, the beneficiary of the Live Earth concerts. Author David de Rothschild (one of People Maganize's recent featured bachelors!) will be on Good Morning America tomorrow to discuss the book and his work to stop the climate crisis. Stop by your local bookseller and pick up a copy!

### The Green Technology Initiative

The Green Technology Initiative has been set up to help UK businesses reduce the carbon footprint of their IT systems in line with the government target of a 20% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2010. The Initiative is a non-commercial organisation providing the business community with free advice and information. [READ FULL ARTICLE](#)

### THE WORLD

SWITZERLAND

Robert McAfee thought you would be interested in this story: NPR : Swiss Town Guards Itself Against Climate Hazard

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=13972014&ft=1&f=1007&sc=emaf>

## MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS ON CO2 AND RESISTANCE

### COMMODIFICATION OF THE ANTI-CO2 MOVEMENT: PRETENDERS IN ACTION

The drive for profit transforms everything into a commodity for sale— Jesus as early as July.  
Watch what is happening to the Anti-Warming Campaign.

First, CO2 is diffused into the generalized "sustainability." Several extremely expensive ads in the May 14, 2007, number of *The New Yorker* illustrate the trend. Consider the mendacious BP ad. Astonishingly, the company's public relations firm persuaded British Petroleum to now call itself "Beyond Petroleum." But the text offers a lot of chicanery and only superficial claims. In huge letters: "Our plans for solar [highlighted] are heating up." The planet is destructively warming, but this oil company is performing good warming. BP "is embarking." So hardly beyond petroleum; they are just starting to start. "Embarking on a \$70 million expansion project of our solar plant." BP has a solar plant? How big in size and investment? "...the largest fully integrated solar plant in North America." "Fully integrated"? Now catch your breath: BP will "also upgrade the plant by employing sustainable design components." That was not an essential aspect of the expansion? What are such components? Doesn't matter, it's a matter of character: "It's part of our commitment to broaden [actually how much in wattage?] our renewable energy portfolio to provide low carbon electricity." BP will provide low carbon electricity via solar power? BP is committed to reducing CO2 at their Frederick, Maryland, plant. Perhaps it's a public relations joke. Well, they end the article, "It's a start."

Take the 2-page Lexus ad of May 14, 2007. The first and very striking page has a desert-looking plant with molecules among the leaves and buds. The message reads: "Proof that nature and progress can coexist comfortably. Very, very comfortably. This is luxury hybrid. This is the pursuit of perfection." And on the facing page a photo of a Lexus sedan, with the message: "The pursuit of perfection." Immediately following (totaling four pages of business as usual in energy) Chevron gives two statements and one question on the first of two pages: "There are 193 countries in the world. None of them are energy independent. So who's holding whom over a barrel?" On the next page are some graphs and texts arguing that since all oil exporting countries also import energy, energy independence "is an unrealistic goal." Therefore, "balancing the needs of producers and consumers is as crucial as increasing supply and curbing demand." But in "Chevron Steps Taken," nothing is said about curbing demand, but everything is about marketing, partnership, and their own efficiency; that is, their own profit. Except they do say they had committed "hundreds of millions annually to alternative and renewable energies to diversify supply," but without citing evidence. Both of these ads promote consumption; both companies will increase CO2 significantly. And they seek to deceive: nature will *not* coexist comfortably with that monster CO2-spewing car; energy independence is a red-herring: it diverts attention away from the issue of rising oil demand; both distract us away from the urgent need to reduce CO2 by 70 to 90% very soon.

### TRUTHS ABOUT WARMING

GEORGE MONBIOT

therealnews.com seems to be a good website for news with videos

Here is a link to their page for Global Warming including an interview with George Monbiot

<http://therealnews.com/web/index.php?thisepisode=44>

There is more on Monbiot at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Monbiot](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Monbiot)

For more George Monbiot videos, go to <http://video.google.com/videosearch?q=%22George+Monbiot+%22&hl=en>

*The Real News* is a **non-profit** news and documentary network focused on providing independent and uncompromising journalism. Our staff, in collaboration with courageous journalists around the globe, will investigate, report and debate stories on the critical issues of our times.

We are **member supported** and do not accept advertising, government or corporate funding. (from Chris D)

### TAKING ACTION: WILL YOU VOLUNTEER?

### OMNI BOTTLED WATER CAMPAIGN

The project would reduce plastic bottled water. Even though in 2006 the US public drank 28.3 gallons of bottle water per person on average, it's only a small part of the CO2 problem. Yet we must tackle this and a thousand more small causes of CO2, along with the serious ones of coal-fired electricity plants,

Cars, and planes.

Problem: Bottled water is extravagantly expensive--7000 times more than tap water.

Its plastic bottles are made from **oil** and therefore contributes to all the liabilities of a fossil fuel economy..

Its production and transportation contributes to global warming.

It contributes to filling up municipal landfills.

The bottles are a major source of unsightly litter.  
All of these hidden costs are paid for by taxpayers.

What other cities are doing about this waste and pollution:

San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom praised the virtue of tap water, denounced bottled water for all the above reasons, and ordered city departments to stop buying bottle water.

This past June he led the U.S. Conference of Mayors in a resolution praising tap water and calling for a study on the environmental effect of bottled water.

Recent Deceptions Exposed::

PepsiCo Inc.'s Aquafina admitted it got its water from a municipal source and agreed to change the labels to make that clear.

Coca-Cola's Dasani and Nestle Waters North America's Pure Life also come from a public water source.

Bottled water companies are fighting back with expensive full-page ads in *The New York Times* and other newspapers.

What might we do here and in what steps?

1. Form a coalition of like-minded people.
2. Send a statement to Mayor Coody asking for a reduction in bottled water.
3. Purchase an ad in a newspaper exposing the many negatives of b.w.
4. Contact the Beaver Lake Water Assoc., the regional water assoc., municipal water officials to oppose bottled water.

We can start as soon as we find a coordinator for the project. Is that you?

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Check out <http://www.congress.org>. Congress.org is a service of Capitol Advantage, a private, non-partisan company facilitating civic participation. Congress.org allows users to:

-Identify and contact leaders in Congress, the White House, and state legislatures.- Post letters online in Letters to Leaders and read what other Americans are saying to elected officials.- Create and post Soapbox action alerts to enlist others on your issue.- Have letters printed and hand-delivered to Congress.- Find and contact local and national media by ZIP code or by state with Media Guide.- Have your representative's votes sent to you weekly via e-mail with MegaVote.- Search alerts and take action in the Issues and Action area Go to <http://www.capitoladvantage.com/capwiz/contact.html> to get your organization's alerts on Congress.org, Yahoo!, MSN, AOL and more sites).

End of OMNI's Climate Change Newsletter #4.

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