

Greens Against Nuclear Energy: Fighting the Nuclear Renaissance

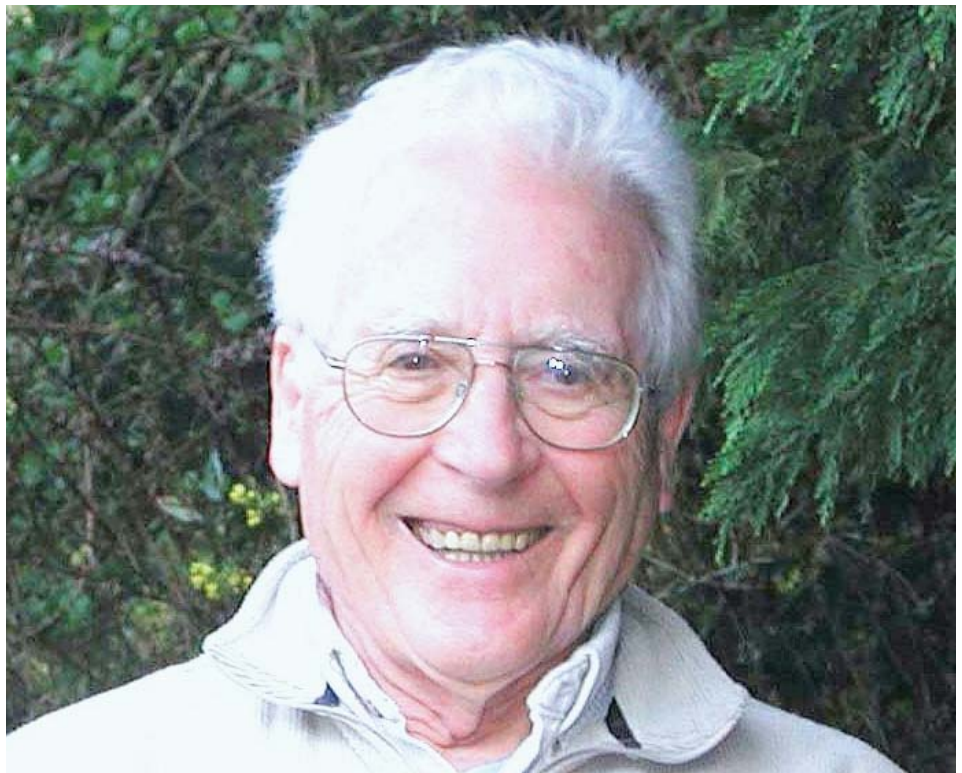
By Tom Csabafi

Summary: Nuclear power is “clean” inexpensive energy that doesn’t emit the greenhouse gases that environmental groups say are responsible for global warming. So why are Greenpeace and other environmental groups so determined to stop it? And what explains the unlikely coalition of environmentalists and statesmen who support nuclear energy?

Word is out: Nuclear power is efficient and cost-effective, and it has both strong supporters and opponents in the environmental movement.

British scientist James Lovelock supports nuclear energy. The proponent of the “Gaia hypothesis” that the living and non-living parts of the Earth are a single organism says, “I am a Green, and I entreat my friends in the movement to drop their wrongheaded objection to nuclear energy...Every year that we continue burning carbon makes it worse for our descendents. ... Only one immediately available source does not cause global warming, and that is nuclear energy.” So does Stewart Brand, founder of the hippie bible, the Whole Earth Catalog, who told Fortune magazine (August 6, 2007), “Each new reactor is safer and cheaper and smaller and smarter than the previous one, and that will probably continue.”

Greenpeace co-founder Patrick Moore reported his epiphany on nuclear power. “In the early 1970s when I helped found Greenpeace, I believed that nuclear energy was synonymous with nuclear holocaust...[but] my views have changed, and the rest of the environmental movement needs to update its



This jolly green giant loves nuclear energy: James Lovelock, originator of the “Gaia hypothesis” and a giant in the environmentalist movement, believes his fellow greens should “drop their wrongheaded objection to nuclear energy.”

views, too, because nuclear energy may just be the energy source that can save our planet from another possible disaster: catastrophic climate change,” he wrote in a Washington Post op-ed (April 16, 2006).

British prime minister Tony Blair told Members of Parliament in May 2007, “We are not going to be able to make up through wind farms all the deficit on nuclear power.” And Mohamed El Baradei, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N.’s chief nuclear inspector, has argued that “...existing well-run nuclear power

plants have become increasingly valuable assets. Although the initial capital cost of a nuclear plant is high, the operating costs have become relatively low and stable.”

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That's striking testimony in favor of nuclear energy from diverse sources.

Nuclear power produces about one-sixth of the world's power. According to the World Nuclear Association, as of March there were 439 nuclear power reactors operating in 31 countries. In 2006, these facilities generated 2,658 billion kilowatt hours (kWh), or roughly 16% of the world's electricity. Construction is currently underway for about 34 reactors in 11 countries.

Yet an array of nongovernmental organizations and governments opposes nuclear energy with an almost religious fervor, organizing protests against its increased production and use. Their lead group is Greenpeace, the preeminent activist group in what has become a worldwide antinuclear movement that fervently denies the benefits of nuclear energy. The Greenpeace website declares flippantly that nuclear power "is the most expensive and most dangerous means ever devised by humans to boil water." The group says it "has always fought—and will continue to fight—vigorously against nuclear power because it is an unacceptable risk to the environment and to humanity. The only solution is to halt the expansion of all nuclear power, and for the shutdown of existing plants."

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For two decades memories of the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear accident in Ukraine soured Europe on nuclear power. Italy, which has no nuclear reactors, banned construction, while Germany, Sweden and Spain pledged to phase out their existing power plants. With the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, left-wing protest against nuclear weapons was easily shifted to demonstrations against nuclear power.

of heart. Her government originally proposed to shut down Germany's 17 nuclear power plants, which emit no carbon by-products. But Merkel's stronger commitment to reduce CO₂ emissions has led her to reconsider her opposition to nuclear power.

Opponents of Nuclear Power

Its supporters say that nuclear energy has been proven safe as long as safety rules are followed. But that hasn't stopped activist

Greenpeace trivializes nuclear power and human needs, calling the energy "the most expensive and most dangerous means ever devised by humans to boil water."

But Europe's position is changing, and the cause is fear of global warming. Green attitudes about global warming in part explain why the government of Finland began construction in 2005 of a new nuclear facility at Olkiluoto, near Helsinki. The plant, to be built by the German company Siemens and the French company Areva, would be the first new nuclear plant in Europe in 15 years. It's one reason why France, which depends on nuclear energy for 80% of its power, is building a new reactor in Flamanville. The construction of the facility began in December 2007. It's also why the British Labor government announced on January 10, 2008 that it would back the construction of a new generation of nuclear power plants after two years of study and consultation. The tug-of-war in Europe, which currently has 197 nuclear power plants in operation, seems increasingly to favor supporters of nuclear power. They see it as an alternative to the fossil fuels that they believe are responsible for global warming.

Ironically, groups like Greenpeace agree that global warming is the greatest threat to Planet Earth. According to Greenpeace coordinator Kert Davies, "Global warming is the byproduct of decades of irresponsible coal and oil use." However, climate change alarmism, coupled with the rising price of oil imported from unstable parts of the world, is precisely why many in Europe are reevaluating their antinuclear positions. For instance, Germany's Angela Merkel has had a change

groups like Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth and the Sierra Club, which are mobilizing activists to oppose it. In Europe Greenpeace has tried to help local activists stop construction of the planned Belene nuclear power plant on the Danube River in Bulgaria. However, the European Commission approved Bulgaria's plans in November 2007 and the Bulgarian government has awarded contracts to a Russian company, Atomstroyexport, for two new reactors. Albena Simeonova, an activist affiliated with Greenpeace who lives near the site, denounced the plans as a "mad-scientist scheme" and a "megalomaniac scheme." Simeonova, who received the \$125,000 Goldman Environmental Prize in 1996 from the San Francisco-based Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund, lamented "the prospect of living with a second Chernobyl on our doorsteps."

Long known for combining legal action and street protests with "direct action" tactics (e.g., chasing and obstructing whaling ships, breaching military bases and airport security), Greenpeace activists have targeted the nuclear power industry worldwide. They scaled a French nuclear tower, clashed with Swedish police, and protested the "waste" of public funds on a new reactor in Brazil by lining up toilet seats covered with radioactive symbols in Rio de Janeiro. Founded in Vancouver, Canada, in 1971, Greenpeace is a worldwide organization with 46 offices in 42 countries. Its 501(c)(4) lobby arm, Greenpeace, Inc., reported 2006 revenues

For frequent updates on environmental groups, nonprofits, foundations, and labor unions, check out the CRC-Greenwatch Blog at www.capitalresearch.org/blog

of \$15.8 million. Its 501(c)(3) “charitable” Greenpeace Fund had 2006 revenues of \$10.7 million.

Friends of the Earth (FoE) is another green group with international chapters and an activist membership. Founded in 1969 by David Brower, a man who was ousted from the Sierra Club for being too radical, the 501(c)(3) group, with \$3.5 million in revenues in 2007, is small in comparison to other green groups. But from its Washington, D.C. headquarters it coordinates worldwide activist protests comparable to Greenpeace against dams and whaling.

FoE’s “Don’t Buy the Big Nuclear Lie” campaign is aimed at preventing the construction of nuclear reactors in the U.S. Its principal tactic: a lobbying effort to stop Democrats in Congress from providing loan guarantees to the nuclear power industry. Friends of the Earth takes an unexpected libertarian position that it shares with the Cato Institute: They argue that the industry is economically unviable without taxpayer subsidies that it doesn’t deserve.

The San Francisco-based Sierra Club, founded in 1892, has 1.3 million members and a nationwide staff of 500. It has both a lobbying arm (2005 revenues: \$85 million), a charitable foundation (2006 revenues: \$29 million), and a “527” political committee, the Sierra Club Voter Education Fund (2004 revenues: \$8.7 million). The Sierra Club also opposes the licensing, construction and operation of new nuclear reactors, claiming that there are “better, cleaner and cheaper” energy solutions.

One suspects that the real reason why the greenest of green groups oppose nuclear energy is that they can’t stand the idea of more energy production. Any resource that attracts capitalists must necessarily repel groups like Greenpeace. Despite nuclear energy’s economic and environmental benefits, green groups force themselves to repeat anti-nuke warnings based on two nuclear plant accidents that occurred decades ago.

Certainly nuclear waste management must be addressed. But green groups and anti-corporate groups like Public Citizen, founded by Ralph Nader, oppose the selection of Yucca Mountain in Nevada, which



“All technology should be assumed guilty until proven innocent,” said the late David Brower, the radical founder of Friends of the Earth.

is scheduled to begin operating as a nuclear waste depository in the next few years. Public Citizen, with an annual budget of \$3.5 million, is also organizing campaigns to shutter California’s two operating nuclear reactors at San Onofre and Diablo Canyon. If the group were as concerned about global warming as it claims, it should be able to see that nuclear energy addresses its fears



Greenpeace co-founder Patrick Moore, previously an opponent of nuclear energy, now says it could help save the Earth from catastrophic climate change.

about climate change while providing for the energy needs of a state whose economy is the world’s seventh largest.

New York State offers another example of an economic powerhouse heavily dependent on nuclear energy: Nuclear energy provides 29% of the state’s electricity. But left-wing groups want to shut down existing reactors. Most recently, the feminist anti-war group Code Pink proposed to shut down the Indian Point Nuclear Power Plant, which provides 12% of the state’s electricity supply.

Nuclear Watch South, another tiny anti-nuclear group with a \$57,000 budget lobbies against the Savannah River Mixed Oxide Fuel (MOX) Fabrication Facility, which is located at the Savannah River Site, a facility near Aiken, South Carolina that processes nuclear waste. Under a 2000 nonproliferation pact between the U.S. and Russia, the MOX facility converts weapons-grade plutonium from both countries for use in nuclear power generation.

One day the MOX facility could be retrofitted to recycle nuclear waste, surely a task that left-wing groups ought to wholeheartedly endorse. The project might then eventually whittle down the U.S. nuclear warhead arsenal, the second largest in the world. But that doesn’t interest Nuclear Watch South, which argues that the recycling process threatens national security because the uranium and plutonium in warheads could be stolen by terrorists.

Green Arguments Against Nuclear Power

While Europe is increasingly eager to adopt nuclear energy, the United States has been slow to make commitments to build more nuclear plants, and according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, no new nuclear power facilities have been built in the U.S. since 1996. Memories of the accident at Three Mile Island (TMI) in Pennsylvania in 1979 as well as in Chernobyl linger, and anti-nuclear groups like Greenpeace fan fears about reactor safety.

The most irrational opponents equate nuclear weapons with nuclear power plants, calling them “birds of a feather,” in the words of a small Chicago activist group, the Nuclear Energy Information Service (2006 revenues:

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\$36,000). “Each year a typical 1000 megawatt (MW) commercial power reactor will produce 300 to 500 pounds of plutonium -- enough to build between 25 - 40 Nagasaki-sized atomic bombs,” it notes.

More serious critics focus on the real problem of nuclear waste storage. For instance, there is an important debate over how dangerous it is to store thousands of tons of nuclear waste in a deep tunnel in Yucca Mountain, Nevada, one hundred miles northwest of Las Vegas. Burying a residue of spent plutonium or uranium underground for hundreds of years is feasible according to the U.S. government. But local communities have legitimate concerns about earthquakes and geological defects that must be recognized.

Antinuclear groups raise the issue of nuclear power plant accidents. They stir up fears that private companies will put families at risk if they construct electricity-generating nuclear facilities in populated areas. Many Americans do fear nuclear power in light of the incidents at TMI and Chernobyl, and also fear that terrorists could attack nuclear power plants and spread deadly radiation. In May 1989, three years after Chernobyl, a pollster commissioned by the Cambridge Report asked, “How important a role *should* nuclear energy

The following average emission levels occur in the production of 1 megawatt hour (MWh) of electricity (measured in pounds of emissions per MWh):

	coal	oil	natural gas	nuclear
carbon dioxide	2,249	1,672	1,135	0
sulfur dioxide	13	12	0.1	0
nitrogen oxides	6	4	1.7	0

Source: EPA, as cited by EIA at <http://www.eia.doe.gov/cneaf/nuclear/page/nuclearenvissues.html>

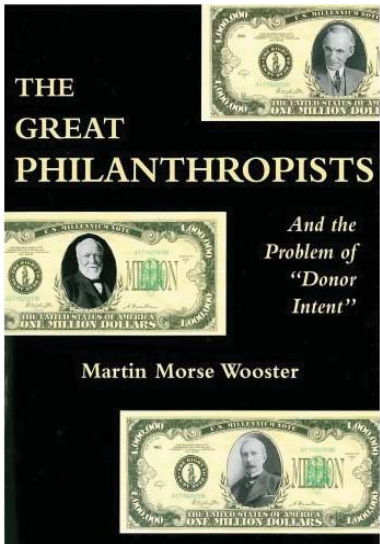
play in meeting America’s future energy needs?” Just 38% supported nuclear energy.

To be sure, the Chernobyl accident was a major nuclear mishap, and it has had short and long-term impacts on health and the environment in contaminated areas in Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. Studies show that approximately 50 people have died between 1986 and 2002 from acute radiation syndrome (ARD) related to Chernobyl. Hundreds more cancer cases can be attributed to it. International agencies, funded mainly by western European governments and Japan, continue to seriously study Chernobyl’s aftermath.

Still, it is important to note that Chernobyl represented an ethical failure by Soviet officials as well as a technical failure of system design. By comparison, federal and state agencies, led by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, have concluded that radiation from the TMI accident posed no threat to human health or the environment. (A fact sheet about the aftermath of TMI prepared by the commission is available at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fact-sheets/3mile-isle.html>.)

But antinuclear groups ignore the mounting evidence that nuclear power is a clean source of energy that has grown safer over the years and increasingly cost-effective. The trend in research and development in the nuclear industry points toward the production of safe, compact and low-cost reactors. Moreover, if global warming is a problem, then nuclear energy, which the U.S. Energy Information Agency states bluntly, “makes no contribution to global warming through the emission of carbon dioxide,” may be part of the solution.

That’s not something that groups like Greenpeace, the Sierra Club, and Public Citizen want to hear. Asserting that nuclear power is neither clean nor green, the attacks of antinuclear environmentalist groups on the nuclear industry grow more shrill and exaggerated. Relying on half-truths and hairsplitting, environmentalist groups opposed to nuclear energy even deny the scientific assertion that nuclear power generates no carbon dioxide, the primary so-called greenhouse gas.



GOOD DEEDS, SQUANDERED LEGACIES

A cautionary tale first published in 1994, this third edition by Martin Morse Wooster testifies to the continuing importance of the issue of donor intent. It contains new material focused on the ongoing *Robertson Foundation v. Princeton University* case and an update on the tragic battle over the Barnes Foundation. An Executive Summary is also included.

Wooster, senior fellow at Capital Research Center, tells a cautionary tale of what has gone wrong with many of this country's preeminent foundations. But he also shows that other foundations, such as those established by Lynde and Harry Bradley, James Duke, and Conrad Hilton, safeguard their founders' values and honor their intentions.

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In “Nuclear Power: No Solution to Climate Change,” a 2005 paper endorsed by Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, Ian Lowe, the president of the Australian Conservation Foundation, grasps at straws. Lowe states at page 9, in the executive summary of the 132-page report, that “[c]laims that nuclear power is ‘greenhouse free’ are incorrect as substantial greenhouse gas emissions are generated across the nuclear fuel cycle.” He then notes that carbon dioxide is generated at various points in the process such as when the uranium needed for nuclear power generation is mined, and when fossil fuels are burned in order to transport the uranium.

But then elsewhere in the report, we learn that Lowe’s protest is much ado about nothing. Citing a 1997 study, Lowe asserts that, relatively speaking, nuclear power generates very little greenhouse gas:

Greenhouse gas emissions per kilowatt-hour of electricity from nuclear are generally greater than for most renewable energy sources, especially wind and hydroelectricity, though the differences are not great and the emissions from all three sources are far less than most fossil fuel sources. [The report is available at http://www.uitstapkernenergie.be/dossiers_en/20050900-Nuclear_power_no_solution_to_climate_change-%20.pdf.]

Battle for U.S. Public Opinion

American public opinion is changing. A BBC poll of Americans in June 2006 showed 63% support for using nuclear energy and building new nuclear power plants. Similarly, a July/August 2006 Los Angeles Times/Bloomberg poll found 61% support for nuclear energy and power plant expansion. Even some green groups have kept an open mind about nuclear power. The group Environmental Defense has voiced its reservations about nuclear energy, “but we think global warming is so severe and the time for action is so short that we are willing to take another look at it.”

Still, many antinuclear NGOs rush to judgment with emotion-filled stories taking the place of scientific evidence. The Greenpeace International website routinely publishes articles on tragic individual cases that it attributes to radiation. One article

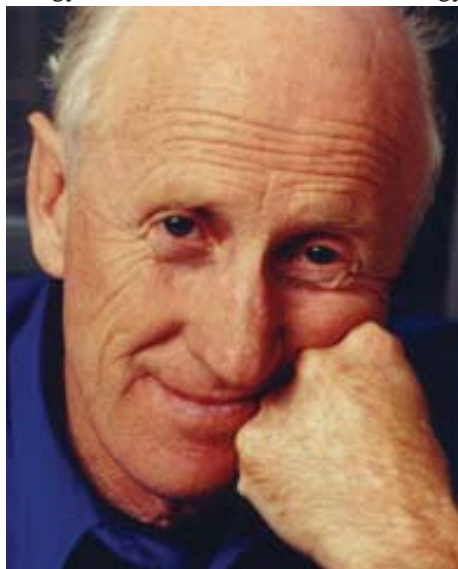


Nuclear power foe Ian Lowe of the Australian Conservation Foundation

entitled “Children of Chernobyl” highlights the story of a young Ukrainian girl suffering from a tumor.

Moreover, Greenpeace USA claims Americans don’t need to rely on either nuclear power or fossil fuels. It says 80% of U.S. energy needs could be supplied by renewable sources such as wind, solar or geothermic energy.

This is pure fantasy. The EIA’s *Annual Energy Outlook 2008* finds that alternative energy sources cannot fulfill our energy



Far out, man: Former nuclear energy opponent Stewart Brand, who founded the Whole Earth Catalog, now embraces nuclear power.

needs. (The report is available at <http://www.eia.doe.gov/oiaf/aeo/index.html>.) It notes that technologies using renewable sources will remain highly inefficient for the foreseeable future. EIA, part of the U.S. Department of Energy, estimates that in 2005 less than 2.5% of total U.S. electricity generation was provided by alternative and renewable sources (excluding hydroelectric power). Even adding hydroelectric power only increases the amount to less than 9% of total U.S. electricity production. Assuming continued economic growth, EIA projects that renewable energy will contribute only 5% of U.S. electricity production by 2030. Fossil fuels will provide 83%. In other words, despite all the media hype concerning wind and solar power, it appears that market-driven technology has not yet found a cost-effective way to capitalize on the promises made for renewable energy.

If antinuclear activists are so sure that alternative and renewable energy sources can satisfy 80% of U.S. energy needs, one has to wonder why it hasn’t happened? Why aren’t markets responding to the “crisis” of climate change? Activist groups have yet to explain current market trends.

Market Trends and the Nuclear Industry Today

Perhaps for the first time since 1986—the year of Chernobyl—there is now a growing demand in Western and developing markets for nuclear energy. In the U.S., there are applications pending before the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (U.S. NRC) for at least 32 new nuclear reactors, according to the World Nuclear Association. Countries as diverse as Finland, Taiwan, and Canada are building new reactors or resurrecting ones previously shut down.

These developments have created an investment boom in uranium, spurring hedge funds to enter the market. U.S. uranium mines were closing when uranium prices were about \$20 a pound in 2004. But today uranium prices are more than \$100 per pound, and companies such as Portland, Oregon-based Adit Capital, Canada’s UPC (Uranium Participation Corporation) and QVT Financial LP are buying up so-called yellowcake stockpiles, speculating that governments and energy firms are going to build more nuclear power plants to take

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advantage of an increased uranium supply. (Uranium fuel accounts for one-third of the operating expense of a nuclear power plant.) Many traders consider hedge fund interest in uranium a signal that nuclear energy is an economically feasible alternative to fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas) in the business of generating electricity.

The Bush administration has shown increased interest in nuclear energy lately and has taken some steps to promote its use. Congress has approved the selection of the Yucca Mountain depository site for nuclear waste storage and the U.S. Department of Energy already operates the Savannah River Site. However, it is noteworthy that the Bush administration has done little to promote its nuclear energy policies to the American public. Perhaps it fears using the global warming arguments that spurred governments in Europe to act.

That fear does not concern Republican presidential nominee John McCain, who has said nuclear power is "safe," "green," and does not emit greenhouse gases. "Nuclear power is used on Navy ships which have sailed around the world for 60 years without an accident." At a CNN debate of the Democratic presidential candidates last July, Senator Barack Obama allowed,

"We should explore nuclear power as part of the energy mix," while Senator Hillary Clinton said, "I am agnostic about nuclear power." Interviewed last August by the environmental magazine *Grist*, Clinton added, "Until we can figure out what to do with the waste and overcome the political objections, we should not be putting a heavy emphasis on nuclear."

The Fight Against "Pebble Bed" Nuclear Technology

Perhaps the most promising development in nuclear energy today is the pebble bed nuclear reactor. This advanced reactor design is being hailed as almost "accident proof." Its advantages (lower cost, smaller modular design, less environmental impact) have spurred research and development around the world. All eyes are currently on Eskom, an electric utility in South Africa, which has pioneered its development.

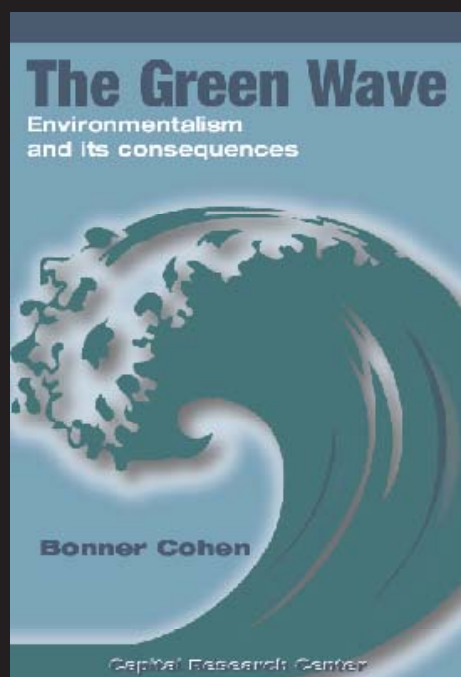
Despite the advantages of the new technology and its promise for South Africa, a group called Earthlife Africa opposes Eskom's license application. In July 2006 Earthlife filed a legal challenge to Eskom's application, claiming the utility's environmental impact assessment was inadequate. Even though nuclear power would give

South Africa an alternative to fossil fuels, Earthlife has put anti-nuclear dogma ahead of the country's needs.

Tiny but well-financed groups like Earthlife depend on U.S. and European NGOs to broadcast their message. Groups like the Amsterdam-based group WISE and the Nuclear Information and Resource Service of Takoma Park, Maryland have a worldwide mission: They alert activists about developments in the nuclear power industry and share information about ways to thwart it.

Earthlife receives financial support from European and American foundations. Its major donors include the Heinrich Boll Stiftung in Germany, an affiliate of the country's Green Party, and the U.S.-based Wallace Global Fund (2006 assets: \$280 million), founded in 1995 by Robert B. Wallace, son of Henry Wallace, the left-leaning secretary of agriculture (1933-1940) and vice president (1941-1945) during the administration of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Nuclear energy can spur economic development and lift living standards in countries like South Africa which has rampant poverty and a growing population. Regrettably,



MUST READING from Capital Research Center...

Today's environmental activists are well-established Washington insiders determined to impose their ideals on the rest of us. In this groundbreaking new book, Bonner R. Cohen, a longtime observer of green do-gooders, traces the rise of environmentalism in America, a movement so thoroughly ingrained in DC culture that the installation of one of its own as Treasury Secretary was barely noticed. Cohen describes how activists created an ideology that now dominates public debate, along with a movement of nonprofit groups that is well-organized and well-funded.

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NGOs like Earthlife Africa offer little but lectures that the world is running out of natural resources.

“Energy Independence” in the United States

The United States is better able than South Africa to address its energy needs, but it remains a net importer of oil and it is scrambling to meet electricity demand for its growing population. Our annual electricity consumption in the U.S. is 12,300 kWh per capita. In 2006, the U.S. generated 4,260 billion (kilowatt hours) kWh of electricity. Of that amount, half came from coal, 19% from natural gas, 7% from hydroelectric sources, and 19% from nuclear power. In 2007, the 104 U.S. active nuclear power reactors generated a record 806.5 billion kWh.

The nation’s annual electricity demand is projected to rise from 4,000 billion kWh today to 5,000 billion kWh in 2030, accord-

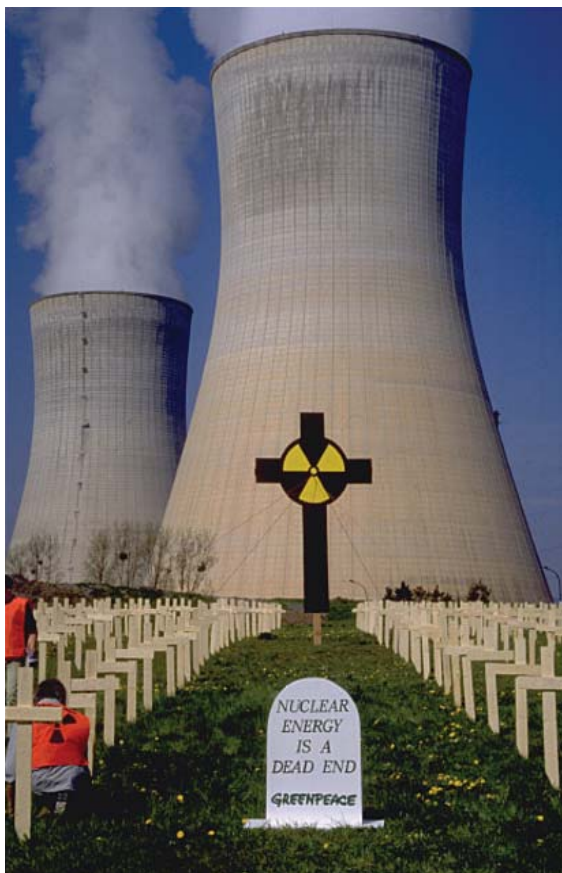
ing to the World Nuclear Association. That increased electricity demand along with increased demand for oil leads American politicians to decry U.S. energy dependency. In his January 2006 State of the Union address President George W. Bush went so far as to liken the nation’s reliance on oil to a sickness. “America is addicted to oil, which is often imported from unstable parts of the world,” Bush said. “The best way to break this addiction is through technology.” The Bush administration, which leaves office in seven months, has high hopes for hydrogen-fueled cars and it seeks more cost-effective ways to produce ethanol in the U.S. But this policy ignores something important: It takes electricity to produce fuel alternatives from corn—and guess what fuel is used to make electricity? Fossil fuel.

Greenpeace and many American politicians cannot admit the truth: the U.S. cannot depend on renewable energy—wind,

solar power and biomass—to fuel our cars, heat our houses, and run our industries. There is an alternative: nuclear energy. America’s 104 nuclear reactors currently provide nearly 20% of the nation’s electricity and they are cost-effective. Improved reactor designs now enable U.S. reactors to last 60 years, instead of the previous benchmark of 40 years. All that’s needed is more capital investment in nuclear energy, which will indeed help the U.S. reduce its oil imports.

Tom Csabafi graduated with a degree in economics from Corvinus University in Budapest, Hungary. He was an intern at Capital Research Center in 2007 under the auspices of American University’s Washington Semester Program.

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Political theater: Complete with a cross bearing the symbol for radiation, Greenpeace protested in 1996 at Tihange, Belgium, on the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident. The mock epitaph reads “Nuclear energy is a dead end.”



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Terrence Scanlon
President

Briefly Noted

Responding to a March 31 Capital Research Center website post (available at <http://www.capitalresearch.org/blog/?p=98>), Al Gore denied through a spokesman that he is in a position to make an immense fortune from global warming-mitigation efforts. The denial came when a Chronicle of Philanthropy reporter asked Gore's private equity firm **Generation Investment Management LLP** (GIM) to respond to the post. On behalf of Chairman Gore, GIM spokesman **Richard Campbell** said the post was a "nonsense story," and denied Gore and members of GIM's board will make a buck from the expansion of carbon trading. "To suggest then that they are somehow benefiting from the growth of this industry betrays a complete lack of knowledge of the carbon offset industry," Campbell told the Chronicle, whose account of the interaction is available at <http://www.philanthropy.com/giveandtake/index.php?id=541>.

Meanwhile, Gore's nonprofit **Alliance for Climate Protection** plans to spend \$300 million on an advertising campaign aimed at convincing the American public that they urgently need to embrace economy-crippling controls on carbon emissions and press politicians to act. The Politico newspaper reports that the group plans to run a series of "strange bedfellows" or "unlikely alliances" TV commercials. One features Pat Robertson and Al Sharpton, while a future ad is expected to feature House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-California) and one of her predecessors, Newt Gingrich (R-Georgia). Deborah Corey Barnes wrote about Gore's energy crusade in the August 2007 *Foundation Watch*.

On the campaign trail, Senator **Barack Obama** (D-Illinois) said if he becomes president he'll give Gore a Cabinet position to combat climate change. "Al Gore will be at the table and play a central part in us figuring out how we solve this problem. He's somebody I talk to on a regular basis," said Obama who was probably relieved to be getting a break from defending his association with Rev. **Jeremiah Wright**, his church's America-hating former pastor.

In an op-ed published in Health Care News, **Grace-Marie Turner** of the Galen Institute criticized the **National Federation of Independent Business** (NFIB) for joining **Divided We Fail**, a health care policy coalition that's pushing for Big Government solutions for health care issues. She points out that coalition member **Service Employees International Union** (SEIU) calls for "a universal health care system" and for "guaranteed affordable health coverage for all Americans." Turner warned that "pretending there is a middle ground between a much-expanded role for government in our health sector and a properly functioning, patient-centered free market is nothing more than an attempt to deceive voters"

From the "pot calling the kettle black" file: UPI reports that House Democrats intend to file a complaint with the Federal Election Commission saying the **National Republican Congressional Committee** is unlawfully coordinating campaign activities with the conservative '527' group **Freedom's Watch**. All 527 groups are forbidden from coordinating with political parties or candidates, and Republicans have made similar accusations against liberal 527s in the past, saying they worked with Democrats. The **Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee** says the NRCC helped to prepare a Freedom's Watch TV ad in Louisiana that criticizes Democratic House candidate **Don Cazayoux**. Freedom's Watch called the complaint "absurd."

President **George W. Bush**'s climate change-mitigation plan unveiled April 16 that would in theory halt the growth of greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 immediately came under attack from environmentalists and their champions in Congress. Bush said he was against a Senate proposal that slaps mandatory limits on such gases five years from now and favors a "comprehensive blend of market incentives and regulations" including improved energy technologies. **Sierra Club** boss **Carl Pope** said the president "is throwing a Hail Mary to polluters in a last-ditch effort to stave off any meaningful action on global warming. Under the president's plan we'll need a real miracle to save us from global warming."

David Brock, president of the **George Soros**-funded character assassination factory, **Media Matters for America** (MM), isn't even pretending to be nonpartisan or fair anymore. After meeting with Soros last month, the turncoat former journalist has become chairman of **Progressive Media USA** where he will direct a \$40 million media campaign for four months attacking the GOP's presumptive presidential candidate, Senator **John McCain** (R-Arizona). As a 501(c)(4) organization, the group doesn't have to disclose its donors, but the Politico reports that Brock plans to form a related 527 group, **Progressive Media Action**, so the campaign can take in donations from unions and other sources.

House Energy and Commerce Committee chairman **John Dingell** (D-Michigan), wants to impose a 50-cent tax on every gallon of gasoline in order to discourage consumption. **David Ridenour**, vice president of the **National Center for Public Policy Research**, criticized the proposal which wouldn't "have much of an effect" over the long term, and pointed to a new NCPPR poll that showed 48% of the public opposes paying even one cent more in gas tax. Meanwhile, John McCain has proposed that all federal gas taxes be suspended from Memorial Day to Labor Day. "The effect will be an immediate economic stimulus," he said on the campaign trail last month.