

**SIRC  
Board of Directors**

Bob Aiken  
Tom Baldacci  
Gary Bocard  
Devon Hope  
Jack Kaster  
Dick Miller  
Tom Osborn  
Marolyn Overton  
Russ Peterson  
(Chairman)  
Jeanne Seaver  
Tom Sharp  
(Treasurer)  
Mary Anne Senkowski  
Angie Stewart  
Ray Sueflow  
(Secretary)  
Mike Walters

**SIRC Newsletter  
Editor**

Mike Walters

**Assistant Editor**

Angie Stewart

**Website  
Manager:**

Angie Stewart  
skidawayrepublicanclub  
.com

**LOCAL NEWS**

**May 2011**

---

**“STATE of the STATE” True Perspectives Seminar May 9, 2011**

The next True Perspectives seminar will feature State Senator Buddy Carter and State Representative Ben Watson reporting on the just completed Georgia legislative session. One topic is House Bill 87, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Enforcement Act of 2011. This will require employers with ten or more employees to ensure new hires are eligible to work in the U.S. It also requires secure and verifiable identification for official purposes and helps local law enforcement agencies handle issues of illegal immigration.

Other items include the proposal to overhaul the state tax system and the all-important redistricting session which starts August 15. And, as usual in these True Perspectives meetings, they will answer your questions and listen to your ideas.

The seminar is at Plantation Ballroom, starting with registration at 9:00 AM. Help yourself to coffee and pastries and take a seat for the sure-to-be-interesting next hour. There is a \$5 fee for SIRC members and \$10 for guests. Please tube your checks at 2 Foxglove Lane, Jack Kaster, or 6 Sedgewater Retreat, Tom Sharp. To reserve a spot, or for further information, call or email Jack Kaster at 598-7714 or kasjac @ bellsouth.net.

Future seminars are planned on ObamaCare, Tax Reform (the “Fair Tax”) and Sharia Law.

---

**County Hotel Proposal**

The County Commissioners apparently have not yet had enough negative feedback to abandon their plan to use County Funds to build a large convention hotel on Hutchinson Island. You can help by sending your own thoughts on the need to abandon this project, and for the County to address real needs such as their huge unfunded pension liability (likely to be more than \$100 million).

---

**Membership Dues**

Almost all members have paid their 2011 dues. If you have not yet paid your dues, please tube your check for \$40 for a Family membership or \$100 for Sustaining Membership to Tom Baldacci at 226 Yam Gandy Road, or pay on line at our website: skidawayrepublicanclub.com.

---

**Key Future Dates**

May 9 - True Perspectives Seminar on State Legislation, 9:00am, Plantation Club  
August 9 - True Perspectives Seminar on ObamaCare,  
with U.S. Congressman Tom Price  
October 17 - Beer & Brats Dinner

*In this issue...*

Pg 2 - Debt Limit Allegory

Pg 3 - County Hotel Building?

Pg 4 - Book Review: *Decision Points*

Pg 5 - Don't Raise the Debt Ceiling

Pg 6 - Obama Doctrine: Don't Lead

Pg 7 - The Good CO2

## Allegory on Freezing the Debt Limit

There's much fretting (mostly by Democrats and main-stream media) over how we would imperil our economy if we don't raise the debt limit. It's almost as if the Administration works would deliberately renege on bond interest payments if they don't get their way on their continued borrowing spree.

The petulant attitude this administration has towards fiscal restraint brings to mind an oblivious college kid, wildly wasting his parents' money with no understanding of the broader implications. Substitute "Republican party" with "Dad" and "Obama administration" with "Junior" and the conversation might go like this.

Dad: Son, we need to talk. You're finishing your freshman year at a prestigious school, and I have serious concerns.

Junior: What? My grades? Not my fault. It's such a competitive school, all the other smart kids study and ruin the curve. I'm a victim!

Dad: Your grades are a separate issue, Son. I'm more concerned about finances.

Junior: WHAT? You can't afford my tuition any more? What did you and Mom do? If you blew my college money, that's very selfish of you.

Dad: Your tuition is fine and covered. Your mom and I were frugal for years so we could afford your tuition. The problem is the other costs. What are all these credit card bills? Here's one from Joe's High-End Used Cars? We may have to limit your credit card use, or take the card away completely.

Junior: That's for the used Corvette which I got at a sweetheart price.

Dad: Why do you need a car?

Junior: Duh, to get to and from campus.

Dad: What? Why are you even going off campus? We were paying for you to live in a dorm.

Junior: The dorm had all these stifling rules, so a bunch of us rented an off-campus condo to be closer to town.

Dad: OK, first thing, you are moving back to campus. You can't use a credit card to pay the off-campus rent.

Junior: Too late! I already signed a contract, so someone has to pay the monthly rent for the next year. And I have a few more payments on the car I signed for.

Dad: Sublet the condo and sell the car.

Junior: How will I get pizza in town if I don't have a car?

Dad: Dining out? You are in college. Walk to the cafeteria.

Junior: The pizzas on campus are disgusting. And over-priced! You want me to be frugal, right?

Dad: Don't eat pizza. Eat vegetables and fruit.

Junior: That could depress me and might adversely affect my grades.

Dad: I'll take the chance you won't ruin your future because you have to eat healthy.

Junior: What about my social life? My off-campus friends aren't on some lame "austerity program." College is more than just grades you know. If gas is so expensive, it's because your generation was in bed with "big oil."

Dad: Thanks for mentioning the gasoline bills. I was coming to that next. You need to get new friends on campus. The parents of your off-campus buddies are probably having the same conversations with their sons right now anyway. And college grades are a pretty good metric on what you are getting for your tuition money.

Junior: I don't get it. You have a good job. Why all of a sudden can't you afford my college costs?

Dad: Nobody's job is safe forever. And if you keep spending like this, I won't be able to afford college for your kid sisters and brothers. Your crummy choices are now impacting their futures.

Junior: OK, but you don't want to default on the condo or the other stuff I've bought on your credit card, do you? That would ruin your credit rating, not mine.

Dad: I've already discussed this with my bank, and they think this is a smart move. And we aren't going to miss any payments to creditors. What will be curtailed is discretionary spending on unnecessary stuff, like the car, the pizzas and the "socializing."

Junior: What about the small business entrepreneur who runs the pizza place? This will hurt their bottom line.

Dad: Nice try. Everybody's tightening their belts over the next decade as the country begins to trim its excesses.

Junior: What about all the savings you'll get from ObamaCare on your health insurance? And won't the economy revitalize when those government czars start making more jobs? Can't you wait until that happens?

Dad: That reminds me. We're converting your subscription for *Mother Jones* to the *Wall Street Journal* as a foil for the crap some of your teachers are feeding you.

Junior: I also need a car to get to the protests that are needed. Just last week we took signs to the union rally to save the teachers' pensions!

Dad: That's it. I'm cancelling the credit cards right now, and getting new ones for your mother and me. You need to sell the car now and use the cash for busfare to campus and a month's worth of peanut butter and jelly. We'll pick you up after your last exam. This summer you're getting a job to earn your own spending money. Next fall, you're not going to major in art history. You need to study something with more discipline. You clearly need a reality check on what it takes to survive as an adult. And you are living on campus.

If by chance we miss some payment on a contract you have signed that I am not aware of, it will be in the context of this overall austerity program which my creditors will no doubt applaud. My guess is when they see the efforts I'm making, that helps rather than hurts our credit reputation. If I need to borrow in the future, it will be at a lower rate than if we did nothing.

### **Chatham County Still in the Hotel Business?**

By Mike Walters

It is now evident that private sources of funding are not readily forthcoming to go with the County's offer of \$50 million part ownership. Perhaps it is time to shelve this idea and pursue more important issues.

Others have written letters on this subject, some of which are shown below.

The Savannah Morning News published my letter as an op ed article on April 25 outlining the reasons to be very skeptical. It also highlighted the need for the County to tackle a vexing fiscal problem, namely a likely \$100 million or more unfunded pension liability. This means that the County will need to come up with more than \$100 million in added funds over the next five to ten years to make good on the pension promises it made to past employees. Declaring bankruptcy to abrogate those promises is not really an option, even as Los Angeles is actively seeking that option to solve its pension problems.

When we met with County officials about why this underfunding problem exists, the following were uncovered. You can retire at full pension after 25 years with no age limit (like the military who risked their lives and took less than market pay to defend their country). The County also gives retiree medical coverage vested after only five years – very expensive. Amazingly the County voluntarily gives cost of living increases to retirees, just as they do to active employees. This is not contractual, so it is likely not in the official unfunded liability.

It is clear that new promises to future employees may not get the same largesse as in the past. But we made those past promises, and the County needs to find a way to pay for them. We owe it to the police and firefighters and others who have served this County. However, given that traditional pensions don't really exist now in the private sector, new employee compensation packages need to be looked at realistically, so that future fiscal crises don't arise.



---

### **Convention hotel best left to private sector**

Sunday's editorial calling for further discussion on the issue of public funding for a convention hotel on Hutchinson Island ("A tough spot") is a welcome dose of reasoned thinking.

I am not convinced of the wisdom of using taxpayer dollars, especially in these harrowing economic times, to fund a commercial venture whose benefits are uncertain. The editorial competently summarized some of the arguments for and against.

For me as a public servant, expenditure on such ventures is, by and large, best left to the private sector. Funding governmental services, such as education, emergency services and operation of our jails, is what taxpayers expect government to do with the precious dollars they entrust to our use.

The county's Memorial Medical Center, considered by many an essential public service, is in need of investment. Public dollars that fund a hotel aren't available to provide health care for the disadvantaged among us.

This is not to say that the hotel is a bad idea: the jury is out, although assumptions I've seen favoring public investment are partly based on sunny occupancy rates not reached elsewhere in Savannah hotels. If the project is worthy, let private money recognize and reward it with investment.

A county report said it well: "... local government ownership of a hotel begs not only the philosophical issue of government's (wandering) into a business venture traditionally viewed as private, but also a more critical question of risk."

Helen L. Stone, Chatham County Commissioner,  
District 1, Chairman Pro Tem

---

### **To Chairman Liakakis & All Commissioners:**

I submit respectfully the following:

I concur with Mr. Ross comments below. No public input has been allowed to this date at the County Commission meetings on this topic and call to question why? What is up, what is the rush and why all the secrets?

We have been out in the community and many are unaware of this project and once advised are against this whole idea of putting any of our tax dollars at risk, especially when no private equity investors are willing to step up to the plate.

I have an idea, for those of you that serve on the County Commission, that think it's a great deal, why not invest your own personal capital! How much are you willing to invest? Why don't you start your own fund and seek out capital on your dime and your friends dime and then come back with how much they are willing to commit? If it is such a great deal, just think how rich you will become. Just a thought!

The convention center is doing well considering the economic downturn at this time; our Hotel owners and small business are struggling. Your citizens are all struggling! Let's all help each other through these tough times, but not by spending tax dollars, but by saving. Let's consider changing the focus to public safety, unfunded pension the County has at this time or just saving for a rainy day!

I have attached additional signed petitions for your review from residents of Chatham County against this project. Keeping in mind of the petitions from residents, that were hand delivered estimated 171 signatures to you back in early March.

Thank you for your time and please know that all of you are in our prayers as you are called to task to make some tough decisions.

Sincerely yours,

Jeanne Seaver  
President, National Right of Communities Association

## **Bush Sets the Record Straight**

Review of *Decision Points*, by Mike Walters

In this memoirs on his presidency, George W. Bush reveals his straightforward and courageous approaches on all the major issues confronting him. His eye on the bottom line and disdain for trying things in the press kept him from responding to his critics during his presidency – much like Ronald Reagan kept his eye on only several major issues on which he felt he could really make a difference – ending the Cold War and restoring America's competitiveness – in both which he succeeded.

Bush 44 had his defining movement thrust upon him on September 11, 2001 wherein history will reveal a bold and major change in foreign policy engineered by him – namely the Bush doctrine – pithily phrased as “you are either with us or against us”.

He aggressively toppled the Taliban harborers and enablers of state terrorism from Afghanistan and put on notice other regimes that might do the same.

Contrary to the revisionist historians and liberals today, he painstakingly sought bipartisan support for he demands on Iraq to abandon their WMD programs. He even got Congress and the UN to support severe measures against Saddam if he didn't renounce his WMD programs. The only other comparable UN resolution of such solidarity was its authorization to repel the invasion of South Korea in 1950.

Other major issues covered in his book include:

- Medicare Drug Program - to save costs, by preventing later surgeries
- Troop Surge in Iraq
- 2008 Financial Crisis

He makes a compelling case that he never abandoned his conservative principles in any of these crises, but made some pragmatic decisions best for the country.

Especially in the TARP program which he thought necessary to stem the panic from the financial firm collapses in 2008. His preference was to allow failed firms to enter bankruptcy if they couldn't be saved by mergers – like what happened in the 1980s Savings and Loan Crisis. And they did let Lehman go down that way.

Yet his advisors convinced him the resulting world wide panic could only be stemmed by bold U.S. government action. The feeling was there was no certainty that dominoes would topple almost anyone when people won't lend money and depositors all wanted cash. We'll leave it to other second guessers as to what the right course of action should have been. And as Bush points out, almost all the TARP money will be retrieved by the government – except of course the variation that went to General Motors (under whose watch?)

In the early part of his bio, he confronts some critics by admitting he may have had a drinking problem which he solved cold turkey at age 40 and his new found religious awakening after that. He also dispatches the rumors of draft dodging by citing his duty as an F102 pilot in the prestigious Texas Air National Guard.

Nowhere is Bush's presidential leadership more obvious than his decisions on the troop surge in the aftermath of the Iraq war. That war made him vulnerable to criticism from both the left and the right as the subsequent insurgency continued the loss of life of American soldiers and just as tragic the even larger numbers of Iraqi civilians who died from the insurgency that lasted so long.

It is now well documented that AL Qaeda and other terrorist groups seized upon a vulnerable population in Iraq to concentrate their efforts to prevent democracy from taking hold in Iraq. Other locales in the world became safer as the troublemakers all found their way to Iraq.

Not that there weren't policy decisions that might have contributed to the unrest. For example, forbidding any Baathist soldiers from participating in the new army or police forces in Iraq was probably a blunder in retrospect, as they had no jobs and nothing to do but root for a world where they might be able to contribute more.

The strategy of trying to make Iraqi nationals more responsible to defend to withdraw U.S. troops so we would not be perceived as occupiers was not the right one in retrospect because of emerging conditions. Iraqi nationals were not used to hard fighting. Plus the citizens were afraid of retributions if they cooperated with the government effort against the insurgents, so villages that were pacified were quickly retaken by marauding terrorists.

Hence for the Troop Surge strategy devised by General Petraeus, that truly eliminated the terrorists village by village, and restored confidence by the populace that the U.S. would not abandon them as had been done after the Soviet exit in Afghanistan.

Iraq is now considered a major success, with a democratically elected government, and bipartisan support among heretofore and dramatically separate factions as the Sunnis, the Shiites and the Kurds.

It took a courageous U.S. President not to listen to the uniformed and demagogic critics and pull out of Iraq as a likely overall loss. Instead he did the right thing – after thoroughly evaluating all the right advice – and ignored public opinion to make the right decisions for the U.S.

His original intentions for going into Iraq were for U.S. security interests in the first place, not the critics' allegations of selfish oil interest or American imperialism.

Another part of the Bush Doctrine is: Do not ignore terrorism abroad and shrink back to fortress America. Allowing state sponsored terrorism simply gives access by terrorist larger weapons to use in America. So Bush took the fight to them where they live.

There are some who say a few terrorists could never harm America, and only a few intensive religious fanatics can't accomplish much. Yet the hijacked planes on 9/11 caused half a trillion dollar damage to our economy, as well as challenging America's standing in the world. Previously we had rather feckless responses to the early warnings we had on global terrorist threats – the Cole, Embassy bombings, 1992 WTC bombing, among others.

## Hells No

by John Hayward, 05/01/2011, HumanEvents.com

Back in March, Senator Marco Rubio of Florida penned a Wall Street Journal op-ed in which he said he would “vote to defeat an increase in the debt limit, unless it is the last one we ever authorize, and is accompanied by a plan for fundamental tax reform, an overhaul of our regulatory structure, a cut to discretionary spending, a balanced budget amendment, and reforms to save Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid.”

On Friday, Sarah Palin said on Fox News, “Hells no, I would not vote to increase that debt ceiling. Otherwise it just shows the American people we’re not serious yet. We’re still going to incur more debt. No and we don’t have to increase the debt ceiling in the next few weeks. It turns my stomach to hear this assumption articulated that ‘well we have to,’ despite the fact we’re raking in, the federal government, six billion a day. Take that money and service our debt first and pay down some of that debt. Make sure that we’re showing the international financial markets and our lenders that we’re serious about getting our debt and our deficit problems under control.”

“Hells no” is an interesting turn of phrase. Dante said there was more than one hell – nine of them, to be exact. The ninth and worst hell was reserved for traitors. They spent eternity frozen in ice.

There’s increasing talk of demanding hard spending caps and a balanced budget amendment, in exchange for one last debt ceiling increase, as Marco Rubio proposed. I respect the arguments made by advocates of this approach, and it seems in line with the way Washington works – deals must be struck, compromises reached, and so forth. I lean more toward the Palin prescription, though... and really, aren’t she and Rubio saying essentially the same thing?

Take away Palin’s churning stomach and invocation of the infernal, and swap in Rubio’s list of demands that Congress will never meet, and you end up in the same place: the hells of no. If Rubio is serious about his terms, he’s just one disappointing Senate vote away from standing on Palin’s ground.

The Obama Administration notoriously tried to suppress Standard & Poor’s warning about the danger to America’s credit rating. This warning was not meant as some kind of threat, to pressure Obama into doing S&P’s bidding. They were projecting what might happen in the next couple of years. Muzzling them wouldn’t have made the danger go away – it would just prevent us from knowing about it. That is not the behavior of a government preparing to get serious about its irresponsible spending policies.

What is pouring out of this Administration right now is a profound betrayal of the American people – an act of treachery against their treasury, and their trust. If Obama is successful and wins re-election, he won’t have “saved” the benefits of America’s growing dependency class. In-

stead, he will have made the inevitable crash of the system providing those benefits painful beyond belief.

The people of the next decade will look back on plans like Paul Ryan’s “radical” Path for Prosperity and tearfully wonder why it wasn’t adopted, as a prelude to even more profound reforms to entitlements and spending. Ryan’s plan still gives people choices. Existing Medicare beneficiaries are grandfathered in. New enrollees get some say in how their Medicare money will be spent. Such choices are what we will be losing in the hells of no, when an overburdened and unstable system collapses with devastating speed, and nobody gets “grandfathered” into anything.

The smooth-talking con men who promise endless new spending, funded by a few little tax increases on the faceless and hated rich, will be very hard to find on that terrible day. I hope Americans have the wisdom, in the coming hours of decision, to pay more attention to people like Ryan, who are ready to put their careers on the line now. Their commitment is worth far more than airy promises from people selling nebulous “budget concepts” that can never add up.

People like Obama will be very comfortably retired on the day America discovers the snake oil they were selling has soured into high explosives. Listen instead to the guy who’s running himself ragged to sell a plan that all the “smart people” say is electoral suicide for him. Listen to those whose reluctance to raise the debt ceiling has gotten them branded as “loony” and “our version of al-Qaeda terrorists, really” by Bush’s bizarre former Treasury Secretary, Paul O’Neill. They understand the political consequences of their plain speech. It’s about time we started listening to people who know what consequences are.

Marco Rubio called for some highly laudable reforms that have very little chance of getting through Congress, including some that require amending the Constitution. Even if all of these reforms passed, forcing this out-of-control government to obey them would be a never-ending battle. It’s much simpler to get where he wants to go by leaving the debt ceiling in place – one epic vote that would compel the federal government to begin the painful process of living within its means, right now.

One way or the other, the New Deal and Great Society models of government will be an unhappy memory in a few more years. All we control is how unhappy the memory is. Anyone who tells you otherwise is lying to your face. The “debt ceiling” is a lie if we keep raising it. Let it become truth instead, and let us have an end to the treachery of empty promises, made by politicians who should no longer be allowed to pretend they don’t know any better. Otherwise, we’ll be the ones who end up frozen in ice, on the rapidly approaching day when we have consumed all the debt in the world.



John Hayward is a staff writer for *Human Events*, and author of the recently published *Doctor Zero: Year One*

### The Obama Doctrine: Leading From Behind

by Charles Krauthammer, 4/29/11, Washingtonpost.com

Obama may be moving toward something resembling a doctrine. One of his advisers described the president's actions in Libya as "leading from behind."

-- Ryan Lizza, The New Yorker, May 2 issue

To be precise, leading from behind is a style, not a doctrine. Doctrines involve ideas, but since there are no discernible ones that make sense of Obama foreign policy -- Lizza's painstaking two-year chronicle shows it to be as ad hoc, erratic and confused as it appears -- this will have to do.

And it surely is an accurate description, from President Obama's shocking passivity during Iran's 2009 Green Revolution to his dithering on Libya, acting at the very last moment, then handing off to a bickering coalition, yielding the current bloody stalemate. It's been a foreign policy of hesitation, delay and indecision, marked by plaintive appeals to the (fictional) "international community" to do what only America can.

But underlying that style, assures this Obama adviser, there really are ideas. Indeed, "two unspoken beliefs," explains Lizza. "That the relative power of the U.S. is declining, as rivals like China rise, and that the U.S. is reviled in many parts of the world."

Amazing. This is why Obama is deliberately diminishing American presence, standing and leadership in the world?

Take proposition one: We must "lead from behind" because U.S. relative power is declining. Even if you accept the premise, it's a complete non sequitur. What does China's rising GDP have to do with American buck-passing on Libya, misjudging Iran, appeasing Syria?

True, China is rising. But first, it is the only power of any significance rising militarily relative to us. Russia is recovering from levels of military strength so low that it barely registers globally. And European power is in true decline (see their performance -- except for the British -- in Afghanistan and their current misadventures in Libya).

And second, the challenge of a rising Chinese military is still exclusively regional. It would affect a war over Taiwan. It has zero effect on anything significantly beyond China's coast. China has no blue-water navy. It has no foreign bases. It cannot project power globally. It might in the future -- but by what logic should that paralyze us today?

Proposition two: We must lead from behind because we are reviled. Pray tell, when were we not? During Vietnam? Or earlier, under Eisenhower? When his vice

president was sent on a good will trip to Latin America, he was spat upon and so threatened by the crowds that he had to cut short his trip. Or maybe later, under the blessed Reagan? The Reagan years were marked by vast demonstrations in the capitals of our closest allies denouncing America as a warmongering menace taking the world into nuclear winter.

"Obama came of age politically," explains Lizza, "during the post-Cold War era, a time when America's unmatched power created widespread resentment." But the world did not begin with the coming to consciousness of Barack Obama. Cold War resentments ran just as deep.

It is the fate of any assertive superpower to be envied, denounced and blamed for everything under the sun. Nothing has changed. Moreover, for a country so deeply reviled, why during the massive unrest in Tunisia, Egypt, Bahrain, Yemen, Jordan and Syria have anti-American demonstrations been such a rarity?

Who truly reviles America the hegemon? The world that Obama lived in and shaped him intellectually: the elite universities; his Hyde Park milieu (including his not-to-be-mentioned friends, William Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn); the church he attended for two decades, ringing with sermons more virulently anti-American than anything heard in today's full-throated uprising of the Arab Street.

It is the liberal elites who revile the American colossus and devoutly wish to see it cut down to size. Leading from behind -- diminishing America's global standing and assertiveness -- is a reaction to their view of America, not the world's.

Other presidents take anti-Americanism as a given, rather than evidence of American malignancy, believing -- as do most Americans -- in the rightness of our cause and the nobility of our intentions. Obama thinks anti-Americanism is a verdict on America's fitness for leadership. I would suggest that "leading from behind" is a verdict on Obama's fitness for leadership.

Leading from behind is not leading. It is abdicating. It is also an oxymoron. Yet a sympathetic journalist, channeling an Obama adviser, elevates it to a doctrine. The president is no doubt flattered. The rest of us are merely stunned.



Charles Krauthammer is a weekly columnist for The Washington Post. He received the National Magazine Award for essays and criticism in 1984, the Pulitzer Prize for distinguished commentary in 1987 and the Bradley Prize in 2004.

### Carbon and CO<sub>2</sub>: Clearing Up the Confusion

By Paul Driessen, April 30, 2011, Townhall.com, abridged

We are constantly bombarded with information – much of it inaccurate, misleading, even deliberately so.

We are often told to reduce carbon emissions, support “carbon disclosure” and invest in “carbon trusts” – to prevent catastrophic global warming, global climate change or global climate “disruption.” News stories, lobbying and corporate “ethics” promotions frequently use “carbon” and “carbon dioxide” almost interchangeably; and occasionally talk about “dangerous carbon monoxide emissions.”

Torn by misplaced hydrocarbon guilt, wanting to do right ecologically and often scientifically challenged, people are naturally confused. Because so much is at stake – for our energy supplies and prices, jobs, economies, living standards, budget deficits and environment – clearing up that confusion is a high priority.

“Carbon” is what we burn to get energy to power modern society. Carbon is the molecular building block for wood, charcoal and coal, and hydrocarbons like oil and natural gas. Cars and power plants do not emit carbon, except in the form of soot. Thus, talk of “carbon disclosure” or “reducing our carbon emissions” is misleading, unless one is confessing the charcoal used at a picnic, or apologizing for not having pollution controls on a wood-burning stove.

“Carbon monoxide” is an odorless, deadly gas. A natural product of combustion, it increases when ventilation is poor, oxygen levels are low and burning is inefficient. It’s why we shouldn’t use charcoal grills indoors or operate cars in garages, unless we’re suicidal.

“Carbon dioxide” (CO<sub>2</sub>) is another natural byproduct of combustion, from power plants, factories, vehicles, homes and other users of wood, coal, petroleum and bio-fuels. It is what many environmental activists, politicians and scientists blame for recent/future climate change.

The other major byproduct is water vapor or steam – plus pollutants that reflect impurities in the fuel and are removed via scrubbers and other technologies. e.g. sulfur and nitrogen oxides, particulates, mercury.

Thousands of scientists vigorously disagree with the hypothesis that CO<sub>2</sub> is responsible for (dangerous) climate change. It plays only a minor role in a complex, chaotic climate system that is driven by numerous natural forces, cycles, and positive and negative feedback loops. They note that CO<sub>2</sub> increases have followed, not preceded, temperature rises throughout Earth’s history.

CO<sub>2</sub> constitutes a mere 0.0380% of our atmosphere. That’s 380 parts per million (380 ppm), which sounds much more threatening when juxtaposed with the pre-Industrial Revolution figure of 280 ppm. But even that increase represents only 0.01% of Earth’s atmosphere.

It is far below historical CO<sub>2</sub> levels. During the Jurassic and Early Carboniferous periods, our atmosphere contained 1,500-2,500 ppm CO<sub>2</sub>. However, even at today’s comparatively CO<sub>2</sub>-impoverished levels, this trace gas is vital to the health of our planet. CO<sub>2</sub> enables photosynthesis and plant growth: CO<sub>2</sub> in, oxygen out. Without

CO<sub>2</sub>, there would be no plants and no oxygen; life as we know it would cease. Carbon dioxide is truly the “gas of life” – and no attempt by Al Gore, James Hansen or EPA to brand it as a dangerous pollutant can change that.

The 100 ppm rise in CO<sub>2</sub> levels came courtesy of two things. As oceans warmed after the Little Ice Age ended 160 years ago, they released some of their CO<sub>2</sub> store-houses, as seawater retains less CO<sub>2</sub> as it warms. The rest came from hydrocarbon fuels burned during the Industrial Revolution and modern era.

Though vilified by radical greens and climate alarmists, hydrocarbon energy and the Industrial Revolution have hugely benefitted mankind. They doubled average life expectancies in industrialized nations and increased prosperity, overall health and living standards in proportion to the ability of poor communities to acquire electricity and modern technologies. So telling poor countries to limit hydrocarbon use, and to focus on wind and solar power, sharply limits their ability to modernize, create jobs, and improve health, living conditions and life spans.

And all that extra CO<sub>2</sub> from electrical generation and other economic activities? A book by Craig and Sherwood Idso, *The Many Benefits of Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> Enrichment*, describes 55 ways the extra carbon dioxide has blessed the planet. For example, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> increases photosynthesis rates for plants and expands root systems that reduce erosion.

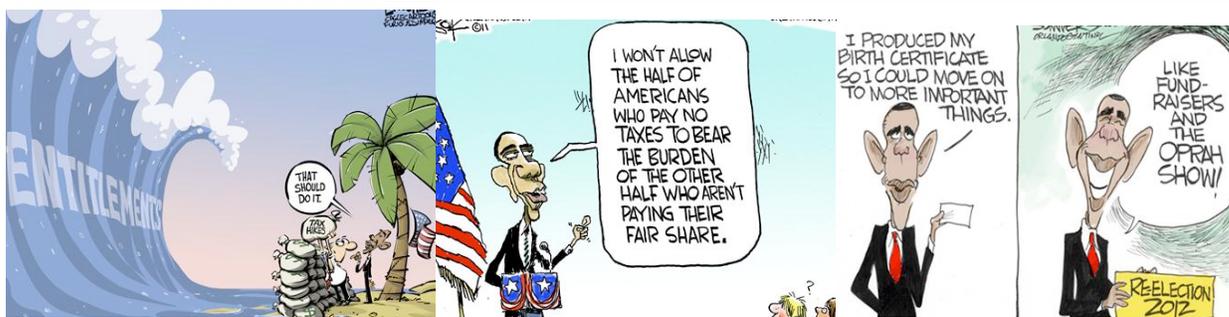
Higher CO<sub>2</sub> also helps plants release moisture – further increasing drought resistance. Plants also reduce their absorption of harmful pollutants that can damage their tissue. Rising atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> improves nitrogen fixation by soil bacteria. It also increases plants’ ability to manufacture Vitamin C, antioxidants, and health-promoting substances in medicinal plants, while improving plants’ immune systems to withstand diseases.

Attempts to coerce wind and solar installations will require more land, raw materials and taxpayer subsidies to these expensive, unreliable energy supplies. Trying to capture and store CO<sub>2</sub> from power plants and factories will require trillions of dollars and vast supplies of energy, to take this plant-fertilizing gas out of the atmosphere and inject it under high pressure deep into the earth. To get 1000 megawatts of net electricity from a power plant designed for CO<sub>2</sub>-capture would require building (at minimum) a 1300-MW plant, burning at least one-third more fuel than a conventional plant does, using over one-third of the 1300 MW to power the CCS equipment – and paying much higher electricity prices. The impact on factories, shops, jobs, household budgets and fuel supplies would be significant.

Legislators and regulators need to focus on controlling unhealthy amounts of real pollutants (based on valid medical and environmental science) – and keep their pesky hands off our CO<sub>2</sub>!



Paul K. Driessen is a senior fellow with the Committee for a Constructive Tomorrow & the Atlas Economic Research Foundation. In 2008 he co-authored *Energy Keepers, Energy Killers: The New Civil Rights Battle*, with Alan Gottlieb and Sean Hannity.



**SIRC MEMBERSHIP - SUSTAINING MEMBERS (LIFETIME MEMBERS in BOLD)**

Aiken, Bob & Christine	Hansen, Helm & Ann	Mueller, Ron & MaryJane	Senkowski, Ronald & MaryAnne
Aufderheide, John & Elizabeth	Hartson, Verne & Lynnetta	Murphy, Mary	Setter, Tara
Baldacci, Tom & Judy	<b>Heussler, Bud &amp; Ginger</b>	Murphy, Matt & Terry	<b>Shantz, Tom &amp; Helen</b>
Barrow, David & Elaine	<b>Holland, Will &amp; Jean</b>	Myers, Dick & Rhea	<b>Sharp, Tom &amp; Mary</b>
Baumgardner, Gerry	Hope, Charles & Devon	Nangle, Jane	Shea, Brendan & Pat
Bocard, Gary & Sandy	Huber III, John & Mary	Neises, Jack	<b>Sherrill, Jack &amp; Ann</b>
Boggs, Patty & Phil	Innes, John & Marianne	Nelson, Dick & Kris	Shipp, Bob & Sandi
<b>Cartledge, Gene &amp; Gale</b>	Jarman, Bob & Kathy	Nicholson, Chris & Kim	<b>Shomaker, Richard &amp; Jean</b>
Christian, Sue	Johnston, Tom & Jettie	<b>Nickels, Robert &amp; Carol</b>	Simons, David & Rachel
Carini, Paul & Judy	<b>Kane, John &amp; Frances</b>	Noyes, Jim & Susan	Solomons, Phillip
Cohen, Irvin	<b>Karrh, Bruce &amp; Janice</b>	Oberdank, Larry & Arlene	Springthorpe, Bryan & Mary Ann
Cole, Barry & Rebecca	Kaster, Jack & Joan	O'Brien, Obie & Mari	Staimer, George & Carole
Consodine, John, Jr & Tiffany	Klahr, C. Dean & Carroll	O'Connor, Tim & Margie	<b>Stephens, Jerry &amp; Helen</b>
Cote', Dick & Marian	Koeller, Harriette	<b>Ogrin, Beverly</b>	Stewart, Jeff & Angie
Coulter, Denny & Julie	Kurtz, Joe & Bambi	Osborn, Robert & Valerie	Stewart, Will & Judith
Daggett, Allen & Judy	<b>Larsen, Ken &amp; Nancy</b>	Osborn, Tom & Kay	Strickland, Bill
Davis, Jerry and Sandy	Lasker, Mark & Sybil	Otto, Martin & Doris	Stryker, Howard & Audrey
Dawson, Patricia	Lavish, Ed & Johanna	Overton, Scott & Marolyn	<b>Stuhley, Eileen</b>
<b>Dobranksy, Joe &amp; Mary</b>	Laughinghouse, Gary & Sandy	Parrott, Dave & Carol	Suefflow, Ray & Marcia
Dolson, Tom & Judie	<b>Lindholm, Cliff &amp; Karen</b>	<b>Paull, John &amp; Barbara</b>	Sweat, Kay
Duffie, Ed & Onnie	<b>Loupee, Jerry &amp; Bonnie</b>	Peer, George	<b>Sweers, Jack &amp; Judy</b>
Duncan, Max & Trilby	<b>Luck, Carolyn</b>	Persons, Will & Chris	Tate, Marc & Carol
<b>Duren, John &amp; Carol</b>	Lutton, James D.	Peterson, Russ & Louise	Trice, Bill & Sandy
Eckels, Jim	Marley, David & Sara	Pierce, Joan	<b>Ulmer, Bill &amp; Patty</b>
<b>Eckburg, Dick &amp; Judy</b>	Maugh, Roger & Judy	Platte, John & Louise	<b>Vestal, Joseph</b>
<b>Emery, Jim &amp; Melissa</b>	McAlpin, Morgan & Liz	Potterfield, Tom & Ruth	Walker, W.R. & Judy
Faircloth, Bob & Jean	McEachern, John & Lisa	Powell, Donald & Phyllis	Walters, Mike & MaryAnne
Forssell, Mark & Shirley	<b>McKenzie, Herb &amp; Joan</b>	Protz, Jane	Weber, Robert & Bobbie
Friday, Marc & Laura	McCain, Bill & Susan	Reinhard, Bob & Jane	Wentworth, Will & Priss
Guira, Alex & Anne	<b>McLaughlin, Sam &amp; Barbara</b>	Rhea, Bud & Dorothy	<b>Wettengel, Phillip &amp; Sue</b>
Gilliam, Joe & Laura	Meeker, Jack & Jean	Robey, Lee & Betty	White, Don & Beverly
Glass, Curt & Sandy	Meng, Bob & Beverly	Robinson, Mack & Lois	White, Tom & Hazel
Goldman, Jerry & Suzy	Methfessel, Herm & Joan	<b>Rosefield, Sara</b>	Witsell, Edward & Ethel
<b>Goldsmith, Bill &amp; Barbara</b>	Meyer, Darby & Renee	Sapp, Greg & Theresa	Wiebe, John & Linda
Haase, Tom & Kate	Miller, Dick & Ann	Schirmacher, Paul & Gerri	Wilson, Frederick
Hamlet, Joe & Barbara	<b>Moore, Mark &amp; Inge</b>	Schoenecker, John & Kathy	<b>Winnert, Ken &amp; Mary Lee</b>
Hanlon, Dan & Donna	Moore, Robert & Joan	Scott, John & Yvonne	<b>Wisnabaker, Gary &amp; Jeannie</b>
		Seaver, Jeanne	