

## Republican Perspective

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### FOSSIL FUELS IMPROVED THE WORLD

*"Science is the great antidote to enthusiasm and superstition" Adam Smith*

The environmentalists' bane is energy derived from fossil fuels. We are told that CO<sub>2</sub> will lead to the destruction of life as we know it. The Left's intelligentsia regularly make bold predictions about the planet's demise. In 2014 Bill McKibben, the Left's leading environmental spokesman, called for a 95% ban of fossil fuels.

Instead of banning fossil fuels (oil, natural gas, coal) perhaps it would be more responsible to recognize what our standard of living would be without them. First, Republicans are not against clean air and water. Nor are we against conservation. However, we do stand for improving our standard of living with a growing economy providing middle class jobs. After all, it's for the children.

Alex Epstein's recent book, *The Moral Case for Fossil Fuels*, is a great read as it highlights the benefits of worldwide fossil fuel energy. Filled with detailed charts and references, Epstein shows there is a strong correlation between fossil fuel use and life expectancy. Further, between fossil fuel use and income, particularly in the rapidly developing parts of the world.

In 2014, the world used 39% more oil, 107% more coal and 121% more natural gas than in 1980.

Fossil fuels are the only energy technologies that can currently reliably meet the energy needs of the world's 7+ billion people. Data from the last 40 years shows the environment is improving despite the increase in fossil fuel use.

If you looked back the last 100 years, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions increased rapidly in the last 15 years but only a mild warming trend of less than 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit has been experienced over a century. During this time the world witnessed the great Industrial Revolution belching prosperity into the day-to-day lives of many individuals.

Too often extreme environmentalists claim that any human actions that harm the environment should not be permitted to occur. Development has become one of the leading targets of environmental attacks. These anti-humanists equate the environment with open spaces and wilderness. They have their piece of the pie and see no need for development to be enjoyed by others.

Undeveloped regions are full of environmental risks such as dangers to our health, disease carrying insects, disease carrying animals, bacteria filled water and disease carrying crops. Development of the environment means water purification systems,

power plants, dams, sea walls, irrigation systems, vaccines, synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. Environmentalists say develop with “renewables” and imply that solar and wind work most of the time. To date, there is not one free-standing solar or wind power plant in the world. They all require back-up from fossil fuels.

We are under the constant onslaught of the “Green” label and “sustainability”. It is fashionable to loudly protest and object to needed industrial projects whether it be power projects or dams. This is done under the guise that some plant, animal or fish takes precedence over the needs of human beings. When it comes to fossil fuels our grand-children are being indoctrinated on their negatives and not being taught the man-made miracle that is cheap, plentiful and reliable energy.

Some environmental intelligentsia would like to see a campaign to de-develop the U.S. One of these proponents is John Holden who became a science advisor to President Obama. He prefers an attempt to reverse industrial development by law. An Obama speech included: "At the dawn of the 21st century, the country that faced down the tyranny of fascism and communism is now called to challenge the tyranny of oil..." Oil is now equated to Stalin and Mussolini!

Perhaps Mr. Obama should listen to the words of Kenyan James Shikwat of its Inter Region Economic Network: "The rich countries can afford to engage in some luxurious experimentation with other forms of energy, but for us we are still at the stage of survival. I don't see how a solar panel is going to power a steel industry, how a solar panel is going to power a railway network, it might work, maybe, to power a small transistor radio."

Republicans do not wish to save the planet from human beings; we want to improve the planet for human beings. Fossil fuels do not destroy the planet. Fossil fuels transform ancient dead plants into reliable energy that minimizes risks to human life. Some would call this progressive.