Bush Blind Spot:  
The World's #1 Economic Issue in the Coming Century  
by PHILIP ORTON [posted.10.31.00]

"There's a lot of -- there's differing opinions. And before we react, I think its best to have the full accounting, full understanding of what's taking place."

-- George Bush, on Global Warming, October 11 Presidential Debate.

"World's most challenging problem at the turn of the century: Climate change"

-- Results of a vote by hundreds of the world's top business and political leaders at the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Switzerland, February, 2000.

"Our climate is now changing rapidly... Our new data and understanding now point to the critical situation we face: to slow future change, we must start taking action soon."


Climate change is the most challenging issue facing the world -- anyone who disagrees is "in denial."


Yes, in his 1992 book, Al Gore suggested that the internal combustion engine could become obsolete within 25 years.

This was not a statement prescribed by campaign advisors or pollsters. Thanks to good old-fashioned American ingenuity, however, some auto company execs now see dollar signs when they think about climate change and emissions reductions.

Al Gore has been the top politician working with the U.S. auto industry on this topic over the past eight years. In frequent trips to Detroit, he has brought together captains of industry; labor leaders and working men and women; Teamsters and auto workers; lifelong environmentalists. His lead in the polls in the automobile capital of America, Michigan, is testament to the fact that the automobile industry is beginning to believe in his vision.

Aside from the obvious environmental benefits, this is a good strategy for removing our reliance on foreign oil. Not a bad energy policy. What is Texas oil mogul George Bush's energy policy? Surprise! "tap more oil on U.S. soil!"
Though his official platform says otherwise, Bush's debate statements suggest that he believes there is still scientific debate about whether the planet is warming.

George Bush has a blind spot, for he lacks the vision necessary to negotiate the difficult twists and turns that are approaching.

Globally, the 1990s was not only the warmest decade in the instrumental record (120 years), it was the warmest decade in 1000 years, as recently demonstrated by two separate research groups and lines of research. What's wrong with a little extra warmth?

We are tinkering with the complex life support system we depend on for our livelihood. Research is showing that early stages of global warming have resulted in a rise in severe weather and drought. Unusually warm ocean waters have contributed to massive flooding in Asia and Southern Africa (2000), Venezuela (1999), and Central America (1998), responsible for tens of thousands of deaths and millions of environmental refugees.

Unchecked, global warming is likely to lead to a new era of global political instability, with worsened shortages of water and food.

George's lack of vision is going to get us into trouble.

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