FOIA Number: 2017-1094-F

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Washington File

18 May 2000

Clinton Seeks Energy Revolution in 21st Century

(Cites global warming as major threat to planet) (1400)
By Jim Fuller
Washington File Science Writer

President Clinton -- calling global warming the most critical environmental challenge of the 21st century -- is backing a broad set of initiatives to increase energy efficiency, accelerate the adoption of renewable energy technologies, and shift to less carbon-intensive fossil fuels.

Clinton warned in a recent radio address that a national consensus is needed to reduce U.S. emissions of greenhouse gases "if we value our coastlines, our farm lands, and our vital biodiversity." Many believe global warming is caused by greenhouse gas emissions such as carbon dioxide, which is produced when fossil fuels are burned to generate energy.

"The 1990s were the hottest decade on record, and the first three months of 2000 were the hottest here in 100 years," Clinton said. "Scientists say that the temperature rise is at least partly due to human activity, and that if left unchecked climate change will result in more violent storms, more economic disruptions, and more permanent flooding of coastal areas."

In a recent interview, the president also referred to possible health consequences of global warming, citing that in Africa, for example, malaria is being found at higher and higher altitudes where it was too cool for mosquitoes in the past.

"So there will be a lot of very bad, more dramatic weather events," he said. "There will be a shift in the patterns of agricultural production. There will be flooding that will be quite bad, and there will be more public health crises."

The president's view is supported by a draft report on the probable impacts of climate change, released in April by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), an international collaboration of several hundred scientists sponsored by the United Nations and the World Meteorological Organization. The IPCC's new preliminary analysis, which is currently undergoing expert review, concludes that human beings have "discernibly" influenced the planet's climate and that the Earth's surface is likely to warm at least 1 degree Centigrade and as much as 5 degrees Centigrade by the end of the 21st century.

The Climatic Data Center of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration recently released a study showing that since the mid-1970s, the global temperature has risen at a rate of about 0.19 degrees Centigrade per decade.

In December 1997, 160 nations reached agreement on the Kyoto Protocol, which calls on industrialized nations to cut their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 5 percent below 1990 levels by the period 2008 to 2012. The deadline for completing negotiations on the protocol is the sixth meeting of the parties to the Climate Change Convention to be held November 13 to 24 in The Hague.

While the Clinton Administration supports the protocol, many members of the U.S. Congress are holding back support, claiming the treaty calls for measures that would be unduly expensive for industry.

"While the science on climate change has grown stronger ... some in Congress have buried their heads ever deeper in the sand," Clinton said in his radio address. "I urge them to recognize that reversing global warming will strengthen our economy, while safeguarding our future."

Clinton said that the international energy market will reach $5,000,000 million over the next 20 years and that consumers will increasingly demand clean energy. "We're the world leader in those technologies," he said. "We should be promoting them, not denying their need."

If humankind pursues energy efficiency with the enthusiasm that it pursued the Industrial Revolution, Clinton said, "there will be an energy revolution in the 21st century that will save the planet .... That will be one of the great stories of the 21st century -- that there was a dramatic revolution at work caused by a change in the source of energy, in the level of conservation, and in the availability of technologies that just weren't there before."

The Clinton Administration's budget request for fiscal year 2001 calls for accelerated efforts to promote clean energy technologies; spending and tax credits aimed at conserving energy; and new efforts, like the Clean Air Partnership Fund, to boost state and local efforts to reduce both greenhouse gases and ground-level air pollutants.

For example, the budget calls for $4,000 million in tax incentives over five years to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions by encouraging people to buy more energy-efficient cars, homes and other products. The budget also includes $410 million to develop domestic sources of renewable energy, including wind, photovoltaics and geothermal energy, and a bioenergy initiative that would develop high-tech methods of burning organic materials such as waste wood chips.

The budget would also set aside $200 million -- twice the request of last year -- to provide U.S. business with financial incentives to market renewable energy in developing countries. The White House estimates that energy use in developing countries will overtake that of industrialized countries by 2020, representing a market for technology and energy products of between $4,000 million and $5,000 million.

About $2,400 million of the budget request is for initiatives designed to reduce the harmful effects of global climate change -- which is 42 percent above what Congress approved last year.

On April 22, in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of Earth Day, the president signed an executive order requiring a 20 percent petroleum reduction in federal vehicle fleets in five years. Already, in Washington, D.C., 2,600 federal and local government vehicles are running on clean natural gas or ethanol, and next month the government will open the first of seven gas stations offering those fuels. Clinton said the new order will cut oil consumption by more than 170 million liters a year, reduce U.S. emissions of greenhouse gases to help stop global warming, and ease pressure on gas prices.

A second executive order signed by the president -- also intended to cut pollution and greenhouse gases -- allows federal workers to spend up to $65 a month to commute to work by public transportation, thereby reducing single occupancy vehicle travel and local area congestion. Employees will receive the benefit completely free of payroll taxes.

On May 17, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced new rules that would require reducing the sulfur content in diesel fuel by 97 percent to provide for the cleanest running heavy-duty trucks and buses in history. The new rules would also require new models of both diesel and gasoline engines in heavy trucks to meet strict emissions standards. The proposal would cut 2.8 million tons of smog-causing nitrogen oxides emissions each year once the program is fully implemented in 2010, and emissions of particulate matter, or soot, would be reduced by 110,000 tons each year.

According to scientists at the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, airborne black soot has the capacity to raise regional temperatures far more than carbon dioxide, a major greenhouse gas that also results from combustion.

Last December, Clinton announced new clean air standards that will lead to cars that are up to 95 percent cleaner. These standards also call for a reduction of sulfur levels in gasoline by 90 percent.

U.S. officials report that major improvements in energy efficiency continue to be reported. "The strong performance of our economy over the past year, despite oil price rises, underscores the dramatic improvements in energy efficiency and reliability over the past quarter century," said a White House statement released March 18. "Increased energy efficiency ... has helped insulate the economy from short-term market fluctuations."

The United States consumed 15 barrels of oil for every $10,000 of gross domestic product in 1974, according to the statement. That level has dropped to only eight barrels of oil for the same amount of economic output.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA) says U.S. companies have reported reductions in 1998 greenhouse gas emissions amounting to over 200 million metric tons, three times the amount of reductions reported in 1994 -- the first year of a voluntary reporting program sponsored by EIA. Of the 187 companies reporting reductions, more than half are part of the electric power sector. The companies reported emission-reduction projects such as improved plant efficiencies, cogeneration and use of non-fossil fuels, such as nuclear and renewable fuels.

(The Washington File is a product of the Office of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: http://usinfo.state.gov)

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May 19, 2000

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SUBJECT: Staff article on Clinton Global Warming Initiatives

NUMBER OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER SHEET: 3

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Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

WHITE HOUSE CAUGHT!

WHITE HOUSE DENIES ITS OWN PROJECTIONS ABOUT KYOTO PROTOCOL'S HARM

QUESTION: Joe, how does the President feel the people will have to struggle if Al Gore's Kyoto treaty goes into effect? What do you think will be the effect on gas prices then?

MR. LOCKHART: ***I don't think there will be an effect on gas prices.***

White House Press Secretary Joe Lockhart
Thursday, March 9th, 2000

Al Gore's own Energy Information Administration (EIA) and Council of Economic Advisors (CEA) demonstrate the falsity of this latest in a series of misrepresentations and denials by the White House regarding the serious harm the Kyoto Protocol would impose on American energy consumers! A slew of independent economists confirm the serious harm.

The Council of Economic Advisors' recently released *Economic Report of the President* reminds us on page 251 that the Administration's policy is to use tradable carbon permits to meet the Kyoto target. Discussing whether to auction (sell) or allocate (give away) permits, the CEA says, "Allocating permits to firms would result in handing over assets valued in the **tens to hundreds of billions of dollars annually**."

The Energy Information Administration's *Impacts of the Kyoto Protocol on U.S. Energy Markets and Economic Activity* agrees. Accompanying charts (over) show Clinton/Gore's estimates of how Kyoto Protocol implementation costs dwarf this year's tripling of crude oil costs:

	Effect of tripling crude oil	Effect of implementing Kyoto Protocol
Gasoline	43 cents per gallon increase	71 cents per gallon increase
Highway diesel fuel	50 cents per gallon increase	88 cents per gallon increase
Home heating oil	71 cents per gallon increase	90 cents per gallon increase

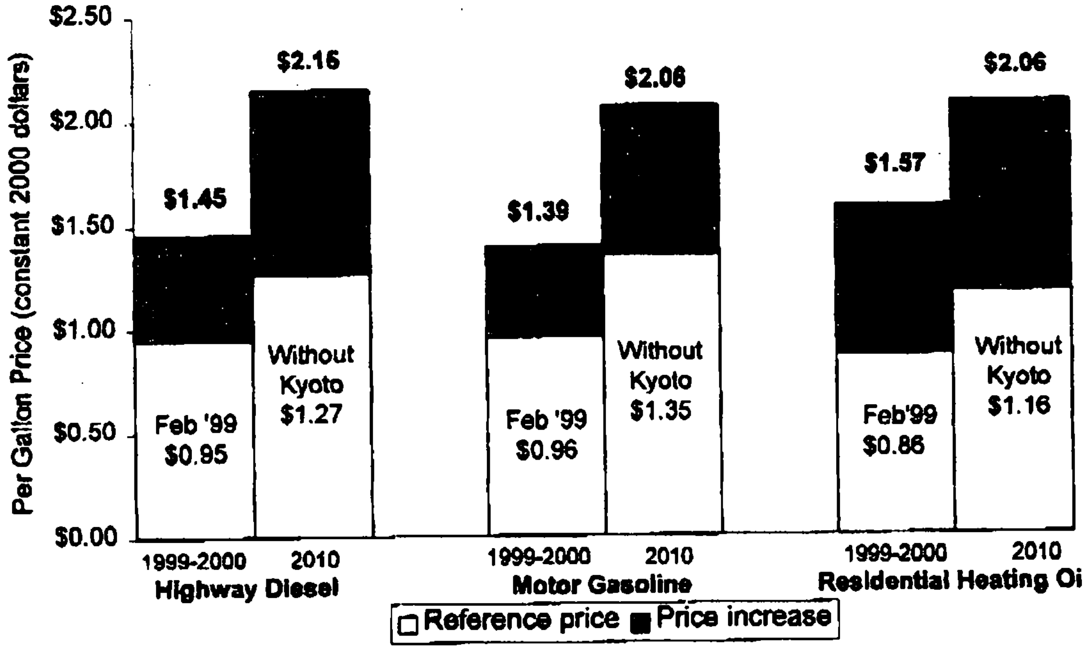
The Kyoto Protocol would, without a shadow of a doubt, impose huge costs on American consumers and cause serious harm to the economy of the United States while exempting developing countries from any binding emissions obligations. The Administration's own economists show the serious harm.

The Clinton/Gore White House cannot deny its own analysis and maintain credibility.

Joe Knollenberg
Member of Congress

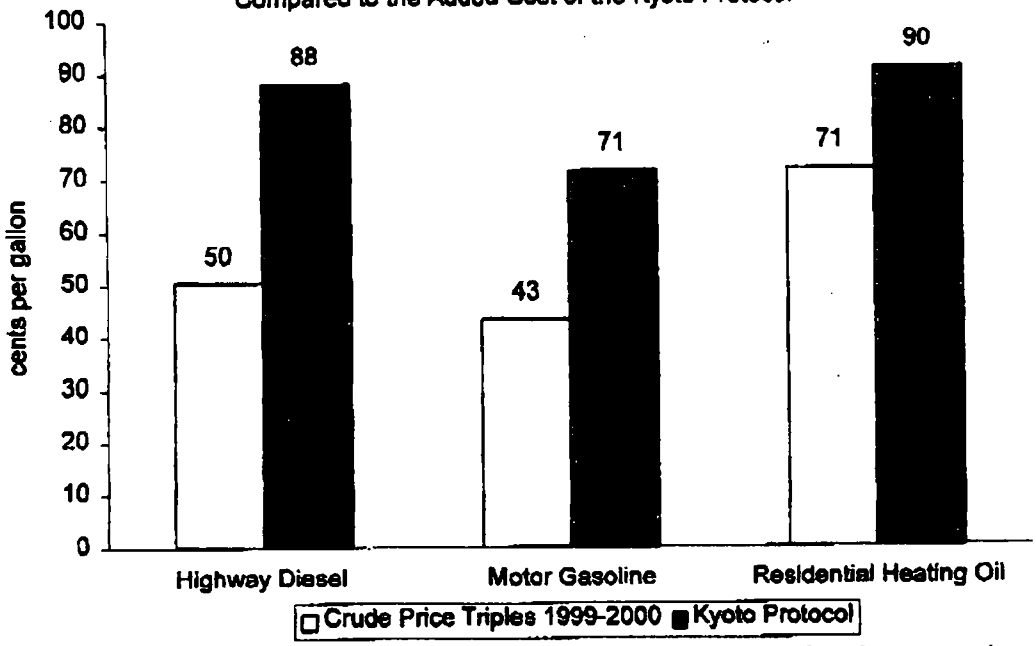
Larry Craig
United States Senator

Recent Increases in Petroleum Product Prices Compared to the Added Cost of the Kyoto Protocol



Sources: 1999-2000 prices from U.S. Energy Information Administration web site, www.doe.eia.gov. Prices for 2010 are from EIA's "Impacts of the Kyoto Protocol on U.S. Energy Markets and Economic Activity." The added cost of Kyoto represents the difference in petroleum product prices in 2010 for business as usual vs Kyoto (domestic action only) scenarios. Prices adjusted for inflation from 1996 to 2000 dollars.

Recent Petroleum Product Price *Increases* Compared to the Added Cost of the Kyoto Protocol



Sources: "Crude Price Triples" from U.S. Energy Information Administration web site, www.doe.eia.gov. "Kyoto Protocol" added costs are from EIA's "Impacts of the Kyoto Protocol on U.S. Energy Markets and Economic Activity" representing the difference in petroleum product prices in 2010 for business as usual vs Kyoto (domestic action only) scenarios. Prices adjusted for inflation from 1996 to 2000 dollars.

3/28/00

To: Elliot

Fr: Paul Bledsoe

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3 pages