

# PRESS RELEASE

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## **BUSHWHACKED**

**By Harry Braun**

President Bush, who was selected, not elected, and who shrouds his administration's actions in secrecy, has used his powerful office to initiate a wide-range of radical and irresponsible energy, environmental and foreign policies. Bush is not only at war with Al-Qaeda, but with 30-years of bipartisan progress of protecting the environment from contamination and abuse. These policies are not only having a devastating impact on the U.S. international relations, but the long-term environmental damage and financial impact to the American people from the increasing use of fossil and nuclear fuels is impossible to calculate.

The radioactive waste problem is especially insidious because it is virtually impossible to contain, and it is invisible to the human senses until disease or death occurs. Radioactive isotopes spread in an ecosystem like red dye spreads in a glass of water, and some isotopes, such as Neptunium-237, Cesium-135 and Iodine-129, have half-lives of over a million years. In the case of Iodine-129, its half-life of 16 million years means it must be sequestered from the natural environment for over 160 million years. Assuming only a single maintenance technician earning \$50,000 a year is considered, the cost over time would be \$8 trillion, the vast majority of which will be paid for by billions of taxpayers in the future for over a million centuries. It is hard to imagine a more selfish and immoral act that to impose such toxic "deathcamps" on literally millions of Americans for such incomprehensible amounts of time into the future. President Bush has given new meaning to the term "Toxic Texan." Given this grim record, the Bush administration is a far greater threat to the American people than the leaders of Iraq or Al-Qaeda. Indeed, we are all like passengers on the *Titanic*, whose confused captain is heading full speed towards a devastating constellation of interrelated exponential icebergs -- and there is only a limited amount of time to change course.

In the short time that President Bush has been in office, he has managed to transform an estimated \$5 trillion surplus into a multi-trillion deficit, as well as vaporize the extraordinary international support that occurred as a result 9/11. The Bush administration's unprecedented anti-environment, pro-big business, pro-war policies have poisoned the international relationships with our closest allies, and supercharged the recruitment efforts of Al-Qaeda, which the Bush administration admits is a profoundly dangerous global organization. What makes Al-Qaeda so dangerous is that it has millions of sympathetic supporters, many of whom watch the daily atrocities that are committed against the Palestinians on the Al Jazerra Arab television network. Instead of going to war with Iraq, which is like throwing gasoline on the fire, the Bush administration should be concerned about the fact that millions of young people around the world are growing to hate America with an intensity that incites them to commit suicide as long as they are able to kill or injure Jews or Americans.

The Bush administration obviously does not understand that the exponential consumption of non-renewable resources, like oil, coal and natural gas, is unsustainable, and that the longer that a transition to renewable hydrogen technologies and resources is delayed, the more costly it will be -- both in terms of capital expenditures and environmental damage. If we wait too long, the transition may not happen at all. This is because the earth's primary food production systems will fail, which would end civilization as we now know it in a matter of weeks -- if not days. With empty supermarkets, no one will care about Iraq or Afghanistan because the panic and chaos that will follow will make the World Trade Center disaster look like a walk in the park.

### **Climate Change**

The U.S. is a major contributor to carbon-based global warming “greenhouse” gases, which are generated primarily as a result of burning fossil fuels, yet the Bush Administration has unilaterally refused to support the Kyoto Protocols, which if followed, would gradually reduce the growth in carbon emissions in the atmosphere. The response from the U.S. should have been to not only approve the Kyoto Protocols, but initiate an international Phoenix Project strategy for all countries to begin an immediate shift from fossil and nuclear fuels, to wind and other solar hydrogen systems. These renewable energy technologies are modularized and can be mass-produced like automobiles, and their deployment would fundamentally resolve many of the most serious and interrelated energy, economic and environmental problems.

### **The Toxic Texan**

The Bush administration has sought to have increased levels of arsenic in our drinking water and has revoked the requirement that mining companies clean up mine related pollution. His Administration has modified federal regulations to allow industrial toxic wastes to be dumped in rivers and streams, and rolled back emissions standards for old coal burning power plants -- even though the utilities in question had already agreed to install the necessary scrubbers. Just as Newt Gingrich was able to repeal the regulations regarding accounting for corporations, Bush is using the power of the presidency to undermine environmental regulations at every level. He apparently is not aware of why the Environmental Protection Act or the strict securities laws were passed in first place. As Tom Teepen wrote in the *Atlanta Journal & Constitution*, “the Bush administration is putting foxes in charge of every regulatory henhouse.” Moreover, it was reported in *The Washington Post* that the Bush administration is quietly purging the little-known, but highly-influential advisory bodies that council federal scientific agencies. The professional experts are being replaced by conservative ideologues or industry representatives who have an obvious stake in the outcome.

### **Foreign Policy**

While the Bush Administration likes to portray the “terrorists” as those who hate “freedom,” such simplistic slogans ignore the real reasons that millions of people have developed an intense hatred for the atrocities that have been the direct result of U.S. Foreign Policy. Most Muslim intellectuals believe that the Bush Administration’s war on terrorism is being used by undemocratic rulers to justify arresting those who are advocating democracy. They point out the fact that since World War II, America has enriched itself by supporting oppressive regimes in countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, Iran, Vietnam, Chile, Singapore, Malaysia or Burma and Pakistan. When the U.S. imposed the country of Israel on the Arab countries in 1948, death and destruction has never stopped. While it may be unconstitutional for the American government to support any religion within America, U.S. Foreign Policy obviously does not follow this constitutional provision, and the result has been 50 years of tragic abuse, mass-murder and chaos in the Middle East, and much of the world. The thousands of people who died in the World Trade Center attack were victims of this U.S. policy that supports freedom and democracy at home, but tyranny abroad. Until these obvious injustices have been resolved, the war against terror will never be won, and innocent people on both sides of the conflict will continue to be slaughtered.

### **More Trees, Less Bush**

Millions of acres have been lost to wildfires, yet rather than acknowledge the real problems, which are primarily attributed to the misguided “zero-tolerance” burn policy as well as the increasingly serious droughts that were predicted by the world’s most respected scientists as part of the global warming process. President Bush’s response was to blame environmentalists; he delayed the removal of the small brush on the forest floor that is the primary fuel for the wildfires; and he seeks to allow loggers to cut the remaining old growth trees that are needed to retard the growth of the highly flammable small trees and brush.

**“Just as the Bush Administration’s  
“Clean Air” initiative undermines existing clean air  
requirements, its “Healthy Forests” initiative erodes the  
environmental protection of the nation’s forests.”**

The Bush Administration’s “Healthy Forests” initiative will not only eliminate the protection of the nation’s forests, it will also provide corporate welfare incentives for large logging companies to cut down the mature trees that are part of the solution – not the problem. Even before the wildfires occurred this summer, Bush had proposed reversing a prohibition of federal road building for loggers on 58 million acres of national forest land, and he is now using the wildfires as an excuse to bypass the bipartisan laws that were established 30 years ago to protect the national forests from commercial abuse.

### **Broken Promises**

Candidate Bush said he was a “uniter not a divider,” yet his policies have been so radical that even moderate Republicans are offended, and even as the Bush administration has acknowledged, the relations with long-standing allies such as Germany have been “poisoned.” He said he believed in free markets, yet he has approved record subsidies to steel and agricultural interests. He said he opposed “nation building,” yet he is attempting to do exactly that in Afghanistan and Iraq – and who knows where else? He said he would move cautiously on the world stage, yet he has brazenly announced that the U.S. would unilaterally determine who shall face military reprisals, regardless of international law.

This not doubt explains why The Bush administration has refused to recognize the new International Criminal Court, which is the first permanent legal forum for trying people charged with genocide and other crimes against humanity. Indeed, the Bush administration has actually attempted to have U.S. military forces immune from such proceedings, in spite of the long and sorry history of autocracies committed by the U.S., starting with the native American tribes, and continuing on through World War II, where entire cities in Germany and Japan that our own military leaders indicated were of no military value were destroyed by U.S. bombing. Indeed, the U.S. is the only country to ever use nuclear weapons on another country – at a time when that country (Japan) was trying to surrender. Then there is Vietnam, a tiny Asian country that had more U.S. bombs dropped on it than both sides used against each other in World War II. Given this perspective, it is easy to understand why Bush seeks to have the U.S. avoid being accountable, but such policies give new meaning to the term “Ugly American.”



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