

J. Gofman

A Sane Solution to the Energy Problem

by

John W. Gofman, M.D., Ph.D.

A presentation for

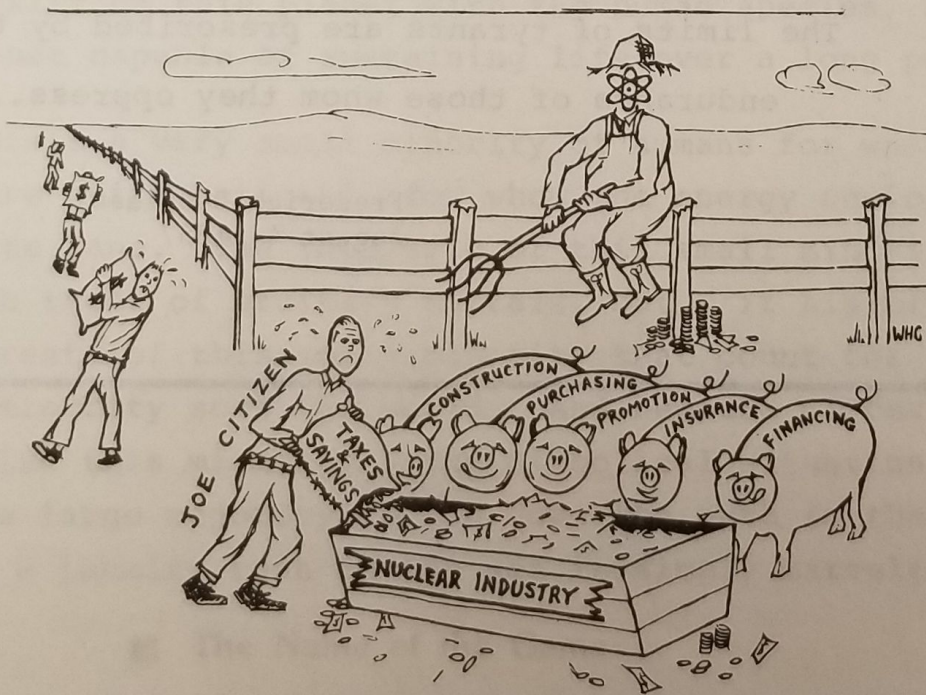
The Seventh Annual Membership Meeting

of

The New England Coalition on Nuclear Pollution, Inc.

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Courtesy of Critical Mass.



KEEP IT COMING FOLKS, WE'VE GOT TO KEEP THESE PIGS HEALTHY!

Committee for Nuclear Responsibility, Inc.

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" Power concedes nothing without a demand.

It never did and it never will.

Find out just what people will submit to,

and you have found out the exact amount of

injustice and wrong which will be imposed

upon them; and these will continue until

they are resisted with either words or blows,

or with both.

The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the

endurance of those whom they oppress..."

Frederick Douglass

August 4, 1857

Some of you may wonder why I chose as a title for this talk, "A Sane Solution to the Energy Problem ". Briefly, the answer is that I have no doubt whatever that that the so-called "energy crisis" is going to be solved. No doubt at all. The only question that exists is whether a sane or an insane solution is going to be sought. It is clear to me that the President of the United States has already made his intentions clear to opt for an insane solution, just as have the last two Presidents before him. Now , since most people wouldn't be prepared to believe that that all three recent presidents of the United States are irrational, which would be the presumption if they choose an irrational solution to a major problem, we must next ask ourselves what we mean by the term "sanity".

It is when we examine the answer to that question that we begin to understand the outlines of the real basis for policy formulation by top governmental and private sector leaders of our society. The key issue is "sanity" viewed through whose eyes. When I say that an insane solution to the energy problem is being opted for, I mean insane from the point of view of the overwhelming majority of humans, from the point of view of other living creatures, plant and animal, who are the hapless victims forced to co-exist on this planet with the human species, and of the earth as a planet capable of sustaining life over a long period of time.

There exists a very small minority of humans for whom the policies being chosen are quite rational, for whom the energy choices being made are indeed quite sane. The interests of this small minority are hardly consistent with those of ordinary mortals, but , if history is any guide, it is the interests of this small minority that count for everything, at least as this minority sees the world. And because of certain features that characterize this minority , the diabolical situation is made to exist where the large majority is led down the path to their own disaster believing such a lemming rush to the sea is simply marvelous.

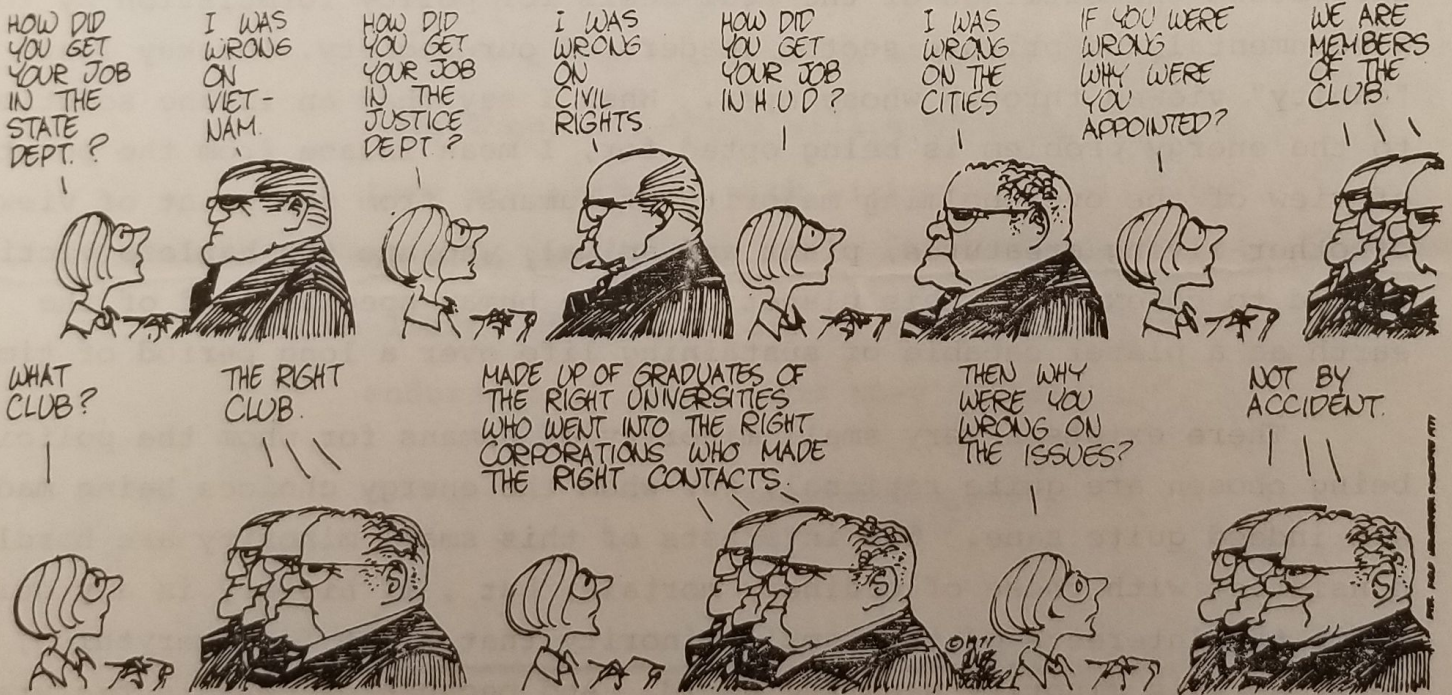
■ The Name of the Game

Many people think that national objectives are to create a healthy economy , with full employment, with a healthful environment, and with as many people as possible enjoying their brief span of existence on the Earth. To aid in achieving this desired state of affairs, we have government dedicated to achievement of these objectives.

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That is a lovely view of the way things are, -- bearing as much resemblance to reality as Mr. Nixon's publicly-expressed view of his role in the Watergate cover-up. As I see the scene, there has always been a very different way that the world really operates. With essentially no exceptions I am cognizant of, societies are operated by and for the interests of a privilege elite. That is true whether the societies are called free enterprise, capitalist, socialist, communist, or by some other name. The operation of the society is still the same, namely the maintenance of privilege for its elite, and the extension of privilege of its elite.

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The proper role of government has always been, is, and, unless a miracle supervenes, will always be, to insure that such privilege is maintained and extended. Assuredly that has been and still is the exact function of the United States Government. If you doubt that, simply look at tax structures, look at the tremendous interest of the Congress and Administration in creating safe workplaces in industry, and at their enormous interest in maintaining environmental integrity. And that by no means is a description exclusively for the USA. I think the Soviet Politburo is just as much concerned about the welfare of the average Soviet citizen as is the United States Congress about your welfare.

As the privilege elite sees a proper world , the peons should occupy their proper place, which is to labor hard at jobs they are generously provided in a manner that guarantees that the elite shall maintain the largest share of the fruits of all labor and that the share held by the elite shall be increased whenever and wherever possible. And the elite is quick to point out to the peons that this is assuredly the best of all possible worlds for by the magic of trickle down and a constant growth in the economy, the peons will enjoy an ever-better life than did their ancestors.

In the early days of feudal societies the elite could maintain its power by small private armies and tax-collectors, and the peons were generally kept in line by these agents, oftentimes quite brutally. In the more modern ,highly technologically-based societies, the armies are still there, the tax collectors are still there, but an important new class of agents of the elite has been created. This class is constituted of masters of business administration, scientists, academicians (and the universities they populate), and sundry professionals such as the lawyers the physicians, and engineers. To this latter class, generously cut in for a modest share of the spoils, falls the task of convincing the larger society that everything is being done to assure that larger society a good life. So it is that Tony Mazzocchi, one of the few true friends of the laboring man, was recently able to relate a story from Paul Brodeur's book, "Expendable Americans" about a physician who knew about the fact that a particular plant was killing its workers through asbestos exposure but did absolutely nothing to inform the workers of what was going on. The passage from Mazzocchi's article is so choice, I quote it here :

"When Dr. Grant (Medical Director of Pittsburgh Plate Glass and Corning) was questioned by Paul Brodeur, in fact (and this is now Mazzocchi speaking) I know it's true because I was standing right there, Brodeur asked, " Didn't you think you had a responsibility to tell the workers what was happening?"

He (Dr. Grant) answered that " to do that would be to violate the patient/doctor relationship."

And Brodeur said, "Who's the patient?"

Grant said, "Pittsburgh Corning."

Mazzocchi adds that that was one of his (Dr. Grant's) more candid moments.

So much for the ideals and behavior of some of my brethren in the medical profession. As for the engineers, the story is not much different. I'm sure all of you are well aware of the embarrassment of the AEC over the

existence of Wash-740 (the Brookhaven Report) and the withheld update. Brookhaven report which indicated that casualties from a nuclear plant accident could be even worse than those estimated in Wash-740. Conveniently a group of unbiased engineers was assembled to produce the now-infamous Rasmussen Report, which through the application of ink to paper suddenly made nuclear power the safest industry imaginable. Never mind that the Union of Concerned Scientists procured documentary material which showed an AEC Staffer, Ed Gilbert, had written his boss a memo worrying that " the facts may not support our predetermined conclusions". And later, this same man writing that " the information we seek should not have the effect of raising unanswerable questions." Deborah Shapley of Science interviewed Rasmussen and others involved in the Reactor Safety Study. "They have maintained," writes Shapley, "that while the atmosphere surrounding the study may have been biased, the study itself was not." Perhaps the most prominent hazard about the Rasmussen Report is the risk that people will believe it. Certainly the chance of its credibility is not higher than the chance of being killed by a meteor. So much for objective, unbiased engineers.

For some strange reason, biologists have enjoyed an aura of respectability. There is a group of people one could trust. The AEC funded some twenty laboratories for twenty years at a rate of 50 to 90 million dollars per year to study the hazards of ionizing radiation. In that entire period there were probably fewer than 10 pages of studies from that whole effort which even mentioned the words concerning the possibilities of deaths from cancer from the peaceful uses of the atom. When Tamplin and I started to calculate deaths (a task we interpreted as our assigned mission) from radiation, the entire AEC, particularly its prominent staff biologists, began to suffer from widespread internal hemorrhages. The garbage with which they endeavored to stem the flow of their bleeding was a sight to behold. So much for how much you can trust the biologists.

Why do I bring all this up here? It is primarily to make the point that the cadre of people who have comfortable sinecures in government and industry and universities are an important adjunct in modern society to the armies and tax collectors in ensuring that the peons of society are kept in line. In this particular case the function is not suppression, but rather to give the atmosphere of legitimacy to those programs the privilege elite concoct for the purpose of maintaining and increasing their privileges.

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■ But Who Would Act against His Family's Interests?

During my experiences in the debate over nuclear energy and concerning alternatives to it, one question is very commonly asked of me when the actions of scientists, physicians, engineers, and physicists are impeached. "Why in the world would they do that?-- it's their lives, their children's lives which are at stake too." Surely these men, even opportunistic as they may be, would not knowingly jeopardize the lives of their families." That is an interesting question, and deserves a very thoughtful consideration. It is this question that makes many people doubt that nuclear power could be as bad as the nuclear critics say it is. I've given a lot of thought to that question and I can give you only an empirical answer. That answer is that such men must have an ability to make very effective rationalizations when they lie and otherwise obfuscate the facts they know.

A personal experience of my own might illuminate the ability to rationalize. Shortly after Tamplin and I stated that radiation would cause 20 times as many cancer per rem of exposure than the previous most pessimistic estimates from the ICRP, I received a phone call from an official of the US Public Health Service who requested that I never divulge his name. He stated that a high official of the AEC had come to see him to ask that he help in the campaign to "destroy Gofman and Tamplin." He told the AEC official that he had read our paper and that, while he did not agree with everything in our calculations, in the main he thought our evaluation was quite reasonable. The AEC official, he said, pointed out that the issue was not whether Gofman and Tamplin were correct, but rather that the nuclear power program would suffer if their findings were not discredited. And, according to the Public Health official, the AEC man added, "Look, when all those cancers and leukemias start to appear, you'll be retired, I'll be retired, so what difference will it make? Right now, we need to protect the nuclear power program." The AEC official had children, a wife, and, for all I know, may even have had grandchildren. But none of that served as a deterrent.

This episode taught me never to trust someone simply because they would not act against their apparent self-interest. The vastly overwhelming self-interest is the current job, with all its perquisites and privileges. Death of their child from cancer or leukemia is quite effectively rationalized away. Dr. Alvin Weinberg has told us how to make some of these rationalizations when he pointed out that it was premature to

worry about the cancer hazard of long-lived plutonium . After all, Dr . Weinberg, cancer research is very active and maybe a cure for cancer will be found by that time. Dr. Weinberg did not mention the more likely prospect that a cure for cancer may never be found-- after all that would destroy the rationalization. On the surface, Dr. Weinberg's rationalizations may even sound reasonable to someone with the largest part of the cerebral cortex missing.

This brings me to an important first point in the effort to achieve a sane solution to the energy problem. STRIP AWAY RATIONALIZATIONS WHENEVER YOU CAN. Generally they are very thin-- just enough to allow the man to look at himself in the mirror when he shaves, and enable him to say, " I'm not the world's worst bastard." I mentioned above the half-witted suggestion concerning plutonium toxicity. And beyond stripping away the rationalizations, BE SURE TO NAME NAMES of those who make them. It is very hard for people to look at themselves and admit they are rascals or nincompoops. While they may become even more defensive to protect their rationalizations, they will, in this defensive posture, become even more absurd , assuming that were possible , and manage to discredit themselves entirely.

One of the favorite rationalizations of the scientists who serve as propaganda vehicles for the nuclear industry is that we should not worry about the long half-life of plutonium-239. With pride of ignorance they happily point out that society handles tons upon tons of lead, AND THE HALF-LIFE OF LEAD IS INFINITE. There's a brilliant put-down of the worriers about plutonium. Leonard Sagan was perhaps the first to use this widely. At the same time (in 1970) that Dr. Sagan was saying this, The New England Journal of Medicine carried an editorial stating that it was a national disgrace that 200,000 children in the USA carried overtly toxic levels of lead in their blood stream and that these children were suffering from permanent irreversible lead-induced brain damage. More recently Dr. Bernard Cohen has carried the banner of why worry about radioactivity , we handle many poisonous substances in ton quantities. Well, a recent article in the Pediatrics Digest (1977) points out that the number of children suffering from lead intoxication in the USA is more like 600,000 , not 200,000 * The inordinately stupid handling of

* None of these numbers account for the non-ghetto dwellers, like most Americans, who carry sub-clinical levels of lead (from auto exhausts and industry) in their blood . These lead levels may well account for the fact that about one-half our population is as nutty as it is.

lead by our society is undoubtedly one of the worst of societal crimes, with the bulk of the effects being suffered by the poor of the ghetto. To justify the stupidity of assuming that plutonium is going to be contained to one part in 10 million by stating that after all we handle tons of lead simply won't stand up to exposure. This is an illustration of the way one can destroy the rationalizations of the well-paid cadre of sycophants who function to help justify the depredations of the privilege elite.

■ Why the Privilege-Elite Opts for Nuclear Electricity

Thus far we have focused on the use of the technical community and of certain other professionals by the privilege elite. Now we must turn to the question of why the privilege elite seems so determined to push an anti-societal technology upon the public. There is no a priori reason that an insane technology such as nuclear power should be chosen by the privilege elite. Indeed, it would not be unthinkable, all other things being equal, that Mr. Carter and Dr. Schlesinger might choose to solve the energy problem by sensible means. But they don't do so, and there must be a compelling reason for the choice of insanity. Recall, I said earlier that one must always ask about "sane or insane" for whom. Nuclear power can never make sense from the viewpoint of the welfare of the larger segment for a very simple set of reasons. If all radioactivity from nuclear power were perfectly contained,* under all circumstances, normal and abnormal, then it would be hard to say that nuclear power is an insane choice from the public viewpoint. For if every bit of radioactivity were perfectly contained, no one would get hurt, and nuclear power would be "safe", even if inordinately expensive.

Now, even the nuclear advocates don't claim they can contain the radioactivity perfectly. They only claim containment of such substances as plutonium to a degree of perfection of one part in ten million, or one part in one billion. Not absolutely perfect. Even a low moron would consider that sort of claim to emanate from people far less brilliant than he. It is that sort of claim that makes nuclear power an absurd and insane technology. The required containment has not been achieved and there is no prospect it is going to be achieved. I should

* and this doesn't begin to address the abysmal inability to control the plutonium from being widely used for the express purpose of proliferation of nuclear weapons.

back off and correct myself a bit. Dr. Alvin Weinberg has outlined conditions under which nuclear power could be safe, namely with absolute and perfect social tranquility. A totally robotized society would indeed help eliminate the human error and malevolence that could interfere with perfect containment of radioactivity. But even this type of ideal society in the Weinberg dream will still be plagued with machine failures and Acts of God. But one might surmise that there is something unsaid in the Weinberg dream of a nuclear economy---robotized humans are not likely to complain about dying prematurely of radiation-induced cancer or leukemia in any case. So that is a plus for Weinberg's ideal "socially tranquil" society.

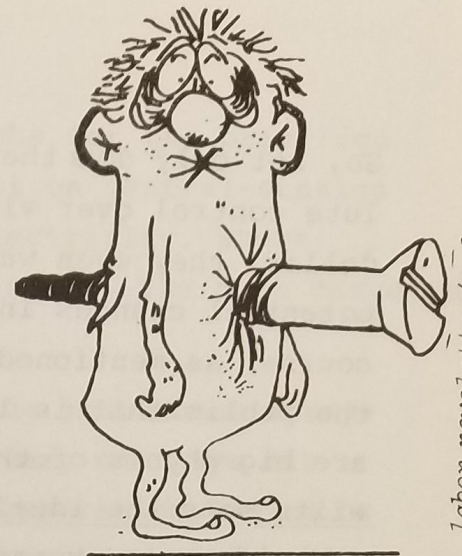
How does the privilege elite view the question? The answer is that the robotized society is exactly what they want and require. Why?

In the early heady days of a free enterprise economy, there was growth, innovation, inventiveness, risk-taking. Those who were the best entrepreneurs did exceedingly well in acquiring privilege, material wealth, and once having acquired a fair share of both, they could go on to extend their acquisitions. But much of that heady phase is over, and the going is tougher. It is not that the privilege elite no longer aspires to the ownership of everything. It is just that they don't want to take risks.

They much prefer a sure thing. Beside that, the privilege elite feels it has given too much already of the share of the spoils to labor, to their sycophants, and that the name of the game is now to get as much back as possible. For these purposes, we now find the massive conglomerates of corporate power endeavoring to bring one segment after another of the economy under their centralized control, so that they can insure themselves a guaranteed profit, at the expense of the larger public, from each segment of the economy. We don't see new entrepreneurs entering the automobile business each year. We find the food growing and distributing functions becoming centralized into fewer and fewer hands. There aren't many new telephone companies being organized each year. And as for energy, be it solid fuels, liquid fuels, or electricity, this is not the arena for the wildcatter of old. Of and by itself, bigness is not necessarily bad. There can very well be certain economies of scale that might be beneficial to the larger public. But it is not the bigness that is at issue. It is, rather, the setting up of our economy in a manner such that at every turn the privilege elite has an absolute guarantee

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that all members of the public pay their tithe. And that tithe is steep, and getting steeper with every passing day. It is paid in many, many ways.



labor newsletter/cpf

When the privilege elite discovered that a bigger profit could be obtained by replacing labor with energy, they went right ahead to create unemployment with the shiboleth that new growth would create new jobs. Yet, today with all the growth that has occurred, we have the largest, most protracted unemployment since the Great Depression. They've even coined a phrase for it, "structural unemployment", as though it were ordained by the Almighty.

Note well who suffers the most from this structural unemployment, whose hopes and aspirations are shattered with the destiny of staying in the ghetto without hope of leaving it. And note especially well who pays for this social disgrace. It is not the large corporations, nor the privilege elite who own them, it is Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Public, through a tax burden, so that they have to run faster and faster to get back to the starting line.

All this, of course, is arranged through the brilliant intercession of the Congress and the Executive branch under such terms as "welfare". Not being satisfied with having the segment of the public which does work pay for those who can't find work, the privilege elite has extracted a number of further guarantees that their privilege will be extended. They now demand that the research and development to lead to new products be financed also by John Q. Public through his tax dollars. So we find that when a new energy system, such as the breeder, is proposed, we hear that it will be "commercialized" through the joint efforts of government and private industry. A beautiful balance is struck. The entire electric industry will pay 250 million dollars and the Federal Government, meaning you and me, will pay 9 billion, 750 million dollars for this "commercialization" effort. That's real equity, real private enterprise, that's what makes the American economy grow and prosper.*

* Even construction of "conventional" N-plants will be further subsidized by the hapless tax-payer, if the House agrees to the multi-billion dollar tax credit approved by the U.S. Senate in October 1977; the huge subsidy is supposedly necessary to discourage utilities from building oil or gas-fueled power plants.

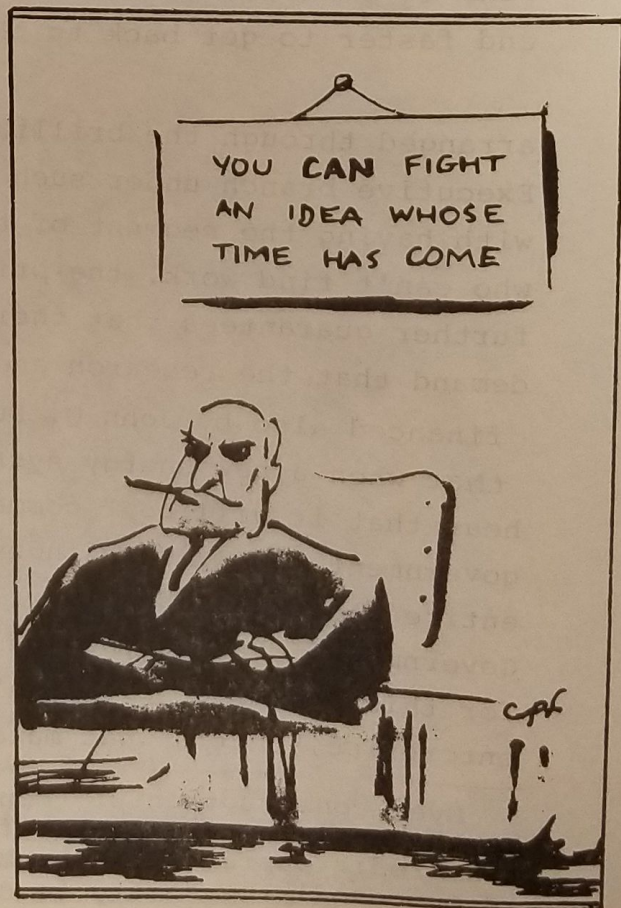
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So, not only does the privilege elite steadily tighten the noose of absolute control over virtually every major part of the public's expenditure dollar, they even want the public to pay the bill to explore any of the potential changes in the mix of products bought by the public. And of course, as mentioned above, to pay the bill for the expendable part of the public that is left out entirely. Food, transportation, and energy are big chunks of the average person's expenditures, and as the privilege elite sees the ideal world, they want to insure a guaranteed return from each of these expenditure areas. And they want nothing left to chance in this endeavor. They want to control the source of supply and to be able to price everything right up to the point short of outright revolt by the public.

If one were trying to think of how to handle the energy question with the goals just outlined, he could be sure the choice would not be decentralized solar energy for heating, cooling, or individual or group solar electric installations. That approach would make sense from the point of view of the public peon, but it certainly is pure insanity from the point of view of the privilege elite. From the point of the view of the privilege elite, the only choice which makes sense is to opt for that energy approach which absolutely guarantees complete dependence on a central source. That is the basis for the miraculous romance between our energy-planners and electricity.

Never mind that there is no reason which makes sense for using electricity for than than about 10% of our end-uses of energy. Electricity makes one hell of a lot of sense if you are trying to guarantee public dependence, if you are trying to guarantee that everyone will pay his tithe for the energy part of his dollar.

So it is no accident that the ERDA, or the Department of Energy, which is



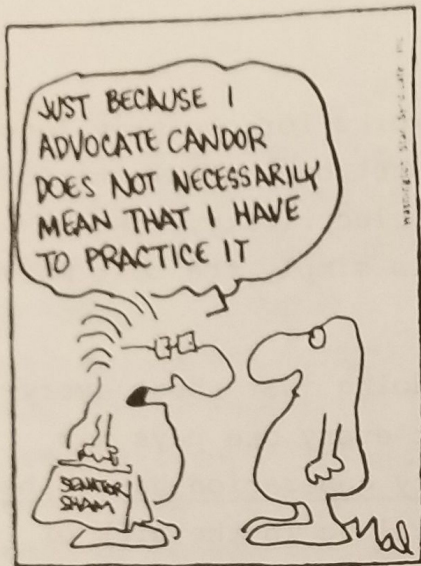
a very, very large sycophant organization which works for the privilege elite, spends by far the largest share of its budget on central-station power, on trying to convince everyone that using electricity, where electricity makes no sense on a rational basis, is simply the most marvelous idea.

If you go one step further, having decided that doing just about everything electrically is an excellent guarantee that every one pays his tithe, the next step is to ensure that electricity generation has to be centralized securely forever. Nuclear power came along in the "nick of time", to borrow nuclear salesman Seaborg's favorite cliché, to solve the problem. Nuclear power is just what the doctor ordered. It provides a guaranteed centralized control, it won't ever be a do-it-yourself technology, and every dollar poured into the nuclear electricity option forecloses the prospect more and more of development of challenges from decentralized energy forms. It is indeed ideal! And that is why the ERDA is so pleased to spend just about everything they can on this technology. What better way can a devoted cadre of bootlickers hope to curry the favor of their masters.

And once having tasted the possibility that a final solution has been reached by the privilege elite of how to guarantee a stable tithe from everyone on the energy part of his or her daily expenditures, the privilege elite can be expected to fight tooth and nail not to lose this handy payment. As for hazards to health, I've already covered the manifold rationalizations that are used. Technology will solve all the unsolvable problems. And, further, as for the privilege elite or its families suffering from side effects, I've already pointed out that this threat is of small moment when viewed alongside the stacks of dollars to be had.

So it is that an insane technology from your point of view or mine is the darling choice of the privilege elite. That the Congress, the Executive branch of government lend all their support to this insanity is not at all surprising, once one has clear in his head that these branches of government have nothing to do with serving the best interests of the larger public. They never have had, and they don't now. Every once in a while when the peons appear restive over the massive shellacking they are taking with inflation or unemployment, or paying for welfare,

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or paying the tax bills so that the rich won't have to pay taxes, it becomes the right time for a little infusion of populism. This is particularly helpful once every four years. The populism is required just up to election day. Then it all disappears.

The most recent case in point where a little populism was required was the Jimmy Carter campaign when he sensed that the peons were a bit restive about the hazards of becoming victims of nuclear power. Nuclear power will

be used only "as a last resort", Mr. Carter assured. With the election safely passed, the need for populism disappeared. Some foolish person had the temerity to ask Mr. Carter's energy staffers about the broken promise of nuclear power "as a last resort".

Unabashedly the staffers provided the answer, "Of course, nuclear power is a last resort and we are down to last resorts, so, 'Anchors Aweigh'" Some people seem to feel a little deceived. But that is only due to the naivete of believing they understood the real function of politicians and of government in general. If the privilege elite wants nuclear electricity as a way of guaranteeing a tithe from everyone, you can count on politicians, Republican, Democrat, Martian, or otherwise to bend every effort to see that the privilege elite is accomodated.

■ Is There a Chance of a Return to Sanity in Energy?

In the real world where the movers and shakers make things happen, there is no energy crisis worth talking about. The only crisis worth talking about and doing something about is ensuring that everyone pays the energy tithe forever, just as they are squeezed to pay the tithe for other essentials of life. So there is going to be no move toward sanity from the movers and shakers. And you can depend on that. Any other possibilities?

Some have hoped that the education of the public about the hazards of this absurd technology would lead to its rejection. Some even thought education of Congress would lead Congress to reject the technology by law. I must admit that even I once thought there was some virtue in trying to educate the Congress. I think we all know what value there is in that

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endeavor. As for education of the public, that is infinitely more valuable than educating the Congress, simply because the two march to different drummers. But by now we have succeeded in educating the US public to the hazards of nuclear energy. The polls show that the public is convinced that nuclear power is the riskiest choice of energy options. BUT the same polls show that about 65 % of the public is convinced that we must go ahead with nuclear power because otherwise the economy will falter that jobs will all be lost as the economy goes to hell, and that we will return to the caves. The public is no more immune to the threat of economic loss than the sycophants who are well-paid for their obeisance to the masters. Survival is indeed important to people, and anyone who thinks people are going to jeopardize their survival is simply mistaken. So, if a slick Madison Avenue campaign has convinced the public that the economy needs nuclear power, it is going to be very hard to convince them otherwise. To be sure, the peons do become restive the more they realize what a rip-off nuclear power is as they pay their utility bills. But unless they can see a way out, even this restiveness doesn't help very much.

There are those who feel that a dramatization by direct action will block the further development of nuclear power. There is certainly no doubt but that such dramatizations do indeed have educational value, and they do help raise the consciousness of a segment of the public to the massive rip-off of their lives that a centralized control of society represents. But, at the same time, a very large segment of the public will see such action as a threat to livelihood, and this segment will applaud repressive measures to counter the threat. Then the centralized control of our lives will not only be via the guaranteed economic rip-off, but there will be even more invasion of our residual rights as humans than already exists through the dossiers, the wiretaps, the infiltrators into the environmental movement, the blacklists for employment or grants, and the many other techniques for creating a thousand year reich.

It is hard to see the way back to a free society, to real private enterprise, and to some restoration of an ability to exert some control over our lives. These goals are totally at variance with the goals of the privilege elite, and they have the power and financial means to impose their goals, no matter that it makes the earth unfit for human or other habitation. In his book, The Greening of America, Charles Reich saw the development of Consciousness III at a rate a bit higher than has turned out to be the case.

But there
some possibilities that I think are constructive, and the energy problem may be the issue that helps move society away from the total robotization currently planned for it.

First of all, there is already occurring in the chemical industry the rash of cancers that was quite predictable from the helter-skelter introduction of chemical carcinogens into the workplace and the environment in general. There will soon be a rash of cancers and leukemias in the nuclear industry. It will be important to try to get people to appreciate the rip-off of their health in these occurrences. As yet, labor has accepted the cancers as the price of employment, but it is possible that they may still be made to feel indignant about such a royal screwing. Especially important will be to identify by name through whose courtesy such marvelous premature deaths are brought to labor. The same holds for identification of the promoters of nuclear power who should be brought to account for the cancers that are going to ravage the workers of the nuclear industry.

It is sad to contemplate that we will probably have to contaminate the planet to some degree irreversibly by radioactivity before much of the public can be brought to indignation.

On the positive side is the fact that nuclear power is very expensive now and getting more expensive every day. There is still some degree of entrepreneurial activity in the country, not under monopoly control, and there is still very great inventiveness in the population. It is conceivable that the combination of inventiveness and entrepreneurship may show that energy efficiency and solar energy can be made cheap enough and reliable enough that the restive peons may embrace them to the dismay of the Schlesingers and the Carters who support total control of our lives. Therefore, it is very important to support all the efforts by amateurs, by small companies, by inventors to solve our energy problem by going around the central control systems. It is important in doing this not to claim that which is not soundly based, not to lead people to waste their funds on systems that don't really work. That would be moving backward. But I believe that small individualized energy systems are going to come along, and that they may show up the ludicrous nature of the Federal government's energy priorities.

As I would see the effort to restore some dignity to our rights to choice, our right to live without being robots for someone's privilege system, there are two efforts that are going to be needed. One is at the

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local level and the other is at the national level.

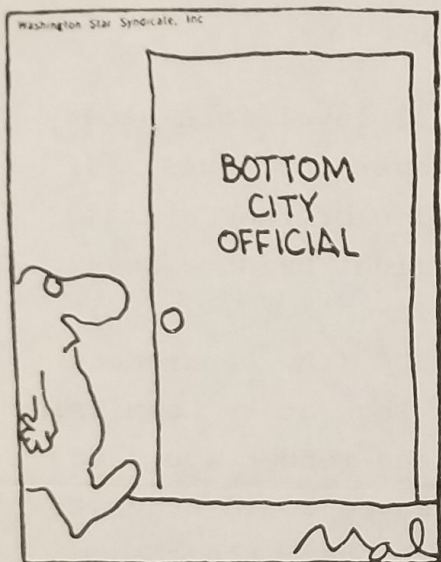
At the local level , small-time functionaries will do everything they can to block any effort to help us out from the tithe system and control over our lives. This is only natural since small-time functionaries see themselves as faithful sycophants who aspire to become big-time functionaries who can share in such plush grab-bags as the Koreagate pie. But while they are still small-time functionaries, they have to live in your midst,

and they are, therefore, vulnerable to the constant exposure you can give them as they serve against the public interest.

For example, as local legislators and public utility commissioners attempt to block the introduction of sane energy strategies for individual users by zoning ordinances, building codes, and the like, they can be exposed and named and held up for public ridicule. I think this is very important and can be effective.

If this approach is used, even their families will come to wonder what makes them such SOB's.

There is already, sporadically, but surely, evidence that local officials can be brought to act for the public interest, rather than against it. This is true even for some utility commissioners.



At the national level, or Federal level, the only constructive thing I can think of is for every one to realize what a thwart it represents to the health and happiness of the population. To expect that the national government will work toward energy sanity is empty folly. That simply won't happen. If it helps your adrenaline level to write to your Congressman, by all means do so, but don't expect constructive action from him. * I know of the campaigns to dis-elect the dirty dozen, and I certainly have hoped that their disselection would improve matters. But in the main, I think we get another dirty dozen with different labels and stripes.

* Letters to Congressmen can help on issues concerning which the privilege elite is totally indifferent. But let the issue touch the elite's interests, and then you'll find your Congressman can't hear you or read.



The best thing we could achieve at the national level is a steady reduction in the size and power of the government over our lives. If enough people would consider the decrease in the size of the Federal Government itself as a major national goal, there might be some real hope.

Just imagine the salutary effect of reducing DOE (the Department of Energy, formerly ERDA) and the NRC (the Nuclear Regulatory Commission) to half their current size. The obstruction they can render would at least be reduced in half, and because the dollars saved could stay at home where something constructive could be done with them, the chance of sane energy solutions would be materially enhanced---at least by a factor of two.

If DOE disappeared altogether, and the dollars could remain with you for energy progress, we probably could guarantee a rational solution of the energy problem.

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