

THE NEW CIVIL RIGHTS STUGGLE: ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE & EFFICIENT ENERGY

**Formal Remarks of
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It is wonderful to be here in the great state of Utah.

The motto of this great state – “Industry” – is what I want to talk about today.

Not about the great industries that fuel the economic powerhouse that has become Utah.

I want to talk about industry of the people ... to overcome adversity, to build a better life, to climb the economic ladder of success.

I also want talk about those who want to deny you the ability to be industrious for your family and your community ...

... who want to deny you the ability to exercise fundamental civil and economic rights ...

... who are behind what history will judge to be one of the greatest attacks ever launched against minorities, low-income families and the working poor in America.

Some of the organizations leading this attack are right here in Utah. Today I will name names and I will pull no punches.

So let us begin.

As a student of history, let me set the stage with a historical observation.

The great American civil rights revolution of the 1950’s and 1960’s was one of the greatest and most successful social and political liberations of a people in the history of mankind.

It was also an extraordinarily unusual historical achievement.

Consider, for example, these facts:

- It was achieved with relatively little violence.
- It was achieved in a relatively short period of time.
- And it was achieved during a time of relative peace and prosperity, when America was at a height of its military and economic power.

Contrast the American experience with French and the Russian revolutions. Those movements were extraordinarily brutal and bloody affairs, they dragged on for years and they occurred at times of great national unrest and insecurity in those nations.

Why, then, did the leaders of the American civil rights revolution succeed in their great movement?

Because we wielded a very powerful weapon. *That weapon was a tenacious hold on the moral high ground that allowed us to appeal to the moral conscience of the American people.*

Yes, there is still antagonism and discrimination toward minority groups in America today. But it is far less prevalent. And it is no longer blatantly legal or consciously sanctioned by government.

But a new challenge to basic civil rights has emerged today.

The civil rights now under attack are not those we won with the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act.

What is under attack is our ability to economically exercise the rights granted by these acts of Congress.

What is under attack is our ability to transform constitutionally protected rights into civil rights that we actually enjoy: jobs, homes, transportation, healthcare, modern living standards, and other earmarks of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

What is under attack is the ability to tens of millions of Americans – many right here in Utah – to afford to live and prosper in this great nation and continue to climb the ladder of economic opportunity.

The culprit of this new civil rights battle? Environmental policies and laws that increase the cost of energy and economically enslave those Americans who most struggle to climb the ladder of economic success.

Let me put this another way: **the civil rights challenge of our time is to stop extreme environmental policies that drive up the cost of energy and disproportionately hurt low-income Americans and the working poor.**

Let me explain.

Energy is the master resource of modern society. It makes possible our ability to enjoy all civil rights. With abundant, reliable, affordable energy, much is possible. Without it, hope, opportunity and progress are hobbled.

Laws and policies that restrict access to America's abundant energy drive up the price of energy and consumer goods.

They cause widespread layoffs, leaving unemployed workers and families struggling to survive, as the cost of everything they eat, drive, wear and do spirals out of control.

They threaten to roll back much of the civil rights progress for which civil rights revolutionaries and Dr. King struggled and died.

They also present a false choice to the American people. They lead us to believe that energy and environmental policies are mutually exclusive. That we cannot have one without the other.

That is a false dichotomy. We do not need to choose between a clean environment and affordable and reliable energy. We can have both.

Or rather, we can find a common sense balance between the sometimes competing demands of these two great societal goals.

Modern-day environmental extremists don't believe in this common sense balance. In fact, they abhor it. They want to hamstring economic opportunity, growth and prosperity because they believe these occur only at the expense of the environment.

Few environmental extremists bear the resultant burden of those policies.

But minority groups, and the working poor, do.

While the goal of environmental extremists is to satisfy selfish esoteric passions for a pristine environment, the day-to-day concern of minorities is afford the energy that helps them maximize economic civil rights.

Ironically, many of the originators of the environmentalist movement were trained in the civil rights movement. Most of their leaders studied our tactics and strategies.

Above all, they understand the power of the most important weapon that was used in our liberation: *the tenacious hold on the moral high ground that allowed us to appeal to the moral conscience of the American people.*

But there is a fundamental difference in the use of this hallow instrument of liberation and its use by the radical environmentalists.

The radical environmentalists do not have a true claim to the moral high ground, because they use this instrument to deny access to available energy. The environmentalists' claim to the moral high ground is illusory, immersed in hubris and cloaked in pseudo science.

Extreme environmentalists prey upon the good intentions of the general public. These laws and policies that they sponsor have consequences.

They turn endangered species acts, land use and zoning regulations into obstacles to economic development for minorities.

They threaten to keep minorities impoverished and laboring at menial jobs, deny them a seat at the energy lunch counter, and send them to the back of the economic bus.

This is wrong. We must begin here and now to stand up for energy and economic civil rights.

There is an excellent example right here in Utah. A group of environmental elitist groups who call themselves the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, better known as SUWA, are desperately trying to deny Utah access to abundant energy resources across more than 9 million acres of public lands here.

Now, there are areas in this state – and in every state – that deserve some form of special protection.

But the SUWA proposal for Utah is the equivalent of driving a bulldozer across the hopes of dreams of millions of people in this state. Why do I say this?

Because the SUWA land grab it will restrict the production of Utah energy. That will in turn cause energy prices to rise. And those price increases will hurt low-income families the most.

This land scheme will destroy jobs, reduce revenues to Utah's education system, and force the state, in all likelihood, to raise taxes even higher in order to provide the level of services it now provides.

Furthermore, this land scheme would have another, even more insidious dangerous result for our nation. It will reduce Utah's ability to be more self-sufficient in terms of the energy we need.

It will make this state – and America – even more enslaved to imports from foreign nations.

Much of that imported energy comes from nations that hate America and all that we stand for.

And some of the dollars we send overseas for that energy end up in the hands of terror groups that try every day to kill Americans wherever they can find them.

So, when elitist groups like SUWA, the Sierra Club, NRDC and others push for policies like this ...

- ★ They are arguing for America's continued enslavement to hostile foreign nations.
- ★ They are lending aid and assistance to America's mortal enemies.

- ★ And they are preventing the poor of this state from being able to afford to climb the ladder of economic opportunity.

Those are strong statements, I know. But they are the unvarnished truth, my friends. And it is time to speak the truth on these matters, no matter how much it may offend the sensibilities of environmental elitists.

Of course, I'm not sure this will offend the chairman of the SUWA's Board. After all, he is non-U.S. citizen – a European multi-billionaire who lives in lap of luxury in Switzerland.

I doubt it will offend the sensibilities of two of SUWA's longest-serving Board members. They are right now sitting in a federal penitentiary after having been convicted of bank securities fraud. The scheme they hatched was termed by law enforcement officials as one of the worst they had seen.

It will not offend the sensibilities of the SUWA's current leaders, who recently snubbed a request by 45 Utah legislators – both Democrats and Republicans – to disclose information to the public that the public has a right to know given the illegal activities of SUWA's leadership.

These facts really make me wonder: why has the Utah news media not gone after this group with all of the investigative vigor it reserves for scandal in the business community?

I would remind the Utah news media that there is no statute of limitations on uncovering the truth. In fact, it is your responsibility as members of America's Fourth Estate.

Now, much of the rationale for these extremist policies is global warming—or as environmental activists prefer to call it, catastrophic global climate change.

I have no doubt that our planet has warmed a little over the past hundred years. As most people know, it has been warming and cooling at various intervals throughout our Earth's history. I do not even doubt that humans probably played a small role in some of this recent warming.

However, if these phenomena are not properly analyzed, climate change laws could trample our implicit but indispensable civil rights – our unfulfilled economic civil rights – that are dependent on abundant and available energy.

These elitists push the notion that we humans are causing a global cataclysm of biblical proportions, that will be upon us a century from now, if we do not repent and change our ways.

I know there are a lot of good, decent people who truly believe this. But I also know there are hundreds of scientists and other experts—many of them here with us today—who vigorously disagree.

And I know there is an army of well-financed activists, scientists, bureaucrats and politicians who are pounding on the Climate Armageddon theme—linking every weather

event and unfortunate tragedy to fossil fuel use—and vilifying anyone who dares to question their assertions.

I am not going to delve deeply into their motives—other than to say that money, power, control, and an unhealthy sense of their own infallibility are involved.

These environmental alarmists also display a distressing level of callous disregard for the consequences of their analysis and actions.

CORE has seen it throughout the Third World—with their opposition to using DDT to prevent malaria, to biotechnology to reduce malnutrition and starvation, and to electricity generation, to build modern societies and end deadly lung and intestinal diseases. Millions have died.

Yet these activists still will not budge, or even apologize.

We are seeing the same ideological attitudes here, and with the same disregard for civil and human rights.

The American government rejected the Kyoto Protocol, sending the environmental activists into overdrive. They began to pound home their unrelenting message that fossil fuels are sending Planet Earth into climate chaos that will exterminate species, flood coastal cities, and cause droughts, storms, diseases and a seemingly endless stream of unnatural disasters.

While there is no real, replicable evidence for any of this, Congress responded with over a dozen bills that sponsors insist will stabilize our unstable climate, prevent catastrophe.

What is largely missing from this debate is what these bills will cost consumers – and the working poor in particular.

If these bills were to become law, they would give activists, courts and bureaucrats control over virtually every aspect of our lives. Activists and bureaucrats would control any activity that produces greenhouse gases such as heating, cooling, transportation and manufacturing, bakeries, dry cleaners, hotels, office and apartment buildings, cement plants and dairy farms and an endless list of unrelated activities.

Every one of these bills injects high-tax, anti-energy arsenic into a weakened economy that is already on the verge of a recession—and at a time when Congress claims to be stimulating the economy with paltry pump-priming initiatives.

These bills would compel Americans to stop using fossil fuels—and force them to switch to pricey so-called alternatives like wind and solar power.

They would make coal, oil and gas deposits off limits—or price and regulate them out of the picture. Wind, solar and bio fuels do have their virtues. However, the Energy Reality is powerful and unavoidable:

- ★ Over half of our electricity comes from coal.

- ★ Oil, natural gas, nuclear, hydroelectric and geothermal power generates another 47% of our electricity.
- ★ Wind and solar sources provide only 1% of our electricity.
- ★ Ethanol is an expensive, land intensive drop in the bucket. In fact, they are not alternatives at all. They are at best supplements, and will remain so for many years to come. If we foolishly turn to them as alternatives now, we will find they are illusory. We will blindly push ourselves into soaring prices and a disastrous Energy Gap, from which many families will never recover.
- ★ Wind and solar are also unreliable—and their energy costs more per kilowatt hour—leaving families with less money for food, housing, transportation and healthcare. These turbines kill raptors and other birds.

Every one of these climate bills would make reliable, affordable energy a distant memory—even with an all-out program to build more nuclear power plants, which many greens and legislators say will happen over their dead bodies.

All would force industry to spend trillions of dollars to capture, pipeline and store carbon dioxide. The higher energy costs these bills would bring are an enormous extra tax that would force companies to lay off workers—or simply close their doors.

What will happen to consumers if the leading climate change bill in Congress, known as Lieberman-Warner, gets passed into law? More specifically, what will it mean to the great State of Utah?

Well, I have some answers on that point, courtesy of a recently completed independent study by one of our nation's pre-eminent research firms, Science Applications International Corporation.

SAIC estimated the economic impact on Utah of the leading bill in Congress, known as Lieberman-Warner. Here is what they found:

- ★ Utah will lose 10,227 to 15,384 jobs in 2020 and 28,155 to 37,479 jobs in 2030 under this bill.
- ★ Utah would see disposable household income reduced by \$919 to \$2,979 per year by 2020 and \$3,780 to \$6,893 by 2030.
- ★ The price of gasoline in Utah would increase between 74% and 140% by 2030, while electricity prices would increase by 96% to 133%. Natural gas prices would rise by 113% and 154% by 2030.
- ★ Utah's gross state product would drop by by between \$1.1 and \$1.5 billion per year by 2020 and \$4 and \$4.7 billion by 2030.

- ★ The impacts of this bill on the poor, who spend more of their income on energy and other goods than other income brackets, would be especially harsh. By 2020, energy costs would chew up 17% and 19% of income under this bill, compared to a projected 14% without this bill. Others on fixed incomes, such as the elderly will also suffer disproportionately.
- ★ Finally, Utah's 1,125 schools and universities and 56 hospitals will likely experience a 20% to 24% percent increase in expenditures by 2020 and a 64% to 84% increase by 2030. For government entities, costs for services, including public transportation and vehicle fleets, such as school buses, will also rise under this bill.

Let me ask the citizens of Utah one simple question: you call this progress?

I don't. And I would wager than more than 90 percent of the voting-age population of Utah would agree with me on that point. I hope each and every one of our elected officials of Utah listens and contemplates this point.

The fact is that we are closing off access to vast quantities of energy that belongs to all Americans—not just to vocal activists and citizens who have been intimidated and bamboozled into believing all the environmental and climate change hysteria.

We are slowly destroying the energy system we have, and we are promoting an expensive, environmentally harmful, illusory energy system that exists only in theory and environmental rhetoric.

- ★ Worst of all, we are harming our poorest families;
- ★ We are rolling back the civil rights we struggled so long and hard to achieve.
- ★ We are sending many minorities to the back of the energy and economic bus.

This must not, and cannot continue.

For forty years, I have led the Congress of Racial Equality in fighting for social, political and economic civil rights for all Americans. I am not about to stop now. I am not about to surrender our civil rights progress to pressure groups and legislators who seem to have no compassion, and no ability to recognize the terrible toll that these anti-energy policies are taking on our economy, opportunities, and civil and human rights.

Allow me to focus on an issue that could compel us to resume our march to gain our economic civil rights. This could usher in a whole new era of civil rights agitation. There is a plan to put the polar bears on the endangered species list. If this is done, we will be forced to file a suit to challenge the government's plan.

Putting the polar bears on the endangered species' list would trigger the intrusion of bureaucrat involvement in all aspects of our activities and will unleash a string of lawsuits against virtually all economic activity in the country.

It will result in higher energy prices across the board which will disproportionately be borne by minorities.

It will cause countless families in our country in winters ahead to choose between food on the table and fuel in the furnace.

CORE will not let this go unchallenged.

In summary, I call on every one gathered here today, and every caring, thoughtful citizen in our great nation to join with me in challenging these Energy Killers, these modern day Bull Connors and George Wallaces, who are standing in the door, trying to prevent poor Americans from achieving Martin Luther King's dream of equal opportunity and true environmental justice.

We must tenaciously hold on to the moral high ground as we appeal to the moral conscious of the American people.

They are good people; they want to do the right thing.

Together, with them, we can make it happen.

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