

The oil fields are running dry

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I would like to talk to you about the SEX of the renewable energy industry, Solar Energy Excitement. The oil fields are running dry in the Middle East. The maximum production has been reached and the world is waiting in anticipation for something to replace their need for energy. Energy is what drives our cars, powers our homes and powers industry. The oil bridge we have built is falling down change is on the horizon.

We should not fear change.

Change is good. Getting out of our comfort zone is what has propelled the human race into new ages, like the industrial age. Now that we are in the information age, we need a new power source. We need leaders with 50 year visions of the future not four year visions. Do I dare say, I do not believe anyone on the ballot is up to this challenge.

Energy companies and investors base decisions not on political terms of two, four or eight years, but in generational terms of 30 plus years. The energy industry may not fear change, but to invest billions or even tril-

lions on energy infrastructure and resources, you need leadership and consistent vision of the next fifty years.

It's time for America to get off its knees and stand up for a new energy future. We must lead the world in reducing greenhouse gases and preparing the world for the post-oil economy of the future. We can regain our standing in the world we had after World War II, reestablish our economy and secure our place in the world. Is not our battle cry "Independence and Freedom!"? We can gradually, but deliberately, wean ourselves of the oil addiction. It is our nature to do for ourselves which has been our strength as a nation since the first puritans landed at Plymouth Rock.

Government has proven on

every level it can't do the job by itself. This is not the task of government to create new industries but to provide a clear vision, strategic investment in technological development, incentives to move forward and most importantly, legal and regulatory certainty.

Government should invest in new technologies. This serves as an incentive for energy "invention" but it is the role of the investment community to transform those inventions to marketplace "innovations." Only when government and industry work together as partners can we expect the results we desire. Not only can we have good jobs but a good environment too.

If we as a nation would come together in the same spirit as landing on the moon we could move mountains. Just think a

whole nation with one voice to accomplish energy independence. If the federal government would just invest what it has in the oil industry. The solar industry would within ten years stand on its own. As Governor Bill Richardson says, "bridging this 'valley of death' is essential to our energy future". The last few paragraphs contain excerpts of Governor Bill Richardson's speech to an energy conference at investment banking firm Bear, Sterns in February 2007. Richardson is the Governor of New Mexico and former U.S. Secretary of Energy.

As an installer, the investment I need is staggering. What is needed on this level is stability in the market place. Steady sales in order to make the investment to serve the customer. The past has proven that seasonal sales are not enough. There has to be year around sales in order to support the investment needed.

Using Germany as an example, cost per installed watt has fallen by twenty percent because of an environment that encourages solar installations. The same could happen here. Germany plans to be totally off fossil and nuclear power by 2025. Although Germany is a smaller nation it has made the commitment to being renewable. Presently ten percent of Germany energy needs are supplemented by renewable energies. Where will they be in the year 2010?

The journey starts by making the first step. That step is as a nation we need to wean ourselves off oil. Can solar, hydro and wind do it all? It can make up a substantial part of our energy needs but we need other new inventions to come to light; better cars to take care of our locomotion needs, design and run more efficient manufacturing facilities, homes need to be more passive in their design. The individual can make the biggest contribution to getting off the oil addiction. Industry needs to supply the product and government needs to provide the vision and environment for the investment.

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