PickensPlan

T. Boone Pickens Media Coverage 3.13.09

Total of 17 Placements

- Print: 6
- Blog/Online: 7
- Broadcast: 4

Coverage Summary:

Pickens has a blog on *The Huffington Post* that discusses AT&T's announcement to switch 8,000 vehicles to natural gas. *The Journal of Commerce Online* also has a story on the AT&T news which includes quotes from Pickens' statement.

The *Kansas City Star* included a brief on the upcoming Virtual March. The Virtual March is also mentioned in a piece on *Zacks* which details AEP's endorsement of The Pickens Plan.

Print Placements (Full Articles Below)

- **Wind is Behind this CEO's Sales** – *Del Mar Times* – 3/12/09
- **What Dallasites are Billionaires?** – *Dallas Business Journal* – 3/12/09
  - *Conde Nast Portfolio*
  - *MSN Money*
- **Gallup: Global Warming Skepticism Growing in U.S.** – *Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune* – 3/12/09
- **The Buzz: Pickens Calls for March on D.C. for Energy Independence** – *Kansas City Star* – 3/12/09

Blog/Online Placements (Full Articles Below)

- **Don't Give Up on Natural Gas –** *HoweStreet* – 3/12/09
- **Is H2O the New CO2?** – *Triple Pundit* – 3/12/09
- **When Stars Align** – *The Huffington Post* – 3/12/09
- **AT&T Boosts Alternative Fuels** – *The Journal of Commerce Online* – 3/12/09
- **Obama Braces for Big Oil Backlash** – *Mother Nature Network* – 3/12/09
- **What's Really Going On** – *Intellectual Conservative* – 3/13/09
- **AEP Joining Pickens Army** – *Zacks* – 3/13/09

PRINT COVERAGE

Wind is Behind this CEO's Sales – *Del Mar Times* – 3/12/09

Sam Brown may reside in Solana Beach, but his work takes him to National City, where he owns and operates two companies - Knight & Carver YachtCenter and Knight & Carver Wind Group.

With a finance degree from the University of Miami and a law degree from California Western School of Law, Brown brought his bottom-line skills to both firms in 2001. Now he presides over a combined work force of nearly 400 employees.

KC YachtCenter, regarded worldwide as a megayacht refit center, services a vast array of large vessels, including luxury yachts as large as 300 feet. Some of the world's largest yachts have been refurbished at Knight & Carver in recent years.

The Wind Group has enjoyed rapid growth, a rarity in this time of layoffs and economic woes. The company operates two wind blade factories - one in National City, another in Howard, S.D. - with other locations in the works.

Naturally, with his hectic schedule and extensive travel, Brown's favorite resting place is his Solana Beach home, along with his wife, Maureen, and the couple's two children, Brittany, 12, and Joseph, 17.

What brought you to Solana Beach?
I came to San Diego to go to law school (at California Western School of Law) back in 1980.

My very first day I was here, some friends took me to the San Diego County Fair. I thought, "This is really cool." Growing up in Massachusetts, it was how I had always pictured Southern California. At that moment, I decided I wanted to live here. And I've lived here ever since.

What keeps you in Solana Beach?
Our proximity to the ocean, great restaurants and schools.

If you could snap your fingers and have it done, what might you add, subtract or improve in Solana Beach?
It'd be great if we had a better selection of family-friendly restaurants. And a skateboard park like they have in Carmel Valley.

Who or what inspires you?
My wife, Maureen, is my greatest source of inspiration.

If you hosted a dinner party for eight, whom (living or deceased) would you invite?
I think President Obama would be great. He'd be my No. 1 choice. Former GE CEO Jack Welch, because he changed American business. T. Boone Pickens, because he believes in wind energy as much as I do. Winston Churchill, because he's a great negotiator and smoked cigars, like I used to. And Howard Stern, because he's outrageous. Also, my son, Joseph, because he'd be inspired. And my daughter, Brittany, because she'd get all their autographs. And me. Am I invited?

What are you listening to currently?
I'm listening to classic rock. I just got Sirius/XM satellite radio installed in my vehicles, including my Harley-Davidson Soft-tail motorcycle.

What was the last thing you read?
"Hot, Flat, and Crowded" by Thomas L. Friedman. It's the gold standard guide to sustainable living in the 21st century.

What is your most prized possession?
My family and my Harley - in that order.

Describe your greatest accomplishment.
Succeeding in a financial turnaround of our companies (yacht repair and wind energy) and creating 400 good-paying jobs here in San Diego and in South Dakota.

What is your motto?
Profit isn't optional.

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What Dallasites are Billionaires? – *Dallas Business Journal* – 3/12/09

Recession woes aside, several Dallas-Fort Worth area billionaires managed to make their way onto “The World’s Billionaires 2009” list, recently published by Forbes magazine.

Fort Worth resident Alice Walton, 59, daughter of the late Sam Walton, ranked highest on the list among the locals. Walton, who inherited part of the Wal-Mart fortune, ranks 12th on the Forbes list with a net worth of $17.6 billion.

Forbes noted that Wal-Mart remains a strong retailer in down times thanks to a business model that is focused on discount prices. Alice’s sister-in-law Christy, 54, and brother S. Robson Walton, 65, also rank 12th alongside her, while brother Jim Walton, 61, ranks 11th.

Fort Worth is home to another member of the 2009 billionaire list: Robert Bass, 61, who inherited and continues to grow the Bass family fortune. Forbes ranks Bass 110th on the list of 468 billionaires, with an estimated net worth of $4.5 billion. The Bass fortune was grown in the oil industry and through investments.

Another Texan ties Bass for the 110th spot. Self-made billionaire Henry Ross Perot Sr., 78, is worth $4.5 billion. Perot made his fortune after founding Electronic Data Systems in 1962. He sold EDS to General Motors for $2.5 billion and later formed data processing company Perot Systems. Forbes notes that Perot and his son sold natural gas interests under land owned by the Perots’ Hillwood real estate platform on Texas’ Barnett Shale to Quicksilver Resources.

Ray Lee Hunt, 66, ranked 261st on the list with a net worth of $2.5 billion. Hunt is the youngest son of H.L. Hunt, whose fortune grew in the oil and real estate sectors.

Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban, 50, landed in the 296th spot on the list. Cuban has a net worth of $2.3 billion, according to Forbes . He made his money in the Internet industry with the creation and sale of Broadcast.com.

Three more Bass family members followed Cuban on the list: Lee Bass, 52, and Sid Bass, 66, (each ranked 334 with $2 billion apiece) and Edward Bass, 64 (ranked 468, $1.5 billion).

Oilman T. Boone Pickens, 80, also ranked 334th on the list. Forbes says declining energy prices caught him off- guard, causing him to lose $1 billion in energy funds in nine months. Regardless, he still ranks among the world's billionaires with $2 billion.

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Gallup: Global Warming Skepticism Growing in U.S. – *Minneapolis-St. Paul Star Tribune* – 3/12/09

By Paul Walsh

More Americans are skeptical about the seriousness of global warming than ever before, according to a survey released this week by the Gallup organization.

A record 41 percent now say news coverage of global warming is exaggerated, while 57 percent say coverage is generally on the mark or underestimated. As recently as 2006, Gallup found that 30 percent viewed news coverage of global warming as exaggerated vs. 66 who did not.

Gallup conducted the survey in telephone interviews with 1,012 national adults March 5-8, 2009. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

The poll also found that Republicans are more doubtful about global warming than Democrats or Independents. By age, older respondents were more skeptical than younger people.

Gallup also found that those questioned were more concerned about several other environmental issues -- polluted water, toxins in the soil, loss of the rain forests, etc. -- than global warming.

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The Buzz: Pickens Calls for March on D.C. for Energy Independence – *Kansas City Star* – 3/12/09

Virtual billionaire

Oil executive T. Boone Pickens is organizing a Virtual March on Washington, D.C., for Energy Independence on April 1-3.

Pickens is calling on the “Pickens New Energy Army” to ask Congress to take action now to develop a comprehensive U.S. energy plan that will make the country energy independent and reduce the nation’s dependence on foreign oil.

The Buzz says you’ve just got to love T. Boone, and not just for his goofy name, which reminds one of P.T. Barnum.

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BLOG/ONLINE COVERAGE

Don’t Give Up on Natural Gas – *HoweStreet* – 3/12/09

By Chris Mayer

Natural gas stocks look like gold pieces falling out of Mr. Market's pockets. Time to scoop 'em up, or at least hold what you have. Don't toss 'em out, because Mr. Market has blind spots!

I am still bullish on natural gas, for several reasons. On the supply side, the production decline rates on natural gas fields are steeper than those of oil. In fact, production from many of the new shale plays that brought on so much new supply can drop off as much as 70% after the first year! Plus, the cost structure of the industry is much higher than it ever was. We saw a lot of cutbacks when natural gas prices hit $8. As natural gas prices linger around here in the $4 range, a lot of supply will come out of the market quickly.

On the demand side, natural gas has some favorable tailwinds. It will likely benefit from any emission caps and penalties put on coal. A recent issue of Petroleum Review included a piece about gas- fired power plants entering a new golden age. Then there is the T. Boone Pickens' angle on gas-powered vehicles.

Even now, the growth rate in the number of natural gas-powered buses and trucks in operation is north of 25% annually. And as Pickens has often pointed out, the U.S. has lots of natural gas. So any plan to reduce our dependence on foreign oil must include our vast reservoir of natural gas.

So it seems natural gas has a good future, even though the market relentlessly pounds away at the share price of natural gas producers and drillers. It is a temporary state of affairs. In the private market - where, presumably, buyers and sellers are more knowledgeable - valuations have held much firmer.

Today, investors may look upon the market as they might look on an old friend in a padded cell. It's a bit nutty. Some valuations just don't make sense. The market's estimation of Contango Oil & Gas (MCF:amex) is proof in the pudding.
How can I recommend a natural gas producer at a time like this, you may be wondering? After all, look at what's happened to natural gas - it's falling like a bungee-jumper…without a bungee cord.

That’s true. But some natural gas companies can make money even at $4 natural gas. Contango is one of them. Its wells are prime examples of "tangible assets that sweat" - physical assets that pour off cash, our favorite kind of investment. Ken Peak, the CEO and largest individual shareholder, says that Contango earns $10 million a month in after-tax free cash flow at $5 gas. That's $120 million a year in free cash flow on a stock that trades for $533 million market cap. In other words, at $5 gas, the stock would be selling trades for less than five times free cash flow!

Of course, Contango’s depressed valuation is no accident. Investors are unloading the stock, partly because natural gas prices have already tumbled and partly because of the fear that they might tumble some more. But knowing what we know about how rapidly depleting natural gas deplete, we are very tempted to believe that natural gas is too darn cheap. If we get to $8 natural gas, Contango will gush cash flow.

Its production costs are about $2.18 per mcf, all in.

Natural gas ought to correct very quickly this time around. Annual natural gas depletion in the U.S. is around 36% per year. So it wouldn't take a lot of production cuts to quickly get a steep drop in supply.

As it is, the company has zero debt, another rarity. As of December 30, it had $77 million in cash, or nearly $5 per share.

And I admire Peak, who is one of those smart eggs who seems to coolly put his money in the right places time and time again. His track record is impressive. In December 2007, he sold Contango's shale acreage for $338 million. Contango's cost was only $38 million, so he turned a net profit of $300 million for Contango. In February of 2008, he sold Contango's interest in an LNG project for $68 million.

Contango's cost basis was $2 million. Contango itself is a great story of wealth creation. Peak started it in 1999. The total capital put into the business was $50 million - never a cent more than that. Today, Contango's market cap - even at this depressed level - is over $500 million.

How did Peak create such wealth? King Arthur had Excalibur, Charlemagne had Flamberge and Ken Peak has Dutch and Mary Rose. Big finds in these fields in the Gulf of Mexico powered the wealth creation story at Contango. The company now has proven reserves of 369 Bcfe. So based on Contango's current market cap, you get these reserves for only about $1.50 per Mcf - a super cheap price. These are low-cost and high-price reserves. It's the good stuff, to put it bluntly. "You get 22 [Mcfe] every time you buy a share," says Peak.

The stock is so cheap Peak worries some deep-pocketed bully will come along and try to steal it. Peak recently adopted a shareholder rights plan that makes such a takeover more difficult. As he put it: "Because the stock price is so far down, I didn't want the company to be vulnerable where some of the stockholders, including me, are taken advantage of."

The plan would normally bother me, but not in this case. Peak wants to get paid for what he has, and he knows what it is worth. Management owns 24% of the company. When they get paid, so do we.

He thought about selling Contango earlier in 2008, but couldn't get a price he was happy with. "Our seven wells [alone] are worth billions," he declares. Again, the market says Contango is worth only $544 million as I write. Ultimately, I think Peak will sell the company. I think the purchase price will be at least $95 per share. But even if that doesn't happen, Contango is a great bargain here at the current quote of $33.

Contango is also buying back its own stock. Peak says Contango enjoys a 50% after-tax return on these purchases. With the share price so low, buybacks add a lot of value to net asset value (NAV) because Contango is buying proven natural gas reserves at prices much cheaper than what it would cost you to find them with a drill bit. Plus, Contango has exploratory blocks still in the hopper. So there is more upside here.

Stay the course.

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Is H2O the New CO2? – *Triple Pundit* – 3/12/09

When it comes to urgent environmental crises, water is clearly in a class of its own. Few other issues have the same far-reaching impact on human health and well-being, economic sustainability, or national security. After all, you can live without oil; you can't live without water. So it's no surprise that many of the latest environmental campaigns along with a growing media debate are posing the question, "Is water the new carbon?"

Up to this point, oil and resulting C02 emissions have gotten most of the attention, but many experts warn that declining water supply and failing water infrastructure globally may soon become the world's next major crisis if meaningful action isn't taken soon.

They're Not Making Any More of It

About 70 percent of the earth's surface consists of water, but only 3 percent of it is freshwater, and less than a third of that is drinkable. The amount of water on the planet has remained static, due to the replenishing cycle of rain and evaporation over the past four billion years. Today, 6.5 billion people share that same fixed supply and even now, more than a third of the world doesn't have enough water. Now imagine the situation when the global population adds another three billion people in the next 50 years.

Like so many of our natural resources, water is undervalued relative to its cost, which is adding to the problem and encouraging waste and inefficiency. Consider that some 70 percent of the quality drinking water flowing into North American or European homes is flushed down the toilet or used for cleaning. A significant amount of freshwater is lost through leaking pipes and outmoded infrastructure, but fixing these systems could cost trillions of dollars.

Freshwater supplies are decreasing globally due to waste, mismanagement, over-consumption and pollution. But the demand globally is increasing by an expanding global middle class whose appetite for consumer goods, personal transportation, electricity, and western diets filled with meat and dairy all heavily impact water supplies.

Big Business Responds

On a positive note, the folks at GreenBiz.com recently hosted their second annual State of Green Business Panel Discussion where leading corporations discussed how they are responding to water use issues. For example, Coca-Cola recently announced water neutral goals. They are pledging by 2010 to return to the environment all water used in their manufacturing clean enough for fish and farms. Companies like GE and IBM are also announcing reduction goals for freshwater.

Michael Kobori, VP of Supply Chain Social and Environmental Sustainability for Levi Strauss stressed the need to consider the full lifecycle of a product to truly assess the water footprint. The manufacturer only controls a portion of that footprint, but can take actions to impact water usage by consumers. As an example, one pair of 501 jeans uses 3,480 liters of water (or about 920 gallons): 49% is used in cotton growing, 45% in home laundering and just 5% in milling and manufacturing, which Levi's directly controls. To address the consumer portion of water consumption, the company has changed the care label in the jeans to "wash in cold water and tumble dry." And Levi's is working with Proctor and Gamble's coldwater Tide on in-store advertising in Wal-Mart stores which encourages consumers to wash less and use cold water.

Jason Morrison, Director of Economic Globalization and the Environment Program at the Pacific Institute highlighted the need for education around water issues. The Pacific Institute encourages companies to address water as a strategic initiative, and has published a report with BSR (Business for Social Responsibility) offering a framework for understanding water issues. He also described the CEO Mandate a public-private initiative designed to assist companies in the development, implementation and disclosure of water sustainability policies and practices.

Who Are the Water Winners?

Beyond big business, governments are also responding. According to the BBC News, "When water availability drops below 1500 cubic meters per person per year, a country needs to start importing food, particularly water intense crops." Saudi Arabia faces this problem. Twenty other countries fell below this threshold in 2000, and another 14 will join them by 2030.

China, South Korea, and Saudi Arabia have all taken steps to lease agricultural land in Africa. Water is the main reason these countries can't grow enough food for their people. By the way, Brazil, Russia and Canada top the list of water rich nations.

The Blood, Guts, and Feathers of the Thing

Four years ago, the Chicago Climate Exchange broke new ground by providing industries with a way to reduce their total emissions through the trading of carbon credits. Now at least one member of the Exchange sees a similar future in solving the problems of water pollution and shortages. “When I got involved in carbon offset development, it became obvious that water was potentially a bigger market than even carbon,” says John Regan. Regan founded the Environmental Credit Corp., a carbon-credit supplier on the Chicago Climate Exchange.

Carbon reduction is a relatively slow evolution. It takes 25 to 50 years before you see the impact of what you do today. If you don’t solve the water impacts in five years, you’ll have a crisis on your hands.

Just like a carbon trading scheme, under a water cap and trade system, water polluters would have the option to reduce pollution in their own operations, or to purchase pollution-control credits from another source.

The former oil tycoon turned wind tycoon, T. Boone Pickens, is now poised to become America’s first water tycoon. According to Business Week, Pickens owns more water than any other individual in the U.S. and is looking to control even more. He hopes to sell his water, some 65 billion gallons a year, to Dallas. He plans to move the water over the same corridor that would transport the electricity generated on his enormous wind farm. As far as Pickens is concerned, it's a simple matter of supply and demand. "There are people who will buy the water when they need it. And the people who have the water want to sell it. That's the blood, guts, and feathers of the thing," he says.

In fact, many business opportunities exist for a new breed of water entrepreneurs as highlighted in a recent Triple Pundit article. The New York Times recently reported a Bureau of Labor Statistics finding that demand for hydrologists (scientists who study the distribution, circulation and physical properties of water) is predicted to grow 24 percent from 2006 to 2016, much faster than the average for all occupations.

Aqua Consciousness

There’s no question that carbon has gotten most of the attention over the past few years. Emma Stewart from the Environmental Defense Fund refers to this single-minded approach as “carbon myopia”:

[A] singular focus on one ecological system, the atmosphere, may cause perverse outcomes or neglected crises in the hydrosphere or lithosphere. We see this clearly in the rush to produce lower carbon biofuels and the unintended consequences this has had on land use, biodiversity, water and other issues. To put it bluntly, your company does not live by carbon alone, but on water, oxygen, nitrogen, phosphorus, sulfur and hydrogen cycles.

Awareness and concern over water use is on the rise, triggering a response from big business, government, and entrepreneurs. But thankfully, an understanding of the interconnection among our natural systems is also growing. Hopefully this will keep us from trading one crisis for another (water for carbon) and fixing one thing as we break something else. On this the experts also agree: A sustainable future depends on a balanced systems approach.

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When Stars Align – *The Huffington Post* – 3/12/09

By T. Boone Pickens

Once in a great while events converge to make, not just news, but to make a real difference. This is one of those times.

Yesterday, Randall Stephenson, the Chairman and CEO of AT&T announced that his company was taking a giant step forward by replacing about 8,000 vehicles currently running on imported diesel with vehicles that run on domestic natural gas.

In a period when we have seen oil prices swing between $147 per barrel last summer to just over $30 per barrel this winter it is more clear than ever that American businesses cannot remain at the mercy of foreign oil suppliers.

I have been talking about reducing our dependence on foreign oil for years, and last July I introduced the Pickens Plan to show the path to make that happen.

I started talking about building out our wind and solar capacity to replace about 20 percent of the power that is now produced by using natural gas. Then I talked about using the natural gas we wouldn't need to generate electricity and use it as a transportation fuel to replace foreign oil.

Last year we spent upwards of $475 billion on foreign oil. And we imported about two-thirds of all the oil we used. It was clear to me that America was at risk. We were at risk for some foreign government from the Middle East, or Africa or South America to decide to turn a valve and cut our supplies.

The Pickens Plan is designed to reduce our exposure and it's having an impact.

As Keith Johnson wrote in his Wall Street Journal blog: "Telecoms titan AT&T has apparently been listening to the endless appeals by T. Boone Pickens to start using natural gas for cars."

The AT&T deal is a one-for-one trade. For every gallon-equivalent that AT&T uses in natural gas, that is a gallon that doesn't have to be imported.

There has been a great deal of resistance to being "green" on the part of a lot of companies. Too expensive, too chi-chi, too whatever.

Well, AT&T isn't in the business of losing money. In fact, in the face of this bleak economy, AT&T's market cap is within a few percentage points of where it was this time last year.
I wish I could say that.

So, when a company like AT&T says it is making a major commitment to come off foreign oil and go to domestic alternative fuels, that is big news. There are all kinds of good reasons for doing this. It is better for the environment -- natural gas is cleaner than diesel or gasoline. It is better for the company's bottom line -- they can plan for a more stable price and a much more stable supply. It is better for America -- the benefit of keeping American dollars circulating at home rather than in places like the Middle East is something even a geologist can understand.

Carl Pope, Executive Director of the Sierra Club, who has been behind the Pickens Plan since its earliest days also congratulated AT&T but, on the Sierra Club website pointed out that AT&T wanted to do even more:

"That's exciting, even wonderful, news. But the backstory is less cheerful. My sources indicate that AT&T was prepared to make an even larger commitment to CNG, but that the domestic auto industry wasn't willing to meet the customer demand -- and AT&T wanted in this economic moment to buy domestic."

That speaks to the momentum value to AT&T taking this step. The chief operating officers of other major corporations will be telling their transportation departments to take a look at what AT&T is doing and come back with a report on whether they should do it, too.

Smaller companies will look to the majors and say "if it's good for them to change 8,000 vehicles to natural gas, maybe I ought to look at my eight (or 80) trucks."

Finally, we should expect cash-starved cities, counties and states to start looking at their fleets and decide that they should begin moving to a clean, abundant, available and cheaper fuel source - natural gas.

When that happens the domestic auto industry will have found the market it says it is looking for. The stars have aligned and AT&T is a leader in making the skies clearer so those stars are brighter.

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AT&T Boosts Alternative Fuels – *The Journal of Commerce Online* – 3/12/09

By William B. Cassidy

Company to spend $565 million on 15,000 CNG, hybrid vehicles
Telecommunications giant AT&T will spend up to $565 million on 15,000 trucks and cars powered by compressed natural gas, a step hailed as the largest corporate commitment to CNG-powered vehicles to date in the United States.

The CNG commitment represents a big leap in AT&T's use of alternative fuels, and it may boost interest in increased use of domestic natural gas as an over-the-road fuel among freight truck and service-vehicle fleet operators nationwide.

"When a company the size and reputation of AT&T takes a leadership role like this, you know that other companies — large and small — are going to sit up straight and take a good hard look," said T. Boone Pickens, the billionaire oilman and investor who lobbies for increased use of domestic natural gas and other alternatives to oil-based fuels (see PickensPlan.com).

"When other fleet operators put their transportation teams on this, you're going to see a major shift away from imported diesel and onto domestic natural gas," Pickens said in a statement.

AT&T will replace about 8,000 gasoline-powered service vehicles with vehicles powered by domestically available CNG over the next five years at a cost of about $350 million. The company will spend about $215 million to replace 7,000 gasoline-powered cars with a variety of hybrid vehicles over the next 10 years.

As a result, the company expects a dramatic reduction in emissions. The CNG vehicles will emit approximately 25 percent less greenhouse gases than gasoline models.

This year, AT&T plans to add 800 CNG and hybrid electric vehicles to its fleet. Last year it rolled out 105 alternative fuel vehicles in 30 cities across the country.

AT&T's decision comes as the Obama administration and business advocates such as FedEx founder, chairman and CEO Frederick M. Smith and Pickens step up efforts to advocate greater use of natural gas and the electrification of transportation.

The company framed its decision in Obama's call for the development of clean technologies and green jobs. "AT&T and other U.S. corporations have a unique opportunity to partner with the new administration as it works to lead the country out of this economic downturn," said Randall Stephenson, chairman and CEO.

"While there are no easy solutions to the challenges facing our nation, this investment is a first step on our part to help boost other industries while at the same time encouraging wider use and production of efficient vehicles and domestic fuel alternatives."

There's been debate about which alternative to petroleum-based fuels is best: natural gas, electricity or biofuels or other solutions. The biggest handicap toward more extensive use of CNG is its relatively small distribution infrastructure compared with the retail distribution network for gasoline and diesel.

Short-haul freight and passenger transportation can be electrified using the existing power grid, advocates of battery-powered vehicles say, though that grid needs to be fed by either nuclear or coal-consuming power plants, raising other environmental concerns.

AT&T said its pilot programs prove that a mix of alternative-fuel solutions is best for its fleet and that multiple technologies can help reduce operating costs over time, while reducing fuel consumption.

"This is part of a long-term strategy that will help us continue to cut operating costs, reduce emissions in the communities we serve and make our business even more sustainable," said Stephenson.

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Obama Braces for Big Oil Backlash – *Mother Nature Network* – 3/12/09

By Karl Burkart

Little known fact: While most every other industry was falling to pieces last year, the oil industry posted record profits. ExxonMobil alone made $45 billion. So Obama is feeling little sympathy as he attempts to bolster the sinking U.S. economy by going after the clearly unnecessary tax credits the industry currently enjoys.

If you've read my previous post tracing big oil money in Washington, you might guess that all hell is breaking loose as a result. According to a recent Business Week report, the industry is flying their top brass to Washington and mustering a PR army that will target not only politicians but all the major press outlets with a 1-2 punch message:
Eliminating tax breaks for the oil industry will result in the loss of millions of jobs and increased dependence on foreign oil.
First off, if the industry has just made record profits off the backs of hard-working Americans struggling to make ends meet (remember that $4 gallon of gas last year?) one would think they could afford to hedge their own job losses. And to the point that the removal of the off-shore tax credit will increase dependence on foreign oil ... just not true.

Even if the industry did require the tax incentives to open new wells (which they don't — Bush lifted the restriction last year) new wells will not significantly help the situation for at least five years (optimistically) to 10 years (realistically) when they will go into full production. And at best, it is estimated that there is only about 10-12 years worth of extractable oil out there. So the enormous infrastructure investment would never really break even (unless of course the American public shoulders the burden).

Why then wouldn't we want to direct that money towards a solution that will provide long-term stability?

This is the question that Obama and the DOE are facing. For a fraction of the price, according to T. Boone Pickens who spoke last week at ECO:nomics summit, we could convert our trucking fleet to natural gas (which is cheap, abundant, burns cleaner and is domestic). That would buy time to develop technologies like biofuels and batteries, that could provide a long-term solution. And more importantly, we would be creating jobs in a growing industry rather than a dying one.

If you want to lend your hand in support of the President, you can sign a petition that Moveon.org is currently circulating called "Stop Subsidies for Big Oil."

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What's Really Going On – *Intellectual Conservative* – 3/13/09

By Phillip Ellis Jackson

Barack Obama is half-way through his first 100 days in office, and the country is a mess. The stock market continues to tank, and the best advice our illustrious leader has for the nation is to just suck it up, because things are going to get a lot worse before they get better.

Campaign promises for complete transparency have become completely opaque as life-altering bills are negotiated in Congressional back rooms, and signed into law without even the formality of a public hearing. Promises to veto pork-laden legislation and curb earmark abuse have given way to blaming yet-to-be-signed legislation on a previous Administration; and when that excuse doesn't pass the laugh test, to re-define an end to pork and earmarks as a theoretical goal, not an actual policy objective.

Barack Obama promised us hope and change. We've seen very little real change as far as the process of government goes, and virtually no hope that things are getting better anytime soon. So, are you confused about the way things are going in Washington? Don't be. In fact, it's all rather simple to understand.

I. Growing vs. dividing the economic pie

First, remember the off-script comments of Candidate Obama in his famous Joe the Plumber confrontation. The proper role of government isn't to facilitate the growth of wealth. Rather, it's to spread the wealth. Growing wealth means increasing the size of the proverbial pie, which is a harder thing to do than spreading the wealth, which simply means cutting up the existing pie differently. Thus the need to define the "rich" as families (or small businesses) making more than $250,000, or $200,000, or $180,000, or whatever arbitrary number is needed to make this redistributionist formula work.

All this focus on $250,000 "wealth" will have the desired effect of capping people's expectations. Once the target has been identified, those in the blast zone do everything they can to mitigate their exposure. If you're a small businessman like me, it means sidelining any intention to expand my business interests. This means jobs lost when people get laid off, jobs never created when people don't get hired in the first place, and a focus on personal wealth preservation rather than expanding the economic pie.

Because I don't have an offshore account or am not a Democrat party official, there is only so much tax avoidance I can manage. I'll do what I can with the limited resources I have at my disposal, but in the end I'll still wind up in the top tax bracket. So mission accomplished from the government's perspective.

II. How limiting private wealth helps Washington

Why mission accomplished? Because putting the damper on private wealth creation serves two purposes. First, it "equalizes" family incomes by dramatically reducing the gap between those who have and those who don't. Never mind that those who have worked, saved, scrimped, educated themselves, sacrificed, and took risks to secure that advantage (that is, unless they were born Kennedys, at which point it's okay to inherit one's money).

The fact that I have more money or property than you do is inherently unfair. Like the right to privacy which can't be found in the Constitution but has been theorized to exist, and therefore is real, the notion of fairness now becomes a quasi-Constitutional benchmark. Is the private accumulation of capital permitted by the Constitution? Technically yes, but it isn't fair to have really "rich" people (i.e. those making $250K, $200K, $180K etc.), so we'll just tax the living hell out of them to destroy their incentive to make more wealth, and confiscate the "excessive amount" of wealth they've already unfairly accumulated.

Second, by destroying private wealth accumulation, the only way to actually grow the economy is to have the government do it. Since that greedy bastard Phil Jackson is no longer willing to hire people and create new businesses (the unsuccessful ones causing him to lose his investment, and the successful ones having their profits taxed away in the name of fairness), then by God the Government will step in and fill the vacuum.

These jobs, of course, will either be civil service positions, thus the employee owes his/her continued economic well being to continuing governmental support; or they'll be good paying union jobs, where the employee will owe his continued economic well being to continued support of the union. Individual initiative plays no role here in wealth creation. In fact, in the name of fairness, those who have the talent and ability to make more of their lives will just have to suck it up and take comfort in the knowledge that those who don't have your talents or abilities, or won't make the sacrifices or take the risks you would, will not be denied the fruits of the nation's collective labor. After all, it's only fair.

This is why in the face of a crashing stock market, the Obama Administration has no interest in following the daily ups and downs (or more precisely, the daily downs and down furthers) of the New York Stock Exchange. As it plunges, so does the disparity between rich and poor as the "rich" people's 401K's and other investments crash along with it. And in keeping with the maxim that no good crisis deserves to go to waste, two additional "benefits" occur.

III. The additional benefits of an economic downturn

First, don't expect to hear anything for the next decade or two about privatizing social security. Never mind that privatization was only intended for the young, who had a 30-40 year horizon; not for old farts like me in their fifties and sixties. It's the government's role to take care of you – and thus control you — in your old age, and we can't have anything interfere with this natural order of things. You'll take your 1-3% annual growth in benefits and like it, and expect no more.

As a side note, this has the additional salutary effect of helping to control medical costs. When we adopt a Canadian or European-style national health system that assigns medical benefits on a triage basis, there's no temptation to dip into your private savings for a medical procedure to save the life of a 70-year-old person, because you will have no unfair, extra money available to pay for such an operation. Society's resources can be better directed to treating a much younger voter, I mean person, while you take comfort in the fact that you've lived a wonderful life and now need to move on. (And I don't mean changing government-subsidized apartments.)

Second, as the stock market plunges, the value of American companies plunge. This, of course, requires the government to step in at some point and "rescue" them. However, don't think of this as a Coast Guard cutter tossing a drowning man a life preserver. Rather, imagine a government bureaucrat holding a thirty-page personal services contract requiring you to make major lifestyle changes before you'll be thrown a rope. Government bailout money comes with strings. For the States, it's those pesky requirements to enact new laws Washington likes, or overturn existing laws the Federal Government doesn't appreciate. For the private sector — using Detroit as an example — it's building the kind of car Barney Frank wants, whether there's a real market for it or not.

The more the government gets to bail out the economy, the more it controls the economy. The more the government ruins the economy, the more there is to bail out. This is why the first Obama stimulus package contained no stimulus at all. It was a vehicle to enact thirty years of pent-up liberal legislation. The more the business community studied it, the deeper the Dow Jones sank.

IV. When the private sector actually has to be helped

Stimulus II has been proposed for this summer because, by then, about half the market's value will have vanished, and unemployment will start to hit double digits. American business will have exhausted its reserves, and what is now simply damaging to the country's future will become really damaging. This is when an actual bail-out law could see the light of day that contains limited private sector inducements, enough to stop the decline and maybe creep things up a little.

Once Stimulus II works its magic, whatever is left of American private enterprise will become the new foundation for the US economy; one that is firmly under the control of elected officials and the bureaucrats that support them. Presto-chango, in less than a year we'll go from market capitalism to state socialism, and thanks to the media, with the ignorant American public hailing the people who wrecked the economy as the ones who saved it.

V. Can the present trend be reversed?

Now let me get you really depressed. I don't see any way out of this situation. Counter-action requires two things: awareness and leadership. The media will do its best to hide or excuse the Obama administration's duplicity and incompetence. What they can't hide, Congress will address through a reauthorization of the Fairness Doctrine (albeit by another name). Even in the best of times, when information is readily available, most people would rather watch MTV or a sporting event than try to understand what is really going on in Washington. Suppressing what little truth exists magnifies this ignorance a thousandfold.

As for opposition leadership, even if the message could successfully get out, I don't see where it would come from. Yes, the Republicans held together for the most part in blocking the first Obama stimulus package (or more accurately, the Pelosi-Reed stimulus package), claiming that it had too much pork and wasteful spending. But when it came to advancing these same principles in the recent continuing authorization of government services, the Republicans were just as pork-filled as the Democrats. No one seriously believes that if the majority of current Republican Congressmen and Senators were suddenly to gain power, anything fundamental would change. Sure, we'd have less overt anti-capitalist legislation, but as for eliminating government waste and pork, it would be like re-arranging deck chairs on the Titanic time.

Add to this the fact that liberals with money are willing to spend their money on acquiring power, while conservatives with money are in it solely for themselves. I'm not speaking here about the Obama-rich conservatives making $250,000 or so. They'll write a check for a thousand or two every once and a while. Rather, I'm comparing the George Soros' of the world to the Boone Pickens' of the world. Soros pumped in bazillions of his own dough to create Moveon.org to achieve a political goal. Boone Pickens pumped in $25-50 million of his own money to educate the country about the benefits of wind power and natural gas — two commodities he just happens to have a direct financial interest in promoting.

The wealthy Left aspires to power to exert control over others, and reshape the country into its image. The wealthy Right uses the acquisition of power as a means to further line their own pockets. Until the ROWGs (rich old white guys) on our side look beyond their own immediate interests, we're going to keep losing this battle.

VI. When the cure is as bad as the disease

But all is not lost. There are two ways the Socialist Express can be stopped, neither of them appealing.

The first involves the same thing that typically brings down Liberal Democrat administrations: reaching too far, too fast. By cramming cap and trade, some version of the Kyoto treaty, radical health care reform/rationing, and other life-changing social and economic programs down the throats of the American people all at once, they risk a backlash.

Everybody loves health care reform, until they have to wait 3 months to see a doctor about a non-life threatening injury. Everybody wants to save the planet, until their heating and gas bill reaches stratospheric levels. Then, there's a backlash — and if the opposition party actually appears to stand for something, they have an opportunity to win despite the media's efforts to swing the election.

Second, there are exogenous events that can change the public's mood. The Left/Media took Katrina and transformed a natural disaster amplified by corrupt Louisiana politics (which neglected the levies and had no real evacuation plan for New Orleans) into a Bush Administration problem. The Right will have no such help re-defining Obama's legitimate mistakes, until the mistakes can no longer be excused away.

If this country is attacked again in a significant way on Obama's watch, no amount of backtracking and fancy dancing will explain away the current administration's complicity. Their focus on undoing many of the Bush Administration's security measures, from closing Gitmo, to watering down terrorist surveillance, to trying to get out of Iraq and Afghanistan as fast as they can, will in the words of an anonymous Obama supporter, finally "come home to roost."

So there you have it. Short of a man-made economic disaster or enemy attack, we're totally screwed. But, at least now you can understand how it got this way, and why short of war or economic collapse to change the nation's course, things will never be the same again once we implement our Obamatopia.

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AEP Joining Pickens Army – *Zacks* – 3/13/09

By Jon Kolb

American Electric Power & the Pickens Army to March Together for Energy Independence

The T. Boone Pickens-led "Pickens Army," with 1.4 million members, announced that American Electric Power Company (AEP), one of the major of electric energy utilities in the US, signed up for the "Pickens Plan" to help establish a 21st Century-era transmission grid.

To bring more renewable energy to market, AEP must have improved transmission. The Chairman, President and CEO of American Electric Power, Mike Morris, and the utility's 5 million customers, collectively seek greater energy efficiency.

American Electric Power supports a more diversified and domestic-based energy supply mix, increased energy efficiency and greater investment in new energy technologies. The pending US energy policy will play a central role in AEP's economic recovery and support for modernizing its electric system.

AEP Management recognizes that as alternative energy sources continue to increase in usage, the utility will require a "smarter," modern and more efficient transmission system that can transmit energy from remote locations where it is produced to where it is needed at any given time.

The new plan includes such possibilities as servicing the high demand for electricity on a hot summer day in New York with power including wind from Kansas and a few hours later shifting that power to meet the same energy demand in Southern California. However, this ability will require a modernized transmission grid.

AEP and the Pickens Army are partners in the Virtual March on Washington that will take place April 1-3.

AEP operates as an electric utility in 11 states and owns the nation's largest electricity transmission systems -- so they are an important part of realizing the Pickens Army's vision for wind.

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BROADCAST COVERAGE

1. Worldwide Exchange **DMA: N/A**
CNBC (---) National **Spot Cost: $65**
03/12/2009 04:00 AM - 05:00 AM **Est. Audience: 13,152**
Available formats: QuickView, DVD, CD, digital link, videotape, transcript, NewsBoard

00:09:16 oil down 7 %...oil has run from thirty five up to forty seven, forty eight yesterday ... moving back today.yes, inventory numbers were bearish ... I think alot of shorts were emboldened by today's numbers ... I think it setting up for another short squeeze ... I think **Boone Pickens** said it somewhere before he thinks 60 before forty..I think you will see 50 befoer 40 00:10:42

2. The Tonight Show **DMA: N/A**
NBC (---) National **Spot Cost: $59,310**
03/12/2009 11:35 PM - 12:35 AM **Est. Audience: 4,038,000**
Available formats: QuickView, DVD, CD, digital link, videotape, transcript, NewsBoard

00:00:33 Monologue : Jay gives the opening monologue. Bernie Madoff was sent to jail. Women hate Jason from The Bachelor more. Madoff is running an NCAA tournament pool. Nadya Suleman appeared on Dr Phil, which was called KNocked Up. Barack Obama says American schools are falling behind. A teacher in FL was arrested for taking nude photos with a 14 year old student. Sarah Palin's daughter Bristol and Levi Johnston broke up. Assm Felix Ortiz wants to tax strip club patrons in NY.Economy is so bad that Batman drove a Ford Focus and **T Boone Pickens** is now Slim **Pickens**. George W Bush will give a speech in PA. John Edwards gave a speech at Brown University. DHS will study using BO as a lie detector. Apple is making a smaller iPod Shuffle. The NY Post reports that Eliot Spitzer's hooker Ashlee Dupre is taking yoga. C Murder will stay in jail in LA. Canada has an Obituary Channel that airs Clipper games. A-Rod had hip surgery before Madonna. V; deer in liquor store in Greensburg, PA. Amy Winehouse uses heroin almost as much as all of Russia. Harvard University researchers found that women with big butts are healthier during a diabetes survey. The Wall Street Journal reports that sideburns are a good alternative to Botox. Hugh Hefner's ex Holly Madison will be on Dancing With the Stars. 00:12:12

3. The Tom O'Brien Show **DMA: N/A**
Syndicated Radio (---) National
03/11/2009 04:00 PM - 05:00 PM

00:24:49 (discussion about energy independence) ....all plans that are out there , they have basically ... the plans I have seen are also going to cost a lot of money ... like **Boone Pickens** plan- that is a subsidy ..it is a monster subsidy...he wants roads coming in there...it is good but the fact of the matter is the politics and the soft money ... it's like well ---here's my plan but by the way we need 4 billion dollars and we are going to do this off to the side ..I just hope we keep the vision to see what energy independence will do for us 00:25:24

4. The WBAP Morning News **DMA: 5**
WBAP-AM 820 (ABC) Dallas/Fort Worth **Spot Cost: $295**
03/12/2009 06:00 AM - 07:00 AM **Est. Audience: 37,900**

00:56:00 (host and guest joke about people on Forbes list who have lost billions).....we have to tighten our belts**....Boone Pickens** had to lay off his belt tightener.... **Boone Pickens** by the way is down to 3 windmills and a ceiling fan...that is when you know times are tough... 00:57:59