

THE WHITE HOUSE

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WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: TODD STERN

SUBJECT: Climate Change Weekly Report

Communications

*Networks.* We had a good week in the media. The NBC and CBS evening news on Earth Day both did substantial features keyed off a new article in *Nature* on a study showing 1990, 1995 and 1997 to have been the three warmest years since at least 1400 A.D., and the 1990s to have been the warmest overall decade since that time. The study indicated that greenhouse gases are emerging as the dominant climate force in the 20th century. Both networks used good visual footage, including the recent break in the Antarctic ice shelf. CNN, meanwhile, did an Earth Day feature showing the kinds of products people can buy to make their homes more energy efficient.

*Albright speech.* The *Washington Post* ran a very good editorial today about Sec. Albright's Earth Day speech on climate change. In the speech, Sec. Albright announced a "diplomatic full court press" to encourage meaningful participation by developing countries, including the planned appointment of a special State Department Coordinator for Global Climate Change. The editorial also commended the Chile announcement, which I discussed with the *Post's* editorial writer, Fred Hiatt, last week.

*Science petition.* OSTP did good work behind the scenes with the National Academy of Sciences to beat back the Seitz petition. The *New York Times* ran a very good piece about the Academy disputing the petition (circulated by a past NAS President). The NAS noted that its most recent report on global warming, done in 1991, concluded that greenhouse warming posed a threat sufficient to merit a prompt response.

*Shell Oil.* Shell announced that it was leaving the Global Climate Coalition, the major anti-Kyoto corporate coalition. *Washington Post*: "Royal Dutch/Shell Group yesterday dealt a blow to oil industry efforts to fight the Kyoto Treaty by withdrawing from a coalition of oil companies, automakers, electric utilities and others opposed to the treaty's terms for reducing global warming." Shell issued a very good statement.

Domestic

*PATH.* We are continuing work on a May 4 event for you in Los Angeles rolling out the Partnership for Advancing Technologies in Housing (PATH), pending a final go-ahead from scheduling. Note that the LA City Council is expected to pass a resolution today declaring that they are formally joining the PATH partnership.

Handwritten notes and checkmarks on the left margin, including a large checkmark and the word "PATH" written vertically.

**Federal Energy.** We have been working with several agencies on a federal energy plan (lighting, windows and a lot more) that I hope to have to you within one-two weeks.

### Congressional

We have begun extensive staff level meetings in the House and Senate in support of our climate budget initiative, making joint visits with Treasury on the tax incentives. Sen. Bumpers and Rep. Fazio have agreed to circulate letters from Frank Raines explaining the high priority the Administration places on these budgetary requests and knocking down the bogus claim that our requests amount to "backdoor" implementation of the Kyoto treaty. We are also staying in close touch with the industries and advocacy groups most interested in our budget initiative. This week, several Republican Senators, led by Sen. Hagel, denounced Kyoto on the Senate floor. Sen. Kerry is writing an article for *Roll Call* supporting our efforts and responding to recent articles by Senators Murkowski and Hagel. On Thursday, Rep. McIntosh chaired a hearing entitled, "Kyoto Protocol: Is the Clinton-Gore Administration Selling Out America." Witnesses included Members (among them Sen. Hagel), economists, state/local officials, environmentalists and ordinary citizens. Witnesses, from EPA, Labor and DoE also testified. The hearing turned out to be more balanced than expected.

### Diplomatic

G-8. There are G-8 preparatory meetings this weekend in London. Jim Steinberg and Stu Eizenstat will be negotiating climate change language as part of both the Leaders' Communique and the Statement of Foreign Ministers. We are (1) pushing for strong language on why developing countries must participate and why it is in their self-interest to do so; (2) pushing for the establishment of a G-8 working group focussing on developing countries and the so-called flexibility mechanisms in preparation for the Buenos Aires Conference in November; and (3) pushing back on language proposed by the Brits suggesting that there should be limits on international trading. There is deep suspicion in the EU that we intend to use trading to buy our way out of our obligations, doing nothing at home. That is obviously false, and it is important for us to underscore the seriousness of our commitment to taking action here at home. At the same time, it would be highly undesirable to limit trading, interfering with the efficiency of a trading system and boosting the cost of reductions worldwide. The lower the worldwide cost of reducing carbon emissions, the more carbon we'll all be able to reduce.

cc: Vice President  
Erskine Bowles  
John Podesta  
Ron Klain  
Katie McGinty  
Gene Sperling  
Jim Steinberg  
Janet Yellen