

4/2/08: rev 2

Dave:

I just listened to your NYS PBS radio wind power piece (<<<http://tinyurl.com/2yb2vg>>>).

I owe you an apology as I clearly did not do a very good job of explaining the situation. Let me try to clarify:

1 - For instance, although you made a modest effort to summarize my position, it is more comprehensive than your one sentence summary might indicate. See below*.

2 - For instance when I said “It doesn’t work” I didn’t say that electricity wasn’t generated. I thought that I explained what I meant by saying (and writing to you) that:

- a) wind power is **not** a scientifically sound solution to help with global warming, and
- b) wind power is **not** a commercially viable source of energy on its own; and
- c) wind power is **not** environmentally responsible.

Yet you contradicted my statement by saying “The thing is it *does* work” without adequately explaining my statement, and without providing factual evidence to refute ANY of those three fundamental problems I made (which I also sent you written documentation about).

3 - For instance I gave you written references (an **eight page** document to be exact) to *numerous* technical articles that clearly demonstrate that this business is one of smoke and mirrors — yet you cited not a single one of these. Hmmm.

4 - For instance I gave you the names of several *independent* Ph D’s and energy experts (also in that written document) who have concluded that wind power is a superficial misguided effort — yet you quoted not a single one of these people. Hmmm.

On the other hand I advised you that the promoters (e.g. the NYSERDA’s of the world) were **not** objective sources, but were mostly people who advocate wind power as it is their job to do so — yet those were the types of people you chose to have speak in wind power’s behalf.

5 - Mr. Klapp (*who is directed by his boss to support renewables*) said that “a less-expensive source offsets a more expensive source”. This is quite misleading to non-technical people.

First of all, wind power is **more expensive** than any conventional source we have, so that would mean that wind power would never get on the grid. Oh, let me guess: he intends to ignore the enormous subsidies that make it the most expensive source. Right. Otherwise his position would fall apart.

Secondly, even if you buy his politically driven position that wind power is “less expensive”, what he actually says is that wind power *electrons* might well replace gas fired *electrons* on the grid, but that says nothing about the fact whether the gas fired electrons are still being generated in a reserve status, still creating CO2, and still being paid for by consumers.

Then you state that “coal and nuclear power are the cheapest and most reliable sources of electricity, then (Klapp says) wind power comes next.”

Dave, **this is an inaccurate statement** that (if it came from Mr. Klapp) should give you pause as to his knowledge of the facts. Hydroelectric is the cheapest and most reliable source of electricity we have in NY, and you (or he) didn’t even mention it. Hmmm.

6 - The unidentified “2005 study” you cite is likely from General Electric, a major supplier of wind power equipment. Please identify your sources so that listeners can decide whether they are objective. Again, no facts are provided for their very biased opinions.

For instance, Germany and Denmark have already reached the levels supposedly necessary (according to that report), yet not a single conventional power facility has been shut down, and in fact they continue to be built. **Where are the CO2 savings?** I repeatedly asked you that question over the last three months and so far you have not given me an answer.

Somehow it always seems that it comes down to that they will magically appear **in the future**. As I'm sure you are tired of hearing me say: there are some 50,000 wind turbines in operating in the world today.

That is clearly an adequate number to prove TODAY whether these speculative and politically motivated claims are accurate or not. I know that you heart's in the right place, Dave, so please join the people who are truly interested in making the planet a better place to live, **and insist on this verification**

7 - Then on to Mr. Connors who says that due to wind power “we are using fewer fossil fuels”, but I didn't hear the supporting facts that prove that. I'm sure you asked him to prove that statement, so *please forward me the evidence he provided you.*

Mr. Connors also says that “It is unlikely that a wind farm, **no matter how large it is**, will ever cause a coal facility to be turned off.” No matter how large it is: in other words thousands of turbines (like in California's Altamonte Pass) will still not shut down a single coal facility. *Think about the implications of that statement.*

He says that “we are turning coal facilities up and down anyway.” Firstly, we do NOT just turn coal facilities up and down momentarily (i.e. to correspond with wind fluctuations). Secondly, following his own logic then, so how has wind power made the situation better?

8 - Then you “quoted” the NAS study as saying that: “by 2020, wind farms will reduce our electricity related CO2 emissions by 4.5%... So there's a real number.”

Dave, I wrote you subsequent to our conversation to make **sure** that you absolutely understood that this was not a “real number” by ANY stretch of anyone's imagination. The NAS committee made NUMEROUS written qualifications to project that number.

The NAS report's exact wording is (my emphasis):

“Projections for future wind energy contributions to reduction of air-pollutant emissions in the US are **HIGHLY UNCERTAIN.**”

Then it says: “Using future **projections** ... the committee **estimates** ... that wind energy **probably** ... will contribute to offset **approximately** 4.5% of CO2 emissions...”

Four significant qualifiers in one sentence, yet your characterization of their report does not indicate the speculativeness of this number at all. A typical listener would take your statement that the NAS 4.5% is a definite, or at least very highly likely number.

It is absolutely no such thing.

You also did not clarify that electricity related CO2 emissions are only about a third of our total CO2 emissions, so the US CO2 savings optimistically may be about 1.5%. Big deal.

9 - I do not recall saying anything about the NAS estimate as being “a self-fulfilling prophecy.” That is not my belief.

What I did say (that you didn't mention), was that Jon Boone wrote about this very accurately (in “*Industrial Wind - A Bill of Goods*”), stating that the number was highly speculative, and dependent on several optimistic and unlikely outcomes. You acknowledged reading that — yet also made no comment in your report about that conclusion.

Further I then did say (which you did quote me) was that we already have an adequate number of turbines in operation today to remove all of this speculation, so why should there be any need for guesses about what may happen **twelve years** from now? You had no answer to that.

Additionally I subsequently gave you the name and contact info for a physicist on the NAS committee who said that he would be glad to explain the report and its assumptions to you in more detail. Since you didn't report on this, *what did he say?*

10-Then you talk about the *Wedges Theory*, written by *two Princeton* scientists. I have read their theory and corresponded with one of them. The bottom line is that the wind power wedge is **entirely dependent** on the ability to economically store the power generated. You did not mention that critical detail.

The fact is that no such ability exists — so, as of today, wind power is NOT a viable wedge.

You should have called them on a basic contradiction in their theory paper. Their title says: “Solving the Climate Problem for the Next 50 Years **with Current Technologies**”. Since economic storage of wind power electricity does not exist, how can this be called a “current technology”? This is typical of the foolishness seen in those supporting this wind power illusion, yes even from *scientists from Princeton*.

11-Mr. St. Cross (*who is also directed by his superiors to support renewables*) says that it is his *opinion* that there will be a “tipping point” if enough money is thrown at wind power. More speculation. *Is this piece about science fiction or what?*

It was **good** that you mentioned the ethanol situation. **That is EXACTLY where we are headed with all of this rose-colored glasses speculation.**

I say we'd be much better off forgetting wind power and investing about 25% of the money earmarked for it at improving conventional sources of electrical power, particularly nuclear. (See <<<http://tinyurl.com/29fmn8>>> for more info.)

12-Even given “the dire forecast about climate change” (more unproven hypothesis), **WHY** is wind power “a risk that must be taken”?

The bottom line is that wind power does not materially reduce CO2, introduces serious reliability issues into the grid, is environmentally destructive in several ways, and is financially very expensive. **So where's the beef?**

So I apologize for doing a disservice to you and your listeners in my failure to adequately communicate here. Hopefully if you go on to do a print version, these corrections will be made.

regards,
john droz, jr.

*My basic position about wind power is this:

- a) **Fact #1:** wind is an unpredictable commodity. *No one* knows exactly how much wind will be blowing in Maple Ridge (for instance) at 3 PM tomorrow afternoon, much less a week from now. This is a very big deal regarding the electrical grid, as cutting the wind speed in half results in reducing the electrical output by about **90%**.
- b) **Fact #2:** the wind power output at Maple Ridge facility (for example) can and *will* go to zero on *many* occasions. And just “joining up several farms” will not eliminate that fundamental problem. For example see what happened in Texas on February 28th, 2008, where many **hundreds** of turbines, in **several** locations, just died:
<<<http://tinyurl.com/23lrxz>>>.
- c) **Fact #3:** energy generated from industrial wind power can not be stored, practically or economically. *It has to be used immediately.*
- d) These three facts lead us to conclude that wind power will not likely truly provide what is known as Base Load electrical power.
(See <<<http://tinyurl.com/2xo238>>> for a brief explanation of Base Load.)
- e) Because of these three facts, as wind power is added to the grid, backup from conventional energy sources (like coal) must also *still be built, and still be operating.*
- f) Even in the short term, due to the complexity of nuclear, coal-fired and gas-fired power plants, they can not simply be “turned down” when wind power jumps on and off the grid. In NY hydro power (a clean, low cost, non-fossil fuel energy source) is often cut back instead, because it is the easiest to quickly control.

The net effect of all of this is that the CO2 savings resulting from wind power will be very small, and the cost (per ton of CO2 saved) will be **extraordinarily** high.

Add this to the fact that there is *significant* environmental damage done in the installation and operation of these behemoths.

So what sense does it make to spend tens of billions of dollars to make a trivial change on one part of the environment, while damaging another part of the same environment?

This is neither sound science nor wise environmental policy!