

THE DEWEESE REPORT

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Constitutional Convention Can Not Be Controlled

By
Tom DeWeese

As Americans become more frightened by the disastrous direction our government is taking, and more frustrated that elected representatives are not listening to them, the demand is growing for drastic action. In recent months the action most heard in state houses across the nation is a rising call for a new Constitutional Convention (Con Con).

Supporters somehow think a Con Con is the solution to saving our Republic. They want to amend the Constitution to force a balance budget. They want to shore up ambiguous language to make the meaning clear. They want to assure there is no doubt what America is and should be. For most pushing such an agenda, their intentions are honest.

Their solution will be a disaster for one simple reason – no one can control a Constitutional Convent. It doesn't matter how well intentioned its purpose. It doesn't matter how well planned. It doesn't matter what the actual resolution says and the people think they are approving. A Con Con has no oversight or rules other than those made by the actual participating delegates themselves. There are no rules for selecting delegates.

Once a ConCon is called for by the legal number of states, as laid out in Article V of the Constitution, It is the duty of Congress to call for one. Period. That's as far as it goes. In this day, when Nancy Pelosi, as Speaker of the House was able to twist enough arms to force through the Health care plan against the wishes of a strong majority of Americas; when the current Congress was able to flimflam the American people into believing it had really cut the budget; when these same people are the ones who will set the rules for a Con Con, from establishing the delegate-selection process, to dictating who will be qualified to be delegates, how on earth can anyone support such a disaster in the making. A Con Con will result in one thing- our precious Constitution laid out on an operating table to be

dissected and bludgeoned by Dr. Jekyll.

But still, a growing number of “conservative” leaders across the country and in the media are joining the chorus for the need for a ConCon. Some actually claim that they aren't calling for an out and out Constitutional Convention, rather for an “Article V Convention. There is no such distinction. To suggest that some other category exists that isn't as serious or dangerous than a Con Con is simply an untruth.

Here are the facts. The main groups pushing for a Con Con are the *American Legislative Exchange Council* (ALEC), a conservative association of state legislators; and a new group calling itself the *10 Amendments for Freedom, Inc*, chaired by William Fruth, President of POLICOM Corporation, which provides independent economics research.

While ALEC is working behind the scenes to build support for a Con Con among state legislators, Fruth and his *10 Amendments for Freedom* group has moved into the public eye to sell the Con Con idea to mainstream America. In March, 2010, Fruth kicked off his campaign by mailing out a slick, expensive package to conservative leaders and to over 7,000 state legislators. The package contained a book written by Fruth entitled “10 Amendments for Freedom.”

In the book, Fruth lays out an argument for the need for, not just a balanced budget amendment, but a total package of 10 Amendments to the Constitution including, the balanced budget; repay the national debt in 50; government transparency; line item veto; term limits for Congress; control illegal immigration; English-speaking nation; no foreign law shall bind us; government restraint (preventing the the Federal Government from growth beyond

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Constitutional Convention

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constitutional powers; and finally, an amendment declaring “in God we trust.” Of course, there is no doubt that these amendments have great appeal for most conservatives, answering their growing frustration and fear of government expansion.

Arguing that Congress “will not likely take any action to cause the 10 Amendments for Freedom to become law of the land,” Fruth calls for all ten amendments to be packaged by state legislatures to be passed in a resolution calling for a Constitutional Convention. His package would include specific instructions to Congress as to how the delegates would be selected and outlining rules that would be enforced to assure only the ten amendments would be voted on.

Arguing the advantages of the Con Con, Fruth says, “Can you imagine the excitement in the nation leading up to the Convention? Schools will have to dust off history books which teach how our nation was founded. Many people for the first time will read the Constitution. The issue will be discussed at length, exposing what happened to our country over the years.”

Fruth then scoffs at our fears of a Con Con and efforts to stop it. He says, “Simply, it is not reasonable to assume there can be enough delegates sent to a convention who will propose amendments which ‘repeal the bill of rights’ or ‘legalize socialism.’ Even if they did, the amendments would never be ratified,” concludes Fruth.

Anticipating opposition to his scheme for a Con Con, Fruth says that those who opposed the effort in the 1980’s, to call for a Con Con for a balanced budget amendment, told the American people that the delegates at the convention can “change the Constitution any way they want.” Argues Fruth, “We know that is not true.” He says, “it is both irresponsible and disingenuous for anyone to publicly say that the convention can change the Constitution.” And he says,

“any recommended changes must be approved by three-fourths of the states.

These are the arguments now being presented to every single state legislator and Governor in the nation as Fruth and ALEC put on a full-court-press to call for a Constitutional Convention. While the intention may be an honest desire to reign in the power of government, the fact remains that every one of these arguments for a Con Con is wrong.

The fact is, once 34 states petition Congress to convene a Constitutional Convention, the matter is completely out of the States’ hands. There is absolutely no ability to control what the delegates do in the convention. Attempting to instruct delegates to discuss only a specific issue like a balanced budget – or the whole package offered by the *10 Amendments for Freedom* group -- is absolutely impossible. Instead, once the convention starts, the delegates become super delegates which can take any action they desire concerning the Constitution. In short, at the convention the Constitution can be literally change any section, or even the entire document if they desire.

What proof do I offer? Here are the exact words of Article V of the Constitution: **“...on the application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, (Congress) shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which...shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States.”**

Article V gives absolutely no guidelines as to how it will be run, how delegates can be selected and who can do the selecting. Once the 34 states make the request, the entire matter is in the hands of Congress to decide. It does not matter if the states passed resolutions as Fruth proposes, containing absolute guidelines for delegate selection. The Constitution provides no rules – it is up to Congress to decide how delegates are selected and what qualifications they will have. The guidelines proposed by Fruth

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“Progressives” and the Art of Civility

“Let’s take these S.O.B.s out!”

When concerned Americans objected to Obama’s health care scheme and turned out at town hall meetings in strong opposition, they were called racists and fringe radicals. The Department of Homeland Security then released a report calling those Americans who opposed Obama’s policies “potential domestic terrorist.” As more and more Americans took up the protests against an ever growing federal government, the “Progressives” took to the CNN/MSNBC/New York Times media cabal to accuse the growing Tea Party of violence and then called for “civility” in political debate. That of course meant NO DEBATE. Its got to be their way or ... as Teamster leader James Hoffa put it...“Let’s take these sons of bitches out.”

Nice, very civil. If we said it we would be accused of promoting violence. But these are the compassionate progressives, not the racist, violent Tea Party. Following are more of their compassionate, civil quotes and actions, just for the record.

“It’s a fight literally for our right to exist. Don’t misunderstand what this is. Don’t misunderstand – not a joke, not a joke, not an applause line. You are the only folks keeping the barbarians from the gates... You are the only non-governmental power...The only one who has the power and capacity to stop this onslaught...You know, to state simply what I stated two years ago...the other side has declared war on labors house and it’s about time we stand up!” *Vice President of the United States Joe Biden, speaking to the same Teamster labor Day rally with James Hoffa. Hoffa also publicly told Biden that the teamster army is ready to march for Obama.*

Also on Labor Day a major video game producer (StarvingEyes Advergaming) released their new product called – **“Tea Party Zombies must die.”** **The game features several different levels where the only objective is to mercilessly slaughter everyone on the screen, from Fox News stars, or Americans for Prosperity employees. IN the game you can brutally kill Sarah Palin, Bill O’Reilly, Sean Hannity, Michele Bachman, Glenn Beck and many more conservative leaders.** *The head of the company, Jason Oda, said “the game was just a personal project. I am not worried about it affecting business.”* **Pretend to kill a lousy conservative – business as usual.** “Progressive civility.”

Then there is the new video produced by Progressives (don’t you love them calling themselves that – as if conservatives are anti-progress). **The video is a compilation showing liberals on Twitter wishing death upon Republicans.** A few examples:

“On the subject of Rick Perry: will someone please shoot the motherfer?”**

“F*ck one, kill one, marry one: Michelle Bachaman, Sarah Palin and Rick Perry.”

“Michele Bachman is going to swallow her knee at the rate she keeps sticking her foot in her mouth. Or get shot in the head.”

Then there is comedian and “Progressive” firebrand Janeane Garofalo appearing on that stalwart of unbiased news, Keith Olbermann’s show. She of course needed to talk about the Tea Party as well. She told him of her belief that black businessman and presidential candidate Herman Cain is being paid to run. Said Garofalo:

“In this presidential race, because he deflects the racism... that is inherent in the Republican party, the conservative movement, the Tea Party certainly, and the last 30 years the Republican Party has been moving more and more to the right, but also race-baiting more, gay-baiting more, religion-baiting more, but Herman Cain I feel like he’s being paid by somebody to be involved and to run for president so that... ‘Oh yeah, you can be racist, it’s a black guy asking for Obama to be impeached. It’s a black guy who’s anti-Muslim or ‘it’s a black guy who’s a Tea Party guy’ and I just feel like, well wouldn’t that suit the purposes of whomever astroturfs these things, whether it be the Koch brothers or ALEC or Grover Norquist or any religious – any anything, or it could even be Karl Rove. ‘Let’s get Herman Cain involved so it deflects the obvious racism of our Republican party” And in “Progressive” living rooms across the nation, heads were shaking up and down in complete agreement. Civility is of course the central concern of them all.

And finally there is Al Gore who compared those who don’t accept his global warming theories with the pro-segregation forces of the early 60s. The former vice president recalled how society succeeded in marginalizing racists and said **“climate change skeptics must be defeated in the same manner.”** ●

We Haven't Survived 911 in Good Shape

By Robert Ellis Smith

When I was preparing the September 2001 issue of my newsletter, Privacy Journal, we received the following message at 9:27 a.m. Sept. 11 from Marie George of the CNIL data protection agency in France: "In the name of President Gentot, all the members of the commission and its staff, let me express our compassion and our support after the terrible event that has stricken America today. Be sure we stand by you."

We published the note and this response: "We will all need this support and compassion. We professionals have to be sure that the strictures that will inevitably follow a calamity like this are not directed at our own law-abiding citizens, but aimed precisely at the sources of the threats."

WE HAVE DONE EXACTLY THAT. We have allowed angry surveillance and intrusive questioning to be turned against our own people, spending billions of dollars in bogus technology and identity schemes, most of it to create what policy makers will admit is "security theater." They will say that that is what the American public wants, not carefully targeted security precautions directed towards the likely perpetrators of the September 11 terrorist attacks and their progeny.

Americans, the victims of the attacks, are subjected to delays at airports and outrageous pokes at their private parts, viewed by networked cameras everywhere, required to carry photo IDs in order to travel or vote or attend school; their personal data is collected and manipulated and stored in gigantic database that seem to show no relevance to the current threat. Not only do the operators of new "fusion centers" not have a clue about sensible privacy protections, they don't know what they are doing generally. Except that they do know how to spend tax monies. We willingly go along with gigantic expenditures for untested purchases from the terrorist-security-ID vendor cabal.

We demand fingerprints and other indignities from visitors from nations that have been allies in the fight against terrorism, thus reducing the willingness (notably in the privacy field) of many of them to consider travel to the U.S.

Yet the perpetrators of the attacks nearly get away with murder. The President during the attacks, George W. Bush, actually showed a lack of interest later in capturing the acknowledged leader of Al-Qaeda and mastermind of the murderous plot, Osama bin Laden. Obama encountered resistance within his own bureaucracy to the notion that capturing bin Laden should be revived as a priority.

Al-Qaida's second-in-command after the death of bin Laden, Atiyah Abd al-Rahman, was killed in Pakistan Aug. 22, 2011, and hardly anyone in the U.S. noticed. But we have accepted outrage upon outrage at government buildings, private office buildings, transportation centers, voting booths, universities. We seem unable to get our economy back on track. We accept infringements upon constitutional rights to free speech and against unreasonable searches. We tolerate inaccuracies, on their face, from the mouths of those in the intelligence apparatus. Could the late Osama bin Laden have planned it any better?

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carry absolutely no weight in the final process – even if every state passes the exact same resolution including those rules. Again, Article V simply says that when 34 states have called for a Con Con the Congress “shall call a Convention...” Period.

And there is more legal proof in support of the argument that delegates are not bound by an instructions or resolutions from the states.

First, of course, is the famous letter written by former Supreme Court Justice Warren Burger to Phyllis Schlafly, President of Eagle Forum. In the letter Burger writes, “... *there is no effective way to limit or muzzle the actions of a Constitutional Convention. The convention could make its own rules and set its own agenda. Congress might try to limit the convention to one amendment or to one issue, but there is no way to assure that the convention would obey. After a convention is convened, it will be too late to stop the convention if we don't like its agenda. The meeting in 1787 ignored the limit placed by the confederated Congress...*”

And there is more legal documentation proving that Congress or the states can control the agenda of a Con Con. Corpus Jurus Secundum is a compilation of State Supreme Court findings. The following is the collection of findings regarding the unlimited power of the delegates attending a Con Con. (From Corpus Jurus Secundum 16 C.J.S 9) “*The members of a Constitutional Convention are the direct representatives of the people (1) and, as such, they may exercise all sovereign powers that are vesting in the people of the state. (2) They derive their powers, not from the legislature, but from the people: (3) And, hence, their power may not in any respect be limited or restrained by the legislature. Under this view, it is a Legislative Body of the Highest Order (4) and may not only frame, but may also enact and promulgate, Constitution. (5).*” The footnote numbers after the citation quoted reference the particular cases from which the citations were made. (1) Mississippi (1892) Sproule v Fredericks (11 So. 472); (2) Iowa (1883) Koehler v Hill (14N.W. 738); (3) West Virginia (1873) Loomis v Jackson (6 W. Va. 613); (4) Oklahoma (1907) Frantz v Autry (91 p. 193); (5) Texas (1912) Cox v Robison (150 S.W. 1149).

Clearly, the position put forth by Fruth, and ALEC, that state legislatures can pass a resolution dictating the rules of the Con Con is simply wrong.

Delegate selection is another dangerous trap waiting to spring. Again, Article V provides no guidelines. The process is left for Congress to decide. That means the current Congress could control the entire delegate

selection. Under the rules that Congress could set, States may not even be represented. If the states are *allowed* to choose delegates, then what would be the method? Again, Congress will decide. Will the governor or the state legislature appoint delegates? Or could it be a bicameral panel or blue ribbon commission? Or could it be a plebecite – a vote of the people? If so, then who would be eligible to vote? Would it be all eligible voters? Or taxpayers only? Or would we possibly, in the interest of “enfranchisement,” allow all citizens, and potentially foreign nationals (illegal immigrants) to vote for this “special election?” There are no guidelines and anything is possible.

And what would be the qualifications to be a delegate? Would it be exclusively lawyers? A mix of professionals? So-called “proportional representation” of all special interest groups – NGO’s? Will some be excluded because of “extreme” convictions? Of course, according to the Federal Department of Homeland Security, “extreme convictions” includes those who want to protect the Constitution. So, what will the criteria for eligible delegates be? All of these choices would be made by Congress.

But again, none of that will matter, according to those calling for the Con Con. William Fruth argues that no matter what such a convention does, it still must be ratified by two-thirds of the states, making it very difficult to do bad things against the will of the people. A history lesson is in order.

There has been only one Constitutional Convention in the history of the nation – that was in 1787. At the time, the nation was held together by the Articles of Confederation. The states were having a difficult time performing commerce among themselves. So it was decided to hold a Constitutional Convention to simply discuss how interstate commerce might be better organized. As the delegates were selected, delegations from a majority of states were given specific orders by their states to discuss nothing else beyond the commerce issue.

However, some delegates including James Madison had a very specific agenda planned for the convention and as soon as the delegates arrived at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, they closed and locked the door, pulled down the shades and met in secret for a month. When they were finished, they had created an entirely new nation. We were very lucky that the convention was attended by men like Ben Franklin and George Washington and Madison. They produced the most magnificent document ever devised for the governance of man.

Today, we have entrenched power forces led by the likes of Barack Obama, Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid.

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Constitutional Convention

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And we have notoriously weak leaders like current House Speaker John Boehner and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell who rarely miss a good compromise to keep the peace. These are the people who will decide the rules for the convention, including delegate selection. Do you trust them to follow the rules dictated by state legislatures? Do you think Pelosi and Reid would pass up an opportunity to set their own rules to guarantee a Constitution to their liking?

And there is more. Concerning the argument that no matter what the delegates produce, the states still must ratify it – thus serving as a safeguard to tomfoolery, consider this fact: The Articles of Confederation required that any changes be ratified by 100% of the states. That was the document that was the law of the land – until something else was put into place. But, when the new Constitution was put to the states for a vote of ratification, suddenly they needed only two thirds to approve it. Why? The fact is, Article V of the new Constitution was used – even before the Constitution which contained it was approved. Now, what do you think Reid and Obama and company would do with that precedent? What if the new document produced by the Con Con said ratification only required a vote of Congress – or of some special commission? The precedent of 1787 says that could happen. So much for protection by the states.

And rather than an excitement in the nation with a rebirth of study of the Constitution, as Furth envisions, there would in fact be a long, hard, ugly and expensive battle over the process, guaranteed to leave the nation split along ideological lines. It's not difficult to envision civil unrest, riots or even civil war as a result of any re-writing of the current Constitution.

These are the reasons why I, and many others around the nation, adamantly oppose a Constitutional Convention at this time. We fear a Con Con because the subject matter cannot be controlled. And if the worst happens, there is no guarantee that we can stop ratification. There has never been a worse time in the nation's history to consider changing this grand document. The Con Con delegates could literally put the Constitution on an operating table and use their scalpels to slice it up, creating an entirely new form of government. That new document, as precedence has shown, could be enforced without ratification by the states. Remember, our current Constitution was not ratified by the rules set forth in the Articles of Confederation, but by an Article V that wasn't yet law of the land. Now that the precedence is there, it can happen again. The Pelosi's of the nation, proven to have the power and the will to twist any issue or initiative as they

desire, are rubbing their hands together at the prospect of a Con Con.

No doubt there is great need for several of the amendments Fruth and his group propose. But he seems to ignore the fact that there is a powerful, organized opposition. Again, I call your attention to the continuing battles over Health Care, taxes, illegal immigration and massive government spending. These are child's play compared to what will happen in a Con Con. Do Americans really want to risk that in these uncertain times? Every freedom-loving American must stand up against this misguided call for a Con Con. Tell your state legislators NO. ●

We Haven't Survived 911 In Good Shape

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And what of the once revered right to privacy in American tradition? Too many of us say, "If it will make my plane flight safer, I'll do anything." Too many of us think, "If the government comes up with the security restrictions, they must be based on solid research and reliable testing." They are not, as we can tell from a look at the false starts in deploying search hardware at airports and at the continual failures to consider incorporating protection of citizens rights in the new security protocols.

We have lost some of our rights to privacy not because of an anti-civil liberties majority on our Supreme Court but because we ourselves have simply permitted them to atrophy.

And what of the protectors of privacy, the heads of non-profit groups seeking to apply some common-sense to this security mania? They are split right down the middle and across the center and every which way. They hardly talk to each other anymore. (Of course most of them tend to be loners anyway.) No one is pushing a concerted strategy of resistance, just when the threats are so great. Whether this last trend can be counted as a legacy of 9-11, we can't say. But we can say that Bin Laden could not have planned it better.

Robert Ellis Smith, a lawyer, is publisher of Privacy Journal, a monthly newsletter founded in 1974 and based in Providence, R.I. ●

Our least sustainable energy option

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Energy. Mining, quarrying, drilling, milling, refining, smelting and manufacturing operations make the production of metals, concrete, fiberglass and resins, turbines, and heavy equipment to do all of the above very energy-intensive. Ditto for transporting and installing turbines, towers, backups and transmission lines. That takes real energy: abundant, reliable, affordable – not what comes from wind turbines.

In fact, it probably requires more energy to manufacture, haul and install these monstrous Cuisinarts of the air and their transmission systems than they will generate in their lifetimes. However, no cradle-to-grave analysis has ever been conducted, for the energy inputs or pollution outputs. We need one now.

Health. Whereas environmentalists garner scary headlines over wildly speculative claims about health dangers from hydraulic fracturing (to extract abundant natural gas for wind turbine backup generators), they ignore and dismiss a growing body of evidence that wind turbines cause significant health problems.

Principal health issues are associated with noise – not just annoying audible noise, but inaudible, low-frequency “infrasound” that causes headache, dizziness, “deep nervous fatigue” and symptoms akin to seasickness. “Wind turbine syndrome” also includes irritability, depression, and concentration and sleep problems. Others include “shadow flicker” or “strobe effect” from whirling blades, which can trigger seizures in epileptics, “vibroacoustic” effects on the heart and lungs, and non-lethal harm to animals. Serious lung, heart, cancer and other problems have been documented from rare earth mining, smelting and manufacturing in China, under its less rigorous health, workplace and environmental regulations.

To date, however, very few health assessments have been required or conducted prior to permit approval, even for major wind turbine installations. Perhaps the trial lawyers’ guild could redress that oversight.

Environment. Raptors, bats and other beautiful flying creatures continue to be sliced and diced by wind turbines. Thankfully, the Bureau of Land Management has included an “avian radar system” to track the slaughter within its 500-square-mile Chokecherry region – and banned mining among the turbines.

Wind turbines are supposed to reduce pollution and carbon dioxide emissions. But because backup generators must repeatedly surge to full power and back to standby, as wind speed rises and falls, they operate

inefficiently, use more fuel and emit more – much like cars forced to stop repeatedly on freeways.

Jobs. The myth of “green jobs” is hitting the brick wall of reality. While the turbines are installed in the USA and EU, the far more numerous mining and manufacturing jobs are in China, where they are hardly “green.” As Spanish and Scottish analysts have documented, the “green” installer and maintenance jobs cost up to \$750,000 apiece – and kill 2.2 to 3.7 traditional jobs for every “eco-friendly” job created.

Electricity costs and reliability. Even huge subsidies cannot cure wind power’s biggest defects: its electricity costs far more than coal, gas or nuclear alternatives – and its intermittent nature wreaks havoc on power grids and consumers. The problem is worst on hot summer afternoons, when demand is highest and breezes are minimal. Unable to compete against cheap Chinese and Indian electricity and labor, energy-intensive industries increasingly face the prospect of sending operations and jobs overseas. Bayer Chemical’s warning that it may have to close its German facilities is just the tip of the iceberg.

When it comes to wind, Nat King Cole might have sung: “Unsustainable that’s what you are, unsustainable though near or far. Unsustainable in every way, and forever more that’s how you’ll stay.” Maybe not forever, but certainly for the foreseeable future, especially compared to increasingly abundant natural gas.

So take a hint from Spoon’s lively tune and “cut out the middleman.” Forge a direct relationship with energy you can afford, energy that works nearly 24/7/365, energy that causes the least ecological damage and is far more sustainable than wind power: the hydrocarbon, hydroelectric and nuclear power that have sustained our society and brought unprecedented health, prosperity and living standards to billions.

Then help the planet’s least fortunate people to do likewise.

Paul Driessen is senior policy advisor for the Committee For A Constructive Tomorrow and Congress of Racial Equality, and author of Eco-Imperialism: Green power - Black death. ●

True nature of the Wildlands Project

“We must make this place an insecure and inhospitable place for Capitalists and their projects – we must reclaim the roads and plowed lands, halt dam construction, tear down existing dams, free shackled rivers and return the wilderness millions of tens of millions of acres of presently settled land.” *Dave Foreman, Earth First. ●*

Our least sustainable energy option

From a land use, economic, environmental or raw materials perspective, wind is unsustainable

by Paul Driessen

President Obama and a chorus of environmentalists, politicians, corporate executives and bureaucrats are perennially bullish on wind power as the bellwether of our “clean energy economy of the future.”

In reality, wind energy may well be the least sustainable and least eco-friendly of all electricity options. Its shortcomings are legion, but the biggest ones can be grouped into eight categories.

Land. As American humorist and philosopher Will Rogers observed, “They ain’t making any more of it.” Wind turbine installations impact vast amounts of land, far more than traditional power plants.

Arizona’s Palo Verde nuclear plant generates 3,750 megawatts of electricity from a 4,000-acre site. The 600-MW John Turk ultra-supercritical coal-fired power plant in Arkansas covers part of 2,900 acres; two 600-MW coal-fired units in India use just 600 acres. Gas-fired units like Calpine’s 560-MW Fox Energy Center in Wisconsin require several hundred acres. All generate reliable power 90-95% of the year.

By contrast, the 600-MW Fowler Ridge wind installation (355 turbines) spans 50,000 acres of farm country along Indiana’s I-65 corridor. The 782-MW Roscoe project in Texas (627 turbines) sprawls across 100,000 acres. Oregon’s Shepherds Flat project (338 gigantic 2.5 MW turbines) covers nearly 80,000 wildlife and scenic acres along the Columbia River Gorge, for a “rated capacity” of 845 MW.

The Chokecherry-Sierra Madre project will blanket some 320,000 acres of sage grouse habitat and BLM land in Wyoming with 1,000 monstrous 3-MW turbines, to generate zero to 3,000 MW of intermittent power. That’s eight times the size of Washington, DC, to get an average annual output one-fourth of what Palo Verde generates 90% of the time. But C-SM has already received preliminary approval from BLM.

To replace just 20% of the United States’ 995,000 MW of total installed generating capacity, we would need to blanket an area the size of Kansas with

wind turbines, and then add nearly a thousand 600-MW gas-fired backup generators ... and thousands of miles of new high voltage transmission lines.

Raw materials. Wind turbine installations require vast amounts of steel, copper, rare earth metals, fiberglass, concrete, rebar and other materials for the turbines, towers and bases.

A single 1.7 MW wind turbine, like 315 of the Fowler Ridge units, involves some 365 tons of materials for the turbine assembly and tower, plus nearly 1100 tons of concrete and rebar for the foundation. Bigger units require substantially more materials. Grand total for the entire Fowler wind installation: some 515,000 tons; for Roscoe, 752,000 tons; for Shepherds Flat, 575,000 tons; for Chokecherry, perhaps 2,000,000 tons. Offshore installations need far more raw materials.

To all that must be added millions of tons of steel, copper, concrete and rebar for thousands of miles of transmission lines – and still more for mostly gas-fired generators to back up every megawatt of wind power and generate electricity the 17 hours of each average day that the wind doesn’t blow.

Money. Taxpayers and consumers must provide perpetual subsidies to prop up wind projects, which cannot survive without steady infusions of cash via feed-in tariffs, tax breaks and direct payments. Transmission lines cost \$1.0 million to \$2.5 million per mile. Landowners get \$2,000+ a year per turbine, plus royalties on all energy produced from the turbine, plus payments for every foot of access road and transmission lines. However, taxpayers pay more, while the landowners’ neighbors suffer property devaluation, scenic disruption, noise, health problems and interference with crop spraying, but no monetary compensation. Direct federal wind energy subsidies to help cover this totaled \$5 billion in FY 2010; state support added billions more; still more billions were added to consumers’ electric bills.

The Other People’s Money well is running dry. The “manmade catastrophic climate change” thesis behind the wind energy campaign is in shambles. Voters and consumers are understandably fed up.