
June 15, 2008

LETTER

In a Trance on Global Warming

To the Editor:

Re "Another Failure on Climate Change" (editorial, June 11):

First, we had the failure of the Senate to pass a bill, supported by Senators Barack Obama and John McCain, that would have helped reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. Then, the Senate blocked the extension of tax incentives designed to promote renewable energy development.

These actions come at a time when oil prices are headed toward \$150 a barrel, when extreme weather events and climate instability are escalating all over the world, and when the national scientific academies of 13 countries, including that of the United States, have issued a joint urgent call to the Group of 8 industrialized countries that they must immediately adopt highly aggressive policies to reduce the threat of global warming.

And so, led by President Bush and those in Congress who clearly do not understand the increasingly dire warnings from the world's scientific community, who act as if they were living on some planet other than our own, we march in silent assent, like the Light Brigade in the Crimean battle of Balaklava, like the children of Hamelin blindly following the Pied Piper, like people under a spell, into the rising and rapidly warming waters of the sea.

Eric Chivian

Boston, June 12, 2008

The writer is the director of the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School.

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