

President Biggs Comments to Congressional Hearing

The ongoing saga over the Navajo Generating Station is a perfect illustration of the tyranny that now characterizes our federal government. Consider the following:

First, the Navajo Generating Station—a coal-burning power plant—was actually a compromise that was *proposed* to Arizona by the federal government and environmentalists who preferred the plant to the construction of hydrologic dams on the Colorado River.

In other words, Arizona did not *ask* for NGS—it was forced on us by the same federal government that is now trying to shut it down.

Second, the federal government claims that this rule is necessary to reduce regional haze in the Grand Canyon and other scenic locations throughout the Southwest.

Yet, there is no conclusive evidence that the existing haze in and around the Grand Canyon would be visibly improved by the selective catalytic reduction technology that would be required under the federal rule. Studies have shown that NGS contributes less than 4% of the haze in the Grand Canyon each year and there was literally no improvement in visibility when the Mohave Generating Station was shut down in 2006.

How can the federal government justify a rule that will cost Arizona consumers over a billion dollars for an improvement in visibility that is *imperceptible* to the naked eye? I submit that is cannot.

Third, the federal government's rule totally fails to take into account the consequences of NGS shutting down. What would happen to the hundreds of Native Americans who currently work at the plant? What would happen to the City of Page, whose economy depends on the plant? What would happen to the state's economy when the Central Arizona Project has to buy electricity on the open market? What would happen to the state's economy when our water and electricity rates skyrocket because of the loss of cheap, reliable power from NGS?

I suggest that the federal government has not only failed to take these questions into consideration, but that it doesn't care.

The federal government, including the bureaucrats at the EPA, worship at the altar of a now *state-sponsored* religion whose theology postulates that the end of the world is coming if we do not clean up our air.

Under the tenets of this pseudo-religion, everything—our jobs, our economies, our livelihoods, even our very way of life—must be sacrificed on the altar of environmentalism.

This theology can only lead to one final destination—financial ruin and societal bondage. Followed to its logical conclusion, environmentalism will lead our country down a forlorn path whose final destination is a place where the private sector is not allowed to produce, consumers are not allowed to consume, and personal liberties and freedoms are crushed—all in the name of and for the sake of, the environment.

Let me be clear—I believe that our air should be clean and our water unpolluted, but when bureaucrats in Washington D.C., with a simple stroke on a computer keyboard, can craft regulations that (1) cost Arizona residents and small businesses a billion dollars, (2) destroy hundreds of jobs, and (3) dramatically increase water and electricity rates, all for an improvement in visibility that is *imperceptible* to the naked eye, then something is very, very wrong with our country and our federal government.

I hope that the federal government will accept the proposal that has been put together by a coalition of NGS stakeholders, including several environmental groups.

If it does not, I submit that the Environmental Protection Agency and the theology that informs its opinions and directives, represents a grave threat not only to the economy of this country, but to the personal freedoms and liberties upon which it was founded.