

# Island Press

**Island Press launches a major outreach campaign surrounding the release of *Apollo's Fire: Igniting America's Clean Energy Economy*.**

*Apollo's Fire* is co-authored by Congressman Jay Inslee (D-WA) and Bracken Hendricks. Congressman Inslee is a recognized leader on energy issues and the prime sponsor of the New Apollo Energy Act, a comprehensive plan to build a clean energy economy in America. Hendricks is the founding Executive Director of the Apollo Alliance for good jobs and energy independence, a coalition of labor, environmental, business and community leaders dedicated to changing the politics of energy independence.

Their new book is about the crisis in energy created by global warming and oil dependence. It is about the transformative potential for investment in jobs, the economy, and social justice from developing new energy sources that are needed to rebuild America's communities, restore hope to our citizens, and create a vibrant, competitive U.S. economy in the coming century. The title evokes the Apollo space project and the nation's effort to put a man on the moon, and calls for a similar effort to create a different economy based on renewable energy.

An interview was published in the *Seattle-Post Intelligencer*.

## **SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER**

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## **U.S. mobilization needed on energy**

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**By JOEL CONNELLY**

P-I COLUMNIST

Co-written by Rep. Jay Inslee, "Apollo's Fire: Igniting America's Clean Energy Economy" celebrates the drive and ingenuity of grass-roots Americans while damning the lethargy of the federal government.

President Bush discovered the cause of renewable resources last year and scheduled a visit to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory in Colorado.

But 32 workers had just been laid off from the government-run laboratory. A last-minute "transfer" of \$5 million put them back on the job just in time to greet the president.

Inslee, a Democratic congressman from Bainbridge Island, and co-author Bracken Hendricks argue that America needs to mobilize its resources, as it did when President Kennedy promised in 1961 to put a man on the moon.

Understanding the need for this robust investment requires only a modest use of intelligence.

The United States burns about 21 million barrels of oil each day, nearly 25 percent of the world's consumption. We import more than 65 percent, or 13.5 million barrels, of what we use.

As pollutants warm the Earth, potentates reap the rewards, and oil consumption is the tail that wags U.S. foreign policy. "In 2005 alone, the United States sent nearly \$40 billion to the Persian Gulf region to purchase oil, even as we financed a war on terror," the authors write.

Where do we go for solutions? How about Redmond and its namesake high school? Redmond High used to be identified by a big smokestack. It burned fuel oil, later switching to natural gas.

"We burned more fuel than Microsoft," teacher Mike Town explained Monday to his environmental science course.

In tackling the 21st century, however, the high school switched to geothermal energy. Heat from the ground, plus an experimental solar panel, meets the needs of a 211,000-square-foot building.

"The investment was going to take us 19 years to pay off: With what's happened to natural gas prices, it came down to seven years," Town explained. The campus' carbon dioxide emissions have been cut from 3.73 million pounds each year to 2.56 million pounds.

"A lot of people say how tough it will be to meet the Kyoto Protocols on global warming and how it will hurt the economy. We're 29 percent below Kyoto," he said.

Town is a hero in "Apollo's Fire," which devotes space to his solar-heated home. The teacher and his wife generate more electricity than they use. It goes out on the regional grid and they get a check at year's end.

What type of commitment is coming from the "other" Washington?

"The federal government's budget for energy is now just over \$3 billion," Inslee and Hendricks write. "Kennedy got us to the moon. The current energy budget will not get us anywhere but to the next high-priced gas station.

"... The federal government spent \$6 billion last year building a truck to withstand improvised explosive device (IED) detonations in Iraq. That (energy) budget is eclipsed by just one company, the Microsoft Corp., which invests twice that sum, or \$7 billion a year, in research."

Sloth at the top has been balanced by speed at the grass roots. In 2005, the ethanol industry alone generated nearly 154,000 new jobs. In 2006, more than \$7 billion was invested in wind energy and biofuels.

In the words of Chuck Savitt of Island Press, publishers of "Apollo's Fire," advocacy of new energy has tended "to preach cold showers and warm beer."

Seattle, sadly, has felt the growth of a stifling, arrogant, everybody-is-impure-but-us energy activism, with bossy, impractical schemes for harassing users of the family car.

By contrast, "Apollo's Fire" celebrates innovation, entrepreneurship and science. It spotlights such efforts as CalCars -- the do-it-yourself team that demonstrated the practicality of a car that gets more than 100 miles to a gallon of gasoline.

Can this country replicate the Apollo experience, or its World War II commitment?

Not with its current government: President Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney come across badly in encounters that Inslee relates. Cheney is especially condescending toward views not in conformance with his.

I had a call the other day from professor Ed Wenk, a Seattle retiree who served as science adviser to Kennedy. He was noting the 50th anniversary of the Soviets' launch of Sputnik.

The Russians were first with a satellite and the first to put a man in space. The initial U.S. effort to launch a satellite got exactly 4 feet off the ground before exploding. Bob Hope quipped, "Hear the news from Cape Canaveral? We just launched another submarine."

As Wenk pointed out, however, the U.S. effort ultimately prevailed. And he noted its bipartisan roots, with a steady-handed GOP President Eisenhower balancing a driven Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson. The country committed itself to space and recommitted itself to science.

Franklin D. Roosevelt readied the nation for World War II by bringing political foes, captains of industry, into the government. The Republicans' 1936 vice presidential nominee, Frank Knox, became secretary of the Navy.

Three factors -- war, warming and addiction to imports -- command a similar national mobilization of know-how.

As Inslee put it at his book dedication, "We can do for energy what Kennedy did for space. ... The ice is melting in the Arctic, but the ice is also melting on resistance in Washington, D.C."

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