

THOUGHTS FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Barbara Hill

September 17, 2009

Dr. Herman Scheer, Time Magazine, 2002 Hero for the Green Century, and author of *Energy Autonomy*, states emphatically that for "the stakes to shift to renewable energy involve nothing less than the most thorough and far-reaching structural change since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Only the naive can believe that this change can be achieved without friction and in agreement with the institutions responsible for traditional energy supplies, or even on the basis of common values."

The energy sector is the largest and most politically powerful business on the planet which explains why this journey has been so fraught with friction. And as Einstein is often quoted as saying: No problem can be solved from the same consequences that created it. Resistance to renewable energy will most assuredly grow as we get closer to tipping the scales to actually replacing non-renewable supplies.

Since 2003, Clean Power Now (CPN) has been passionately committed to this shift. The organization has played a crucial role, most notably, in the discussion surrounding the Cape Wind proposal to build the nation's first offshore wind farm but also in the expanding national dialogue on the creation of a clean energy economy. CPN provides a venue that has given thousands of average citizens a voice in this important and timely discussion that will help determine the country's energy future. This year we celebrate the shift as reflected in historic Cape Wind permitting milestones, tremendous growth in membership, national press coverage, turbines sprouting up locally and a continued fruitful and dynamic collaboration with CLEAN - Citizens Lead for Energy Action Now.

On January 17, 2009, the Cape Wind project cleared a major hurdle when the Final Environmental Statement was issued finding significant public interest benefits with mostly "negligible" and "minor" effects on the environment. Randall Luthi, former director of the U.S. Minerals Management Service said Cape Wind could be a "bellwether" for the future of offshore wind projects. And in May of this year, all remaining local, state and regional permits were secured by the issuance of the Composite Certificate by the MA Energy Facilities Siting Board.

Our collaboration with CLEAN has yielded dynamic new relationships as well as coverage in the national media with the LA Times, National Public Radio and the Chicago Tribune. Over 140 organizations in every region of the country are working together to create new policies based on decentralized control of energy whereby energy is generated by regionally-appropriate, reliable and renewable sources. This work of building relationships and connective tissue among organizations and their members is advancing this new energy future by educating and coordinating the citizenry to exercise its own power and influence and reclaim its rightful role in democratic self-determination.

Climate change is arguably the greatest challenge the human species has ever faced. Changing the energy paradigm is absolutely critical in minimizing the impacts of industrial society's carbon loading of Earth's atmosphere. CPN's belief in the premise that a well informed citizenry will make wise decisions – and in fact is one of the pillars of democracy is the model that others should emulate. CPN has demonstrated that it is possible to be both passionate and objective advocates on behalf of the planet and humanity.

"Making renewable energy the foundation for a sustainable future is a priority for the human condition. This priority calls for a kind of renewable energy that is intellectual and spiritual - as a political condition." We are doing this at Clean Power Now and CLEAN – through the success of one project at a time, one conversation at a time and new dynamic collaborations where the seeds of transformation are born, nurtured and open.