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**Transcript from 5/8/07**  
**A North American Labor Assembly on Climate Crisis**  
**UFT, New York City**

Good morning everybody.

I do want to add two things to that very generous introduction. The first is that the first adult thing I ever did in my life, the first thing I ever did that wasn't something kids do, was to get up at 5 o'clock in the morning. I was a college student in Boston, and I took the MTA down to Peter Ben Brigham Hospital. I guess I would say I snuck in, the hospital would probably say I broke in, for the purpose of stuffing leaflets into lockers for 1199, which was then organizing the first Hospital Workers union in Boston. They did in fact successfully organize that hospital. The other thing I want to add because it brings you a little bit up to date, my latest book, I have now written three books, is called *Strategic Ignorance* and it's about the president of the US.

I'm going to turn this morning's agenda a little bit on its head. I'm going to talk about our goals first because in my mind legislation is a tool. We shouldn't get tripped up in thinking that legislative strategies are in and of themselves goals. Legislation is just a way to make something happen in the world. And I think we need to focus on what is happening in the world.

I'm going to be very direct. There will be a new energy economy. Whether you and I have anything to do with shaping it and making it, or not, it will happen. It will happen because millions of very, very smart men and women are investing their time and energy in thinking of new ways to deliver energy services to businesses, to commercial firms, to homeowners.

It will happen because, I live in San Francisco and just to the south of me, the folks who made billions of dollars, at unseemly young ages, in some cases investing in information processing and bio-technology, and with mixed results, telecommunications, have figured out the fact that the American energy sector is four times bigger than those three sectors

combined. That it consists of a series of out-moded, out-dated, inefficient and uncompetitive quasi monopolies designed in the 1920s for the benefit of a handful of large corporations, and that a structure that antiquated and outmoded cannot withstand the winds of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Now they're thrilled that in the course of making all this money they can also do something about some major problems facing this country, like our dependence on imported oil, our trade deficit, air pollution and global warming. I want to underscore the fact this is going to happen because it is going to be very, very lucrative. That's why I'm so certain it's going to happen.

The challenge that faces us is whether we and the folks that we represent and work for are at the table when that new economy is shaped. While I can tell you that there will be a new energy economy, neither I nor anyone else can you tell you what form, what shape it's going to take, and whether the people who live in the communities, where we base the old energy economy, will be dealt into the table or dealt away from the table.

I can easily imagine a robust, dynamic solar industry in the US, based in factories located all over the country, generating millions of solid, stable, middle-class, good paying and highly skilled jobs, and providing affordable electricity to households and small business all over the country in ways that don't require us to tear up our mountainsides or fry the planet. I can also just as easily imagine the solar industry that provides dirt cheap subsidized power to well-positioned insiders, expensive electricity to the average person, whose components are largely manufactured in sweatshops in other counties, shipped into the US and assembled by day laborers. Either one of these is a perfectly plausible future.

Brother Dave Foster and I have talked about the reality that there's a lot of iron ore in Minnesota and a lot of wind. Well, if you really believe in market economics, what should that produce? You take the iron ore out of Minnesota. You turn it into steel. You turn the steel into wind turbines. You put the wind turbines up in Southwestern Minnesota and you

have all the raw materials, and all the human capital, and all the skill, and all the infrastructure you need within a couple of hundred miles of the iron range. That's one future. But we don't have market economics in the energy sector. Frankly, we don't have market economics in most sectors any more. Right now what's most likely to happen is that iron ore will be mined in the Mesabi, shipped over seas turned into steel. The steel will be shipped to Europe. The wind turbines will be manufactured in Europe, and then they'll be shipped back to the Great Lakes and erected in Southwestern Minnesota. 80 percent of the jobs that could have been created in that industry won't be here.

Either one of these futures right now is perfectly plausible. How do we get the future we want? I think there are actually two very simple keys to success. Getting this right is not rocket science, it's not even auto mechanics – it's common sense. Common sense tells us two things. If we want to have a better world in ten years, we have to make our decisions on what we need in ten years. If we keep on making decisions in terms of what we want next week, we won't get a better world in ten years.

Time and time again, over the last thirty years organized labor, communities, civil rights organizations and environmentalists have failed to come together around easily-agreed upon long-term goals because of short-term disagreements. The reason we've lost the last thirty years is because as short term as their horizons are on the other side, they thought about the future more than we did.

Second thing, and this one you all know very well, is we've got to do this together. There's going to be no such thing a working family-friendly energy economy that's not environmentally friendly. It's just isn't going to happen. And there is no such thing as an environmentally sustainable energy economy that doesn't take care of workers' families. It is not possible.

The second model I talked about, just think about it for a minute with the wind turbines. One of the things that happens when you take all iron ore from the Mesabi and you ship it wherever you ship it to, Dave or somebody else here could tell me where it would go, and

then you ship it to Europe, and then you ship it back, is that yes, the electricity that comes off the blades is clean, but you cook the planet with Middle Eastern diesel fuel, shipping that steel around the world.

So you can't have the kind of environmentally sustainable economy we need if the concern of workers and their families in the long-term and the concerns of people who breathe and drink, who remarkably enough have to work as well in the long-term, are not brought together. The long-term is our ally and solidarity is our tool.

What's the strategic challenge facing us politically in this country right now? I know that some of our other speakers will address places that they know better than I do. I came up this morning from Washington where I spent the last week, and I'm not surprised but I am going to report to you that our nation's capital is still, as it has been for the last 12 years, the capital of "trivial pursuits".

Most of what Congress is talking about doing with regard to energy is designed to give the appearance of progress with the minimum amount of progress that they think the public will stomach. In January, in a very good vote, the House of Representatives voted as part of the new leadership's initial steps HR 6, which took 15 billion dollars in subsidies from the oil industry, subsidies they didn't have before 2004, when I checked they were actually cooking along quite nicely in 2003, subsidies the treasury can't afford, subsidies they haven't earned.

That was supposed to be the low-hanging fruit. That was supposed to be the bill that would just roar through and establish some momentum, so Congress could then get on with the real business. Well that bill is going at the moment nowhere in the US Senate.

Friday, some Democrats and Republicans in the Senate Energy Committee came up with a plan to deal with the problem of how we get more efficient trucks, cars, and SUVs for Americans to drive, that use less imported fuel from the Persian Gulf. The compromise they came up with is *less* ambitious than the one the President offered in the State-of-the-Union message.

Minnesota just passed a standard for renewable electricity, which will have that state leading the nation until my state, California, catches up because we can't stand having anybody ahead of us. It's going to get that state 35 percent of its electricity from renewable sources. The biggest number anybody in Washington is talking about is 20 percent. The blunt fact is the basic politics of energy did not change in Washington last November. We still have a Congress which views energy policy as being about fuels cartels.

I'm curious. How many of you in this room today work in a company that mines coal, drills oil, pumps natural gas, or mines uranium? (Silence, then some laughter from the audience.) Okay. How many of you work in a company, that if your energy was cut off, if the energy supply whether it's the electricity or some other fuel to your firm was cut off regularly five or six hours a day, your company would be in big financial trouble? How many of you work in a company like that? (Laughter from audience.) Some of you are fooling yourselves. (Laughter from audience.)

That's the reality of the US today. If we had asked that question in 1925 in a room like this, we would have gotten a very different ratio. In 1925, this country was still a producer of primary fuels and a huge part of our economy was fueled by the production of coal and oil. It's not anymore. We are now a nation of people who use energy services, and Congress should be thinking about how it gets the energy services that our economy needs in the most reliable way, at the lowest cost and at the least harm to our national security and environment.

Congress doesn't get that basic point. Congress is still juggling fuel cartels. It's still "What does oil get? What does coal get? What does uranium get? What do the gas boys get?" That's how Congress looks at energy. All the companies that you work for are barely on their radars. Our fundamental challenge is to make Congress think in an entirely different way about this problem. And having just been there, it is not going to be easy. It is not going to be easy, but there is a way to do it. I'm going to lay out where I think our future lies, and then I'm going to let other folks give other perspectives.

Washington is, as I said, still the capital of “trivial pursuits”, but America is moving. The remarkable thing about the energy landscape is that for the last 5 years, and in particular for the last 2 years, and with unbelievable intensity in the last 6 months, corporations, mayors, city councils, governors, trade union councils are waking up and moving. There has been more change in America's energy economy in the last 2 years than at any time since the Arab Oil Embargo of the 1970s first made expensive gas a reality.

Last week while Congress was frittering away its limited time and doing nothing much, Washington State and Hawaii on the same day, two states in the same day, committed themselves to a new energy future, in which by 2050 they will have reduced their production of greenhouse gases by 50 percent. In the last five months, while HR6 has languished in the Senate finance committee, five states have adopted new renewable electricity standards, two states have adopted new clean air standards for cars, 150 cities have committed themselves to adopt internal greenhouse gas reduction programs as part of the US Mayors Agreement on Climate Protection, and more than a dozen of the fortune 100 industrial corporations have come out in favor of dramatic action to reduce America’s carbon dioxide emissions by 80 percent by 2050.

The country is moving. What we need to do and the challenge I’m going to leave you all with is: we need to make sure that as the country moves we and the people we represent are at the table where the movement is happening. It’s more important that we be working together in Albany. It’s more important that we be working together at City Hall here in NY, and in Boise, and in Sacramento, than whether or not Congress gets it. Because if we can work together around this country, we can make sure that the new energy future that’s going to happen is the new energy future.