

My Children's Birthright

My daughter's birthday brings in the fall weather. Born at the cusp of a beautiful Maine Summer and an even more beautiful fall, she celebrates this balancing of seasons with her arrival into our world. She expects it as her birthright, that this changing would stay constant: Every summer would bring in a fall, every fall a winter, and every winter a spring.

But has the earth ever stayed constant for a long time? Has it not always gone through ice-ages and warming periods? Has it not turned oceans and rainforests into deserts and covered deserts with oceans before? It has of course, but always on its own terms, through its own cyclical movements that we are only now beginning to understand.

But we do know this much: Our blip sized existence in the life of this earth is having a major impact on it. Species we had nothing to do with bringing on this planet are going extinct because of us. With good intentions, we try to bring back one, only to find it is decimating another, because the balanced food chain of our planet has gone haywire from under us. Supposedly positioned at the top of the pyramid, we are cutting into it at every level, breaking the fragile connections of evolution.

And we know this also: That the pollution from the power plants of the world and from the growing number of automobiles and from the many chemicals we emit into the air is changing the very atmosphere that protects us, putting holes into it.

We know that a large dam can provide electricity and at the same time change the local climate as it is doing in China, or take away the river that quenched the thirst of many along its banks, as in Tehri in India.

We already suspect that unseen things such as sonar frequencies are perhaps disrupting the ancient pathways of whales, beaching them, and perhaps those from our cell towers are misguiding the bees, decimating their colonies. And surely if two creatures we suspect are being affected, many others we don't are as well?

Ultimately, we do know, whether we can produce reams of concrete scientific proof or not, that we are changing the world in ways that are beneficial neither to it nor to us. I know we can't all stop in one day. I don't stop using my vehicle or turning the lights on or filling my oil furnace either. But given the options in the near future, I hope to.

So, I am looking to the future: Looking forward to the policies that would bring us to preserving the cycles of the weather as we have known them; Looking forward to international policies that don't move polluting industries from a country with certain standards as ours to another such as China or India or Mexico- how stupid is that when we know that a remote Volcano burst can blanket the whole world with its ash.

I am looking forward to effective NATO and ASEAN and African and European Union- all these organizations working to preserving the earth, together. Not just to come together in fits and starts to make useless proclamations against war and genocide, when sometimes their own members perpetrate them, as they sometimes do today.

I am looking forward to good domestic policies here at home. Looking forward to an end to war and bringing home of peace and well intentioned and capable brain power at the helm.

There is much to hope for in the coming election and I am hoping for all of it. Except perhaps, drilling in Alaska. Are we completely mad? It is not a single hole in two

million acres of pristine land. Nothing is that independent of its effects, including and especially drilling for oil. We have stripped the earth enough! Let's stop.

Let's move on to finding viable energy resources for our giant sized wants, and take a lead in restoring the planet to its original temperamental state to appease our ambitions. But first let us all realize that the earth is very very small. Tiny. Every dent counts. Every tree holds it together. We owe this realization to our children whose very future we have put at stake because of our thoughtless actions and greed.