

energy? That's question one. The second question that I hope Members of Congress will ask themselves, what if 99.9 percent of the scientists are right and we are doing it to ourselves?

[From the Washington Post]

SEE NO CLIMATE CHANGE

(By Bill McKibben)

Caution: It is vitally important not to make connections. When you see pictures of rubble like this week's shots from Joplin, Mo., you should not wonder: Is this somehow related to the tornado outbreak three weeks ago in Tuscaloosa, Ala., or the enormous outbreak a couple of weeks before that (which, together, comprised the most active April for tornadoes in U.S. history). No, that doesn't mean a thing.

It is far better to think of these as isolated, unpredictable, discrete events. It is not advisable to try to connect them in your mind with, say, the fires burning across Texas—fires that have burned more of America at this point this year than any wildfires have in previous years. Texas, and adjoining parts of Oklahoma and New Mexico, are drier than they've ever been—the drought is worse than that of the Dust Bowl. But do not wonder if they're somehow connected.

If you did wonder, you see, you would also have to wonder about whether this year's record snowfalls and rainfalls across the Midwest—resulting in record flooding along the Mississippi—could somehow be related. And then you might find your thoughts wandering to, oh, global warming, and to the fact that climatologists have been predicting for years that as we flood the atmosphere with carbon we will also start both drying and flooding the planet, since warm air holds more water vapor than cold air.

It's far smarter to repeat to yourself the comforting mantra that no single weather event can ever be directly tied to climate change. There have been tornadoes before, and floods—that's the important thing. Just be careful to make sure you don't let yourself wonder why all these record-breaking events are happening in such proximity—that is, why there have been unprecedented megafloods in Australia, New Zealand and Pakistan in the past year. Why it's just now that the Arctic has melted for the first time in thousands of year. No, better to focus on the immediate casualties, watch the videotape from the store cameras as the shelves are blown over. Look at the news anchorman standing in his waders in the rising river as the water approaches his chest.

Because if you asked yourself what it meant that the Amazon has just come through its second hundred-year drought in the past five years, or that the pine forests across the western part of this continent have been obliterated by a beetle in the past decade—well, you might have to ask other questions. Such as: Should President Obama really just have opened a huge swath of Wyoming to new coal mining? Should Secretary of State Hillary Clinton sign a permit this summer allowing a huge new pipeline to carry oil from the tar sands of Alberta? You might also have to ask yourself: Do we have a bigger problem than \$4-a-gallon gasoline?

Better to join with the U.S. House of Representatives, which voted 240 to 184 this spring to defeat a resolution saying simply that "climate change is occurring, is caused largely by human activities, and poses significant risks for public health and welfare." Propose your own physics; ignore physics altogether. Just don't start asking yourself whether there might be some relation among last year's failed grain harvest from the Russian heat wave, and Queensland's failed grain harvest from its record flood, and France's

and Germany's current drought-related crop failures, and the death of the winter wheat crop in Texas, and the inability of Midwestern farmers to get corn planted in their sodden fields. Surely the record food prices are just freak outliers, not signs of anything systemic.

It's very important to stay calm. If you got upset about any of this, you might forget how important it is not to disrupt the record profits of our fossil fuel companies. If worst ever did come to worst, it's reassuring to remember what the U.S. Chamber of Commerce told the Environmental Protection Agency in a recent filing: that there's no need to worry because "populations can acclimatize to warmer climates via a range of behavioral, physiological, and technological adaptations." I'm pretty sure that's what residents are telling themselves in Joplin today.

CUT SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Mrs. ROBY) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. ROBY. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I quote, "Leadership means that the buck stops here. Instead, Washington is shifting the burden of bad choices today onto the backs of our children and grandchildren. America has a debt problem and a failure of leadership. Americans deserve better." Senator Barack Obama, March 16, 2006.

Mr. Speaker, cutting spending is critical to creating jobs. Without bold action, our budget situation will get worse, not better. House Republicans are the only group in Washington showing leadership on this issue. We have voted repeatedly to cut spending. And we have passed a budget that would reduce spending by \$6.2 trillion over 10 years. By contrast, it's been more than 750 days since Senate Democrats passed a budget.

Last week, Senator REID said, "There's no need to have a Democratic budget in my opinion. It would be foolish for us to do a budget at this stage." By law, the Senate is required under the Congressional Budget Act to pass a budget.

Now the White House is asking us to raise the debt limit. Secretary Geithner wrote, "Never in our history has Congress failed to raise the debt limit when necessary." But what good is a debt limit that is always increased? The truth is that Democrats spent this money. They made this mess. And now they should help us clean it up. If the White House wants us to consider raising the debt limit, they should be at the table proposing significant reforms that yield trillions, not billions, in savings to the American people. So far, that has not happened.

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HONORING MR. LEMANUEL "LEE" JONES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Lemmanuel "Lee" Jones, who passed away on the 23rd of April after many years of remarkable service to his country and to other veterans. Lee Jones was born in Crockett, Texas, on September 24, 1942, and entered the U.S. Army in 1963.

He served in Vietnam as a sergeant and a squad leader with the First Cavalry Division in 1965 and 1966. He fought in multiple engagements in Vietnam with enemy forces, including the fierce battle of Ia Drang Valley, a battle that was recounted in the best-selling book and as well in a Hollywood movie, "We Were Soldiers." Lee considered this battle to be the prime source of the PTSD that afflicted him for the rest of his life. Lee recently died of physical health problems connected to his service in Vietnam.

In recognition of his military service, he was awarded the Combat Infantry Badge and the Air Medal.

Upon leaving the military in 1966, Lee earned a B.A. in counseling from Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington. He went on to serve veterans as a counselor at the Seattle Veterans Center created with other vet centers by an act of Congress in 1979. Lee soon was promoted to direct the vet center as a team leader, the first African American to achieve this position in the Western United States.

By 1984, Lee was increasingly aware of the cultural and communication barriers that prevented many African American veterans with PTSD from benefiting from therapy groups that were primarily composed of Caucasian members, so he started an African American veterans PTSD group that facilitated culturally sensitive and open communication, education, and therapeutic interactions among its members. Lee's efforts were recognized by the City of Seattle when Lemmanuel Jones Day was proclaimed on November 9, 1989.

This PTSD group was such a success that it continued to meet at the vet center until Lee retired in 1995. The group then convinced Lee to return as a leader of the newly named African American stress disorders program at the VA Medical Center in Seattle, which continues to meet today.

From modest beginnings, this nationally unique program has grown to include hundreds of African American veterans. It has been of great benefit to veterans and to the community. None of this would have been possible without Lee's leadership, therapeutic skills, and compassion for fellow veterans.

I had the privilege of making Lee's acquaintance. In 2008, I asked him to share his experience and perspective on a panel at a veterans town hall meeting in Seattle. The purpose of the town hall was to increase awareness of the hidden injuries of PTSD and traumatic brain injury. It was also to honor soldiers and veterans and their families and to educate them on where they could get help.