

# The Motorist

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We stand at a great crossroads in history. If we go right, we are liable to bump into ourselves coming from the left. And vice-versa. But we do agree on one thing: our national interest requires that we wean ourselves from dependence on fossil fuels. Some of us want an alternative to “oil,” others lust for “foreign oil,” and others yet call for an “overhaul” of our entire energy policy, the whole kit-and-caboodle.

The average motorist at the crossroads is bewildered. The stuff in his Engine has suddenly turned against the flag on his windshield. While thus parked in bewilderment, the motorist sees huge trucks whistling right past him carrying hazardous wastes for burial in a far-off mountain. At least, he hopes it's far-off. He's not sure if anything is “far-off” anymore. Like those movies coming to a “theatre near you,” horrors keep arriving at his doorstep. He'd like to go to a bar to think this over, but he's broke. After being laid off from Enron, he retreated for a while to the toolshed where he re-read Emerson on “self-reliance;” then wondered just where that “self-reliance” went after he moved to the suburbs, enrolled his kids in private school, and put all his retirement in company stock.

Nonetheless, he is a patriot and he's been fighting the War on Terror in his own way, by reporting every move made by the immigrants at the gas station. Perhaps this is what they mean by “foreign oil he muses. In any case, he's been taking Lent seriously. No fun, no shoes, no service. We must be sober to fight the Axis of Evil. Definitely. The trouble is that he can't remember just who's a part of it, then it hits him. How could he have forgotten.

The Axis of Evil is Fossil Fuels, Hazardous Waste, and Poverty—and it builds weapons of mass destruction every day. In fact, he himself is a pretty good example of what it's like to be skewered by the Axis of Evil. Shish-kebab! He is shish-kebab! He turns the key in the engine and, without another look at the crossroads, turns left. Eventually, if he keeps going, he's going to meet himself coming in the other way. Either that, or he'll run out of gas.

# fifth Estate

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