

# Democrats and the Church of White Lightning

By

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The Democratic Party of the United States is a religious organization. Their faith extends to evolution theory, global warming, the damage done by secondhand tobacco smoke, and numerous other faith-based hypotheses that have never been verified experimentally. Their sacraments include homosexual marriage and partial birth abortion. Their priests are politicians who publicly get away with rape and pedophilia, but who nevertheless remain in complete subjugation to Democrat religious orthodoxy.

Nowhere is this faith stronger than in the Church of White Lightning, the leftist lobby currently urging the adoption of ethanol as motor fuel. The Internet overflows with claims by Democrat fundamentalists to the effect that ethanol is cheaper than gasoline, that it is more environmentally friendly than gasoline, and that it will reduce our dependency on foreign oil. They seek to force their religious beliefs on the rest of us by appropriating our taxes to support the manufacture and distribution of ethanol fuels, and to engage in a massive, media-supported public relations campaign designed to proselytize among the scientifically naïve.

Lately, however, less devoted folk have been applying godless (or is it “soulless”) algebra to the question of ethanol as motor fuel. And some of them have begun to question these cherished beliefs even in those areas that don’t easily yield to mathematical analysis.

Concerning the price of ethanol, for example, they accuse radical White Lightning clerics of basing their statement on the per-gallon cost of ethanol alone, disregarding ethyl alcohol’s [lower energy density](#), roughly 70% that of gasoline. The price of gasohol (10% ethanol, 90% gasoline) was \$2.73 in August. The pump price of E85 (85% ethanol, 15% gasoline) was \$2.43. At that price to go the same number of miles on gasohol as you could go on a gallon of straight gasoline would cost you \$2.85. To buy the equivalent in energy of a gallon of gasoline using E85 would run you \$3.31. Some bargain! Of course gasoline prices vary, but ethanol never gives you an advantage. (To check other prices, use [The Gasoholic Ripoffulator](#), a web program that calculates the gasoline-price equivalents of gasohol and E85 from the pump prices.)

Note, too, that ethanol is currently subsidized at \$0.54 per gallon (of ethanol – the subsidy on the ethanol equivalent to a gallon of gasoline is \$0.77). This subsidy is applied at the manufacturer, meaning that as it comes off -- and it will -- you can expect to pay back the full subsidy plus at least two heavy markups at the pump. It also means that even if you don’t drive a car, fellow taxpayer, you get to contribute to the welfare of agribusiness billionaires just as if you did.

For all this, the costs only begin there: The ethanol in E85 costs more than the ethanol in gasohol. This is because ethanol has so many additional costs associated with it: We can't pipeline ethanol, for instance, so we ship 75% of it by train and most of the rest by truck. Alas, you can't ship it in tanks designed for petroleum products either. You need special ones. You also need special tanks and pumps at your local Squat 'n' Spit if they want to sell you the stuff. In fact, the entire infrastructure for distribution and sale of motor fuel would have to be completely torn down and built anew to make ethanol work. To be sure, this would result in a flood of new jobs, but then so do wars and riots.

As far as the effect on the environment is concerned, the [jury is still out](#). You'll have to make up your own mind depending on the fervor with which you believe in global warming and the conditions under which CO2 and NOx emissions were measured in reaching conclusions favorable to ethanol. You'll also have to decide, on the basis of skimpy evidence, whether it takes more or less energy to make ethanol out of corn than the product itself produces. It does seem, however, that studies on ethanol emissions are done with the same scrupulous attention to scientific method as studies on global warming: That is to say, if you believe it, it has to be true.

Will ethanol reduce our dependence on foreign oil? In 2004 the amount of gasoline displaced by ethanol amounted to 2.3%. By 2012, our Department of Energy estimates that this figure will have reached a whopping 3.4%. Given numbers like these, it's easy to believe that if we took the entire 2004 corn crop, didn't feed a single pig or make enough corn flakes to assuage the hunger of even one child, but converted the whole load to ethanol, we could reduce our dependence on foreign petroleum by approximately 6%. Praise FDR and pass the white lightning!

There's [more](#), but by now you get the idea. If you like the thought of the ethanol economy, you might consider voting for candidates who are not Republicans, or simply staying home, on election day. The Democrats will regain power, then you'll be brought to the throne and given all the ethanol you want. Well, for your moped anyway.

If you don't like it, let's all get together in November and vote Republican. Then let's separate The Church of White Lightning from our State, and return ethanol to the purpose God intended for it: Less gasohol, more whiskey.

See you at the polls!