

Gore tells OSU to fight to halt global warming

Ex-vice president calls inaction too costly

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Former Vice President Al Gore called on students and staff members at Ohio State University yesterday to take up arms in a war far different from the one in Iraq.

"We are witnessing a collision between our civilization and the Earth," Gore told a crowd of 700 as he urged them to do whatever is necessary to halt global warming.

Otherwise, he predicted, the consequences will be dire.

The former Democratic presidential candidate has trumpeted that message at college campuses around the country in recent months with a carefully crafted slide show stuffed with charts and graphs explaining global warming and showing its consequences.

He was at OSU yesterday to give the annual Bownocker Lecture, honoring a former Department of Geology chairman.

In a speech scheduled for 30 minutes but lasting 90, Gore passionately warned that glaciers around the world are melting and the Arctic cap could be gone in 40 years.

In 15 years, Montana's Glacier National Park "will be the park 'Formerly Known as Glacier National Park,' " he said.

Repeating concerns of many scientists worldwide, Gore blames global warming on the pollution filling the atmosphere, causing temperatures on Earth to rise.

"We are completely overriding nature and have become a force of nature ourselves," said Gore, who wrote the book *Earth in the Balance: Ecology and the Human Spirit* before he was elected vice president in 1992.



Former Vice President Al Gore tells a crowd of 700 at Ohio State University that Americans need to create new technology that reduces pollution as it improves the economy.

"Do we have any ethical obligation to sit up and take notice of the consequences of what we're doing?" he asked, noting that the past 13 years have contained the 10 hottest years on record and that the western U.S. states are in their sixth year of a record drought.

Skeptics who say the warming trend can't be stopped are wrong, Gore said, who pointed to other successes such as landing a human on the moon and a space vehicle on Mars.

Gore accused Republicans and the Bush administration of "trying to confuse the issues" so that global warming isn't taken seriously.

"This is a political issue," he said. "But glaciers don't care about politics; they just freeze or melt."

Americans, he said, need to create new technology that reduces pollution as it improves the economy.

"The Earth is where we make our stand, by adopting the right perspective and keeping our eye on the prize."

A question-and-answer session planned for after Gore's talk didn't materialize because of the length of his speech.

But Meredith Kelly, 30, who is doing postdoctoral research at OSU's Byrd Polar Research Center, said she appreciated Gore's thoroughness.

"We need to make the public aware of this," she said. "Especially with the way the present administration tends to disregard the opinions of a few thousand scientists and listens just to a few skeptics."

Gore spoke at the invitation of the OSU Department of Geological Sciences and the John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy at OSU.

OSU spokeswoman Shannon Wingard said he was not paid.

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Streaming video of Al Gore lecture at
<http://www.glenninstitute.org/glenn/lectures/gore.htm>