



TUESDAY, AUGUST 02, 2005

How Would You Spend \$300 Billion?

by Michael in New York on [8/02/2005 02:15:00 PM](#)

An amusing op-ed in the NYT about [the silliness of bottled water](#). (Personally, I'm wedded to those square Fiji bottles.) Towards the end, writer Tom Standage talks about the desperate plight of much of the world when it comes to water:

More than **2.6 billion people, or more than 40 percent of the world's population, lack basic sanitation, and more than one billion people lack reliable access to safe drinking water.** The World Health Organization estimates that 80 percent of all illness in the world is due to water-borne diseases, and that at any given time, around half of the people in the developing world are suffering from diseases associated with inadequate water or sanitation, which kill around five million people a year.

Widespread illness also makes countries less productive, more dependent on outside aid, and less able to lift themselves out of poverty. One of the main reasons girls do not go to school in many parts of the developing world is that they have to spend so much time fetching water from distant wells.

And here's the kicker:

Clean water could be provided to everyone on earth for an outlay of \$1.7 billion a year beyond current spending on water projects, according to the International Water Management Institute. **Improving sanitation, which is just as important, would cost a further \$9.3 billion per year.**

Imagine, with the \$300 billion (and counting) that Bush has spent on Iraq, he could have made certain that clean water was available to EVERYONE ON EARTH for the next 150 years! Clean water for the world until 2155. Or Bush could have provided clean water and massively improved sanitation to the poorest of the poor for the next 27 years -- he could have dramatically improved the health of the world until 2032...and of course many other major nations would have pitched in, making the cost to us much cheaper and the benefits last much longer.

Imagine: at every pump and spigot around the world that we sponsored, a small discrete plaque saying "Courtesy of the United States of America." How would you spend \$300 billion?



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HOT OFF THE WIRE

HuffPost Politics

Michael Shaw: Reading the Pictures: As If This Puts Birthers To Bedt - click for full size Seeing is believing? via RJ Eskow. Stewart escalates....
22 minutes ago

Firedoglake

Late Late Night FDL: Holiday Road - Lindsay Buckingham - Holiday Road. I'm not headed to Wallyworld but I am on the road tonight, headed down to the San Francisco Bay Area for the meetup this...
59 minutes ago

Daily Kos

Open Thread and Diary Rescue - *Tonight's Rescue Rangers are noddem, Elise, jlms qkw, taylormattd, Shayera, and joyful with vcmvo2 editing.* The diaries up for rescue are: - *Vikin...
1 hour ago

Crooks and Liars

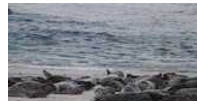
Open Thread - Just a little something re the birther thing. Open thread below...
2 hours ago

Eschaton

Late Night - Go Electric.
2 hours ago

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