

House magicians will continue to conjure up a few minor, if not meaningless, figures in an attempt to divert the public's attention from the real facts of welfare reform.

FOREIGN OIL CONSUMED BY THE UNITED STATES? HERE'S THE WEEKLY BOX SCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, the American Petroleum Institute reports that for the week ending May 3, the United States imported 7,301,000 barrels of oil each day, 1,184,000 barrels more than the 6,117,000 barrels imported during the same week a year ago.

Americans now rely on foreign oil for 53 percent of their needs, and there are no signs that this upward spiral will abate. Before the Persian Gulf war, the United States obtained about 45 percent of its oil supply from foreign countries. During the Arab oil embargo in the 1970's, foreign oil accounted for only 35 percent of America's oil supply.

Anybody else interested in restoring domestic production of oil—by U.S. producers using American workers? Politicians had better ponder the economic calamity sure to occur in America if and when foreign producers shut off our supply—or double the already enormous cost of imported oil flowing into the United States—now 7,301,000 barrels a day.

Mr. President, I hope Senators will examine this information in the context of rapidly rising gasoline prices. U.S. reliance on foreign oil has caused us to forsake the use of alternative domestic fuels and allowed for serious declines in domestic crude oil production. In 1970, the United States produced 9,600,000 million barrels per day. Currently, we are producing only 6,500,000 million barrels per day. Thus, more than half of the gasoline consumed in this country comes from foreign sources, and the problem is getting worse.

Where's the leadership from the White House on this critical issue? The President ordered a draw down of the strategic oil reserves. The American people recognize this for what it is—a cynical joke. Of course Congress should cut the Clinton gas tax. We should also cut taxes on domestic alternative fuel sources, and on a host of other taxes Democrats have heaped on the shoulders of hardworking American taxpayers.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, on Friday, February 23, 1996, the U.S. Federal debt broke the \$5 trillion sound barrier for the first time in history. The records show that on that day, at the close of business, the debt stood at \$5,017,056,630,040.53.

Twenty years earlier, in 1976, the Federal debt stood at \$629 billion, after the first 200 years of America's history, including two world wars. The total Federal debt in 1976, I repeat, stood at \$629 billion.

Then the big spenders went to work and the compounded interest on the Federal debt really began to take off—and, presto, during the past two decades the Federal debt has soared into the stratosphere, increasing by more than \$4 trillion in two decades, from 1976 to 1996.

So, Mr. President, as of the close of business yesterday, Tuesday, May 7, the Federal debt stood—down-to-the-penny—at \$5,093,910,014,740.64. On a per capita basis, every man, woman, and child in America owes \$19,236.90 as his or her share of that debt.

This enormous debt is a festering, escalating burden on all citizens and especially it is jeopardizing the liberty of our children and grandchildren. As Jefferson once warned, "to preserve [our] independence, we must not let our leaders load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between economy and liberty, or profusion and servitude." Isn't it about time that Congress heeded the wise words of my hero, Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence?

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that pursuant to the provisions of section 168(b) of Public Law 102-138, the Speaker appoints the following Members on the part of the House to the British American Interparliamentary Group: Mr. HAMILTON of Indiana, Mr. LANTOS of California, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, and Mrs. KENNELLY of Connecticut.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 232(c)(2) of Public Law 103-432, the Speaker appoints the following members from private life to the Advisory Board on Welfare Indicators on the part of the House: Ms. Eloise Anderson of California, Mr. Wade F. Horn of Maryland, Mr. Marvin H. Kusters of Virginia, and Mr. Robert Greenstein of the District of Columbia.

The message further announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 2137. An act to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 to require the release of relevant information to protect the public from sexually violent offenders.

H.R. 2974. An act to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 to provide enhanced penalties for crimes against elderly and child victims.

H.R. 2980. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to stalking.

H.R. 3120. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, with respect to witness retaliation, witness tampering and jury tampering.

H.R. 3269. An act to amend the Impact Aid program to provide for a hold-harmless with respect to amounts for payments relating to the Federal acquisition of real property, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 150. Concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for an event displaying racing, restored, and customized motor vehicles and transporters.

ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

At 2:43 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mr. Hays, one of its reading clerks, announced that the Speaker has signed the following enrolled bill:

S. 641. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend programs established pursuant to the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act of 1990.

The enrolled bill was signed subsequently by the President pro tempore [Mr. THURMOND].

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following measure was read the first and second times by unanimous consent and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 3269. An act to amend the Impact Aid program to provide for a hold-harmless with respect to amounts for payments relating to the Federal acquisition of real property, and for other purposes.

The following measure was read the first and second times by unanimous consent and ordered placed on the calendar:

H.R. 2137. An act to amend the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 to require the release of relevant information to protect the public from sexually violent offenders.

ENROLLED BILL PRESENTED

The Secretary of the Senate reported that on May 8, 1996 he had presented to the President of the United States, the following enrolled bill:

S. 641. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act to revise and extend programs established pursuant to the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act of 1990.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, which were referred as indicated:

EC-2484. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a final rule (RIN2515-AD73); to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2485. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a final rule (RIN2125-AD38); to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-2486. A communication from the General Counsel of the Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a final rule (RIN2125-AD61); to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.