

chances were one in two that its production would rise in a few years to 4 percent of U.S. oil use, dropping to one percent five years later and less thereafter. Not surprisingly, Congress didn't find that a compelling reason to make an irreversible sacrifice of the wilderness. If in some presently unimaginable future the nation absolutely required ANWR's oil it would still be there for the taking.

Since then, the U.S. Geological Survey has slashed the expected find by more than half. An offshore well drilled in one of the most promising areas was a bust. Another hit oil but not in developable quantity, though the company, Atlantic Richfield, is still enthusiastic.

Meanwhile, the expected market in which ANWR oil would have to compete, has turned from tight to squishy. Projected oil prices for the year 2000 are down from \$38 to \$19 per barrel. That turns the industry's five-year-old projection, which it is now shamelessly recycling, of 700,000 jobs created nationwide, from highly unlikely to laughable.

The last-resort claim is that drilling won't make much difference to this narrow plain that is the biologically crucial part—the birthing, denning, feeding and nursery ground—of a much larger, fragile and unique arctic ecosystem. But no matter how environmentally sensitive the effort, 400 miles of roads, 11 production facilities, four airstrips, two ports, massive gravel mining and housing for several thousand, plus associated emissions and toxic wastes are not what most people expect of wilderness. Neither will the plants and animals.

What's left? A short-term fix that might or might not prolong the oil-welfare state. Not much there to arouse support, even in Washington. So the state's powerful congressional delegation, whose members chair both the House and Senate Natural Resources Committees, came up with a sweetener. They propose to give half of the hoped-for leasing revenue to Washington, which helps make the numbers work in the Republicans' deficit-reduction plan. If Congress counts on the money, however, it is playing a chump's game. The state has promised to sue for any split less than the 90 percent it believes is guaranteed by its Statehood Act.

Alaska's congressmen want the name of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge changed to the Arctic Oil Reserve. It's revealing that what's gone is not just wildlife, but the national interest as well. Until Congress acts, they unilaterally have adopted a new acronym, AOR. If the ANWR proposal does pass, the delegation has a lot more to follow, including develop in the Tongass National Forest and turning back 70 million acres of federal lands to the state.

Instead, Congress should give the ANWR proposal the treatment it deserves. In the spirit of adopting new acronyms it could send along a message as well: GRA. Get Real, Alaska. The rest of us would trade for your troubles. Face the real choices now—ANWR isn't the answer.●

DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MENTALLY DISABLED VETERANS

● Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, on September 26, during the Senate debate on H.R. 2099, the VA-HUD appropriations bill, I offered an amendment to strike a provision in the bill which would discontinue disability compensation payments to certain mentally disabled veterans when their savings reach \$25,000. Unfortunately, my amendment was not adopted. I continue to believe strongly that this pro-

vision should not be enacted and urge the conferees on H.R. 2099 to drop it.

Mr. President, as I noted in that debate, this provision discriminates against a small group of veterans: those who are mentally disabled. It does terrible harm to these veterans. One proponent of the provision expressed the view that the provision does not affect the standard of living or the condition of any veteran. I disagree.

Mr. President, let me describe the situation of a veteran who called my office to explain how this provision affects her. She is from New Mexico. She receives VA compensation for a mental disorder that resulted from her military service. At times over the years, her disability has been particularly bad and she has been rated incompetent by VA. Right now, she is doing better and is not rated incompetent. However, she never knows when things will turn bad again and she will again be at risk of being rated incompetent.

Because of this risk, she told committee staff that, if this provision is enacted, she will not go to the VA hospital for treatment because she is afraid they will determine her condition is worse and they will recommend she be rated incompetent. If that happened, she would lose her compensation. Then she would lose her house because she could not make the mortgage payments. That is what she said. So, she will not seek treatment.

Mr. President, I understood that this bill would take away disability compensation from incompetent veterans whose estates exceed \$25,000, and I have opposed it as rank discrimination against a small group of veterans who are unable to protect themselves. Until this veteran called, however, I had not focused on how this provision would inhibit the very people we are trying to help from seeking medical treatment. I am convinced that this woman's condition will be affected by this provision. She is so afraid of this provision she will not seek the help she needs—help she has earned—help she is entitled to. That is what this provision does to mentally disabled veterans. That is why it should be dropped in the conference report.●

VETERANS HEALTH CARE ELIGIBILITY REFORM ACT OF 1995

● Mr. WELLSTONE. Mr. President, I understand that the House Budget Reconciliation bill incorporates the provisions of the "Veterans Health Care Eligibility Reform Act of 1995," a draft bill which addresses some of the critical problems faced both by veterans seeking health care and by the VA in providing health care services. I applaud the sponsors of the bill for their efforts to help the VA fulfill its lofty purpose: to take care of those who have served their country with pride and honor.

The House bill would enable the VA to provide its services more efficiently

and in the most appropriate setting, assuring our Nation's veterans that they could receive the care they need. Specifically, it would ensure that VA health care providers are granted the freedom to treat veterans on an outpatient basis when appropriate and would broaden the VA's authority to contract for outpatient services. In other words, the VA at long last could pursue methods of treatment based on medical and economic common sense, benefiting veterans and providers alike.

Let me highlight some of the key provisions of this innovative legislation which is of major importance to America's veterans. It would:

Enable VA, within appropriations, to provide all needed hospital care and medical services to eligible veterans, including preventive and home health care;

Call for VA to manage the provision of care and services through enrollment or registration, based on a system of priorities;

Assign priority for enrollment in the following order: First, veterans 30 percent or more service-connected disabled, second, former POW's and veterans with service-connected disabilities rated 10 or 20 percent, third, veterans receiving aid and attendance or housebound benefits and otherwise eligible veterans who suffer from a catastrophic disability, fourth, veterans unable to defray the cost of medical services, and fifth, all others;

Give VA discretion to determine how an enrollment system would operate and authority to set additional priorities within the above priority groups; and

Protect specialized VA programs, such as those for veterans with spinal cord injuries and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Mr. President, I want to stress that this legislation not only enjoys broad bipartisan support in the House, but that it is very much in the spirit of the Senate Appropriations Committee report issued last month on the VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Appropriations bill under the aegis of my distinguished colleagues Senators BOND and MIKULSKI.

This report noted the committee had included a provision "enabling VA to treat veterans eligible for hospital care or medical service in the most efficient manner," adding that the Committee supported the VA's efforts "to shift as much of its inpatient workload to ambulatory care settings as possible, to make better use of its resources." This is precisely what the House bill seeks to accomplish.

I also want to underscore that this legislation has won widespread support from numerous veterans service organizations [VSO's], experts on veterans health care, and the VA.

There have, however, been widely differing estimates from the VA and CBO on how the bill will affect demand for VA services and what impact if any it

will have on the VA budget, even though the bill specifies that it is to be implemented within appropriations. While the VA contends the House proposal is budget neutral and that it would make available as much as \$268 million within 2 years to expand VA outpatient services, CBO estimates that any savings will be offset by over \$3 billion in costs incurred as a result of increased demand for VA outpatient care. A number of VSO's have joined the VA in taking sharp issue with the CBO cost analysis.

Mr. President, it seems that proposals which satisfy so many needs of both patients and their health care providers deserve our deepest commitment and support, but at the same time we need to fully explore the consequences of such reforms. We need to change the way veterans receive their health care. That much is clear from how eager both sides of the equation—patients and providers—are to make the same changes. But we also need to ask ourselves: "What are the costs if any?"; Could these reforms cause other unintended problems in the future?; Will the proposed reforms alleviate problems plaguing the VA health care system?; and Will cuts in Medicare and Medicaid lead to increased demand for VA services so that the need for eligibility reform becomes even more pressing? We need answers to each of these pivotal questions before we can proceed.

I strongly believe that the provisions in the House bill or some variant of these provisions could at the very least provide a vital first step to achieve long-overdue eligibility reform, and to do so in a responsible manner. However, we first need to sit down and get all the facts out on the table so we can come up with clear answers to complex questions.

In anticipation of the possibility that the provisions of the House veterans bill will not be included in the final Senate/House version of the budget reconciliation package, I propose that the Committee on Veterans' Affairs conduct hearings to solicit the views of those who would be affected by such reforms and those who have thoroughly investigated their future effects on veterans' health care and their budgetary impact. I would welcome the chance for the committee to hear from representatives from the VA, VSO's, the Congressional Budget Office, and anyone else who could bring crucial insights to the forum. We need to include all viewpoints, to look critically at all data, and to listen to all voices before we can move forward responsibly. We need to institute eligibility reform but we need to carefully craft reform to ensure that it improves the quality of VA health care, makes it more user friendly, and increases its cost effectiveness.

I have requested that my distinguished colleague Chairman SIMPSON hold hearings on this topic when feasible and, if he concurs, look forward to

working closely with him on preparations for the hearings. ●

ELECTION OF JOHN J. SWEENEY AS PRESIDENT OF THE AFL-CIO

● Mr. MOYNIHAN. Mr. President, for the past three months, two of the nation's foremost labor leaders, John J. Sweeney and Thomas R. Donahue, have campaigned for the presidency of the AFL-CIO. This afternoon in New York City at the AFL-CIO's biennial convention, the delegates chose Mr. Sweeney. I rise to congratulate him, and Thomas Donahue as well, for their dedication, service, and not least, their civilities.

Mr. Sweeney and Mr. Donahue remain strong and united in their pledge to lead the labor community into the next century. Both are sons of Irish working class families from the Bronx—home of another great labor leader, the legendary George Meany. As friends and allies in the labor movement for over 35 years, Mr. Sweeney and Mr. Donahue have vied for the presidency with energy, but without bitterness. There is much we in political life can learn from such earnest and talented men. Victory need not mean vanquishing the opponent. Good ideas are not the province of any one faction. These are the lessons John Sweeney and Tom Donahue have taught us all.

There is more to these men than their recent contest. There is much testimony given to the value of work and the dignity that comes from having a job. John Sweeney and Tom Donahue, and the millions they represent, embody those values even as they advance them.

It is prophetic that John Sweeney, born in St. Joseph's parish in the Bronx—named for the patron saint of working men and women—has been chosen to lead the 13 million members of the AFL-CIO. The son of a bus driver, he learned the value of a job and the dignity of hard work from his father. Mr. Sweeney first joined a union as a part-time grave digger while attending Iona College in New Rochelle, New York, and began his trade union career in 1950 with the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union. Later, in 1961, he joined Local 32B of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and eventually rose through the ranks to become the SEIU's President in June of 1980. Today, this union, representing doormen, elevator operators, custodians, all manner of workers, is 1.1 million members strong.

Tom Donahue, another Bronx native, has had an equally long and distinguished career in the labor movement. He has served most recently as the Acting President of the AFL-CIO after Lane Kirkland stepped down in August of 1994. Mr. Donahue began his career at the AFL-CIO as Executive Assistant to George Meany, and was later elected to serve as Secretary-Treasurer, a post he held for many years. I am indebted to him for advice, and counsel through-

out my near two decades on the Senate Finance Committee.

While there could only be one winner today, the election is not so much a victory for John Sweeney, but for the labor movement as a whole. Let there be no question that Mr. Sweeney has his work cut out for him, as they would say in the "ICG", for this is a critical time in labor's history. But his record as an organizer of workers promises great things. And may I say that it is a tribute to New York and to the Bronx especially that in these turbulent times for labor, the membership of the AFL-CIO has once again entrusted its leadership to a New Yorker. I wish my friend John Sweeney great things as he embarks on the newest phase of his remarkable career.

The origins of today's AFL-CIO go back to 1881, or some will argue 1886. Which is to say, in the first century of the American nation. They have sustained their principles and organization into what is now the third century of our nation. It has been a remarkable and eventful journey and it is only begun. I stand with them in solidarity and joy for this fine moment. ●

"AMERICA, I LOVE YOU SO"

● Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the work of a well known, long time resident of Las Vegas. Mike Corda is a very accomplished songwriter, having written songs for such artists as Robert Goulet, Sammy Davis Jr., Nancy Wilson, Wayne Newton, and Lou Rawls. But as successful as he has been as a songwriter, Mike's greatest pride comes from his service to this country as a United States Marine. In the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, Mike rolled up his sleeves and went back to work to put the finishing touches on a song that would capture the patriotic pride of yesterday. That song, is entitled "America, I Love You So" and I ask that the lyrics of the song be printed in the RECORD.

The lyrics follow:

AMERICA, I LOVE YOU SO

America, I love you,
No place on Earth can match your style.
Your helpin' hand's world famous—
And your heart is in your smile.
No nation rates above you,
Where seeds of freedom proudly grow—
I feel the need to "fall in",
There's something here that's callin',
America, I love you so.
No nation rates above you.
When into outer space you go
I feel the need to "fall in"
There's something here that's callin',
America, I love you so—
America . . . I love you so!

(Words & Music by Mike Carda) ●

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, OCTOBER 26, 1995

Mr. NICKLES. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in adjournment until the hour of