

go to the farmers' lunch near the Russell Building. They are serving a \$10 lunch for 39 cents because farmers are here, 2,000-fold, saying: This is our share of the food dollar. It is not enough. We cannot make a living. We need help. We don't need charity. We need a little attention from Congress, better trade agreements, a better farm program, a little action on the anti-trust front to deal with the concentrations of monopolies that exist, and a little understanding that we matter to America's future. We produce food. It is a hungry world. Food matters. Congress, pay attention. That is all they are saying.

With that, I will have lunch with friends of mine.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROBERTS). The distinguished Senator from West Virginia is recognized.

Mr. BYRD. Before the distinguished Senator goes to lunch, would he agree with me that Oliver Goldsmith, writing in "The Deserted Village," must have had our family farmers in mind when he said:

Ill fares the land, to hastening ills of prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay;
Princes and Lords may flourish or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;

But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroy'd, can never be supplied.

Is there anything more fitting by way of poetry than Oliver Goldsmith's words in "The Deserted Village" when he talked about the bold peasantry?

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, as always, the Senator from West Virginia has captured in just a minute, with verse that comes from memory, something that I have not been able to say in 45 minutes. He is absolutely correct.

Again, let me thank him for being on the floor as I made the presentation.

Mr. BYRD. I thank the distinguished Senator.

ELEVEN-MONTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE TRAGEDY AT COLUMBINE HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, today marks the 11-month anniversary of the tragic school shooting at Columbine High School in Colorado. On April 20, 1999, 2 boys walked into their high school, armed to the hilt, and killed 13 students and faculty members before taking their own lives. Despite the horrible nature of this crime, and those that have followed it in Georgia, in Michigan, in the District of Columbia, and in other places throughout the country, the Congress has shown precious little leadership in exploring ways to help prevent mayhem in our schools.

Last May, in response to the Columbine shooting, this Senate passed the Juvenile Justice bill by an overwhelming bipartisan majority of 73-25. Despite this strong show of bipartisan agreement, the legislation is bogged down in a morass of election year poli-

tics. Despite the fact that the American people are crying out for some leadership on this issue, the Congress is proving itself to be uncaring, if not irrelevant.

There is plenty of controversy to go around anytime any measure comes before the Congress which deals with gun violence. We have all heard repeatedly the cautionary slogan chanted by some, "guns don't kill people, people kill people." But increasingly in recent years it has been children who are wielding guns against their classmates. Perhaps the slogan should be changed to "guns don't kill children, children kill children." Sadly, that slogan now has the ring of reality, but, I doubt that anyone will be lobbying for gun rights with those words imprinted on their lecture.

The Senate-passed legislation contained a number of important provisions to not only crack down on violent juvenile offenders, but also to reduce the potential for weapons to fall into the hands of children who may not understand all of the dangers that the weapons pose.

The Senate legislation is a compromise between the rights of the individual to keep and bear arms and the safety of the public to be protected from those who should not have those guns. The bill would require that every handgun sold must have a trigger safety lock or secure container. It would require background checks on all buyers at gun shows. The legislation would ban the youth possession of semiautomatic assault weapons and their high-capacity ammunition clips. And it would bar anyone convicted of a violent felony as a juvenile from possessing a gun. These are commonsense provisions on which I hope parents and gun owners alike could agree.

Last week, the Nation's leading gun manufacturer, Smith & Wesson, imposed upon itself many of the provisions contained in the Senate version of the Juvenile Justice bill, including trigger locks and background checks. If Smith & Wesson can see the wisdom of balancing public safety with private ownership rights, why can this Congress not do the same?

The last time—and, in fact, the only time—that the conference committee on the Juvenile Justice legislation met was last August. Time is of the essence. I urge the conferees on both sides of the hill to meet and to settle their differences. The longer they wait, the longer the delay, the better the chances are that some further tragedy will come along and steal the lives of more innocent children. We might make a difference. We might save a life. Why not have the courage to try?

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator may proceed.

Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, I am pleased to follow the distinguished Senator from West Virginia, who always has most interesting remarks. I am pleased to associate myself with his comments as well.

HIGH FUEL PRICES

Mr. BREAUX. Mr. President, it is hard to pick up a newspaper or turn on a television set or read any kind of political commentary or watch one of the Sunday morning talk shows without having the subject very quickly turn to the high price that we in this country are paying for gasoline. There is a certain amount of *deja vu* when you look at some of these situations: Here we go again. Many Members remember quite well the problems this country faced in the 1970s when we had the long lines at our gas stations around this country. People were screaming and hollering about the lack of gas for their automobiles and were also complaining about the price of that gas if they were lucky enough to get it.

Here we are in the year 2000, and basically the problem is very similar to what it was back in 1973. It is interesting to me to see so many people wringing their hands, struggling to find out exactly what is causing this problem. It is not, indeed, a mystery at all. The problem is one of supply and demand. We are using far more gas and oil in this country than we were in the past decade, than in the past 5 years, in fact, more than we used last year. Yet we are producing substantially less than we are using.

During the 1970s oil embargo, many of us, particularly those from oil-producing States, were saying the problem would only get worse unless we did something to become energy self-sufficient. In those days, the 1970s, we were importing about 36 percent of the oil we consumed in the United States. When the OPEC nations just slightly tightened their valves and started producing a little bit less, that 36 percent brought this Nation to its knees and created the long lines at the gas stations.

Many of us at that time said it was only going to get worse unless we concentrated on trying to be more energy self-sufficient in this country; we would have to concentrate on making sure we were producing, in an environmentally safe manner, the necessary energy to run this Nation.

I wonder what people would say if we imported 50 percent of all the food we needed to feed the citizens of our country. I bet that if we were 50-percent dependent on foreign countries for food in this country, there would be long lines marching in Washington, people clamoring for our Nation to get its act together and become more self-sufficient, producing the food we need. I wonder why it is any different when it comes