

cash-flow—oil. I just cannot accept the policies of this administration to enrich that man.

We have the farmers, and we have the truckers. Mr. President, have you flown lately? Have you looked at your airplane tickets? They put on a surcharge. Nobody can figure out what the ticket costs anyway. If it is a short trip, it is \$20. If it is a long trip, it is \$40.

Have you received a FedEx package lately? There is a surcharge added.

Pretty soon, the American people are going to wake up. A surcharge is going to be on everything. They say: Oil really hasn't affected inflation. Don't be too sure it has not hit yet.

Do my colleagues think we will get relief? We will see what happens on Monday. Anything that happens on Monday is 8 weeks getting to your gas station. That is the harsh reality.

The policy of this administration is more imports. That is it. They never learn by history: 37-percent dependent in 1973; 47-percent dependent when we fought the war in the Persian Gulf; 56-percent dependent now; 65-percent, according to the Department of Energy, in the year 2015 to 2020. Does it behoove us to take action now? I think so.

I told you a little bit about exploration and production. Here is what happened in our employment in energy: 405,000 employed is down to 293,000. That is the position we are in.

Our oil production domestically dropped from about 7 billion to about 6 billion in this period of time because we don't have an aggressive posture. It is not that we do not have oil and gas. This administration will declare victory, I guess, on the 27th if OPEC releases more oil. But I think Americans are going to have to ask a basic question, a simpler question, and that is: Will the administration's actions decrease our oil dependence or increase it? That is the basic question, and the American people ought to understand it.

Next Monday is March 27, and they say there will be an increase in foreign production of another 1 million to 2 million barrels. Then the administration—the Secretary of Energy and the President—is going to claim victory. They will say: We have more oil.

How hollow, because it is going to increase our dependence, it is going to give them more leverage. We are going to have another crisis. They said OPEC could never get together and did not have the discipline. They did. They got together. They would rather sell their oil at a higher price than sell less oil, obviously. They would like to see it somewhere at \$20 to \$25 to keep us on the hook. That is the thought.

I encourage the American people to ask: Is this in our national interest to swallow the administration's claim of victory? If indeed there is a significant increase coming, if we swallow the administration's claim of victory that it is in the Nation's interest to become more dependent on imported oil, or

strike out with an aggressive posture based on American technology and American can-do spirit to develop resources at home in the overthrust belt in my State of Alaska?

I implore my colleagues who want to speak on behalf of America's environmental community, to know what they are talking about. I ask them to get up to ANWR and Prudhoe Bay and take a look at it. See what we have done and look at some other oil fields. Just do not take the word of the self-anointed environmental groups that have a mission. That mission is membership, dollars, and a cause.

I am not suggesting they do not make a significant contribution. The problem is that they refuse to recognize that we are going to be needing crude oil—petroleum products—for a long time. They refuse to recognize that we are better off developing domestically than importing it. They refuse to recognize where we are getting our imports, the significant role of our rock. They refuse to recognize the role of the lives we lost in the Persian Gulf war. They refuse to recognize we have done a pretty good job in developing oil and gas resources. We can do a better job, if given the opportunity.

I do appreciate the time that has been allotted to me today.

I think it is important to recognize that, in all honesty, we do not have an oil policy, we do not have an energy policy. I fear my colleagues from the Northeast are going to be exposed to substantial increases in electricity.

I have the obligation to proceed with electric reliability bills, electric restructuring. But the fact is, they are going to be dependent on fuel oil making electricity. The price is going to be a lot higher than they have ever had before. People are going to be asking, What are you doing about it to relieve the problem? I hope their answer is not solely to increase imports.

I again extend my willingness to travel to the Northeast corridor, my willingness to meet with the editorial writers of the Northeast papers that continually misrepresent facts. I encourage them to give us an opportunity to be heard. I encourage them to come on up and take a look and spend the money so they can objectively make recommendations and decisions upon those to whom they and their papers and their media extend themselves.

I would like them to know that our Governor, and our delegation would love to have you. We will treat you with a level of hospitality that you will find quite suitable and quite comfortable. You might want to bring some long underwear though.

Give us an opportunity to contribute to this country.

The last thing I want to say is, we became a State in 1959. That was 41 years ago, or thereabouts. The rest of the country established their land patterns 100, 150 years ago. We are still trying to develop an economy. We have 700,000 people. We are trying to develop a uni-

versity. We don't have any roads across our State. The Federal Government owns it. We are dependent on natural resources. Our fish are renewable. Our timber is renewable. We also have a lot of oil and gas.

MEASURE RETURNED TO CALENDAR—S. 2251

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, on behalf of the leader, I ask unanimous consent that S. 2251 be placed back on the Senate calendar.

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

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S.J. RES. 14

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 1:30 p.m. on Monday the Senate begin consideration of S. J. Res. 14 regarding the flag desecration and it be considered under the following time agreement:

At 1:30 p.m. Monday, following the reporting of the resolution by the clerk, Senator MCCONNELL be recognized to offer an amendment in the nature of a substitute regarding a statute, and it be limited to 2 hours equally divided in the usual form, and an additional 30 minutes under the control of the Senior Senator from West Virginia, Mr. BYRD, with no amendments in order to the substitute, and, if agreed to, it be considered original text for the purpose of further amendments;

Further, following the debate on the McConnell amendment, Senator HOLLINGS be recognized to offer his first-degree amendment regarding campaign spending limits, with no amendments in order to the amendment and time limited to 4 hours equally divided in the usual form, with 1 of the 4 hours under the control of Senator MCCAIN;

Further, that no motions to commit or recommit be in order or any additional amendments;

Further, that at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, the Senate resume the Hollings amendment for up to 2 hours of their designated debate time, equally divided;

Further, that at 11:30 a.m. on Tuesday, there be up to 60 minutes equally divided between the chairman and the ranking minority member of Judiciary for general debate on the joint resolution;

And, finally, that following the debate on the amendments, the amendments be laid aside, with votes to occur on or in relation to the amendments in the order in which they were offered, beginning at 2:15 p.m. on Tuesday, with 4 minutes for debate prior to each vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BUNNING). Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MURKOWSKI. In light of this agreement, there will be no further

votes today. The next vote will occur on Tuesday, at 2:15 p.m.

Mr. President, let me again thank you for your courtesy, and that of the clerks, who listened to me intently. I understand there may be some more morning business time available. I invite my colleagues to engage in the debate on the subject of ANWR at any time they appear on the floor, in my office, or outside.

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

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

NUCLEAR WASTE STORAGE

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I alert my colleagues that an extraordinary thing happened yesterday in the House of Representatives. The House accepted the Senate bill on nuclear waste without amending the Senate bill.

As the occupant of the Chair knows, oftentimes the House has a little difference of opinion on what is good for the country. The bill we passed in the Senate on nuclear waste had certainly a vigorous debate in this body. There were 64 votes recorded for the legislation which would resolve what to do with our high-level nuclear waste and how to proceed with the dilemma associated with the reality that the Federal Government had entered into a contract in 1998 to take this waste from the electric-power-generating units that were dependent on nuclear energy. This is the high-level rods that have partially reduced their energy capacity and have to be stored. We have had this continued buildup of high-level waste adjacent to our reactors.

The significance of this is that this industry contributes about 20 percent of our power generation in this country. There are those who don't favor nuclear energy and, as a consequence, would like to see the nuclear industry come to an end. But they accept no responsibility for where the power is going to be made up. Clearly, if you lose a significant portion, you will have to make it up someplace else.

The point of this was to try to come to grips with a couple of things. One is that the ratepayers have paid the Federal Government \$15 billion over an extended period of time to take the waste in 1998. The second issue is the cost to the taxpayers because since the Federal Government has failed to meet the terms of the contract and honor the sanctity of the contract agreement, there are damages and litigation from the power companies to the Federal Government. That cost is estimated to be somewhere in the area of \$40 to \$80 billion to the taxpayer in legal fees as-

sociated with these claims that only the court will finally adjudicate.

By passing the Senate bill in the House—I believe the vote was 275—indeed, it moved the issue closer to a resolve. Many in this body would like to not address it. That is irresponsible, both from the standpoint of the taxpayer and from the standpoint of the sanctity of a contractual commitment. If we don't do it, somebody else is going to have to do it on a later watch.

The difficulty is, nobody wants the nuclear waste. But if you throw it up in the air, it is going to come down somewhere.

France reprocesses theirs. The French learned something in 1973, during the Arab oil embargo. They learned that they would never be held hostage by the Mideast oil barons and be subservient to whatever the dictates of those oil nations were and what it cost the French economy in 1973. As a consequence, they proceeded towards the development of a nuclear power capability second to none. About 92 percent France's power is generated by nuclear energy. They have addressed the issue of the waste by reprocessing it through recycling, recovering the plutonium, putting it back in the reactors, and recovering the residue. The residue, after you take the high-level plutonium out, has a very short life. It is called vitrification.

In any event, we are stuck still. We can't resolve what to do with our waste. But we have a bill that has moved out of the House. It is our bill. I have every belief it will go down to the White House. We will have to see if the President wants to reconsider his veto threat in view of the energy crisis we have in this country now and the fact that the administration does not have an energy policy, let alone the willingness to address its responsibility under the contractual terms to accept the waste. If the administration chooses to veto it, we have the opportunity for a veto override. In this body, we are two votes short.

I encourage my colleagues, particularly over this weekend as they go home, to recognize that this issue is going to be revisited in this body. If they have nuclear reactors in their State and they don't support a veto override, they are going to have to wear the badge, the identification of being with those who want to keep the waste in their State. That is where it will stay. It will stay in temporary storage near the reactors that are overcrowded and that were not designed for long-term storage. It will never get out of their State unless we come together and move this legislation, if the President does not sign it now that it has gone through the House and Senate.

Unfortunately, this would put the waste ultimately in Nevada where we have had 50 years of nuclear testing out in the desert, an area that has already been pretty heavily polluted. We have spent over \$7 billion in Nevada at Yucca Mountain where we are building

a permanent repository. Quite naturally, the Nevadans, my colleagues, will throw themselves down on the railroad track to keep this from happening.

But the point is, you have to put it somewhere. In my State of Alaska, we don't currently have any reactors.

As chairman of the Energy Committee, my responsibility is to try to address this national problem, with a resolve. What we have, obviously, is this legislation that has passed both the House and the Senate. It will be back. It will be revisited. I encourage my colleagues to recognize that we have a responsibility to address this on our watch. If we put it off, somebody else is going to have to address it. It is going to cost the taxpayer more. Now is the time, since we finally have a bill that has gone through the House and Senate.

The interesting thing is, had the House taken up our bill and amended it, we would be hopelessly lost because there would be a filibuster on appointment of conferees. It would take 9 days or something like that. It could not be done.

That didn't happen in the House. I commend the Speaker, Denny Hastert, for keeping a commitment. I commend our leader, Senator LOTT, who made a commitment that we were going to bring this up. Not only did we bring it up but we passed it.

I alert my colleagues, again, what goes around comes around. We are going to get this back. If you are against it, you had better come up with something else that is a better idea. Otherwise, it will stay in your State. If you want to get it out of your State in a permanent repository, you had better get behind this bill, if we have to go for a veto override.

I thank the Chair 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. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, are we in morning business at this time?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are in morning business, and the Senator from Idaho controls 60 minutes.

ENERGY CRISIS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, earlier today I came to the floor, as did several of my colleagues, to discuss what I believe is now nearing a crisis in our country; that is, the tremendous runup in the price of energy that we have watched for well over 3 months creep up on the reader boards at the local gas station or in fuel bills for those in homes heated with fuel oil.

A lot of Americans are scratching their heads and saying: What is happening? Last year, at this time out in