for the skill and grace with which they conducted themselves in this campaign; grateful to the Gore-Lieberman campaign staff, whose idealism, ability, and hard work make me optimistic about America's future; grateful to my Senate staff here in Washington and back home in Hartford—they have served with me on behalf of the people of Connecticut for so many years, and continue to do so with such commitment during this eventful and unusual year—grateful to the people of Connecticut whose support over the past 30 years has put me in a position where AL GORE could give me the extraordinary opportunity he did this year; and grateful to the people of Connecticut without whose backing this year I would not now have the privilege of looking forward to 6 more years of service to them and with you, my colleagues, as a United States Senator.

My greatest gratitude is to Vice President GORE himself. He has been my friend and colleague for 15 years now, but I have never been prouder of him than I was this year, and than I was last night. He conducted the campaign with dignity. He presented his policies and programs with conviction. He spoke with a precision that showed respect for the American people. He stuck to the record, and he worked hard, very hard. AL GORE ran this campaign as he lives his life: with honor, intelligence, and devotion.

Today, the Vice President can look back on 24 years of public service with great pride in his accomplishments, and he can look forward to the years ahead with great excitement about the unlimited opportunities that await him. I wish him Godspeed, and I look forward to his continued friendship. The Vice President knows, as I do on this morning, that Psalm 30 assures us that weeping may linger for the night but in the morning there are shouts of joy.

So, today, as some of us weep for what could have been, we look to the future with faith that on another morning joy will surely come.

I thank my colleagues in the Senate from both parties for their warm personal wishes and support during the last 5 months. I look forward, now, to returning to this Chamber in January and working with all of you to help improve the lives of the American people and to help elevate their respect for the institutions of our great democracy.

Mr. President, I again thank my friend and colleague from New Mexico for yielding me the time, I thank the Chair, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. We are all very proud of the Senator from Connecticut.

The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. I believe under the unanimous-consent agreement I am to speak next, but I note the presence of the chairman of the Appropriations Committee who would like to speak. I yield to him, and I ask I follow him this morning.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ALLARD). Without objection, the Senator from Alaska is recognized.

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STELLER SEA LIONS

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, I am grateful to my friend from New Mexico. I am here once again to talk about the last controversial amendment in the appropriations bills for the fiscal year 2001. We have completed all work on these bills now except for one amendment and that is the amendment that pertains to the Steller sea lions. I am here because there seems to still be a misunderstanding about what we are trying to do. The Congress has passed and the President has signed, as a matter of fact, an extension of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the act that deals with the 200-mile limit off our shores. That act in its original form created the North Pacific Fisheries Council that has jurisdiction under the law for the management plans that apply to fisheries off the shores of my State of Alaska.

In its recent action in issuing a biological opinion under the Endangered Species Act, the Department of Commerce saw fit to use the emergency portions of the Magnuson Act to issue a management plan for pollack and for cod off the State of Alaska within what they call the RPAs, the reasonable prudent alternative areas, dealing with the decline of the Steller sea lion.

There is no emergency provision in the Endangered Species Act. Under the Magnuson Act, management plans are issued by the regional councils, not by the Department of Commerce. There is an emergency clause, if the Secretary makes findings of problems with the fishery, that could justify the Secretary issuing a plan or a revision of the existing plan. That was not done. Instead, the Department of Commerce saw fit to use the emergency clause of the Magnuson Act to once again seize total control of the pollack and the cod fisheries off our shores within the so-called RPAs. They amount to an area of 20 miles around every sea lion rookery. It is an area that extends from Kodiak, all the way out along the Aleutian chain.

The National Marine Fisheries Service has told us there is no data to support the concept that there is a connection between the decline of the sea lion and the harvest of pollack. There is no cause and effect relationship scientifically that exists with regard to this decline. We are appalled by the decline of sea lions off our shores. We also know that sea otters are steadily disappearing, as are fur seals and harbor seals. We believe the reason is the tremendous increase in the killer whales. That is another subject.

Very clearly, what the Department has done now is to increase the danger for fishermen who live in Alaska and fish in the areas off our shores. That fishing currently has the highest level of deaths per capita of any industry in the United States. What this order has done, now, is it has foreclosed the fishing by these small boats in the areas where the pollack is located except during the wintertime. This is a particularly dangerous area. Winter storms increase the problems of fishing. What is more, if they follow the order and go beyond the 20 miles, the further from shore they go on these small boats, even a minor injury becomes a life threatening injury, particularly in the stormy season. I have to report to the Senate that the Coast Guard voted against following this biological opinion last Saturday, in my State, for safety reasons.

What the administration has done is they have restarted the race for the fish. They have made it almost impossible for the enforcement of this biological opinion. They have not consulted with the people who really know the industry as they have issued this opinion. This opinion will have a $500 million to $800 million impact on the industry, according to figures that came from the Department itself.

Just think of this. The largest concentration of fish processors in the United States is on Kodiak Island. I was informed yesterday that, as a result of this opinion, if it is enforced, Kodiak processors will be able to operate for 2½ days. This opinion will create ghost towns in my State along the shore from Kodiak all the way out along the Aleutian chain. Primarily those are native villages. These are not enormous factory trawlers. They fish way offshore. These are people who live in these small villages and harvest this fish—which is a unique fish, as I have told the Senate before. It is unique because it is a biomass constantly growing. Because of the management schemes we have worked out under the Magnuson Act, that biomass has increased almost five times since we started the Magnuson Act.

There is more pollack than ever before, but this is going to limit fishing for pollack in specific areas where the small boats fish.

There is just no way to justify this. Native Alaskans, as I say, are going to lose their jobs, lose their subsistence. About 1,000 boats that otherwise would have gone to sea will not fish under this order. It is just unconscionable.

I am not one who makes threats; I make statements. I have made the statement that I will not sign this conference report if it does not adequately restore this fishery. I will oppose the bill on the floor, and I am hopeful my friends on this floor will understand why.

What this means is we cannot resolve this issue. My staff will meet—thanks to the good offices of the Democratic leader—with representatives of the administration in just a few minutes, but if we cannot resolve this, my advice is make different reservations.

Understand, I cannot as a Senator allow an action that is not following the law that I helped author put a considerable portion of the people who

have year-round jobs in my State out of work, and not just temporarily. They have purported to create these areas around these rookeries forever without any consultation with the regional council that was created by the Magnuson Act, without any public hearings, based solely upon a lawsuit that was filed in a Federal court in Seattle and a friendly suit to use that as a justification for taking back into the Federal Government the management of these two magnificent fisheries—pollack and cod—off our State.

In my opinion, it is unconstitutional, but I know one thing—it is not going to be approved by this Senate.

I thank the Chair, and I thank my friend from New Mexico.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, when I yielded time to my good friend from Alaska, I did not think I would be hearing what I just heard. I am pleased I was here when he discussed this issue of paramount importance to his State.

It is most interesting that a Senator can come to the floor of the Senate and tell us all something that is very important to his State, even though the State is a small State. It is great that our Constitution gives our States representation based upon statehood and not upon population of the State. I trust the administration and others will see fit to work with Senator STEVENS so we will all be out of here before Christmas.

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AMERICAN ENERGY CRISIS

Mr. DOMENICI. Mr. President, I have come to the floor today to talk about a crisis that the leadership in America does not want to tell the American people about, and certainly the leadership does not want to try to solve this basic problem which is the most serious problem confronting us now.

I thought it would be fair and right, since this is what I believe and this is what I understand and before we have a new President, for at least one Senator—and I hope there will be others—to remind the American people that we are in the midst of an American energy crisis. Unless and until it becomes critical to millions of Americans in their daily lives, it is very hard for Americans to think we have a crisis, but there is a growing, creeping crisis of paralysis that will occur in America because we do not have enough energy that is approved by the Environmental Protection Agency and that we can add to our inventories and resources.

The crisis is coming close. Californians may be asking some questions. They ought to be. The media of the United States is not asking them yet. The great State of California, if you put that State alongside countries, is either the third or fourth largest economic unit in the world. In other words, in terms of gross domestic product, California is either third or fourth in the world.

There are brownouts happening in California, USA, which means there is not enough distributable electricity in the power lines, in the grid of California, to permit people to continue operating day by day as if there is sufficient energy for anything and everything they choose to do.

I hope some people start asking: Who did this to us? Why are we in this condition? I predict this will creep across America, and I only hope we do not blame the next President for what has occurred before his watch. We do not have anyone in a leadership position at the executive branch of America, from the President on down, who is telling the American people that we have a big, big energy problem and that there are solutions, but it will mean we have to make some tough decisions.

I want to talk a moment about what energy means.

The reason the United States is powerful, the reason we can have a strong military, the reason we have the best material things in our daily lives—more houses, more cars, more refrigerators—and people can continue to aspire to be materially sound in America with our economy growing robustly, adding people to the payrolls and giving them more money per unit of time, giving them a better standard of living and a life to lead, is because we have energy. Without energy, we cannot grow, and I do not mean grow from the standpoint of adding a subdivision; I mean grow from the standpoint of putting to work for us in our daily lives the kinds of things that use energy and give us productivity, jobs, and economic growth. Without an energy supply, that cannot happen.

I want to talk a moment about our goals for the world.

We have used some really nice words—''globalization,'' for one. The way I see it, America would like poor countries to get rich. We would like poor people in the world to have more, not fewer, material things. Believe me, these poor nations are beginning to look at the world and ask: How about us? Can't we grow? Can't we have prosperity?

Let me give an answer as I see it. If the world is expected to grow and prosper using current American restraints on energy sources, it is impossible for us to grow and the poor to grow because they need huge quantities of energy to grow. Do we want to be part of that? If we do, how can we hide our heads and not encourage that all sources of energy be looked at from the standpoint of the benefits versus the costs—the cost to a country, to the environment.

Because of the inability to make hard decisions, we are just about to make our country a natural gas environment. We have almost abandoned coal. We have almost abandoned cleaning up coal so we can use it.

People are wondering what is happening to natural gas prices. When we say to the American people that all you can use in new powerplants is natural gas, all you can use for anything now because of environmental concerns is natural gas, and then we say we cannot produce it on American lands, on American property, on American public domain—I am looking across the aisle at a Senator who is always talking about coal, coal mining. Let me tell him, there is currently a study that says the United States of America has 200 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. We use 20 a year. That is almost 10 years of total supply. We have it locked up in American public domain, in American real estate that we own as a people, because we are frightened to make decisions about letting people explore for it or drill for it. In fact, we have case after case where almost nonsensical restraints lock it up so we cannot use it.

I submit that the challenge for the new President is to be courageous and for his Secretary of Energy to be courageous. First, we had better define the problem for the American people. A Senator this morning came to the floor and spoke about our growth. I say to my friend from Colorado, we seem to be having a downward trend in our gross domestic product, and everybody wants to tell Alan Greenspan how to do his business. That is OK. That is what Senators do. Everyone claims Alan Greenspan in the last decade did the best job of steering us in the direction of sustained growth, high employment without inflation. I say to my friends, there can be no sustained growth at 2.7 per year or 3.3 per year, which gives us a lot of power in our economy, if we do not have energy to use. We cannot do that with brownouts across America.

That, in and of itself, and the increased price will cause America's economy to sputter and slow down, and somebody will be blamed. I submit, do not blame the new President and do not blame the new Secretary. They may have to tell us the truth. They may have to tell us we cannot as a nation get by hiding our heads from new energy sources, such as advanced new technology in the nuclear area.

I think we are going to have to start talking about it realistically with the American people.

Do you know in South Africa they are about to build a module—that means a small powerplant—with brand new nuclear technology that, number one, means the powerplant can never melt; it is passive; it will turn itself off at a certain temperature.

Do you know that powerplant they are trying to build will not use light water? Their gas-cooled design may be much simpler, much safer, and produce less waste (but some) than light water systems.

We here in America are working on nuclear research and the like related to that kind of addition, but we are doing it in such a quiet way because we are fearful that some will rise up and get angry about it. Angry they may get, but the truth is, if the American people