

beer cost only a nickel. The building still stands on Victorian Avenue, and today is home to several small businesses.

The Soroptimist Club International was founded in Sparks in 1958. The Sparks' Soroptimist club was formed to make a difference for women, focusing their extensive efforts on volunteer service in the community. They sponsored the Miss Nevada Pageant and Nevada Girl's State. Additionally, the Soroptimists awarded scholarships to young women graduating from Sparks High School, raised money for books at the Sparks Library, and donated to the Gray Ladies Indigent Fund for the State Hospital.

However, no history of Sparks would be complete without mentioning John Ascuaga, a developer and entrepreneur who built Sparks' first casino: the Nugget. In May of 1958, the Nugget's ambassador became a part of the town's fabric. The "Tall Cowboy" appropriately arrived on the railroad, in pieces. When assembled, Last Chance Joe, stood thirty-two feet tall at the entrance to the Nugget.

I would also like to recognize Tony Armstrong, the former mayor of Sparks who died in January of this year. Tony's personality, his vision for the city, his management skills, and his deep humanity made him a terrific mayor and an outstanding man. It was Tony who first contacted me about the Sparks' centennial. I miss Tony and it is fitting to recognize him on this day, which he would have enjoyed so much. I wish his successor, Gino Martini, all the best and look forward to working with him on projects important to Sparks.

Finally, it is remarkable that Sparks has retained its Victorian architecture and charm. The city beckons to us as a relic of a gentler and more beautiful time. It is truly one of the jewels of northern Nevada.

A century has passed since the City of Sparks was founded. I hope you will join me in celebrating this lovely Nevada community's centennial.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. Each Congress, Senator KENNEDY and I introduce hate crimes legislation that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society. Likewise, each Congress I have come to the floor to highlight a separate hate crime that has occurred in our country.

According to the San Francisco Chronicle, a participant in a Davis, CA, gay-pride parade was assaulted last summer. The apparent motivation for the attack was the sexual orientation of the victim.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement

Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

NOPEC

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I, again, join in the introduction of our NOPEC bill. I am sincerely sorry that this bill has not yet become law, and I hope that the situation we face as a nation will lead the Senate to recognize the toll that the OPEC producers are exacting from the American people. As gasoline prices continue to skyrocket, exceeding \$2 a gallon in many communities, we must have a real correction. As heating oil prices have soared, the President needs to take notice. Without correction and containment, consumers across the nation will continue to suffer.

The relentless increases in gasoline prices are not the result of natural supply issues. Rather, they are largely due to market manipulation by OPEC, a cartel of those controlling production and supply of oil from the Middle East. When the Antitrust Subcommittee of the Committee on the Judiciary held its hearing on gas prices last year, experts from several fields, both in and out of government, confirmed for us what we already suspected: The higher prices are due to the OPEC cartel that sets production quotas for its members and prevents the free market from setting crude oil prices. The testimony at that hearing revealed that most of the gasoline price increase can be explained by OPEC's unfair production quotas.

The artificial pricing scheme enforced by OPEC affects all of us, not the least of whom are hardworking Vermont farmers. As USDA's Cooperative Extension Office in New Hampshire recently found, the increasing energy costs may add \$5,000 or more to the total costs of operating a 100-head dairy operation in the Northeast. In addition, soaring prices have affected a variety of industries across the United States, and will likely force many Americans to make tough choices about family travel.

Over the last year, I have expressed concern that gasoline prices would simply continue to rise. I have hardly been alone in that belief, and I am sorry to say that my prediction has borne fruit. Sadly, that fruit is bitter for those forced to pay ever higher prices to go about their daily lives. This week, the average price for regular gasoline reached \$2.00 per gallon. Our economy, our farmers, and our families need relief now. They also need good policy. In the absence of White House leadership, Congress should provide law enforcement the tools needed to fight anti-competitive practices.

If OPEC were simply a foreign business engaged in this type of behavior, it would already be subject to American antitrust law. It is wrong to let OPEC producers off the hook just because their anticompetitive practices

come with the seal of approval of the member nations. I urge the Senate to support this bill and to say "No" to OPEC.

SAVING THE IRRAWADDY DOLPHIN

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss an issue which, while not one that you would likely read about on the front page of the newspapers, is important nonetheless. It concerns the alarming rate of deterioration of the habitat of the Irrawaddy Dolphin in Southeast Asia. Recent statistics indicate that there are fewer than 100 Irrawaddy left in the world.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature has placed the Irrawaddy Dolphin on its list of critically endangered species. The primary reasons for this sharp decline include destructive fishing practices, such as the use of dynamite or electric current, and mercury runoff from gold mines. These practices are leading to the extinction of an entire species.

Why should we care? Perhaps a quote from President John Kennedy provides the best answers to this question. In a 1963 address at American University, President Kennedy said ". . . in the final analysis, our most basic common link, is that we all inhabit this small planet, we all breathe the same air, we all cherish our children's futures, and we are all mortal."

I know every Member of the Senate wants to make the world a better place for our children and grandchildren. I am almost as certain that ensuring the survival of the Irrawaddy dolphin, an extraordinary species, would be something that we could do to help achieve this goal.

Congress has spoken on this issue. In the Senate report that accompanied last year's Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, Congress directed the U.S. Agency for International Development, USAID, to devise a strategy to help reverse the habitat decline of the Irrawaddy dolphin.

Some important nongovernmental organizations are already working on this issue, including the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Bronx Zoo in their Species Survival Program partnership. I hope USAID's strategy, which is due shortly, will be a first step in forming a public-private partnership that will prevent the Irrawaddy dolphin from going the way of the dodo and the passenger pigeon.

Once a species is gone, it is gone forever. We need to be sure this does not happen.

MANHATTAN PROJECT NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK STUDY ACT

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I briefly would like to say how pleased I am that the Manhattan Project National Historical Park Study Act was enacted in the last Congress. That Act,