

Now, of course, we live in a plastic world. And all of these plastics are made from oil. If you will look at your car, if you look at your home, you look at your television set, you look at almost anything in your environment, and I suspect this rug was made out of oil. Our pesticides, our herbicides, our pharmaceuticals, our make up, this is all made out of oil or a great part of it is made out of oil. So there is an interest in getting the things we make out of oil, much of our clothing is made out of oil, interested in being able to get these fibers, this material from something else, and so this is an article, "Corn Based Plastic Coming Soon."

Every bushel of corn that we produce requires a lot of fossil fuel energy. And almost half that energy comes from natural gas, which currently is used to make nitrogen fertilizer. Corn, as a plant, is a pig. It requires and uses incredible amounts of nutrients. And we have now engineered hybrid corn so that it can be planted close together. It grows rapidly. It uses the sunlight efficiently, and it uses enormous amounts of energy. And so, this corn based plastic that they are talking about, I don't know what the efficiency there is. But if it is no better than the efficiency of making ethanol, and ethanol, remember, every gallon of ethanol represents at least three-fourths of a gallon of fossil fuel to make it. Some, Dr. Pimenthal, for instance, believes that if you really cost-account all the energy that goes into producing corn, that you use more fossil fuel energy to produce the corn than you get out of the corn. I hope he is wrong. I believe he is wrong. Anyway, after you have produced the ethanol from the corn, you still have a pretty good feed left, and I don't think his calculation took that into effect.

So this corn based plastic really is, in large measure, just recycling fossil fuels. It may make you feel good to say that my shirt is made from corn. But when you recognize the incredible amounts of fossil fuel energy, if it is the same efficiency as using ethanol, at least three-fourths of the fiber of your shirt might just as well have been made from oil because that oil or some fossil fuel source was used in growing the corn from which the plastic was made.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue next week.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agreed to the following resolution:

S. RES. 97

Whereas Thomas F. Eagleton spent his 30-year career in elected office dedicating himself to his country and his home state, representing Missouri in the United States Senate for 18 years;

Whereas Thomas F. Eagleton served in the United States Navy from 1948 until 1949;

Whereas Thomas F. Eagleton, a graduate of Amherst College and Harvard University Law School, launched his political career with his election as St. Louis Circuit Attorney in 1956 and was elected Missouri Attorney General in 1960 and Missouri Lieutenant Governor in 1964;

Whereas Thomas F. Eagleton was elected to the United States Senate in 1968, ultimately serving three terms and leaving an imprint on United States history by co-authoring legislation creating the Pell Grant program to provide youth with higher education assistance, helping to create the National Institute on Aging, and leading the charge to designate 8 federally-protected wilderness areas in southern Missouri;

Whereas Thomas F. Eagleton continued to contribute to his community, state, and nation following his 1986 retirement by practicing law, teaching college courses, writing political commentaries, and encouraging civility in politics;

Resolved, That the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the Honorable Thomas F. Eagleton, former member of the United States Senate.

Resolved, That the Secretary of the Senate communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

Resolved, That when the Senate stands adjourned today, it stand adjourned as a further mark of respect to the memory of the Honorable Thomas F. Eagleton.

RENEWABLE FUELS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ARCURI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate being recognized and the privilege to address you here on the floor of the United States Congress this evening. And I appreciate the previous speaker, who has brought up the issue of renewable fuels and the overall energy situation that America is addressing here. And this dialogue has got to be expanded and continued, and so this input that comes from the gentleman from Maryland is an essential part of our discussion and our debate. I know that when Professor Bartlett digs up some scientific information and lays it out here for us, we know that it is well researched and it is well founded and well grounded, and that it becomes a significant part of the overall debate.

And I would add some more things to this overall debate as we talk about energy and then, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I will move into some other issues as well that are of important concern to the American people.

On this energy that we are dealing with, I have continually heard from the other side of the aisle, well, we can't drill in ANWR. I haven't heard why. We can't drill in the outer continental shelf. I haven't heard why.

I have heard that we have to conserve energy. I think that is good, but it is hard to do that without having the proper financial incentives in place. And one thing we haven't done is reward the companies for doing the exploration, particularly, the exploration for American oil, Mr. Speaker.

And so, as I look at this overall picture, I will submit this scenario that we need to do, and that is, we must grow the size of the energy pie, this overall circle pie chart that we use that is the 100 percent model. And in there are the components we have today called gasoline, diesel fuel, coal, natural gas, nuclear power, hydroelectric, solar, wind; the list goes on of those components, some hydrogen. But it is a smaller size of supply than we need, and that is why our energy prices are high. And that is linked with the rest of the world, certainly.

But here in the United States, we need to be looking at this from the perspective of reducing and eventually eliminating our dependence upon Middle Eastern oil. That is essential that we do that because the funds that are going into Middle Eastern oil, when we are buying oil on the market, those funds, some of them, end up in the hands of our enemies, in the hands of the terrorists, in the hands of the Islamic jihadists. And that is the strongest incentive to becoming more dependent upon domestic energy and less dependent on Middle Eastern energy.

But additionally, our balance of trade goes the wrong way for us. When we are importing energy from overseas in places like the Middle East, that transfers the wealth of the United States over to and puts it into the countries of the Middle East. And so our approach here needs to be the expansion and the continued promotion of these energy supplies that we have that we can develop here in the United States.

The most obvious of those are the biodiesel components, which have been expanding rapidly here in the United States, and particularly in Iowa and particularly in Iowa's Fifth Congressional District, the western third of the State. We are now and have been for some time the number one congressional district out of all 435 in biodiesel production. And that biodiesel production comes from animal fats and soybeans, and the extraction of that processed into diesel fuel, that has proven to be a very effective and reliable, and much of it a biodegradable type of a fuel, much more environmentally friendly than the diesel fuel that is on the market that comes out of the sands of Saudi Arabia, for example. And so our leadership there in the biodiesel production needs to be expanded, and we are on a track to do that.

We are also, in the district that I represent, ranking number two of the 435 Congressional districts in ethanol production. By some time this year, in 2007, we will be number one in ethanol production. That will rank us first in the Nation in ethanol production of the 435 congressional districts, and also first in the Nation in biodiesel production.

We rank currently today about fourth or at least tied for fourth in wind generation of electricity. That will go up to at least second time this year, and perhaps it will be first.