

Isn't it rather peculiar that we have a Strategic Petroleum Reserve with about a 56-day supply of oil in case this country finds its oil supplies in the Mideast, on which we are 58-percent dependent, cut off by some action and we don't have an approved list of bidders who have already proven their financial capacity or the wherewithal to refine the oil and get it to market so we can do this in a process of a very short time? If the supply is disrupted, we are going to need to move it in a short period of time. It doesn't appear to be the case.

The Department of Energy evidently doesn't have a standing list of bidders who are willing to take the oil at a price, refine it, and get it out to the market. It appears that what we have done here is put this out to the highest bidder, and some of these speculators say: I didn't have to put up anything. I have nothing to lose. If I get a position, I can turn around and try to sell my position hoping that the price of oil has gone up, as it has today \$3.50, and make a few bucks without any risk individually—because they haven't had to put up anything.

Let's get this straight. I think this was done at a considerable risk to our national security, and as a consequence, the release of oil from SPR by this administration has not contributed one identifiable barrel to the heating oil reserve for the Northeast part of this country.

Remember what we have achieved so far in the sale is identification that perhaps we will get at least a day's worth of heating oil. But it is not going to arrive until sometime in November.

Further, most of the crude oil released from SPR appears to be going into the foreign markets because they are paying a higher price in Europe than we are paying in the United States. There is no prohibition against the export. The only folks who appear to benefit will be perhaps a few of the speculators and a few of the oil companies that hit the jackpot. I can't imagine the Vice President is going to generate any expanded support from it. But the losers are really the fuel-starved consumers in the Northeast, the people this was designed to help.

I think that raises a number of questions regarding the administration's ability to basically manage the SPR.

When I think of the situation, as I have seen it evolve, I think the Secretary and the administration owe us a few answers.

For example, who bid on crude oil from SPR and what did they offer?

Why were the winning bids selected?

Who didn't get selected and why?

Whom were the bids sent out to?

What assurances did the administration get that oil release from SPR would be turned into heating oil in the Northeast?

How did the winning bidders plan to refine SPR oil?

How will they get it to market?

Why didn't the Department of Energy have a preapproved list of bidders

that might be required in a real supply emergency?

Why wasn't financial responsibility part of the bidding process, similar to the way the Forest Service puts up timber for bid with financial requirements to be part of the bid submission?

I have asked these questions of the Secretary. I look forward to his response.

With regard to our national energy security, I think this administration really needs to respond to this question. The question is: Is that your final answer? Because that is simply not good enough for the American people.

In conclusion, it is my intention, as chairman of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, to hold a hearing, which I intend to call for next Thursday, on the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, to try to generate the factual information relative to just what has been accomplished and what assurances people of the Northeast have that this action will actually result in any increase in our reserves of heating oil for the coming winter in view of the circumstances that exist today—the conflict in the Mideast, the tensions, and the realization that, indeed, we are at a time when we have become so dependent on imported oil that our national energy security is dictated by the likes of Saddam Hussein, Iraq, and others who do not necessarily look for the best interests of the United States when they sell their product to us.

I am always reflective on Saddam Hussein and the realization that now we are importing about 750,000 barrels a day from Iraq. How quickly the American people forget that we lost 147 lives in 1992 in the Persian Gulf war; we had 437 wounded. The cost to the taxpayer was in the billions of dollars.

Now we are looking to Saddam Hussein as a savior for our addiction to oil. I think it is further interesting to note the action taken by Saddam Hussein in relationship to the demand on Iraq from the U.N. to begin to pay Kuwait for reparations from the conflict there in the invasion from Iraq into Kuwait. Saddam Hussein told the U.N., if you require payment now, I will reduce my oil production. It is my understanding that the U.N. said: We will talk about it next quarter.

If you look at where we are today, we find the world's production and the world's consumption are almost equal. There is a little bit more production than there is consumption—just about 1 million barrels a day. But Saddam Hussein is producing 2.9 million barrels a day. His threat to cut production could increase the price of oil from \$36 today to \$56 tomorrow.

I always recall the issue of Israel and our commitment to Israel's security. He ends virtually every speech with "Death to Israel." If there ever is a threat to peace in the Middle East, it comes from Iraq. They are building up their missile-delivery capability, their biological capability, and as a consequence of what we are seeing today

in the Middle East, the crisis is increasing by the hour, and as a consequence the threat is increasing.

So this is all coupled with dependence, an increased growing dependence on imported oil and the inability of the administration to face up to appropriate relief associated with reducing our dependence on imported oil by producing more oil at home in the over-thrust belt in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah—areas where the Federal Government is now taking nearly 60 percent of the public land and putting it off limits.

In my State of Alaska, we are attempting to open up the small sliver of ANWR, roughly a footprint of 2,000 acres out of 19 million acres, a potential supply of 16 billion barrels that would replace what we import from Saudi Arabia over a 30-year period. These are the actions that could be taken as well as conservation and tax incentives to address our energy security.

If we were to take these actions, there is no question in my mind we would be sending a strong signal to the Middle East. We would see a very significant drop in oil, much more so than occurred the other day when the President announced the sale of 30 million barrels from the SPR. I suggest we could expect at least a \$10 to \$15 a barrel drop in the price of oil.

I was thinking about the remarks of the previous speaker relative to the political season we are in. I was reminded in the debate last night of a statement by the Vice President that he always opposed energy taxes. I guess perhaps the Vice President overlooked the fact that when the administration came in in 1993 the first tax they proposed was the Btu tax, British thermal unit, a tax on energy. It was defeated in this body.

However, shortly thereafter there was the effort by the Vice President, who was sitting in the chair of the Presiding Officer, and there was a tie vote in the Senate. The issue was the gas tax, 4.5 cents a gallon. The Vice President broke that tie and that gas tax went into effect.

In conclusion, I assume that the Vice President overlooked his record on increasing energy taxes and perhaps he should revisit his record and his memory.

DEFENSE PRODUCTION ACT AMENDMENTS OF 1999

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to consideration of H.R. 1715, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 1715) to extend and reauthorize the Defense Production Act of 1950, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the bill be considered read the third time and passed

and the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 1715) was read the third time and passed.

STEENS WILDERNESS ACT OF 2000

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of H.R. 4828, which is at the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 4828) to designate wilderness areas and a cooperative management and protection area in the vicinity of Steens Mountain in Harney County, Oregon, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statement relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

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

The bill (H.R. 4828) was read the third time and passed.

Mr. SMITH of Oregon. Mr. President, moments ago, by unanimous consent, the Senate passed H.R. 4828, the Steens Mountain Cooperative Management and Protection Act. This bill, supported by the entire Oregon delegation, is a very unique piece of legislation to enhance the protection of Steens Mountain in Southeastern Oregon, while preserving the local ranching economy.

As the sponsor of the Senate companion bill, S. 3052, cosponsored by my colleague, Senator WYDEN, I am here to thank my colleagues for the swift consideration of the House-passed bill. This bill enjoys broad support, ranging from the local community officials and the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, to Oregon Trout and the Sierra Club.

For those of my colleagues who have not had the good fortune to visit this special place, the Steens Mountain area in southeastern Oregon is a unique geologic formation that is home to a wide diversity of flora and fauna. The Steens Mountain fault block stretches sixty miles. It rises to an elevation of 9,700 feet and drops 5,500 feet in three miles to the historic lakebed of the Alvord Desert.

The federal lands on Steens Mountain are managed by the Bureau of Land Management. There is significant private ownership in the area, with over 270 separate landowners controlling about one-third of the land. There are several large ranching operations that graze both public and private lands in the Steens Mountain area.

Faced with multiple landowners, and a wide range of views on how best to

protect the land, we finally crafted a great bill that enjoys local and national support, and that the President has indicated he will sign.

Through this bill, we are going to designate over one hundred and seventy thousand acres of wilderness. We are permanently removing cattle from over a hundred thousand acres in the High Steens. We will permanently withdraw over 1.1 million acres, including the Alvord Desert, from mining and geothermal development. We are also creating innovative management tools, such as a Redband Trout reserve and a Wildlands Juniper Management Area, to respond to the diverse stewardship needs of the Steens and the wildlife that finds its home there.

Mr. President, it was no easy task to achieve such wide-ranging environmental protection in my state without decimating the way of life of an entire community, and without creating more distrust of federal land management policies. This solution, though, works for the land and the people, rather than trying to make the land fit an existing management classification.

The best way to preserve special places like Steens Mountain, with significant private ownership, is not to force people off the land or to buy them all out. It is to ensure that open spaces are preserved in private ownership, and to provide incentives for the preservation of these open spaces. After all, it is the stewardship of this area by the private landowners over the last one hundred years that makes Steens Mountain the special place that it is today.

For over a year now, the entire Oregon congressional delegation and the Governor have worked closely with the Secretary of the Interior and stakeholders to achieve one primary goal: the preservation of Steens Mountain for future generations of Americans while ensuring that the ranchers can pass their ranches down to their children and grandchildren.

At the risk of leaving someone out, I would like to take a moment to mention some of the people who have contributed to this landmark process. I want to thank all of the Members of the Oregon delegation, the Secretary of the Interior, and the Governor, and all the dedicated staff members who worked on this bill—especially Valerie West, my Natural Resources Director, as well as Kurt Pfotenhauer and Matt Hill of my staff; Lindsay Slater, and Troy Tidwell in Congressman WALDEN's office; David Blair, Josh Kardon, and Sarah Bittleman in Senator WYDEN's office; Amelia Jenkins with Congressman DEFAZIO; Chris Huckleberry with Congresswoman HOOLEY; Michael Harrison with Congressman BLUMENAUER; and working on behalf of Governor Kitzhaber—Kevin Smith and Peter Green. In the Secretary of the Interior's office, I want to extend thanks to Molly McUsic and Laurie Sedlmayr. I also want to recognize the work of Mike Menge, David Dye, and David

Brooks of the Senate Energy Committee, who helped bring this legislation before the Committee and to the floor of the Senate.

There are also many in Oregon that have been essential to this process. First and foremost, those who live in the shadow and beauty of Steens Mountain, and who will continue to act as its stewards: Stacy Davies, Fred Otley and Charlie Otley. There are also those who have represented the various environmental groups in Oregon: Bill Marlett, Andy Kerr, Sybil Ackerman, Jill Workman, and Jim Myron.

Mr. President, this bill is a historic achievement that will protect a mountain and a way of life that are deeply intertwined in the spirit of the American west, and I thank my colleagues for their support.

LIBERTY MEMORIAL IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

RELOCATING AND RENOVATING THE HAMILTON GRANGE, NEW YORK

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Energy Committee be discharged from further consideration of the following resolutions, and further, the Senate proceed to their considerations en bloc: S. Con. Res. 114, S. Res. 368.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolutions by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 114) recognizing the Liberty Memorial in Kansas City, Missouri, as a national World War I symbol honoring those who defended liberty and our country through service in World War I.

A resolution (S. Res. 368) to recognize the importance of relocating and renovating the Hamilton Grange, New York.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolutions.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. I ask unanimous consent that the resolutions be agreed to, the preambles be agreed to, the motions to consider be laid upon the table, that any statement related to the resolutions be printed in the RECORD, with the above occurring en bloc.

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

The resolutions were agreed to.

The preambles were agreed to.

The resolutions, with their preambles, read as follows:

S. CON. RES. 114

Whereas over 4 million Americans served in World War I, however, there is no nationally recognized symbol honoring the service of such Americans;

Whereas in 1919, citizens of Kansas City expressed an outpouring of support, raising over \$2,000,000 in 2 weeks, which was a fundraising accomplishment unparalleled by any other city in the United States irrespective of population;

Whereas on November 1, 1921, the monument site was dedicated marking the only