

One of the things that I think we should identify is something that I had been under the impression the Secretary of Energy was addressing; that was the concern of a number of Governors. I will read the names of those Governors. They include Governor Jeb Bush of Florida; Governor Howard Dean of Vermont; Governor Angus King, an independent, from Maine; Governor John Kitzhaber of Oregon; Governor Jeanne Shaheen of New Hampshire; Governor Jesse Ventura of Minnesota; and Governor Tom Vilsack of Iowa. Let me share with my friends what those Governors have said:

We Governors from states hosting commercial nuclear power plants and from affected states express our opposition to the plan proposed by Energy Secretary Richardson in his February 1999 testimony before the Senate Energy and Natural Resources committee. Secretary Richardson proposes that the Department of Energy take title, assume management responsibility, and pay costs at nuclear plant sites for used nuclear fuel it was legally and contractually obliged to begin removing in January 1998. This proposed plan would create semipermanent, federally controlled, used nuclear fuel facilities in each of our States.

I think it is rather ironic that the whole argument we previously had the last time we took up this legislation was whether or not to site a temporary repository in Nevada. The fear of the Nevadans is, if we started to move this waste out there, Nevada would be the proclaimed site for the waste because it had already moved out there, even though the process of licensing was to continue. Here we have the States expressing the same concern Nevada had when the Nevadans argued against putting a temporary repository in their State and shipping the fuel out before Yucca Mountain was licensed.

Here are the Governors saying:

This proposed plan would create semi-permanent, federally controlled, used nuclear fuel facilities in each of our States.

They have the same fear. The fear is that if the Government takes title, the waste will sit there in their States. Now, there is some rationale in that fear because the Government certainly hasn't been upfront in addressing its responsibility, in contractual terms, to take the waste in 1998. It seems as if the Government is prepared to leave the waste wherever it might be rather than accept it. That is the only conclusion you can come to, as evidenced by the reluctance to take it in 1998, the reluctance to support previous legislation that would put that waste in a temporary repository at Yucca Mountain until Yucca Mountain was determined to be licensed. So now the fear is that these States are going to be stuck with that waste because the Federal Government is going to take control of it in their State, and it will sit there.

Let me cite the specific reasons for the opposition of these Governors. Again, they are Jeb Bush, Republican from Florida; Howard Dean, Democrat from Vermont; Angus King, Independent from Maine; John Kitzhaber,

Democrat from Oregon; Jeanne Shaheen, Democrat from New Hampshire; Jesse Ventura, the Reform Governor from Minnesota; Tom Vilsack, Democrat from Iowa. That is a pretty broad bipartisan group. In the letter, it says:

Specific reasons for our opposition are:

The plan proposes to use our electric consumer monies which were paid to the Federal Government for creating a final disposal repository for used nuclear fuel. Such funds cannot [in their opinion] legally be used for any other purpose than a Federal repository.

Well, if that is correct, then that is correct, they can't be used to store the fuel in those States next to the reactors.

Further, it states:

This plan abridges States' rights. . . .

I think we need to hear a little bit more about States' rights around here.

[I]t constitutes Federal takings and establishes new nuclear waste facilities outside of State authority and control.

Yet within their very States.

These new Federal nuclear waste facilities would be on river fronts, lakes and seashores [where the plants are] which would never be chosen for permanent disposal of used nuclear fuel and in a site selection process.

The plan constitutes a major Federal action—

I think it does—

which has not gone through the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review process.

So the administration is circumventing NEPA.

Further:

The new waste facilities would likely become de facto permanent [waste] disposal sites.

This is the crux of it, Mr. President. They say:

Federal action over the last 50 years has not been able to solve the political problems associated with developing disposal for used nuclear fuel. Establishing these Federal sites will remove the political motivation to complete a final disposal site.

The letter to the President concludes with:

We urge you to retract Secretary Richardson's proposed plan and instead support establishing centralized interim storage at an appropriate site. This concept has strong, bipartisan support and results in the environmentally preferable, least-cost solution to the used nuclear fuel dilemma.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has used all his time.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The 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.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MURKOWSKI. On behalf of the leader, I ask consent there be a period

for the transaction of routine morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

THE LATE SENATOR CARL T. CURTIS

Mr. THURMOND. Mr. President, we begin the new session of the 106th Congress on a sad note, marking the passing of a good friend and former colleague, Senator Carl T. Curtis of Nebraska, who died recently at the age of 94.

For those of you who are new to the Senate, Carl was a great man who rendered a valuable service to his state and our nation throughout his career. First elected to the United States House of Representatives in 1938 and the United States Senate in 1954, Carl holds the record for being the Nebraskan to serve the longest in the United States Congress. In total, he spent almost forty-one years on Capitol Hill before retiring from the Senate in 1979.

During his tenure as a Federal legislator, he earned a well deserved reputation for fiscal conservatism, limited government, and was known as a champion of farmers and agricultural issues. He was party loyalist and a true conservative who never sacrificed personal convictions for the sake of public opinion. Among other issues, he was steadfast in his backing of President Nixon and our fight against communism in Southeast Asia even though these were highly unpopular positions at that time. An indication of his commitment to the conservative cause was the close alliance between he and Barry Goldwater, as a matter of fact, Carl managed the floor during the 1964 Republican Presidential Convention in San Francisco when Senator Goldwater was seeking the nomination of the party. Perhaps most importantly, Carl was known for his commitment to his constituents, nothing was more important to him than helping the people of Nebraska. Such dedication to helping others is truly the hallmark of an individual devoted to public service.

During the course of our time in the Senate together, I came to know Carl quite well as we had much in common, as a matter of fact, he and I both entered the Senate in 1954 and that was not the least of our similarities. Beyond being like-minded on so many issues, we were essentially contemporaries, having grown-up on farms, read for the law instead of going to law school, and preferring to be out meeting with our constituents. It was always a pleasure to work with Carl on any number of issues and I valued his alliance as a Senator and his friendship as an individual. It was a high honor to be asked to serve as an honorary pall bearer by the Curtis family, though I hate to say "goodbye" to my old friend.

Carl Curtis was the embodiment of a public-minded citizen who dedicated

his life to making a difference. From his stint as Kearney County Attorney to his role as an elder statesman, Carl Curtis always sought to build a community, state, and nation that were better for all its citizens. He set an exemplary example for integrity, diligence, and conviction, and others would do well to follow the high standards to which he held himself. My sympathies go out to his widow, Mildred, his son Carl T. Curtis, Jr., his grandchildren and great-grandchildren. All can be proud of this fine man who we are all better for having known.

"DON'T BE DOWN ON THE FARM"

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, last week I joined several of my Democratic colleagues at a hearing on the agriculture crisis that is forcing many family farmers out of operation. We heard a number of witnesses tell compelling stories about how the 1996 "Freedom to Farm" Act has failed them and their communities.

Lori Hintz, a registered nurse and farm wife, talked about the impact of the '96 farm bill on her community in Beadle County, South Dakota. She emphasized that farmers are not the only ones in her area that are struggling.

When farm prices are depressed in a rural community—like they are in Lori's—small businesses, health clinics and schools also feel the pinch. Lori spoke eloquently about the urgent need to invest in rural communities and promote a healthy farm economy, thereby reducing out-migration and preserving the way of life that built and still defines the Midwest.

I believe I speak for all Democratic Senators who participated in last week's hearing when I say that the testimony presented by each witness was both powerful and thought-provoking. That testimony only strengthened our determination to address the agriculture crisis facing this country.

Few people have a better appreciation for the problems confronting our family farmers, and for what we in the Senate need to do to fix those problems, than my close friend and colleague, Senator BYRON DORGAN. Senator DORGAN has stood throughout his public career as an effective and tireless advocate for America's family farmers and ranchers, and his perspective on the economic difficulties felt by many rural residents merits the undivided attention of policymakers in Congress and the Administration.

Today, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to Senator DORGAN for an article published in a recent edition of the Washington Monthly that presents a poignant and persuasive argument for the family farm. I commend this article, entitled "Don't Be Down on the Farm," to my colleagues' attention.

Senator DORGAN knows this topic as well as anyone. We have all learned from Senator DORGAN's entreaties, many of which have been delivered in

this chamber, about the economic challenges facing the people to whom we entrust the safe and abundant production of our nation's food and fiber supply. We have listened to Senator DORGAN's impassioned oratory about conditions in rural North Dakota, and how the economic survival of many communities in his state depends on successful family farms. His words resonate deeply in me, because they often evoke similar scenarios in my state.

In his article, Senator DORGAN makes a number of important observations—things we know to be true, but that too often are recklessly discounted in the crafting of farm policy. He reminds us of the proven efficiency of family farms, and how viable family farms translate into robust, successful communities. He also asks a question to which we still have not received a persuasive answer. What does society gain by replacing family farms with corporate farming operations?

Senator DORGAN also reminds us of the social costs that we may all have to bear for the emergence of corporate agriculture, including the challenge of waste disposal, the threat of related environmental degradation and the loss of a valued way of life.

Finally, Senator DORGAN asks whether we will take steps necessary to ensure the survival of family farms and ranches for the future. That is a question of interest to many members in this chamber, and one to which we simply must find the right answer.

The eloquence and urgency of Senator DORGAN's message reinforces the views of the many Senators who want to secure a strong future for our country's family farms. I appreciate both the effort and conviction evident in the article, and thank Senator DORGAN for his commitment to this vital issue.

I ask unanimous consent that Senator DORGAN's article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the article was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Monthly, Sept. 1999]

DON'T BE DOWN ON THE FARM

WHAT WE CAN DO TO PRESERVE A NATIONAL TREASURE

(By Senator Byron Dorgan)

A Traveler through Western Europe these days observes something unusual to American eyes. Family-based agriculture is thriving there. The countryside is dotted with small, prosperous farms, and the communities these support are generally prosperous as well. The reason, of course, is that Europe encourages its family-scale agriculture, while America basically doesn't care. The difference was apparent at the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle. The European representatives were talking about families and communities, while the Americans talked about markets. You listen to the speeches, as I did, and a question looms up in your mind. If American trade representatives think these European values represent the problem, just what do they think represents the solution? If prosperous rural economies are not a worthy goal then what is?

The question is of great urgency among U.S. farmers these days. Out beyond the

prosperity of Wall Street and Silicon Valley, the producers in America's food economy are struggling for survival. The weather has been miserable. Prices for some commodities are at Depression-era levels. Imports are soaring, and giant agribusiness firms are squeezing out farmers for a bigger share of the food dollar. In this setting, farm auctions have become a grim daily counterpoint to the Wall Street boom.

The stories are wrenching beyond description. I received a letter from a woman whose son refused to get out of bed the day the family farm was auctioned off. His dream was to become a farmer like his dad, and he couldn't bear to watch that dream get sold off by a bank. Suicides among farmers are now three times the rate of the nation as a whole. One Iowa farmer left a note that said, "Everything is gone, wore out or shot, just like me."

Many in the opinion class offer an obligatory regret and then wonder why we should care. Family farmers are just poignant footnotes to the bright new economy, they say, like the little diners that got left behind on Route 1 when the interstates came in. "The U.S. no longer needs agriculture and is rapidly outgrowing it," said Steven Blank, an economist at the University of California at Davis. In his view, farms, like steel mills and television factories can move to low-cost climes abroad, and should. "It is the improvement in the efficiency of the American economy."

Most express themselves in more diplomatic terms. But that's basically the expert view. An economy is just a mathematical equation and efficiency, narrowly defined, is the ultimate value. If family-based agriculture disappears, so be it. This view isn't just distasteful. It is shortsighted and wrong.

The fact is, family-based agriculture is not unproductive or inefficient, even by the narrow calculus of the economics profession. (I'll go into that a little later.) First off, if we care about food, we will not welcome an economy in which control of the food chain lies in a few corporate hands. Monsanto-in-the-Fields is not everyone's idea of the food economy they want. But the basic issue here goes far beyond food. It speaks to us as citizens rather than just as shoppers; ultimately it concerns the kind of country we are going to be. The family farm today is a sort of canary in the mine shaft of the global economy. It shows in stark terms what happens to our lives, our communities, and our values when we prostrate ourselves before the narrow and myopic calculus of international finance. So doing, it raises what is probably the single most important economic question American faces: What is an economy for?

For decades the nation has listened to a policy establishment that views the economy as a kind of "Stuff Olympics." The gold medal goes to the nation that accumulates the most stuff and racks up the biggest GDP. Enterprise is valued only to the extent it serves this end. But what happens when we produce more stuff than we need but less of other things, such as community, that we need just as much? Do we continue our efforts to produce more of what we already have a glut of? Or do we ask a different question? If Americans say we need stronger families and better communities, then we need to question whether our economic arrangements are contributing to those ends. If we really believe in traditionally family values, then should we not support the form of agriculture—and business generally—based upon those values?

There's a way to save our family-based agriculture. Harry Truman had the answer more than fifty years ago. Put simply, Truman wanted to confine the agricultural support system to the family-sized unit. This