

May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GORTON). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAMS. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. GRAMS. Mr. President, I now ask unanimous 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.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH of Oregon). Without objection, it is so ordered.

IRAN NONPROLIFERATION ACT OF 1999—Continued

Mr. BROWNBACK. Mr. President, I rise to speak on the Iran Nonproliferation Act. I note, as many do, the encouraging election results that happened this past week within Iran. I say encouraging because perhaps that country is moving towards a more open policy, a better policy of engagement with the rest of the world and the United States.

I want to point out some facts and some reasons that this act should be passed. Iran remains a danger to the United States and to our friends in the Middle East, particularly to Israel. It is a fact.

Iran continues as the largest state supporter of international terrorism, the bankroller of munitions supplied to Hezbollah in Lebanon and to Islamic Jihad and Hamas. It is still opposed to the Israeli peace process and to peace under any circumstances with Israel.

Those are all the facts, and they remain the facts, in spite of the fact that a so-called moderate President Khatami has been in power in Iran for 2½ years. I know some would say he does not have full control, and he doesn't, nor will he after these elections. This will remain the factual situation even after this election.

I don't think the United States should act on hope but on fact. The recent Hezbollah attacks on Israeli soldiers could not have happened without Iranian approval. Those attacks, made possible by the continued funneling of

arms from Iran to Hezbollah, were undertaken primarily to derail the peace process. After all, Israel has already committed itself to withdraw from Lebanon by July.

Even more worrisome is Iran's effort to acquire weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to be able to deliver them. The administration has already sanctioned 10 Russian entities for providing dangerous technologies to Iran but readily admits that the flow continues. Thousands of Russian scientists and technicians are at work in Iran helping these efforts. This remains the fact today.

Iran has already flight-tested a missile capable of reaching Israel and is working on longer range missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads. Fact.

Under the guise of peaceful nuclear energy development, Iran is spending billions to develop a nuclear infrastructure. Iran, a country rich in both oil and natural gas, needs to develop nuclear energy about as much as Alaska needs artificial snowmaking machines.

The picture gets worse. CIA Director Tenet, in testimony before the Armed Services Committee earlier this month, forecast the possibility that Iran might become a supplier in its own right of missile technology as it develops its own indigenous production capability. Fact.

Those are the facts. Iran is getting this dangerous technology from North Korea and China, but its primary source remains Russia. Russian entities have assisted Iran in the development of a missile capable of hitting Israel. They are also the main technology sources for a longer range missile, the Kosar, that could hit the heart of Europe with nuclear warheads. Fact.

The Russian Government has also signed peaceful nuclear cooperation agreements with Iran to build nuclear power reactors. Iran is reportedly using this legal cooperation to make clandestine efforts to procure nuclear material and to develop the ability to produce weapons-grade nuclear material on its own.

The administration sought to get the Russian Government to stop this flow, and the Russians have taken some steps. They have passed legislation to create an export control regime, for example, but they have done little to enforce it. Not one Russian has been convicted of passing dangerous technology to Iran. Not a single Russian has been convicted under this law.

That is why we must keep the heat on. This legislation requires the President to report to Congress, in a classified form if he deems it necessary, credible information on any entity anywhere in the world that is providing Iran with dangerous technology. It then authorizes him to sanction those entities. If he chose not to, he would then report to Congress on his rationale for not sanctioning. So, in the first instance, this legislation captures China, North Korea, and any oth-

ers who are providing Iran the wherewithal to obtain weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to deliver them.

It goes a step further. Over the past few years, the Russians have been unable to meet their limited financial obligations to the creation of the international space station, so we have been helping them out, paying part of their funding in addition to our own, considerably larger, space station obligations. As it happens, the recipient of this money, the Russian Space Agency, their NASA, is also the Russian governmental entity with jurisdiction over any entity in Russia dealing with missile technology.

Therefore, this legislation requires the President to certify three things before we can continue to pay the Russian share of the space station: That it is Russian policy to stop proliferation to Iran, that they are taking the steps necessary to prevent the proliferation, and that no entity under the jurisdiction of the Russian space station is cooperating with the Iranian missile program.

If we are going to pay Russian obligations, then we have the right to suggest they must do everything they can to stop the proliferation to Iran—something that threatens not only America and our friends but, ultimately, Russia as well. It cannot be in Russia's interests to have a nuclear-armed Iran sitting on its borders.

Some may say, with the recent elections in Iran in which the moderates appear to have done very well, indeed this is not the time to push this legislation. Unfortunately, as I pointed out earlier, even under the reportedly moderate President Khatami over the last 2½ years, Iranian support for terrorism and its weapons technology acquisition have not diminished. Those facts remain.

Hard-liners remain in charge of Iranian security and foreign policy; they will after this election, as well. It may be that at some point in the future Iranian moderates may seek a different course. They have not to date. But for now, they have neither the ability nor necessarily the interest. They appear much more interested in reforming Iranian domestic policy than in all of these problems they are creating internationally. That means we cannot let down our guard. We must do everything we can to stop the flow of technology, to raise the cost of developing weapons of mass destruction, and to delay the time at which Iran could have such a capability.

This is the purpose of this legislation and why I strongly urge its adoption. While the timing of this legislation may not seem the best, perhaps it is the absolute right time. We need to make clear to the Iranian people, particularly their leadership on foreign policy and these terrorist items, that this is unacceptable behavior for them and for the rest of the world to have to tolerate. The development of these

weapons, the sponsorship of terrorism, the development of the missile capacity that could so threaten its neighbors and much of Europe is not responsible behavior. This is something we cannot tolerate, and we are sending that clear message at this time.

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.

THE PRICE OF ENERGY

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I rise to share with my colleagues the plight of our independent truckers who are here in Washington, many of them, expressing their frustration as a consequence of the high increase in the cost of diesel oil. These are individuals who own their own trucks, for the most part, and supply this country with untold tons of food and various other supplies, virtually everything we need.

This is a mobile society and we are dependent on energy to move us. The price of that energy has increased dramatically.

I have yet to hear from the administration expressing any of their concerns, as a consequence of this demonstration by the independent truckers who are trying to bring a focus to what kinds of relief the administration is proposing because every indication is we are going to see higher oil prices, higher energy prices. There are some reasons for this. One of them is we have an increased dependence on imports of oil. We are currently 55-percent dependent on import oil. Most of these imports are coming from the Mideast.

In the world of the oil market, the United States is certainly a giant consumer but, a bit player. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries really calls the tune, and the U.S. generally has to pay the piper. That organization is known by all of us as OPEC. There are 11 countries that make up OPEC, and they produce more than 40 percent of the world's oil and possess three-fourths of the world's proven reserves. The United States, as I indicated, imports 55 percent of the oil we use, or about 10.5 million barrels out of the 19.3 million barrels of oil consumed in the Nation in each and every day.

The point I want to make is this is not just a one-time incident. If you go back to 1973, some of you will remember the lines around the block at the gas station. At that time, we had an Arab oil embargo. However, at that time, we were 36-percent dependent on imported oil, and we created the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. We said we would never expose ourselves to near 50-percent dependence on foreign oil. Today, we are 55-percent dependent, as

I have indicated, and growing. It is our own Government's policies, or lack of policies, both local and national, that have handicapped our domestic industry. The result is consumers from New York to Oregon are paying the price. The truckers who are in Washington today, are paying the price, but not without some loud howls, seeking some Government relief. Several of these self-imposed handicaps are correctable if we would only wake up to a few realities.

On the production side, we have banned oil exploration off a good portion of our coastline, including California and Florida, because a majority of these States oppose it. They have every right to oppose it, and we should honor it. However, we refuse to consider exploration in many areas where clearly it is supported, such as in some areas of Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana, and my State of Alaska.

We should, in these areas where the public supports exploration, get an aggressive leasing plan and proceed to open up these areas, using the advanced technology we have and getting on with the task of lessening our dependence on imported oil.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in my State of Alaska has often been mentioned as a potential for major oil discovery. From the standpoint of my State of Alaska, we have supplied this country with nearly 20 percent of the total crude oil produced in the last 27 years. We have done it through a pipeline and a development process that has been safe. The tragic accident of the Exxon Valdez was a tanker accident that had nothing to do with the production or transportation of oil by pipeline.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge consists of 19 million acres. The assumption is that the entire 19 million acres is going to be open for exploration. That is not correct. Congress has set aside 8 million acres of that tract in wilderness in perpetuity that can never be disturbed. Another 9.5 million acres have been set aside in a wildlife refuge. No development is allowed or is going to be allowed. The remainder of that 19 million acres is 1.5 million acres which geologists have identified as holding as much as 16 billion barrels of oil which would or could replace Saudi oil coming into the United States for the next 30 years. It is not a drop in the bucket by any means.

Where is this administration going with regard to lessening our dependence on imported oil? It wants to raise taxes on the oil companies, saying the royalty valuation in the past has been unfair. Is that an incentive for exploration? I think not.

The President's current proposal in his budget calls for more than \$400 million in new taxes on the oil industry. Who is going to pay those taxes? It is going to be the American consumer.

The consequences are evident. Since the Clinton administration assumed of-

fice, U.S. crude oil production has fallen by 17 percent, and during that period U.S. consumption of oil has gone up 14 percent. Why? Some people drive bigger cars than they used to. Some people like air-conditioning. Some people get on that jet airplane.

What has happened to the industry? Our drilling rigs have gone from 532 active rigs operating in 1990 to 133 rigs operating in 2000.

What is our policy? Our policy is to become more dependent on imports.

On the downstream side, domestic policy really is not any better. Some of my New York colleagues have concerned themselves about the high price of heating oil. I am sympathetic with those who are dependent on that energy source, but while I sympathize on the one hand, I also point out that a good portion of this is self-inflicted. Prices are high because stocks are low.

The State of New York itself reports that the petroleum bulk storage capacity has declined over the past 5 years by more than 15 percent, and the heating oil storage capacity has declined nearly 20 percent, largely due to environmental regulations. Those regulations may be well-founded, but the fact is they do not have either the storage for crude nor the storage they once had for heating oil. Of course, it has been a cold winter. When the heating oil supply is tight, many of my colleagues search for an excuse, while the answer is right in their backyard.

Moving over to suggested relief that has been proposed by opening up the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which is our petroleum reserve in case of a national emergency, there is a suggestion that if we were to release that, somehow this would address the concerns we have over the high price of heating oil. Let me walk you through that scenario.

First of all, the SPR is for supply disruption emergencies. It is a crude oil supply in salt caverns in Louisiana. As a consequence, it has a limited capacity to get out that crude. It is not heating oil. It is crude. So it has to be moved from SPR to refineries, be refined, and then go into the market.

The difficulty with this is the refineries have crude supplies. So if you bring in SPR crude, you are going to have to offset that with the crude they have at the refinery already. The difficulty is in the mix of what the refineries make. As a consequence of low stocks going into this winter, based on the assumption this would not be a cold winter, those inventories were low. Coupled with the reduction in the storage supply for the fuel oil—and then later we did have a colder winter; we all saw the Coast Guard breaking ice in the Hudson River—as a consequence of that, we could not meet the demand for heating oil, and the price went up to nearly \$2 a gallon. That was indeed unfortunate.

Relief. The refiners continued to produce more heating oil. The weather