

they put in all these poison pills or extraneous provisions related to tax breaks, related to malpractice, related to medical savings accounts, and so that when the bill went to conference between the two Houses, it was virtually impossible to get a bill out of conference and to the President because of all these poison pills, added provisions, loading down the Patients' Bill of Rights so that it could not pass and was not a clean bill. We do not want that to happen again.

I have been very happy with what is happening in the other body because it is clear that we have a majority, albeit a slight one, between most of the Democrats and a few Republicans to try to have a bill that clearly will shift the burden so that decisions are made by doctors and there is a real way of redressing your grievances and, on the other hand, not loading this bill down with all kind of extraneous material so we can never get it out of conference and to the President's desk.

But the other development that occurred today that was disturbing, and I think I need to speak out on it because I need to expose again what the Republican leadership this time in the House is trying to do, is that the Republican leadership in the House, which so far has refused to bring up the real Patients' Bill of Rights, will not have it go through committee, will not bring it to the Committee on Rules, will not bring it to the floor, as the Republican leadership has unveiled their own HMO reform bill which, of course, you know, they are going to call the Patients' Bill of Rights, but it is not the real Patients' Bill of Rights. It is not the bill that has already passed the House, that is now being considered in the other body, that has the support of almost every Democrat and about a third of the Republicans.

I want to talk a little bit, if I can this evening, Mr. Speaker, about why this latest House Republican leadership proposal for HMO reform does not cut the mustard and is just a subterfuge to try to kill the real Patients' Bill of Rights, because what I think is going to happen is that the Republican leadership when we come back from the July 4th recess is going to try to bring up their version of HMO reform and ignore the real Patients' Bill of Rights and try to make it so that the real Patients' Bill of Rights never gets considered on the House floor.

Let me tell you a little bit about what this Republican plan that was introduced today, or they had a press conference today, is all about. I would characterize it as an HMO, an insurance company bill of rights rather than a Patients' Bill of Rights. Once again the Republican leadership is protecting managed care plans from simply being held accountable for their actions. Unlike the real Patients' Bill of rights, the Republican plan leaves the review of patient grievances in the hands of the insurance companies and still allows insurance companies the ability to dictate the services patients receive.

Now, I have said before why this is unacceptable. It is unacceptable because the core of the real Patients' Bill of Rights is the idea that the insurance companies do not make medical decisions; the doctors and the patients do. We want to see a real Patients' Bill of Rights, that is what our constituents tell us, not a phony one.

The legislation that the Republican leadership introduced today does not provide many of the assurances that I talked about tonight that the real Patients' Bill of Rights provides. It allows HMOs to choose the external appeals panel and then allows the panel to determine whether the patient can go to court without allowing the patient the right to appeal. In addition, the Republican bill provides only a narrow venue for State lawsuits which then forces all suits over improperly denied care to go to Federal court.

Now, some people may say, Well, what's the difference whether I sue in State court or Federal court? Let me tell you, it makes a big difference. What the Democratic bill says is that you can sue in State court. If the Republican bill forces you into Federal court, there are not that many Federal courts and their dockets are overcrowded and people have a much harder time suing in Federal court, and it costs you a lot more money to sue in Federal court. So there is a difference. I do not want to play it up in a major way, but I want to explain why there is a difference.

I think that what the Republican leadership did today in the House is that basically what they are trying to do is sort of outbest what the other body is doing. They know that the other body is likely to pass a real Patients' Bill of Rights, and they want to bring up a fake one here in the House that the majority of the Members, almost all the Democrats and even about a third of the Republicans are opposed to.

We will see what happens, but I think that we need to expose what is happening here and how this latest bill which was much heralded today by the Republican leadership really does not accomplish the major goal of the real Patients' Bill of Rights, which is to switch the decision about what kind of care you get to your doctor and you rather than the insurance company and that allows you to basically appeal a denial of care to an independent body outside of the HMO and ultimately to court if you do not have a fair shake.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to say, I know that every night this week the Democrats are using our time during Special Orders to draw attention to the Patients' Bill of Rights and why we need to pass the real bill here in the House and also in the other body. Last night we had Members of the Texas delegation get up, and I thought that was very significant because, as you know, President Bush said during the course of the campaign that he would sign a bill that was like the Texas law.

Frankly, the Dingell-Ganske bill, the McCain-Kennedy-Edwards bill, the real Patients' Bill of Rights, is exactly like the Texas law. Yet now President Bush says he will veto that bill and he does not find that bill acceptable and is asking for something else. I think that is not the commitment he made during the campaign. It was not the commitment he made when he was Governor. And it certainly is a commitment that he should keep and hopefully if we send him the real bill, he will sign it even though he is now threatening to veto it.

The second thing I wanted to say is that tomorrow night, the Democrats will have some of our Members who are health care professionals, who are nurses and who are other types of health care professionals, taking to the floor.

The reason we are doing that is because I think that oftentimes it is the people that are in the health care profession, the doctors, the nurses, the technicians, these are the people that understand, I think, oftentimes even more than the patients, why it is important to have a real Patients' Bill of Rights, because they want to take care of their patients. They want to make sure they get the proper care and the care they deserve. They do not want monetary or other considerations, the bottom line, to dictate the quality of care for the average American. We will be here as Democrats every night this week and also when we return after the July 4th recess to bring up the point that the real Patients' Bill of Rights must pass. It is the highest priority of the Democrats in both Houses, and we are determined to see it through.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KERNS). The Chair would remind Members not to characterize Senators or Senate action.

ADDRESSING THE NATION'S ENERGY NEEDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the time that I have that I have been most graciously given to begin to talk about our Nation's energy needs and the national energy policy that has been put forth by the new administration, by President Bush, and the information contained in the National Energy Policy Development Group's report on national energy policy.

I want to commend the administration for taking the leadership on what is a real challenging issue, and that is, providing energy for America's needs. Being from California, they are urgent

needs now and also for the energy needs in the Nation for the future. It is a daunting task and one that needs to make up for a lot of lost time because there has not been a lot of focus on our Nation's energy needs in the last 8 years. So although it may not be popular at times, I want to commend the President for the excellent job that he is doing by tackling such difficult issues.

Why do we need an energy policy? If I may take just a few minutes to outline, it is because America faces its most serious energy shortage since the oil embargoes of the 1970s. Our fundamental imbalance of supply and demand has led to this crisis. Our future energy needs far outstrip present levels of production. Right now, United States energy needs are 56 percent dependent on other countries supplying that need. With that need growing at an ever-increasing rate, we become far more dependent on rogue nations that do not have the best interests of the United States at heart and in many, many ways leave ourselves very vulnerable. I think that it is high time that this policy has been sought after, and I applaud the President for taking steps in this direction.

Last winter, heating bills for many families in the United States tripled. Average natural gas heating costs in the Midwest rose by 73 percent last winter. New Englanders' heating bills jumped by about 27 percent. Millions of Americans are dealing with rolling blackouts, including myself, and brownouts and grayouts and threatening their homes, businesses, families and their own personal safety. Low-income Americans and seniors have been the hardest hit. While energy costs typically represent only about 4 percent of a middle-class household budget, last winter costs for average low-income households were about 14 percent of the household budget.

Drivers across America are paying higher and higher gasoline prices. In 2000, fuel prices on average rose 30 to 40 cents per gallon from a year earlier. This summer in some parts of the Nation, gasoline prices may skyrocket to about \$3 a gallon. High fuel costs also are destroying many, many jobs. For example, trucking company bankruptcies are at an all-time high. Farm production costs are spiking sharply because of higher energy prices while farm income remains low. Surging natural gas prices have increased the prices of fertilizer by 90 percent since 1998.

I can read a lot of the talking points on this about a national energy policy, but I think I can speak from the heart being from California and dealing with our energy crisis and the blackouts that we have. Many, many people say that California is an example of how not to deregulate and because of that they face rolling blackouts. Gratefully and thank God there was no direct loss of life attributed to the blackouts that we have had so far, but there is no

guarantee that we will not face them in the future. In California's energy problems, it was as much mismanagement of the issue from the State level as it was an energy crisis that hit this year; but had there been good management, California would have hit sooner or later because of the dramatic increase in energy needs in California and the lack of California's ability to meet those needs through increased power generation.

□ 2045

There has not been a new generation plant in California in the last 10 years.

So many, many people buried their heads in the sand thinking that the increased population was not going to have an effect on the infrastructure of California, when indeed, of course, it did, and it caught up with us in the form of these blackouts.

So I do commend the President for his desire to want to piece this thing together and diversify our energy base so that we are not so reliant on natural gas.

I have with me today a dear friend. My mom was born in his district in Arizona. The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) is here also to speak on the President's national energy policy, and I would like to yield him some time.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH), for scheduling this hour to discuss the challenges at hand, and whether one resides in Mariposa County, California, or Maricopa County, Arizona, or Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, or Mecklenburg County, Virginia, for that matter, from coast to coast and beyond, in our 50 States we are confronting a serious challenge. We need a comprehensive policy, the type drafted by this administration, because we have reached a point where we must realize that this challenge is multifaceted.

We cannot conserve our way out of it. We cannot drill our way out of it. Instead, we need a calm, confident reassessment of where we are headed.

Mr. Speaker, as I stand here in the well of the United States House of Representatives and I look just behind me here to this podium, I am acutely aware that 40 years ago Jack Kennedy stood there and challenged this Congress and challenged this Nation to put a man on the moon and bring him safely back to Earth before the decade of the 1960s was completed. We were able to do that; a triumph of technology, yes, but a triumph of will and the human spirit. It will take that type of commitment. Just as we brought together the best minds and the most innovative companies to put a man on the moon, so, too, we need a national, organized effort, a strategic and financial partnership between business and government to solve the energy problems.

Am I talking about a State plan, excessive regulation program? Of course

not. We need to find a reasonable, rational way to put the best minds in this country to work on this program, to take what is valuable from business, to take the strategic planning that should be part and parcel of our constitutional Republic and form a good partnership to solve the energy challenges we face.

Quite simply stated, we need less dependence on foreign oil and more attention to developing our own energy supply.

My colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH), summed it up. It is worth noting and amplifying. Early in the 1990s, the oil and gas needed by the United States, the majority of that oil and gas was produced within the borders of the United States. Some 60 percent was produced here in this United States. Foreign suppliers accounted for a distinct minority, some 40 percent. Sadly now, at the dawn of a new century, with almost a decade devoid of any energy policy, with almost a decade of the sweet by and by and we will take our risks and we will not worry about this, the situation is completely reversed. We now depend on foreign sources for almost 60 percent of our oil and gas. Simply stated, a reasonable, rational environmentally sensitive policy of exploring for more American energy is something that forms the foundation of what we need to guarantee an uninterrupted supply of energy when we need it.

It goes beyond that, as important as those products are, because when one thinks of the challenge of energy, when one thinks of what my colleague pointed out, we are talking ultimately not only about the process of exploring and ultimately consuming energy, but there is an impact to the pocketbook. The most immediate effect we think about and associate with across the country is the price at the pump.

We need to have a situation where we are no longer dependent on the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, otherwise known as OPEC.

Here is one of the ironies at the outset of the 21st century: Saddam Hussein's Iraq, a nation which threatened the stability of its neighbors, attempted to invade and occupy another oil-producing state, Saddam Hussein's Iraq, a country in the early days of this administration where American war planes carried out a raid in part to try and disrupt the fiberoptic sophisticated air defense systems now being installed, here is the irony, Mr. Speaker, because of the lack of a cohesive, coherent energy policy, we now import more oil from Iraq than we did prior to the Persian Gulf War.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to take the example of the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) and put an environmental approach to it, because I am in the Congress continually amazed about the hypocrisy of the extreme environmentalist movement in this Nation. I really believe that the current style of

environmentalism in the United States will end when one cannot get water out of a faucet or one cannot get light out of a light switch. People tend in the United States to be very environmental everywhere else but their own backyard, and when emergencies hit like this, there is a change in perception about what we ought to be doing. It is that not-in-my-backyard approach, I think, that has led to a lot of this Nation's energy crises. It has been at the local levels of government, all across the country, but it has also been fueled a lot by the extreme environmental movement that basically puts the environment over human life, and the priorities thereof.

The reason why I wanted to bring that up, when the gentleman was mentioning this is, does the gentleman think that the environmental policies that regulate oil exploration in Iraq are much more stringent in the United States? I do not think so. Yet the United States uses 25 percent of the world's energy and only has 2 percent of the resources, and I do not know what the number is of that 2 percent that is locked up, but I guarantee it is a very, very high percentage.

We are such hypocrites in this country because we demand to use so much energy, and yet we refuse to use our own resources, where if we did that, energy demand would be much more environmentally responsible than in a Third World country.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. RADANOVICH. I yield to the gentleman from Georgia.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to add to that point that in Russia, and I was recently in Russia, their pipelines that transport the oil, they actually use it for oil transportation as much as trucks, but they spill the equivalent of an Exxon Valdez-type spill every week just in transporting their oil.

Here we are, we could help them through aid programs trying to get these pipelines improved, which would help the environment but also our energy supply, and the gentleman said we have the best, the strictest environmental regulations in the country, and yet our environmental policies, our radical environmental policies, want to continuously pick on America.

It is interesting that in 1976, in Louisiana, that is when the last oil refinery was built in the United States of America in 1976. I bet the gentleman was cranking up his eight-track player by the time they opened that one up. In fact, the gentleman's eight-track player was probably already getting dated. The gentleman's slide rule was gone, and he was not driving his Ford Maverick anymore. That is how long ago we are talking about.

Now, unfortunately, radical environmental politics, now there are 8,000 environmental groups in the country. They generate something like \$3.5 billion a year in terms of checks and reve-

nues to them. The Sierra Club out in the great State of California pays something like \$57,000 a month just on rent in San Francisco. That is how big we are talking about. So we approach so many of these things emotionally to how can I best sell my membership rather than what are we going to do to have a good, balanced approach.

Our great friend Kelly Ann Fitzpatrick talks about a poll that says if the people in America are polled, 87 percent say they want clean air. Her question is, who in the heck are the other 13 percent? What is going on here?

We want a balance. We want clean air, clean water. We want energy-efficient cars. That is a given. It is extremely important.

At this point America is not ready to throw in the keys to their internal combustion engines and say, okay, we are all going to start riding bicycles. So as long as we have cars, let us keep the supply up for gasoline.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but think of the distinction here. It seems that to the cynic so much of what transpires politically is theatrical. We heard in the preceding hour, and I was especially struck by our colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) on another matter, just dealing with disinformation and demonization rather than solutions. It seems to me especially on this topic, which touches every American, perhaps we should pledge ourselves not to an extremist environmentalism, but to an enlightened environmentalism; not to a radical environmentalism, but a rational environmentalism; not to the environmentalism of the elite, but to the environmentalism of the enlightened.

Our President has made sense of this because he says, Mr. Speaker, that one has to cease looking at this as an either/or. It is not, well, we will have a clean environment, or we will burn fossil fuels. It is not, we will have clean air, or we will commit to motor vehicles. Indeed, there is an enlightened approach that uses the latest scientific data for clean-burning energy; for environmentally-sound exploration. Though it may not be commensurate with the theatrical politics of demonization and disinformation that drives some of the eco campaigns my colleague talks about, it is what we should do because it is the right thing to do, to provide for our economy, but at the same time protect our precious environment.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to applaud the President for just the very reason that the gentleman just mentioned, because he is taking a leadership role on this issue. The polls came out the other day in the front page of the New York Times that he is slipping now down to 53 percent. Whether one agrees with that or not, I can see where a President like this has the leadership and the desire to want to improve America, to upset a few

people and ruffle a few feathers just to make things different for our country and better. I think that is what real leadership is, and that is why I want to applaud the President for doing that.

The person who spoke recently was the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), a wonderful representative of that State.

We are joined now by the gentleman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON), and I would yield to her at this point.

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of having supper tonight with two friends from Roswell, New Mexico, who are in the oil and gas business. They are second- and third-generation members of their families who are in the oil and gas business. I represent the State of New Mexico, which is one of the country's providers of oil and gas and uranium and coal. We provide the fuel that lights the lights across this country.

I think all of us understand that we have an energy problem in this country. It is toughest in the West, but it affects us all, whether it is the price of gasoline at the pumps or the rising price of the things that we buy in our stores that take energy to make.

I think there is a growing consensus in this country that we need a plan. We have not had an energy policy in this country for almost 20 years. We are more dependent on foreign oil today than we were at the height of the energy crisis. Fifty-five percent of the oil we consume in this country is imported from abroad, mostly from the Middle East, from OPEC. The sixth largest source of supply for oil in this country is now Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Most Americans do not know that, know how dependent we are for our energy security on countries abroad.

California also got itself into a real tough spot over the last decade. Their growing, robust economy required about 10,000 more megawatts of power, but they only built 800 megawatts of supply.

□ 2100

Only my mother can have it both ways. You have to be able to have the supply of energy to use.

Now, I do not think there are any quick fixes that are going to solve the energy problems in this country. I think we need a balanced, long-term approach that conserves the energy we have, and also gives us more supply; that will give us the stability in prices we all want and the energy that we need.

I think that this is much too important to do anything but the right thing. I am very pleased to join my colleagues here tonight to talk a little bit about it.

I spent Sunday afternoon in the East Mountains that are right up against the city of Albuquerque. One of the

reasons that my family and I love being New Mexicans is we love the great outdoors. We love taking our children there. We love the beauty of the land in New Mexico. I know my colleagues would disagree, but I happen to live in one of the richest energy States in the Nation, but I also live in the most beautiful State in the Nation.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentlewoman would yield, you have gone too far now.

Mrs. WILSON. My colleagues, I know my colleagues would disagree, but I think you understand my feeling for the place, and also my knowledge that this is not an either/or question; that if we are smart about it, we can provide the energy that we need to live life the way we want to live it, without damaging the country that we love. I think that is the kind of policy we want to promote, which means we start with conservation.

One of the things I thought was real interesting about the President's energy plan was some of the data that was in it. In fact, we do not take credit for how far we have come in the last 20 years in energy efficiency.

This top line in this chart shows energy use at constant energy per dollar of gross domestic product, for how much we are producing in this country. We have gotten so much more efficient since 1972, which is the baseline year. We are using less energy per dollar of GDP.

Now, part of that is we have a more information-based economy and so forth, but we are much more energy efficient now. A refrigerator, we had to buy a new one recently, thank goodness my husband was at home to get one, and the refrigerator we bought uses one-third less energy than the one that we bought in 1972 that it replaced.

Our cars are more efficient and hold the promise of being even more efficient with hybrid vehicles, which will not restrict our power and our range of those vehicles. So we do wonderful things. We have made tremendous progress with conservation.

But we cannot conserve our way out of an energy problem, any more than I can feed my family just with the leftovers. You have to have the supply too. So we need to increase and diversify our supply of energy and give a balanced mix of energy.

One of the things I am concerned about is the growing reliance on natural gas. I know that a lot of folks do not know that about half of our power plants in this country actually use coal, and we are making progress on clean coal technologies. But most of the power plants on the horizon are going to use natural gas; and within 20 years, we are going to be so reliant on natural gas that we are going to have to be importing natural gas as well. Yet we only have one port in this country that can take liquefied natural gas, which gets to the third problem we have.

We have to work on conservation, we have to increase and diversify our sup-

ply, but we do not have the infrastructure in this country that is reliable and safe and gets things they need to have in order to have a strong energy policy. We do not have the transmission grids that we need. We do not have the pipelines that are safe enough and plentiful enough.

We have not built a refinery in 20 years in America. Our refineries are working at 97 percent capacity, which means if you have a fire or safety shutdown at a gasoline refinery, you immediately create a shortage of supply. We only have one port that can accept liquefied natural gas.

So we must address conservation; increasing supply, with responsible development of domestic supply; the infrastructure needs of this country; and, finally, we have to do some government reform. It should not be possible that the Department of Interior, the Department of Agriculture, the Department of State, can make unilateral decisions that affect our energy security without having to take our energy needs into account, and the way our government is set up today they can do that. That is not right, and we need to change it.

I look forward to working with my colleagues this summer on a comprehensive energy bill that is long-term to address some of these problems.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentlewoman would yield, I think that you have really hit a great point. I do not want to say anything bad about the great State of California, where my mother lived and my sister lived and lots of my friends do, but I have to take on a little bit your Governor on politics, because here is a State that has grown economically, done real well, demand for electricity has gone up, and he will not increase the supply; would not permit some of the things that Mrs. Wilson has talked about that increase supply, the infrastructure.

If my hometown, Savannah, Georgia, grew, and it has been growing. As it grows we have added new schools, we have added new hospitals, we have built new roads, we have built new bridges. In fact, the State of Georgia has had about an 18 percent growth. California, I know, has had unprecedented growth. Yet as Governor Davis would do those things, he would not add on any power plants.

Now, I have to ask, common sense would say if you are going to have growth in population, certainly you have to have growth in the supply of energy. For the Governor of California to come East looking for energy, when he needs to be sitting back in Sacramento signing bills and legislation that streamlines and simplifies regulation, it is ridiculous. He is being negligent.

The Governor, I understand, is going now on David Letterman. Okay, let us be real serious about our energy policy. Going on David Letterman. It is time to put the politics aside and get back to Sacramento and do your legislation.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Being the gentleman from California, if I may, if the gentleman would yield, I think the gentleman is right on the mark. But there was a separate issue in California that brought, I think, the energy crisis in the United States to the fore.

What the problem was in California was really a crisis in leadership in an improper reaction to a flawed deregulation bill that was passed in 1995. We began to see signs of that with this "deregulation" plan, that froze the rates at which utilities could charge consumers but put 100 percent of the energy that they were able to purchase on the spot market, which fluctuated from day to day. That is half a deregulation bill, that is not a full one. If you do not go all the way with deregulation, you do not have deregulation. It caused problems beginning in May of last year.

Mr. KINGSTON. If the gentleman would yield, does Governor Gray Davis of California think he is going to get new energy ideas from David Letterman, or is he just making a charade out of this?

Mr. RADANOVICH. I will say again that the problem in California was a crisis of leadership, and I think blurred objectives; one being a blurred objective, one objective being staying in office and getting reelected, and the other being providing for the needs of California.

Mr. KINGSTON. Has not Governor Davis received over \$1 million from utility companies?

Mr. RADANOVICH. The very ones he vilified, many times they have not been able to speak to him unless it was at his own fund raisers. This is the way the whole thing worked out.

But the problem could have been solved a year ago, and I will make this point: if the Governor would have allowed for a modest retail rate increase by the utilities of, say, 25 percent, it would have driven down future prices; and he could have encouraged the utilities to get into long-term contracts where the wholesale price was below the retail price. We would never have been in this situation.

It was his delay in imposing a modest increase of 25 percent that, by the time he had to impose it, grew to 48 percent, and on top of that, diverting his energies to State bio-energy, the transmission lines. I give him credit, he was working for ways to get the utilities creditworthy, but his decision was delayed and delayed for political expediency and the fear of doing something wrong that might hurt politically. That was the crisis in California.

Mr. HAYWORTH. If my friend from California would yield, because this points up the real challenge afoot. If just one-tenth of the energy that is being utilized to engage in name-calling or to go on late night television, and I do not know, do stupid gubernatorial tricks or whatever is going to be required, if that were utilized to help solve the problem, that is the

measure of a man or woman in public office. Not posturing and preening for the cameras and issuing attack memos and spin, but working to solve the problem.

Mr. Speaker, I have to ask my colleague from California, I heard other reports where temporary energy stations could have been placed into commission on an emergency basis, where some regulations had been streamlined, but what I find amazing is that, apparently, Mr. Speaker, the Governor of California said if the folks employed there do not belong to a union, why, then it was not worth opening the power plant.

Now, Mr. Speaker, whatever your feeling on the right to work or collective bargaining, it seems to me the collective need for energy outweighs the political chits called in by the union bosses.

Let me address, Mr. Speaker, my colleague from California. Are those reports true? Did the Governor say he would not allow these temporary plants to come on line, these regulations to be streamlined, unless the folks were union employees at the controls?

Mr. RADANOVICH. I have no doubt that that happened during the time from a year ago beginning last May to now. I think the real crime has been the hesitancy to provide leadership on the issue. Because of that, it led to a situation that could have cost the State maybe \$2 billion to one that has cost the State of California \$50 billion and has eaten up about a \$12 billion surplus that we had last year. It really was a hesitancy to act, and an allegiance to labor and the environment.

Mr. KINGSTON. Let me ask the gentleman, why is it that the Governor of California has enough time to come on major comedian shows like David Letterman and come out in Washington for Democratic fund raisers and come back East to raise cane about George Bush, but he does not have the time to stay at home and solve the problem? Is the problem not better solved in California, rather than blaming it on George Bush, who just unpacked his bags when the crisis began?

Mr. RADANOVICH. The solution to California's problem was within the leadership of California, in the State legislature and the Governor's office. It was clear that that is where this problem was going to be called.

After a series of mistakes, refusing to impose modest rate increases, gallivanting off, getting the State involved in energy purchasing, buying energy for seven times more than what the utilities were able to receive for that energy, led this thing into such a precarious position that the Governor could not afford then to solve the crisis, frankly, because, if he did, he then would be answering questions like what the heck did you do with our \$12 billion surplus? So, unfortunately, the politics do not allow for the solution in California. Just know for a fact that

there is no solution to this paying four to seven times more for the energy in California than what is being gathered up by the utilities.

The reason that that is happening is because it is not politically expedient to solve the problem in California. There is too much need to vilify the President, there is too much need to vilify Members of Congress, those of us on the Committee on Commerce, because then the issue becomes why did you wait so long to solve this, when it could have cost far less in money and in damage to the State?

Mrs. WILSON. If the gentleman would yield, I am a New Mexican. I have never met Gray Davis, I would not know him if he walked in the room, but I do know people want us to get down to solutions and stop the blame game and get some things done.

I think that this House over the next 6 weeks has got a strategy for dealing with the energy problem that really stresses four things, and they are the four important things for a long-term balanced approach to America's energy needs. Those include things like conservation, increasing supply, fixing our infrastructure and government reform.

When we talk about conservation, there are so many things that we can do. Sandia National Laboratory is in my district in New Mexico and has done some of the leading-edge research on energy conservation in areas that most folks do not think about.

About 40 percent of the electricity used in America is used to put the lights on. Yet we have made so few innovations in lighting in America, to reduce the use of energy in lighting.

□ 2115

Super conductivity. That is kind of a long word, but what it really means is that when electricity goes down the wires, whether it is the transmission wires that take electricity from New Mexico to Southern California, or even just the wiring in this building that keeps the lights on, we lose electrons as it is getting to where you want it to do the job.

In fact, one of the executives with a public service company in New Mexico told me that because California is so big and New Mexico is really kind of small in comparison as far as number of people, we actually lose more electricity. Of the amount that we send to California, we could light up the entire State of New Mexico for a year, just because of the loss in transmission. Well, if we could save that energy through superconducting materials, in other words, materials that do not lose those electrons along the way that heat up the wires in our walls or along the transmission grid, we can use that energy to actually do work and not waste it.

Mr. Speaker, we have wonderful plans for next-generation power plants that will conserve electricity and will make power plants much more efficient as they turn the raw materials,

whether that is neutrons or nuclear materials or coal or natural gas, and turn that into electricity; and when we make those more efficient, we use less of that natural gas and less of that coal in order to make the electricity to light our homes. But we also have to increase supply.

I want to say something here about nuclear energy. Nuclear energy is one of the safest forms of energy. It has some of the fewest emissions of any kind of energy that we have, and it is time to take nuclear energy out of the "too-hard column" where it has languished for almost 20 years. We are going to have a hydro-licensing bill, and it will come out of the Committee on Commerce, I hope within the next month.

Hydropower is one of the cleanest powers we have, and yet there are dams in this country that have existed for 200 years and they are under State control. What most folks do not know is that as soon as you put a turbine on a dam, it comes under Federal regulators, not State law; and it is a nightmare because it takes almost 10 years to get that turbine licensed to provide power and, in the process, you can be ordered to breach your dam. So why would anyone in their right mind take the risk of putting a turbine on an existing dam that has been there for hundreds of years? And as a result, we have clean, safe energy that is going over spillways and dams in this country because we cannot get our licensing right for hydropower.

There are wonderful things we can do with clean coal technology, with natural gas, where we have natural gas on nonpark public lands that we cannot get access to because the Bureau of Land Management is no longer focused on how we steward our resources, but how to keep people off the land that we enjoy in the West.

So there are things that we will do in this House to lead the way, to stop the blame game, to give ourselves a long-term policy on energy, to conserve, to increase supply, to fix our infrastructure, and to reform our government. I am very glad that this House is focusing on those things and not on politics.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I would like to say, continuing to defend California, it was an issue of supply I think that is at the heart of California's energy problems; but the way out of the energy crisis in California now is to, number one, get the governor out of the energy purchasing business; and, number two, work over time to get those utilities creditworthy again so that they can begin to get back into the energy purchasing business, and then get them off the spot market as much as possible. Really, that is the way out of California's energy crisis, in addition to aggressively working on new power supply in the State.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH).

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California.

Those of us who hail from the West and in the western power grid, 11 States, including the gentlewoman from New Mexico and the great State of Arizona, along with our friends in California, understand that the implications of this are far, far-reaching, so there is more than a casual concern when it comes to flipping the light switch.

But listening to my colleague from New Mexico, I think it is important to amplify what has transpired. When she talked about clean-burning sources of energy, I could not help but think about the Palo Verde nuclear plant outside of Phoenix that has worked well and without incident for well on 2 decades, now serving and providing power for the Nation's sixth largest city. Even as we look across the ocean to Europe, while it is true that in Germany, there has been now a hostility, the hostility of the radical environmental movement to step away from nuclear power, we see that Germany's neighbor France has relied on nuclear power for the better part of 3 decades. If the French are able to do so, with safety measures intact, it would seem that American ingenuity, American technology and the ability to streamline regulation, to bring on line new technologies, should prevail.

I listened to the gentlewoman from New Mexico talking about the role of the Committee on Commerce, not to become prideful of different committee jurisdictions, but as the first Arizonan to serve on the House Committee on Ways and Means, the committee charged with tax policy, I think I would be remiss if I did not mention the fact that as we take a look at conservation and the promotion of new technologies, there is a role to be played in tax policy.

I have sponsored a bill that again champions residential use of solar power. The fact is, when that first came online, now almost 30 years ago, another broadcaster who had gone into public office, the late Jack Williams, Governor of Arizona, at that time there was this promise of nuclear energy, but the technology had not caught up with the vision. Now, we have made changes, to the point where residentially, for heating water, for cooling our homes, we have the opportunity to look to the sun, and solar power and solar energy on a residential basis. Just as so many Americans have their own garden in the backyard, we can look to a sound alternative form of energy with technological advancements and, in the long run, not only save on power bills, but save on taxation too.

Mr. Speaker, we should look to those types of commonsense policies. We should never forget that the term "conservative" and "conservation" share the same root, the same notion, that we preserve in a commonsense fashion and, in so doing, free up other sources for those who need them. That is something we need to remember. Conservation plays a key role; not the

only role, but an important part to play, just as we look at tax policy and new exploration and streamlining regulation.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Chairman, if the gentleman will yield, I wanted to touch base with what he is saying in terms of nuclear energy and what the gentlewoman from New Mexico was saying. In France, 76 percent of the homes and buildings are powered by nuclear energy; in Belgium, 56 percent; in America, most people do not know this, it is 20 to 25 percent already, and it is safe.

I represent Kings Bay Naval Base and all the subs down there are nuclear submarines; yet ironically, people in that county will say, well, I am against nuclear energy; it might be dangerous. So you have more nuclear power plants in your county than most of the States in the entire country.

But nuclear energy is safe. It is low cost, it has fewer disruptions of power. One out of every five homes in America are powered by a nuclear plant. It is the second single-largest source of energy already, and it provides almost 70 percent of all emission-free energy. This is something that we cannot ignore. There are 103 operational nuclear power plants in America today, and over 3,000 shipments of nuclear fuel that were spent were moved safely in the last 40 years.

So when we talk about nuclear energy, people need to understand that this is not some bold new frontier that we are talking about. I always hear people say, well, what about Three Mile Island? Mr. Speaker, there were no people killed at Three Mile Island. That does happen with other sources of energy; but the thing is, that was over 2 decades ago.

Again, going back to the days of the 8-track tape player, technology has moved. I think in terms of just the cellular telephones, my first cellular telephone was the size of a brick, it weighed about the same amount and could hardly transmit a message past a couple of oak trees. Technology has moved on. Technology has moved on in nuclear power. I think that we are just fooling ourselves by not being a little more bold and aggressive about it. Again, 76 percent of the houses and buildings in France are nuclear powered.

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, it is interesting, on this issue of conservation, on Saturday afternoon I was on the west side of Albuquerque visiting a housing development that is full of first-time homes and the builder, Jerry Wade of Artistic Homes, specializes in energy-efficient houses and they build it into the house. I met a family there who were buying their first home. They were moving from a rental house, and one of the reasons they were moving is because their electricity bill had gotten so high. They were paying \$160 a month for their electric bill. In the new home, which was larger, but the payment they were going to make, in a home

that cost \$110,000, and it was a really nice home, but Jerry Wade guarantees their electric bill will be no more than \$20 a month, because they build the energy efficiency in.

One of the things that I hope to do in our conservation bill that we are going to be working on here is to make it possible for those savings to be taken into account when people apply for their mortgages, for their federally supported home mortgage loans, so that we can take into account that the electricity bill is going to be lower. The neat thing about what I saw on Saturday was, we are not talking here about something that costs more, we are talking about something that costs less, and that can be done in homes for first-time buyers, not just people who can put on solar panels on their homes.

Talking about where we are going with solar, it used to be that we thought about solar and, gosh, it takes 10 or 15 years to get back the cost of the solar panels. We are on the verge of innovations and technology that will be just as cheap to put on solar shingles on our houses as it is to put on tar paper shingles on our houses. The difference is we hook it up to the meter, and we can actually sell power back to the power company, if we live in a sunny place like my colleague from Arizona and I are privileged to do. We have solar-powered homes, and it does not power the electricity, but it helps preheat the water, it helps keep our electricity bills lower, it helps keep the gas bill lower by preheating the house and heating a bed of rocks under the House. We can do those kinds of things, and it is going to be in the very near future just as inexpensive to do that as it is to build a home the conventional way, and we should build those incentives in to the conservation bill we hope to pass here in the House.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, it has been very interesting to spend this hour, not engaged in disinformation or demonization, but looking for reasonable, rational solutions at the outset.

When the gentleman from California claimed this hour of time, I reminisced about the fact that 4 decades ago, President John F. Kennedy stood at the podium behind us and challenged us to go to the Moon. We harnessed not only a triumph of will and exploration, but a triumph of applying science to a national vision to deal with that challenge. Certainly this challenge cannot be as formidable. Certainly this Nation, with the best minds at the fore, working together with sound policies that streamline regulation, to make it reasonable that look for environmentally sensitive ways to explore for new energy options, that do the research to bring online the innovative new sources of energy and that realize that our destiny is within our grasp in terms of energy self-sufficiency. Certainly that can be the watchword, the vision for us. Certainly that is what the administration offers in its energy plan.

The challenge for us, Mr. Speaker, is to abandon the theater of politics where some have been so tempted to engage in name-calling and political posturing, to truly represent the American people to find sound solutions, to reject the environmentalism of the extremists and embrace the conservation and environmentalism of the enlightened. That is our challenge. I believe we are poised to meet that challenge, just as we put a man on the Moon in the 1960s.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I agree with my friend from Arizona. I want also to state my admiration for this President for taking on this job. I do not envy him. I mean, I was born and raised right next to Yosemite National Park.

□ 2130

Mr. Speaker, I go up and I feel in many ways closer to God in the high country at 9,000 feet. I go to Yosemite, and I hug boulders, and I love them, and I love the environment.

This country has the reputation of holding the environment so sacred. It is wonderful, especially the States we represent and the beauty that comes from those States, those are treasures that we always want to cherish. But we also have people who have needs, who need water, who need electricity.

I am not willing to say that myself or my wife or my child have more of a right towards those needs than anybody else does. Everybody has a right to equal access to this infrastructure in this country, and so we have these resources, the desire to want to be environmentally responsible and, yet, the need to use energy and water and infrastructures.

So it is not an easy job, I think, but I want to applaud the President for taking this on, because it is not a real popular thing. It not something that will shoot him up in the polls for a while, but it will be something that he is providing leadership for in this country and that we so desperately need.

Mr. Speaker, before I wrap up this hour, I will yield to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON).

Mrs. WILSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) for inviting me down to join him here this evening. I think if there is one thing that I will take away from this is that it is time to end the blame game, and to pull together and to lead as a Nation and to give this country real answers to the energy problems that we face.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with my colleagues to that end, and I thank the gentleman from California for yielding to me.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from New Mexico for her comments.

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California, and I just want to say that I do believe we can work together for good, sound science of modern technology, of solutions, and we can get there.

We can improve our infrastructure for energy to get the power to the places that it is needed. We can promote conservation, a balanced environment. We can simplify government regulations so that we can make some progress.

I am a member of the Committee on Appropriations, and we will continue in this Congress and continue to fund research and development on alternative and renewable energy sources.

Mr. Speaker, I am very excited that Honda has on the drawing board right now a hybrid car that will get 75 miles a gallon. I am excited about these fuel cell cars that are out there that have these perpetual batteries. I believe that our government has a role in funding such research, such general research, and we are going to continue to do that.

Mr. Speaker, I also applaud the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) and the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) for your boldness in speaking out on nuclear energy, because I think it is something that Americans need to be comfortable with the dialogue.

Finally, I want to say that I think that we should continue to explore alternative uses and evaluate our own domestic resources to see what we can do to become more energy-independent and not risk our national security on the whims of Middle East dictators and kings and despots.

I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. RADANOVICH) for inviting me to be here tonight and look forward to working with the gentleman and the rest of the Congress on some very positive solutions.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Just one note in closing, Mr. Speaker. Very soon we will move past the rhetoric, and we will have to roll up our sleeves and make it happen. The administration has put out a plan.

I cannot help but think about the holiday we are about to celebrate and observe, the independence of this country. A new biography of our second President John Adams has been written. In the final year of his life and the final days, a committee of men from his home State of Massachusetts went to visit the second President, at that time his son was President of the United States, and they asked John Adams, Mr. President, would you like to propose a toast to the country you helped to found? And he stood up there, stiff-legged, still the strong voice, and he offered two words: "Independence forever." They said, Mr. President, do you want to add anything else to that? And he said, no, not a word, that suffices.

Indeed, not only in the tradition of this constitutional Republic, but for the future of a sound energy policy with an enlightened environmentalism, let that again be our cry: Independence forever.

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from

New Mexico and gentleman from Arizona and the gentleman from Georgia for participating in this special order.

OPEC OF MILK

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHUSTER). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, we will not take all that time this evening, but I wanted to talk about a subject that probably many people out there tonight have never heard of yet and, I would suggest, adversely affects millions of people.

It is something that was recently described by the Wall Street as the OPEC of Milk. It is a price-fixing cartel for milk that hurts families all over the country, especially those who are least able to pay for it.

The history of the OPEC of Milk, the Northeast Dairy Compact, is somewhat interesting. Back in 1996, a small group of New England Members of Congress formed something called the Northeast Dairy Compact. The way it was authorized was not to bring it to the floor of the House or to the floor of the Senate for a vote, but, instead, they were able to sneak it into a conference committee report under an appropriations bill.

Now, their intentions were sound. They believed back in 1996 that this cartel that they created, the Northeast Dairy Compact, would, in their words, help stop the loss of family farms in six New England States by guaranteeing a minimum price for milk. That sounds harmless enough. I was not here at the time, but had I been, those sentiments are certainly ones that we all could have supported.

I would suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, and to those who are listening tonight, that those good intentions went awry a long time ago, and that the OPEC of Milk has done tremendous damage not only to our dairy system and to dairy farmers in New England and all over the country, but also to so many families who are trying to afford the great nutrition that we have in our dairy products.

The reason that this is so timely is that the Northeast Dairy Compact is due to expire in September of this year. This compact clearly could not stand on its own merits, and so we have had some of its strongest supporters, particularly Senator JEFFORDS over in the Senate, saying that he understands how unpopular it is. He implicitly understands how bad it is, but he has said that he is bound and determined to get this reauthorized, passed in September no matter what it takes.

In fact, he told the Associated Press not 3 months ago that his goal would be to "sneak it in through the stealth of the night. And to get it through when people are not looking."

Mr. Speaker, the Northeast Dairy Compact should die a peaceful death in