

ENERGY

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I very much appreciate the remarks of the majority leader. He indicated that we should have passed a farm bill. We should have passed an energy bill as well, Mr. President. Unfortunately, the majority leader did not mention that.

I think it is fitting to once again discuss the priorities that were laid before this body by our President—trade promotion, stimulus, energy legislation.

So as we look at where we are in the Senate today, clearly, we have not been responsive to our very popular President, nor have we been very responsive to the Nation. Indeed, we labored several days on the farm bill. Some have suggested that perhaps it is easier to address the extended benefits associated with that farm bill than the realities associated with our increased dependence on foreign oil.

As I look at the session we have just completed, I think many of my colleagues would agree that as we look at the completion of the year and the realization that we are coming back next year, we should review in some detail just what progress has been made relative to the priorities that were laid by our President before this body.

When this Congress began, I introduced a comprehensive bipartisan energy measure with the senior Senator from Louisiana, Mr. BREAUX. Later, the ranking member of the Energy Committee, Senator BINGAMAN, along with Senator DASCHLE, introduced legislation that touched on many issues that were covered in our bill. That was March.

Shortly thereafter, Senator DASCHLE indicated that those problems, and more, demonstrate the overwhelming need for a new and comprehensive energy policy. America is faced with a grave energy policy that will get worse if we do not act. Prior to the Memorial Day recess, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources had almost completed its hearing schedule and we were discussing dates to mark up comprehensive energy legislation. Again, the majority leader was supportive. On May 16, he stated:

The problem needs comprehensive attention and the problem needs bipartisan solutions. We are concerned about the lack of consultation to date. There has been none. There doesn't appear to be any real sense of urgency here.

I find that a rather curious statement since the only bipartisan measure remained one that I had introduced with Senator BREAUX of Louisiana, and I was receiving complaints about how aggressive was the hearing schedule we were holding.

In May, we received the administration's comprehensive national energy policy, and both the Senate and the House began to prepare for debate on comprehensive, bipartisan, national security energy legislation. We were pressured, perhaps, because the House had done its job. It had reported out its bill, H.R. 4, the energy bill. I stated

that I was committed to bringing a bipartisan measure out of the Energy Committee in time for the debate prior to the July 4 recess.

Then, of course, we had a little change of control here, and our current majority leader didn't seem quite as anxious or concerned with energy legislation. The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, rather than proceeding to a markup, either on my bipartisan measure or the new chairman's more limited bill, suddenly began to repeat hearings—in one case, hearings from the same witnesses who had appeared before us only a few weeks previously.

The majority leader still indicated a willingness to proceed even if it did not have the same sense of urgency. So on July 31, the majority leader stated:

The Democratic caucus is very supportive of finding ways with which to pursue additional energy production. I think production has to be part of any comprehensive energy policy.

This was encouraging since the only bipartisan bill that I had introduced included significant domestic production.

In retrospect, we all should have known that when the majority leader got around to finally introducing energy legislation, as he did several weeks ago, the only production that he would be supporting would be, evidently, foreign production from Iran and elsewhere in the OPEC nations, and the only jobs and economic stimulus created would be in Canada, as he indicated support for a pipeline, not specifying the route and as a consequence, obviously favoring the alternative in Canada, which is very much opposed by my colleagues, Senator STEVENS, Representative YOUNG, and the Governor of the State of Alaska.

My point is, in their legislation they left the route selection neutral, and this is the one favored by the Canadians. On August 1 and 2, the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources finally began consideration of research and development provisions of energy legislation. The majority leader even announced on August 1:

There is a great deal of interest in our caucus in moving a comprehensive energy bill in the early part of the fall. The Energy Committee is going to be completing its work about mid-September.

He was certainly correct in stating the Energy Committee would be completing its work in mid-September, but little did we know what he meant was that he intended to shut down the committee and prevent us from reporting comprehensive bipartisan energy legislation.

When we returned in September and our schedule then continued to slide, the majority leader once again said on September 6:

I have indicated all along that it is our hope and expectation to bring up energy before the end of the session, and that is still my intention.

Like Charlie Brown, once again we believed that Lucy would not pull the

football away, but that was not the case. But it was fall and it was football season, and the majority leader finally pulled the plug on the pretense of concern.

It has always been clear that a bipartisan majority of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources has been ready and willing to report comprehensive legislation with a balance of conservation efficiencies, research and development, and domestic production.

When we on both sides of the aisle stated and indicated our intent to press for a firm schedule to report the legislation, then the majority leader, which in my opinion was in defiance of the rules of the Senate and of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, simply shut the Energy Committee down.

I have been around here 21 years, Mr. President. I have never heard of that particular initiation by a majority leader of shutting a committee down.

On October 9, without consultation or advance notice, the members of the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources were told they were irrelevant and would not be allowed to consider any legislation for the remainder of the session.

I read from a press release from the chairman of the committee, Senator BINGAMAN:

At the request of the majority leader, Senator DASCHLE, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, Chairman JEFF BINGAMAN, today suspended any further markup on energy legislation for this session of Congress.

I remind my colleagues, there is no provision in the Senate rules for the majority leader to abolish the work of a standing committee by edict. That is what happened. The rules of the Senate require each committee to meet at least once a month before the Senate and while the Senate is in session to address the business of the committee.

The Committee on Energy and Natural Resources has not met in business session since August 2. The business of the committee is, among other things, energy. I wonder the reason for the reluctance of the majority leader. Was he fearful the Energy Committee might report bipartisan legislation, for certainly no amendment from this Senator or any other Republican could be reported without some support from the Democratic side. It is clear the Democrats control the committee by a 12-to-11 ratio. I can only guess perhaps the majority leader would have been better off requiring the committee to approve any amendments perhaps by two-thirds of the Democratic members, as he seems to have set on other issues.

It has now been 4½ months since the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources has held a business meeting, and we are no closer to consideration of comprehensive legislation than we were when the majority leader assumed control of the Senate.

The majority leader has indicated and has finally introduced a warmed-

over version of the legislation that he cosponsored almost 9 months ago. The majority leader has again perhaps indicated that he intends to move energy legislation if there is time. Clearly, there is no more time. This is it. We are out.

On the other hand, he has indicated a willingness when we return to take up energy sometime in January or February. Now we hear we are going to go back to an Agriculture bill. We have asked the majority leader to give us an indication of his willingness to take up a bill and give us an up-or-down vote on it, but the indications are we are going to have to have 60 votes.

It is extraordinary that this body in times of national security and the tremendous activity associated with the Mideast, the OPEC nations, Israel, Afghanistan, Iraq, as we look to those areas for our security interests, would have to have a dictate, but 51 votes on the issue will not do it. We are going to need 60 votes.

We are going to get those 60 votes if that is what it takes, but I do not know of another time when the national energy security of the Nation was at risk requiring more than 50 votes. A simple majority evidently will not do.

Let me make it clear to the majority leader—and I have the greatest respect for him—I am prepared to come back and spend day after day, night after night debating an energy policy in this Senate and get the job done. This is a priority of our President, a priority of our Nation, a priority of our veterans, and a priority of our labor groups.

A few weeks ago both the President and Vice President called for the Senate to end this partisan charade and address energy legislation.

The President said in a radio address not so long ago:

Last spring, I sent to Congress a comprehensive energy plan that encourages conservation and greater energy independence. The House has acted. The Senate has not.

The President of the United States is correct. Rather than a spirited debate on comprehensive energy legislation, reported from the Energy Committee, developed in an open process, the majority leader has savaged the reforms of the 1970s to craft partisan legislation behind closed doors with only selected special interests allowed to participate.

There is a process to get advice from members of the Energy Committee, and that is in a business meeting. When the majority leader says his legislation represents input from the Energy Committee, he is not being accurate. Make no mistake, the Energy Committee has had no input on this legislation that has been introduced by the majority leader. I accept that the bulk of the bill was drafted by our committee, but the chairman is not the committee, and it is clear neither he nor our majority leader evidently trusts the makeup of the committee to address it in a bipartisan manner and vote it out.

The reforms of the 1970s were designed precisely to curb the dictatorial powers of committee chairmen, as our distinguished President pro tempore noted in his history of the Senate.

The Vice President hit the nail on the head a few weeks ago in his discussion with Tim Russert on "Meet the Press" when he said:

But there is a disagreement with respect to Senator DASCHLE on energy. The House of Representatives has moved and passed an energy bill last summer. The Senate has not acted. Tom pulled it out of the Energy Committee so they are not considering in committee an energy bill at this point. The House has passed a stimulus package. The Senate has yet to act. The House just passed trade promotion authority. The Senate has yet to act. In the energy area, it is extraordinarily important that we move for energy security, energy independence. We are never going to get all the way over to energy independence, but given the volatility of the Mideast and our increasing dependence on that part of the world for oil, it is important we go forward, for example, with things like ANWR.

I am embarrassed at the lack of action of this body as we conclude this year in not having taken up an energy bill. I grant the farm bill is important, but the farm bill is not about to expire. We do not have an energy bill in this country. We should have an energy bill.

I assume the majority leader will continue to find items he thinks are more important than our national energy security. We have seen it: Railroad retirement, raising the price of milk to consumers through dairy compacts. As I indicated, next year we are going to address this issue and we will seek votes on the issue. I do not believe, on behalf of our constituents, we should duck these difficult decisions. I know the majority leader shares those views as well.

Some time ago, this body voted to initiate sanctions on Iran and some other nations in the Mideast that produce oil because we were not satisfied with their record of human rights, we were not satisfied with their record of full disclosure relative to the development of weapons of mass destruction. I proposed an amendment to include Iraq. At the time during the debate, the majority leader committed to me he would at some time give me an up-or-down vote.

I have communicated with the majority leader and asked him for the up-or-down vote. I have not received a response. I hope I will receive a response very soon because I think it is important to recognize the situation with regard to Iraq. We know Saddam Hussein is developing weapons of mass destruction. We have evidence of that, even though we have not had a U.N. inspector in that country for some time. We know he smuggled the oil.

Many Americans perhaps do not recognize we are importing nearly a million barrels of oil a day from Saddam Hussein, yet we are enforcing a no-fly zone over that country. We are putting the lives of many of our young men and women at risk.

What is he attempting to do? He is attempting to shoot down our aircraft. He has almost succeeded, but it almost seems as though we take his oil, put it in our aircraft, enforce the no-fly zone, which is like an air wall blockade. What does he do with our money? He pays the Republican Army, develops a weapons capability, a biological capability, and aims it at our ally Israel. It is beyond me why this Nation and our foreign policy should rely on Saddam Hussein and Iraq for our energy needs when we have the capability at home.

Finally, I think it is interesting to reflect on where we are in the economic stimulus. We could not reach a conclusion. Yet our economy is in recession. We need a stimulus. It would help get us back on the right track.

The discussions have focused on this for some time. We have talked about "immediate." We have talked about "temporary." We have talked about the creation of jobs, increasing consumer spending or otherwise increasing domestic product. I think we make a big mistake if we only focus on those stimulus ideas that are of a temporary nature. We should also focus on stimulus elements that will ensure the long-term economic growth of our country. Otherwise, we will have to come to the Senate at the end of each economic cycle and perhaps have this debate over again.

One such permanent stimulus would be the establishment of a national energy strategy that ensures energy prices that remain constant, affordable, reliable sources of energy which play an important role in fostering economic growth and development.

We have seen high prices. We have seen sectors of our economy. We have seen the situation in California. We have seen increasing costs. We have seen the development in the OPEC countries of a cartel where, when they want the price to go up, they decrease the supply.

High energy prices reduce consumer disposable income, reduce spending, and inhibit economic growth. Our friend Martin Feldstein, the former Chairman of the Council on Economic Advisers, noted since the end of World War II economic downturns have coincided with energy price increases. This most recent economic downturn is no exception. We have seen a rapid increase in oil prices occurring the first half of this year, followed by similar increases in natural gas and electricity.

The result of data from the Bureau of Economic Statistics shows that while the GDP grew at 5.7 percent in the second quarter of 2000, the most recent data showed the GDP has declined by 1.1 percent for the third quarter. So I think we acknowledge we are in a recession.

This is consistent with findings of the National Bureau of Economic Research that, on an average, for every 10 percent increase in oil prices, economic output falls by 2.5 percent, real wages

drop by 1 percent, and increases in oil prices reduce the number of hours worked and increase unemployment.

We recall what has happened over a period of time, and as a consequence of that we could generalize that high prices for energy and natural gas cause significant impacts on those sectors of our economy that do not depend on oil.

America and the world move on oil. We have other sources of energy for electricity. We have seen impacts across the board. Energy spending by American families increased by nearly 30 percent in 2000. Heating bills tripled for many Americans, particularly in the Northeast. Small businesses had a great increase in costs associated with energy. We have seen this. Thousands of jobs were lost. These high energy prices were the result of one unavoidable fact: Our energy supplies failed to meet our growing energy demands.

For 10 years following the passage of the Energy Policy Act of 1992, U.S. demand for energy increased over 17 percent, while total energy production increased only 2.3 percent. By the end of last year, we had simply run out of fuel for the sputtering American economy. That has changed as a consequence of the tragedy of September 11, but it will not stay that way. OPEC will initiate the cartel to again decrease supplies.

We have seen what happened to our economy as a consequence of energy price increases. We know a national energy strategy that balances supply and demand could reduce threats and future recessions. Alan Greenspan noted on November 13:

As economic policymakers understand the focus on the impact of the tragedy of September 11 and the further weakening of the economy that follows these events, it is essential that we do not lose sight of policies needed to ensure long-term economic growth.

One of the most important objectives for those policies should be assured availability of energy.

As a consequence, the U.S. relies on foreign imported oil with more than one-half of its petroleum needs. Much of this comes from the Middle East, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait.

Consider the consequences of the oil embargo in 1973. At the time, tensions ran high in the Middle East. Then we were involved in the war on terrorism.

It makes sense to consider our energy security in the context of an economic stimulus package. We have not done that. It makes sense to ensure our economic security by ensuring the availability of affordable energy supplies.

One aspect we have not considered in this equation is the contribution of ANWR. Talking about stimulus, there is hardly any single item we could have come up with that would have been a more significant and genuine stimulus package than opening ANWR in my State of Alaska.

What would it have done? It would have created \$3.3 billion in Federal bonuses, money that would have come in from the Federal Treasury as a con-

sequence of leasing off Federal land. This would have been paid for by competitive bidding by the oil companies. It was a jobs issue. It would have created 250,000 new jobs in this country.

The contribution of the steel industry is extremely significant, as well. We have a stimulus package not even considered in the debate because we could not have a debate. We did not have an energy bill.

It would have created 250,000 new jobs and \$3.3 billion in new Federal bid bonuses. And the bottom line is, not a red penny by the taxpayer. That is the kind of stimulus we need in this country.

As we look at the end of the year, we have to recognize the obligation that we have to come back and do a better job. We need an energy bill. We need it quickly. We need a stimulus in this country. We could and should consider a genuine stimulus that results in jobs that do not cost the taxpayer money, and as a consequence spurs the economy.

I hope as we address our New Year's resolutions we can recognize the House has done its job in energy legislation. We did not do our job in the Senate. I am very disappointed. I am sure the President and the American public shares that disappointment.

We have not been honest with the American people because we have a crisis in energy. Our national security is at risk. We are risking the lives of men and women in the Middle East over this energy crisis. We should address it here and relieve that dependence.

I wish all a happy and joyous holiday season, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I wish to ask the distinguished Senator from Alabama, Mr. SESSIONS, how long he will be speaking. The reason I ask, I know the Presiding Officer has an engagement. He has to leave within another 20 minutes, from what I understand.

How much time does the Senator desire?

Mr. SESSIONS. Twelve minutes would be sufficient.

Mr. BYRD. Let me deliver my speech. I ask unanimous consent, am I correct that the Presiding Officer needs to leave the Presiding Chair no later than 7:45, or is it 7:50?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. At 7:50.

Mr. BYRD. I ask unanimous consent the distinguished Senator from Alabama may proceed for not to exceed 12 minutes and I will do something not often done around here; I do it quite often. I wait and wait and wait, realizing I can get recognition almost any time I want, but I am usually willing to accommodate another Senator, even if that Senator is on the Republican side. Not many will accommodate me in that fashion, but I am glad to accommodate them.

I ask consent that the Senator from Alabama have not to exceed, say, 10

minutes, after which I be recognized, and that mine be the last speech of the day. I don't mind relieving the Senator in the Chair, so I will ask that the Senator from Alabama go ahead of me.

Mr. SESSIONS. I am delighted to follow the Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. BYRD. I want to make my speech about Christmas in the main. We refer to this as a holiday. It is not a holiday to me. This is Christmas, which is something different. It marks the greatest event that ever occurred in the history of man. It split the centuries in two. There is B.C. and there is A.D. It was a tremendous event. I believe in Christ. I am a Christian—not a very worthy one, but a Christian. I respect those who are of a different religion. I respect those who believe that Christ was a historic figure but not the Messiah, but a prophet. That is all right. They have a right to believe that.

Both would agree that it was a tremendous event. This is something beyond just being a holiday. When someone wishes me happy holidays, I say: No, Happy Christmas.

I want to make a statement about Christmas, so I ask unanimous consent the Senator from Alabama proceed for 10 minutes and I follow him.

I ask the question of the minority, while I am on the floor, Is there an intention on that side of the aisle to seek unanimous consent by Senator BROWNBACK? If there is still the intention to make that request, I want to be here to object to it; if there is not, I may go on my way happy.

I make that consent and I will see to it that the Chair gets relief.

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

ECONOMIC STIMULUS

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the distinguished Senator from West Virginia. I thank him for his fidelity to his faith and for his fidelity to this Senate and the courtesies and rules that need to be followed to make sure we live up to the high ideals on which this institution was founded. He, more than anyone I know, has taught us the history, and the importance, of what we are about. His courtesy to me, a first-term Senator, is typical of his many courtesies.

I simply say how deeply disappointed I have been that we will be leaving this body before Christmas without having passed a stimulus package. Experts have said a good stimulus package, \$75 to \$100 billion, would preserve 300,000 jobs in this country. That is a lot of jobs. Those people, if they are working, will be happier. Those families will be happier. The homes will be happier. They will pay taxes. They will pay State and local sales taxes and other taxes. They will pay Federal taxes. It will help us run our government.

But if they lose their jobs, there will be a sadness and an unease in their homes, a difficulty that otherwise would not take place, and the government itself, State, local and Federal, will lose revenue.