

Committee we are looking for trade-offs, where you can use timber, grasslands to absorb CO₂, and some of the things we can do there. But to suggest that is a terrific environmental problem is simply not supported by facts.

The same thing is basically true of arsenic. The new Administrator of the EPA delayed the recommendations that were put in on arsenic. Why? Because there wasn't sufficient study, there weren't sufficient scientific bases. Furthermore, under the original plan, there were another 2 years to establish that level. She has assured that there will be a level. But this one was not scientifically put into place in terms of water projects for communities throughout the country.

This idea that it is setting back 8 years of progress is ridiculous. We ought to be working together to find a way for our communities to have a good water supply and at the same time be affordable. I think we can do that.

Another one of our friends said George Bush has declared war on the environment. That is a ridiculous idea. No one is declaring war on the environment. The environment is something all of us want to protect. The question is how do we do that and at the same time let people enjoy the resources.

We have had an interesting debate about the roadless areas in the Federal lands of the West. The Forest Service put out a regulation on roadless areas. I happened to attend some of the meetings. They called for local meetings. Not even the local Forest Service people knew what they were talking about.

We have national forest plans. New plans are developed every 10 years. The Forest Service goes through a very complex system of setting up a forest plan designed to deal with forests differently because they are, indeed, different. This was an idea that came from the Department of Agriculture deciding that all forests should be dealt with in the same way.

It does not work. It does not work that way. Do we want roads everywhere? Of course not, and there is no need to have them everywhere. But we do have to have some if people are going to have access. The environmentalists claim it is just the timber people. I heard from a lot of folks, including disabled veterans, who said: How are we going to enjoy these public lands if we don't have access to them?

I agree with them. Limit the roads? Of course. Roadless does not seem to work.

In Yellowstone Park, the people have an opportunity to see Yellowstone Park in the wintertime and they can see it with snow machines. The park did not manage them at all. They sat and watched it for years, and all of a sudden, they decided the parks cannot have this happen and wanted to discontinue allowing snow machines. We have suggested, rather than that, to take a look at those snow machines.

Get EPA to do their job and set some standards for emissions and noise and then the park can say: Look, if you want to come to the park, you have to have a machine that meets these standards. It can be done, and the manufacturers say they can do it. It is a good idea. People can have access.

Instead, this past administration said: We are tired of it; we are going to do away with it, without even making an effort. If there are too many there, manage them. They are talking now about west Yellowstone where too many of them pile up at the gate, and the park ranger is getting a sore throat, or something. We should not do that. There is a way to manage them.

Agencies seem to have a hard time figuring out how to manage it. When there is a problem, everybody else manages it and changes it. We can do that. Access is something that I think is important.

All I am suggesting and hoping is that this administration will seek some reasonable approaches to the things that need to be done.

The Clean Water Act—do we like clean water? Of course, everybody likes clean water. This EPA last year came up with the clean water action plan that had about 100 different proposals in it, some of which were not authorized under the law, and sought to put those into place. This administration is taking another look at them and, indeed, they should. We can find ways to have clean water and allow the lands to be used.

Those are the kinds of changes this administration is seeking to make that are being called "a war on the environment."

I do not think we can come to reasonable decisions in this body if Members take far-end positions such as if you are for the environment, you cannot be for using it. That is what we find ourselves faced with. That is not a workable answer. I am hopeful we can move toward finding solutions that are, indeed, useful and at the same time, of course, protect the environment.

Getting back to carbon monoxide, this was largely a product of the Kyoto agreement sometime back, signed by the United States as a treaty and brought to this body. We unanimously decided not to consider it. Now we find complaints because CO₂ changes have been made and it was not even considered as part of the Kyoto agreement. Do we want to have clean air? Of course.

These are some issues we need to look at in a balanced way, with good science and not just political decisions. We can consider ways to preserve those resources and at the same time utilize them.

These are the issues which we ought to be talking about. I am distressed, frankly, when I hear on this floor statements such as "going from charm to harm"; "going to destroy the environment"; "declared war on the envi-

ronment." That is not a fair presentation. It is not a logical presentation. I hope we can, indeed, look at some responsible answers rather than looking for a political issue for the next election.

Mr. President, I will shortly be joined by the Senator from Alaska. In the meantime, 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. THOMAS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, I will address an issue that I ran into last weekend at home regarding some of the tragedies that have happened and continue to happen in high schools. We had a threat in one of our schools. Fortunately, it was dealt with before anything tragic happened as in Columbine and some of the other schools.

One of the judges indicated he thought it would be useful, and I tend to agree with him, if we could find a way to get one of the agencies—perhaps the FBI or Education, including someone in psychiatry and others—to try to come up with a plan that schools can put into effect to try to avoid the problem of terrorism, shootings and guns and, more importantly perhaps, describe a better system. It seems in many cases the young people who sought to carry out these deeds had indicated they were going to do that prior thereto. I believe his view was not all communities and not all schools are prepared to deal with those threats.

Perhaps it would be useful if, indeed, we had some assistance putting together a combination of educators, law enforcement, psychologists and a program that could be put into place in a school to try to avoid tragedies of violence; and also, when there was some evidence of it, in this case even a note written of people this student intended to deal with; and then if it does happen, what you do when those things occur. I imagine there are techniques which could be applied, more professional techniques than most schools are capable of on their own.

I suggest, perhaps some Federal agencies, there could be some kind of meeting of the involved people to come up with what they think are the most useful techniques for dealing with this kind of violence in communities and high schools and in detecting it and doing something about it, in dealing with it, if it does happen, and to provide that kind of leadership to communities and to the very school districts throughout the country that would be interested in that type of assistance.

I don't think it is particularly a legislative question, but to encourage the

administration and, as I said, particularly the Department of Education, or perhaps the law enforcement department, to try to come up with some things that could be used by communities so we can avoid, whenever possible, the kinds of things that have happened around the country, and I suppose will continue to be a threat. I think it will be worthwhile.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the order for the quorum call be dispensed with.

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

THE ENERGY CRISIS

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, over the last several days I have had an opportunity to respond to inquiries regarding the energy crisis in this country and specifically the bill Senator BREAUX and I introduced. It covers many of the questions surrounding the adequacy of energy in this country.

We have attempted to focus, first, on the reality that we are in an energy crisis. I wonder when the media and some of the people in this country are going to figure out the reality of this. The issue is not about oil. It is not about ANWR. We have a 303-page bill, and it seems as though everybody wants to focus in on one segment, and that segment calls for increasing our supply of oil from ANWR in my State of Alaska.

It is not just about oil. It is about a terrible energy shortage in this country. It is about our national security. It is about our economy. And it is, indeed, about the recognition that if we do not take some immediate action, this crisis is going to get worse.

I am amused at some of my colleagues. It seems to be focusing in, somewhat, on a partisan basis. To suggest somehow the crisis is being overblown by our President, that by drawing attention, we are compounding the problem, befuddles me. The reality is that what we have seen, over an extended period of time, at least the last 8 years or thereabouts, is a failure to recognize our demand has been increasing and our supply has been relatively stagnant.

To some extent, we have seen that in the crisis in California. We saw an experiment in deregulation fail. We saw an effort to cap, if you will, the price of retail power in California. The results of that effort are associated with the bankruptcy, for all practical purposes, of California's two main utilities as a consequence of the inability to pass on the true cost of that high-priced power that came from outside the State of California, that California absolutely had to have to meet its demand. Those costs, unfortunately, were not able to be passed on to the consumer.

Now we see the utilities basically bankrupt. We see situations where the State is stepping in and guaranteeing the price of power. I wonder if there is any difference between the California consumer ratepayer and taxpayer. They are all the same. But the burden is being shifted now to the taxpayer as the State takes an increasingly dependent role in ensuring that California generates power and has enough power coming in. When we talk about talking down the economy, I wonder if we are not being a little unrealistic.

If we look at what happened in reporting fourth quarter earnings of the Fortune 500, we find that many of these reports have the notation that increased energy costs is one of the reasons for the projections not being what they anticipated.

We also have what we call the phenomena of NIMB—not in my backyard. In other words, we want power-generating capacity but we don't want it in our backyard. Where are you going to put it?

It reminds me very much of the situation with regard to nuclear energy. Nuclear energy in this country provides about 20 percent of the power generated in our electric grid. Yet nobody wants to take the nuclear waste. We have expended \$6 billion to \$7 billion out in Nevada at a place called Yucca Mountain, which was designed to be a permanent repository for our high-level waste. The State doesn't want it. The delegation doesn't want it.

Are there other alternatives? The answer is yes. What are they? Technology.

It is kind of interesting to look at the French. Nearly 30 years ago at the time of the Yom Kippur War in the Mideast, in 1973, the French decided they wouldn't be held hostage again by the Mideast on the price of oil. They embarked on technology. Today they are 85-percent dependent on nuclear energy. What do they do with the high-level waste? They reprocess it, recover it and put it back in the reactors. It is plutonium. They vitrify the rest of the waste, which has a lesser lifetime. As a consequence, they don't have a proliferation problem and the criticism that we have in this country over nuclear energy. But, again, the NIMB philosophy is there—not in my backyard.

From where are these energy sources going to come? Are you going to have a powerplant in your county in your neighborhood? That isn't the question exactly. But in some cases it is the question.

Some suggest we can simply get there by increasing the CAFE standards and increase automobile mileage. We have that capability now. You can buy cars that get 56 miles per gallon, if the American public wants it. They are out there. Some people buy them, and we commend them for that. But is it government's role to dictate what kind of car you are going to have to buy?

Some people talk about the merits of climate change. There is some concern

over Kyoto and the recognition that we are producing more emissions. But are we going to solve the Kyoto problem by allowing the developing nations to catch up or, indeed, are we going to have to use our technology to encourage the reduction of emissions?

Let me conclude my remarks this morning with a little bit on the realization that we have become about 56-percent dependent on imported oil. This is an issue that affects my State. We have been supplying this Nation with about 25 percent of the oil produced in this country for the last decade. One of the issues that is of great concern in the development of oil from Alaska—particularly the area of ANWR—is whether we can do it safely. Of course. We have had 30 years of experience in the Arctic.

Another question is: What effect will it have on the economy? What effect will it have on national security?

About one-half of our balance-of-payment deficit is the cost of imported oil. That is a pretty significant outflow of our national product in the sense of purchasing that oil.

The national security interests: At what time and at what point do you become more dependent on imported oil, and at what point do you sacrifice the national security of this country?

We fought a war in 1991. We lost 147 lives. There is a colleague over in the House who made the statement the other day that he would rather see us drill in cemeteries than to see his grandson come back from a conflict in the Mideast in a body bag. We already did once. How many times are we going to do it as we become more and more dependent? It affects the national security and it affects the economy.

As far as the attitude of those in my State, a significant majority—over three-quarters of Alaskans—support opening up ANWR.

Why do you want to open an area on land in a refuge? Let's put it in perspective. This refuge is the size of the State of South Carolina. This refuge contains 8.5 million acres of a wilderness that is dedicated in perpetuity and will not be touched. There are 19 million acres in the refuge that are off limits, leaving 1.5 million acres, a little sliver up at the top. That little sliver consists of 1.5 million acres out of 19 million acres. People say that is the Serengeti of the north. That is an untouched area.

First of all, they have never been there, unlike the occupant of the chair who has been there. And I appreciate his wisdom and diligence in making the trip up there.

There is a small village there with 147 people. They live in Kaktovik with a school, a couple of little stores, a radar site, and there is a runway.

What do the people think about it? They want it. They want the alternative ability to have a lifestyle that provides jobs, educational opportunities, personal services, health care, and so forth.