

battle-weary veterans when World War II was over. They were much decorated. One of the company commanders had several Silver Stars, several Bronze Stars. These were brave, brave Americans.

As I presented the medal to one of them, he began to cry, thinking back about what his contribution was to this country, what he had done with his buddies, thinking back about the number of friends he had lost in that National Guard unit.

As we now send men and women from our country into harm's way, what we ought to do on defense policy, both with respect to the Defense Authorization Act and the Defense Appropriations Act, is bring these bills to the floor of the Senate, work on them in a spirit of cooperation, and get them passed. That says, with one voice, to those men and women in uniform in this country: We are going to give you all the support you need to do what you need for this country to protect and preserve our liberty and freedom.

We are asking them to find those terrorists who committed these acts of mass murder against American citizens, find those terrorists and punish them, and help prevent these terrorist attacks from ever occurring again. That is a dangerous job.

President Bush has come to the Congress and said in a call to the American people that he needs America to be unified. We should speak as one. We should say to terrorists and those harboring them around the world: This country will not allow that to stand. We will find you and we will punish you.

At this time and in this place, we must, in support of the President and in support of the men and women who wear America's uniforms, we must pass this Defense authorization bill and stop what happened in the last week and a half, stop the blocking of this bill for other issues.

Then let's come back and deal with energy. I have great confidence in my colleague from New Mexico, Mr. BINGAMAN, who now chairs the Energy Committee. My colleague waiting to speak, the Senator from Idaho, LARRY CRAIG, is on the committee. We have a lot of good people on the Energy Committee who can work together for a sensible energy policy for this country. Then let's debate that and have a conference with the House and proceed. Yes, we have security issues with respect to energy. Let's proceed on those and do it in the regular order. We should write that bill in the Energy Committee.

One final point: We not only have security threats with respect to terrorist acts in this country and all the security issues that related to that, we also have some emergency issues dealing with this country's economy. Some of that relates to energy, but some of it relates to general economic circumstances in this country.

The question will be, in my judgment, for the next couple of weeks, Will we need a stimulus package in

order to provide some lift to the American economy? Shall we develop an economic stimulus package? If so, what will that package be? Senator Daschle and I have written to a dozen or so of the leading economists in this country last week, and we asked if they would share in a letter an analysis of whether they believe we need a stimulus package; if not, why not, and if so, what should that package include.

I will release to my colleagues today a special report that describes the response of the leading economists in the country in which they describe how they believe we ought to proceed; what kind of stimulus package, if they believe we should have one, would provide a lift to the American economy; what kind of an approach we should use during this period. We have the Federal Reserve Board working on monetary policies. They are obviously furiously trying to cut high interest rates. We are working on fiscal policy issues in the Congress.

Specifically, the question with respect to fiscal policy is, Will we need a stimulus package? And if so, what will that package be? I will release that report this afternoon. It contains a fascinating analysis by the leading economists, including Nobel laureates, the leading economic voices in America.

We need to get this right, as well. We need to work in a spirit of cooperation, between Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, to join hands and see what we can do to provide some lift to this American economy and give the American people some confidence that tomorrow is going to be better than today; that they can have confidence in the future. We will have economic growth and opportunity in this country's future.

All of those are issues that have relationships to each other. But let me just come back to the point I was making originally. We need to do business in this Senate the right way. The Defense authorization bill ought to be passed. We ought not block that legislation. Blockage of the Defense authorization bill has not been good for this country. Let's back away, debate the issues that are relevant to that bill, pass that legislation, and then let's move on to the other critical issues our country faces.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho is recognized.

THE DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I come to the floor in morning business to talk about National Public Lands Day, but before I do that I want to respond to my colleague from North Dakota, ever so briefly, to suggest that the Defense authorization bill can and should move on the floor just as he said.

There are not a lot of amendments that are holding it up, but there is one important one—that has not yet been offered—in an effort to try to cause the

Senate to shape a direction and establish a time certain when the Senate can debate a national energy policy.

The Presiding Officer happens to be chairman of the Energy Committee in the Senate. He and I have worked long hours already, trying to determine what might go into a national energy policy bill that could come from his authorizing committee.

As we know, the House acted before the August recess on a national energy policy. At that time, the American people said we ought to have a national energy policy for the stability and strength of our economy, because of the long-term need for energy, and, last, because of national security needs.

Since September 11, there has been a literally cataclysmic change in the thinking of the American people as it relates to energy. Issues that once resided in the 35-percent positive range are now at 65-percent positive, relating to certain aspects of energy and energy development. I say that because in looking at a poll that was taken on December 15 and 16, the pollster told me—the poll is still sequestered yet for certain purposes—that in his opinion the events of September 11 changed the mindset of the American public in a greater way than ever in the history of modern-day polling.

No longer is energy an issue of economic stability. It is now, by a factor of 15 points, an issue of national security. Why? Because the American people now well understand we are nearly 60-percent dependent upon foreign oil, and a dominant amount of that oil comes out of the Middle East. In fact, just last week the OPEC ministers decided not to turn down their valves to force up the price of crude oil because they were afraid they would dump the world economy. That was exactly their thinking. I had a phone conversation with our Secretary of Energy, Spence Abraham, who had gone to Vienna to talk to the ministers. They had concluded they would not force the price up by forcing the volume down.

If we are going to decide we cannot deal with a national energy policy for the next 3 or 4 months when in fact we have already spent 2 years looking at policy before the committee—the Presiding Officer, the chairman, has a bill out, the ranking member has a bill out, and there are other versions. We might not be able to do a large bill that is fully comprehensive. But I believe in this time, when America is asking us to unite and stand together and has said that energy is now a national security issue of the utmost importance, that we in the next 2 weeks on the Energy Committee, if we chose to work 4 or 5 days a week and have our staffs working hard, could do just that: Produce a comprehensive energy bill, bring it to the floor, vote on it, and begin to work with the House to find out our differences.

If we recess in late October or early November—or adjourn, whatever our

leadership decides—an energy bill ought to be on the President's desk waiting for his signature. Any less performance than that is an inadequate performance on the part of the Congress.

I think we do have that opportunity. The reason we have a colleague on the floor saying he wants to put one on the Defense authorization bill is to cause the leadership of the Senate not to stonewall the issue but to give us a time certain when that issue can come to the floor.

THE VALUE OF PUBLIC LANDS

Mr. CRAIG. If I could for a few moments talk about something that is near and dear to my heart, that is public lands. My State of Idaho is 63-percent public land. Last Saturday was a time for all Americans to recognize the value we have in our public lands and a time for all of us to give a little something back, by volunteering a Saturday to lend a helping hand to improve our public lands. Last Saturday was National Public Lands Day.

This year, National Public Lands Day focused on "Keeping the Promise" by asking Americans to come together to improve the nation's largest resource, our public lands, and to honor the work and sacrifice of the members of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

They are unsung heroes who built over 800 of America's national and state parks.

Between 1933 and 1942, 3.5 million Corps members planted almost 4 billion trees, and they built parks, roads, and hiking trails.

They laid the foundation for the public lands system that America enjoys today.

This year the Corps held their final national reunion on National Public Lands Day.

The ceremony remembered the efforts of the Civilian Conservation Corp at Virginia's Shenandoah National Park, and the Corps Alumni symbolically passed the responsibility of caring for public lands to a new generation of concerned citizens.

This year, this new generation totaled approximately 50,000 volunteers, who took some of their precious time and performed over a million dollars worth of improvements to our public lands.

I believe National Public Lands Day is an opportunity to build a sense of ownership by Americans—through personal involvement and conservation education.

In recognition of National Public Lands Day and this sense of ownership we should all have for our public lands, I want to spend a few minutes today and reflect on the value of our public lands and on what the future holds for them.

There are around 650 million acres of public lands in the United States. This represents a major portion of our total land mass.

However, most of these lands are concentrated in the West, where as much as 82 percent of a state can be comprised of Federal land. In fact, 63 percent of my own home state of Idaho is owned by the Federal Government.

This can be beneficial, as our public lands have a lot to offer.

For starters, there is a great deal of resources available on our public lands—from renewable forests to opportunities to raise livestock to oil and minerals beneath the surface—public lands hold a great deal of the resources we all depend on and that allow us to enjoy the abundant lives we live in this country.

Having resources available on public lands affords us the opportunity for a return on those resources to help fund government services, from schools to roads to national defense, and ease the burden on taxpayers.

Just as important, though, is the recreation opportunities our public lands offer.

Every day, people hike and pack into the solitude of wilderness areas, climb rocks, ski, camp, snowmobile, use off-road vehicles, hunt, fish, picnic, boat, swim, and the list goes on of the abundance of recreation on these marvelous lands.

Because the lands are owned by all of us, the opportunity has existed for everyone to use the land within reasonable limits.

However, times are changing. We are in the midst of a slow and methodical attack on our access to public lands.

It started with the resources industries. It will not stop there.

At the same time some radical groups are fighting to halt all resource management on our public lands, they are working to restrict and, in some cases, eliminate human access to our public lands for recreation.

Yes, we must manage our public lands responsibly, which includes restrictions on some activities in some areas.

What we must not do is unreasonably restrict or eliminate certain activities.

Some people like to hike in backcountry areas where they can find peace and solitude while others prefer to ride ATVs into the wilderness.

Some prefer to camp in more developed facilities while others prefer primitive spots.

The point is that recreational opportunities on our public lands should be as diverse as the American public's interest.

On the same note, we can use the natural resources we need in an environmentally responsible manner and still have plenty of opportunities to recreate.

In fact, recreation resource, and environmental interests can team together to help each other out. In my own State of Idaho, on the Nez Perce National Forest, representatives of these interests and many others have come together though a stewardship project.

These groups are working with the Forest Service to implement a project

that works for everyone and addresses all of their needs in some fashion.

In order to achieve such success, each group has had to compromise to agree on a prescription that works for everyone. No one gets their way all of the time.

This is just one example of differing interests working together to help each other out and improve the opportunities on our public lands for everyone and to secure a sound environment.

We need to see more of this around the country.

Public land management has become embroiled in fights, appeals, and litigation. The result is that the only ones who are winning are those who want to ensure we don't use our public lands.

This must stop. Differing interests have to come together and realize that we all have one common goal—use of the land in a responsible and environmentally sound manner.

We can not continue to make the same mistakes of the past on these marvelous public lands.

That being said, I would like each of my colleagues to think about how public lands benefit their State and how they might work to support the new generation of Americans who are just beginning to find the wonders of our public lands.

Last Saturday was National Public Lands Day, and many walked upon those lands and rode water equipment on the lakes of those lands. Some even cut down a few trees to make a home or to provide saw timber to a sawmill. Some were herding cattle on the public lands of Idaho, taking them from the summer range to the fall range and heading them home for the winter season. Soon many will be hunting on the public lands of the West—hunting the elusive elk, or the deer, or other forms of wildlife species that are abundant and managed both in balanced and purposeful ways.

That is the great story of our Nation's public lands. It is not simply to lock them up and look at them, to call them, as medieval Europe once used to call them, "the King's land." The lands of the public are not the King's lands, and they are not the Government's lands; they are the people's lands.

These lands must be managed in a way that ensures their environmental integrity while allowing all Americans to enjoy them in their lifetime and in their style.

I yield the floor.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, since we were unable to reach agreement on a