

"The Gospel of Good Success: A Roadmap to Spiritual, Emotional, and Financial Wholeness."

I have known Reverend Caldwell for a long time. He is also a friend to President George W. Bush. He is such an important person in the Houston community, looked to by business leaders, community leaders, and by the people in the community who need help. He is always there when called. I am very proud to welcome him to the Senate this morning.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each and with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The Senator from Nevada.

TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if you picked up a paper yesterday, you would have seen stories about a transportation wreck again. It was all over the television. It was all over the newspapers. There was a train wreck on Sunday in Gainesville, VA, not far from Washington. Five cars on the train derailed, including two carrying propane, which is very explosive. Route 29—I have traveled that road many times going to Virginia to watch my boy play soccer—was closed for several miles. This is one of the main arteries bringing people to Washington from Virginia. The train derailment not only closed Route 29, but two nearby elementary schools were closed as workers tried to get the cars back on the track and also put the propane back on the railcars or remove them completely.

An emergency worker said if the train cars had rolled in the opposite direction, they would have hit an above-ground gas line, and there would have been a catastrophe. This is the third train wreck on that stretch of tracks since 1997.

Over the past few weeks, several tragic accidents on highways around

the country have raised the question: What if? Just this weekend, a dust storm reduced visibility to zero on a highway in rural southern Arizona. The result was a 26-car pileup. Another dust storm in Colorado caused a 30-car pileup on Interstate 70.

What if a truck carrying hazardous waste had been involved in one of these accidents? Less than a month ago at least five people were killed in a massive wreck caused by fog on Interstate 75 in northwest Georgia. That accident involved more than 100 vehicles, including 20 tractor-trailers.

In February, three accidents in 1 day claimed the lives of five people in Miami-Dade County, all involving large trucks. The accidents were attributed to human error.

We know accidents involving hazardous waste can and do occur on our highways and railways. We all remember the Baltimore tunnel fire last year which was caused when a train derailed. The resulting fire burned for 1 week, and an extremely dangerous acid was spilled in the tunnel. Baltimore was closed basically for 3 days. We are very fortunate this accident was not worse.

Each year crashes kill over 5,000 people—that is, truck crashes—and injure another 150,000 people. Over 50,000 people are killed in automobile accidents each year. Large trucks are involved in multivehicle fatal crashes at twice the rate of passenger vehicles. What if more of the trucks on our highways carried hazardous waste? How could we ensure the safety of our communities? Are local emergency teams fully prepared to respond when hazardous chemicals are released?

The answer to all of those questions is obvious.

I can remember being in Ely, NV—I have said this before—where I was visiting one of my friends who I went to high school with. He is a police officer in Ely. He picked up a teletype indicating there was going to be a hazardous load coming through his town. He said: Why did they send me this? I would just as soon not know. I cannot do anything if something happens.

He does not know. They do not have the equipment. He is not trained.

Last summer I introduced, and Congress passed, an amendment requiring the Secretary of Transportation to study the hazards and the risks to public health and safety, the environment, and the economy associated with the transportation of hazardous chemicals and radioactive material. This report should come soon. I am told it will be finished in the next couple of months. In the meantime, this is an issue about which we need to be concerned. These accidents are serious. We have a deteriorating infrastructure, and we have more and more pressure being put on this deteriorating infrastructure.

Serious accidents have happened and are going to continue to happen, and we need to be aware of this.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

NEED FOR A DOMESTIC ENERGY POLICY

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, we are prepared—I guess at 11—to move back to the issue that has been before us now for 3 weeks, and that is energy policy. It is probably one of the most important issues that has been before the Congress in this session and one of the most important with which we will deal.

Some important things have been with us for a very long time, of course, but now we find it even more important as we have national security issues, as we have a need for economic security, as the situation is changing in the Middle East that is even more pressing than it was before.

One of the issues that has been with us all along is the fact we have not had an energy policy. We have not had a policy that has directed the efforts in the United States, which I think in itself is probably one of the most important things we can do. It is hard to make decisions in the interim when there is no policy that says where we want to be and where we want to go. We need a policy so these interim decisions can add toward reaching the goals we have in mind.

We have a very broad policy before us. We have worked on it some in committee. Of course, the President and Vice President CHENEY have worked on a policy as well, the House has passed an energy policy, and the Senate is the one which has not yet done the job we really need to do. I am very hopeful we will come to the snubbing post and get that done as soon as possible.

A lot of things go into it. This has been covered, but I hope we are kind of reenergizing ourselves—no pun intended—as we come back from the recess to talk about a broad energy policy, one that modernizes and increases conservation. We all want to find ways to make better use of the energy we have, whether it be coal, oil, or electricity. We need to modernize and expand our energy infrastructure, and as things change we have to have an infrastructure, for instance in electricity, as we move towards now having more of a market segment in generation.

If that is going to be done, then there needs to be a transmission system that moves the generation to the market. It is a new thing for us, and we do not have that.

We have to have some diversity and talk about and maintain diversity in our supply so we begin to use renewables. We need to find new ways of doing that.

I will always remember a meeting in Casper, WY, years ago when someone said we have never run out of a source of energy because we continue to find and refine new sources. We will continue to do that and indeed need to do so. We need to improve and accelerate our environmental protection, of course. Maybe most of all now, we need to strengthen our energy security.

We have found ourselves, rightly or wrongly—I think probably it is not right—in a position of depending on foreign imports for almost 60 percent of our oil supply. Much of that oil supply has come from the Middle East, and continues to come from the Middle East, and we find that less secure than in the past.

Certainly that dependency on imported oil changes the decisions we can make, and all these factors go into dealing with that. The one that probably deals with it most directly is the opportunity to increase domestic production, which has been one of the controversial areas on the energy bill.

In fact, the energy bill was taken out of the committee. I happen to be on the Energy Committee. We did not have the opportunity to put together the bill. So the bill that has come to the Senate is basically very oriented toward conservation, toward renewables, toward most everything except an increase in domestic production. Now we have come to a point where we need to take a look at that. It is very clear how much more important that is right now than it was before. We see energy prices going up. We see much more uncertainty in the Middle East.

There are some good things as well. We see some new suppliers. We see more imports coming from Russia, and hopefully some more stability there. At the same time we now see instability in Venezuela. We have seen instability recently in Iraq. So it becomes much more clear that over time we really have to deal with this question of becoming less reliant on imported energy. So that affects not only our ability to carry on what we are committed to do in the war on terrorism—obviously that is one that requires a great deal of energy—but I think it is also very important and vital to our efforts to regenerate and strengthen the economy. The economy cannot function without energy.

I hope we can move more quickly in resolving the issues before Congress. The tax package has been completed by the Finance Committee. There are 150 amendments pending.

Hopefully, we do not have to struggle through all of those. Obviously, the question of ANWR is out there. We need to deal with that. That could be perceived differently now than in the past because of continued pressure on the notion of imported oil.

We have a great deal of work to develop more clean coal technology, as coal is one of the most plentiful domestic resources we have. We have an opportunity to become more efficient and effective in generating energy and electric energy. We dealt with that a year ago, particularly in California.

Wyoming is the largest producer of coal. One of the real opportunities in coal is producing the low-sulfur clean coal, and transporting that energy to other places. We can do more.

We have an opportunity to continue making nuclear energy important. For

anyone interested in clean air, which we all are, nothing is cleaner in producing electricity than nuclear power. We have not figured out a way to deal with the waste. There is controversy on that. There are things we can do. We can find storage. Looking at what is done in Europe, they recycle from time to time. We can work those areas.

There is much that needs to be done; there is much that people need to agree to do to move forward on those goals. We find ourselves tied up over some of the elements. I hope we come together and decide what it is we need to do and get on with it.

I am hopeful we can move quickly, certainly to do the best we can. The House has already passed a bill and is ready to go to conference. We can reconcile the differences. The administration is anxious to have an energy policy, to have an energy bill passed, and is working with Congress to do something to make it work while making our economy and environment stronger. We have a lot of energy in our State.

The idea that if you produce and have access to public lands for multiple use, it suddenly ruins the land, is not the case. We have seen over the years we can have multiple use. We can have production. We can have gas production. We can have oil production. We can continue to have a decent environment.

We completed a study on a portion of land under consideration for wilderness in Wyoming called Jack Morrow Hills. One study showed there were operations there some time ago, and the natural evolution had changed it back to a natural place. We have to be careful. We have to use environmentally sound procedures and techniques. We can do that. We are committed to do that. I am hopeful we can move forward.

We have had support from veterans, from organized labor, from women's groups, from the Hispanic and Jewish community, from Native Alaskans. Almost everyone has been here. I had the pleasure of working with veterans who were here promoting energy policy. I look forward to that.

As we return to energy at 11 a.m., I hope our goal is to complete that as soon as possible and move on to other matters.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MOVING ON THE ENERGY BILL

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I want to take a moment to discuss where we are on the energy bill and

how I see us moving forward. As I think the record will note, prior to the recess I filed an amendment on sanctions against Iraq. The specific justification for that was my belief that, at a time when we are seeing the situation in the Mideast erupt, we find ourselves in a position where we are importing over 800,000 barrels a day from Iraq, a country where we are enforcing a no-fly zone, putting the lives of our men and women at risk. At the same time as we are importing this oil, we put it in our aircraft and use it to enforce the no-fly zone. As a consequence, in Iraq, Saddam Hussein generates a cashflow that allows him to keep his Republican Guard well paid and obviously contributes to Iraq's capability of developing weapons of mass destruction.

The purpose of the amendment is to initiate a sanction against Iraq until such time as we can satisfy ourselves that the U.N. inspectors have evaluated whether, indeed, Saddam is using his oil money to develop weapons of mass destruction. I may bring that up today. I have previously received from the majority leader a commitment that he would allow an up-or-down vote on that particular subject at a point in time. I think this may be an opportune time.

The rationale for that is obvious. We find ourselves in a position now where Iraq has indicated it probably will initiate a curtailment of oil exports from that country for a 30-day period. We can only ponder the results of that, as to what it will mean to the consumers in the United States as we see ourselves continuing to be dependent on foreign sources of oil.

I want to take a moment here to discuss where we are in the energy bill and my commitment to see us move forward on it. As you know, we have had a number of successful amendments. I think we have developed a stronger bill. I think it is appropriate to give a rundown on the current situation in the Mideast before I discuss that, and how that has increased the importance of moving an energy bill off the floor.

There is virtually no way to explain the situation in the Mideast. I will not go into the details, other than to highlight the effects it will have on the United States.

While we were on our Easter recess, clearly the tinderbox in the Mideast exploded. In 2 weeks, we have seen 5 suicide bombers; we have seen some 29 Israelis killed, 100 wounded. The same is true on the other side, the Palestinians. Israelis rolled into Yasser Arafat's headquarters in the Palestine settlement when Prime Minister Sharon declared, "Israel is at war."

What did that do to the price of oil? It jumped, first \$3 a barrel on Monday, March 25, closed at \$24.53; trading at \$28, and it is going up over \$30. The Iraqis are calling on the Arab States to use oil as a weapon—oil as a weapon,