

say that what we did not do at the end of last year we will commit to do now, and we will do it on an urgent basis, because that is what will contribute to a good energy policy for this country. Then we will turn to the energy bill.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, I associate myself with the remarks of my colleague from North Dakota on the subject of wind energy. Clearly, this is a circumstance in which the Government needs to act, and act quickly, to provide the incentives that have been previously put in place but have now lapsed, incentives that can make a difference between projects going forward and not.

I do not know what could be more clear than that the incentives for wind energy are absolutely essential if we are going to diversify the base of energy supply in this country, move to more renewables, and have a greater chance of reducing our dependence on foreign sources of energy that leave us vulnerable in a time of conflict in the very areas of the world in which much oil production is occurring.

AGRICULTURAL PRIORITIES

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, when I came to my office this morning, I received the surprising news that our Secretary of Agriculture has now apparently asked her counterpart in Canada to come to the United States to lobby against the farm bill that is pending.

I have never heard of such a thing. We now have reports that the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States is asking an official of a foreign government to come to Washington to lobby the Congress against the farm bill that is designed to help American farmers? What is she thinking of?

The article I am referring to is from the Ottawa Bureau of the Western Producer, and this story says the Canadian Agriculture Minister, Lyle Vanclief, received surprising advice when he called American Agriculture Secretary Ann Veneman to complain about the possibility that a new United States farm bill would authorize a multiyear, multibillion-dollar farm subsidy program. Veneman invited Vanclief to come south to get involved in the debate. This is a quote from the article:

She told Lyle to put pressure on Congress, Vanclief press aide Donald Boulanger said. She said their political system is different from ours because Congress has so much power. She said—

This is quoting the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States—

Lyle, you have to help me lobby Congress.

This is not the way any Cabinet Secretary ought to do their business. It is totally and thoroughly inappropriate for the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to ask an agriculture minister of a foreign government to come and lobby the Congress against a farm bill that is de-

signed to help American farmers. This cannot be.

I am writing a letter today to the President asking him to renounce these apparent efforts by his Secretary of Agriculture to have the officials of a foreign country become involved in a domestic political discussion in our country.

This is a very serious matter. This cannot be the way this administration does its business. I call on the President today to send a very clear message to the Secretary of Agriculture in his administration that she cannot be pursuing foreign government officials to come to this country to lobby this Congress to become involved in a debate in our country. What is next by this Secretary of Agriculture? Has she forgotten whose side she is on? She is in the Cabinet of the President of the United States, not in the Cabinet of the Government of Canada. She is not in the cabinet of the European governments, which would welcome the kind of advice that apparently she is giving and the kind of involvement in our domestic affairs she is reportedly seeking from the minister of agriculture in another country's government.

It is as though the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States has completely forgotten her obligation. The reason it is critically important for us to pass a farm bill is to try to level the playing field to some degree with our major competitors.

In case our Secretary has forgotten, I have a chart which shows an analysis of the difference between what our major competitors are doing for their farmers and what we are doing for ours. This is Europe. They are our major competitors. This is what they are doing on average per year to support their farmers: Over \$300 an acre of support. The comparable figure in the United States: \$38. These are not my numbers, these are the numbers of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. These are the international scorekeeper's numbers. They are the ones that are telling us our major competitors are doing far more for their producers than we are doing for ours. And it does not stop there, because on world export subsidy, this is the picture: This pie represents all world agricultural export subsidies. The blue part of this pie is Europe's share. Eighty-four percent of all world agricultural export subsidies is European. They are buying these markets. The U.S. share is this little red sliver—less than 3 percent. So we are being outgunned nearly 30 to 1. And we have a Secretary of Agriculture who is reportedly calling on an official of a foreign government to come to our country to lobby our Congress against a farm bill for our farmers? It is absolutely preposterous.

This is what our farmers are up against, and we have a Secretary of Agriculture who is supposed to represent American farmers, not Canadian farmers. Here is what American farmers

have experienced: The green line is the prices farmers have paid for the inputs they must buy. The red line shows the prices farmers have received.

It is very interesting that the peak of prices for farmers occurred at the time we wrote the last farm bill. Since that time, one can see what has occurred: A virtual price collapse. The gap between the prices farmers are paid and the prices they pay has turned into this enormous gulf. It is no wonder agriculture in America is in deep trouble. It is no wonder when I ask my farmers what happens if they do not have this new farm bill, the answer from one of the major farm group leaders in my State was: It will be a race to the auctioneer.

That is the reality. That is because our farmers are out here playing on the world stage. We are asking them to compete against the French farmer and the German farmer, and we are telling them: While you are at it, take on the French and German Government, as well.

That is not a fair fight. We can either choose to wave the flag of surrender and give up, throw in the towel, let our people be wiped out, or we can fight back. That is what this farm bill debate is about.

Now we have the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States apparently calling her Canadian counterpart, urging him to come to this country to fight against the farm bill that is moving through our Congress. I have to wonder what she is thinking. She is not on the payroll of the Canadian Government. She is a part of the United States Government. It is thoroughly and totally inappropriate for her to be asking a representative of a foreign government to come to this country to lobby the U.S. Congress against a farm bill for American farmers.

Mr. DORGAN. Will the Senator yield?

Mr. CONRAD. I am happy to yield to the Senator.

Mr. DORGAN. I listened to my colleague. I have not seen the report, nor do I know the contents of that report. However, as my colleague has stated, it is not appropriate, in my judgment, for Canadians to be lobbying our Congress about a domestic farm program, or for anyone from our administration to be inviting them down.

My hope is that that did not happen that the press report is erroneous—and the Secretary will put out a statement saying that is not accurate. If it is accurate, it is inappropriate. Senator CONRAD is certainly right about that.

This raises the broader point that, for the last 6 months, trying to get a farm bill out of this Congress has been an awful process. It is as if those who knew that we needed to get a better farm bill in order to enable family farmers to survive have been on a bicycle built for two, and we have been on the front seat pedaling uphill as hard as we could pedal, and the administration has been on the back seat with their foot on the break.

Every step of the way the administration has said: we don't think you should do this; we don't believe you need a new farm bill. The administration told the House of Representatives not to write one. And the House of Representatives said: it doesn't matter what you say, we will do it.

The administration told the Senate not to pass a farm bill in 2001. We had to go through three cloture votes and still could not get the 60 votes necessary to pass it in 2001.

This year, We have finally gotten a bill out of the Senate. It is in conference. We need to complete this quickly.

With respect to the issue of Canada, Canada is a good neighbor of ours, but it regrettably has undercut our Government and undercut our farmers in every way possible since the United States-Canada Free Trade Agreement. Canada dumped its wheat in our country and refused to open its books and records that would demonstrate there is unfair trade. We have sent people, including the GAO, to Canada to get those records. The Canadians have effectively thumbed their nose at all of our representatives and said: we are not going to give them to you.

I don't think we need advice from Canada about how to help our farmers. What we need from the Canadians is for them to stop hurting our farmers. They have a State-sponsored monopoly in Canada called the Canadian Wheat Board that would be illegal in this country. Every day in every way for years they have been trying to undercut our family farmers with unfair trade.

Senator CONRAD is right when he says we do not need advice from Canadians about how to do domestic agricultural policy in our country. It is not welcome in my view. What is welcome is for the Canadians to decide that good neighbors ought not undercut each other with unfair trade. If they take that step once, they help American farmers with respect to fair trade.

I thank Senator CONRAD for allowing me to respond to his comments.

Mr. CONRAD. I thank my colleague for his insight. It is a remarkable set of circumstances. I call on the Secretary. If this press report is inaccurate, I hope she will say so publicly and do it today. But this press report quotes the spokesman, a press aide of her counterpart in Canada, the Canadian Agriculture Minister, Lyle Vanclief; his press aide, a Mr. Donald Boulanger, is quoted. This is what the article reports:

She told Lyle [Mr. Vanclief, Canadian Agriculture Minister] to put pressure on Congress.

That is in quotation marks. Following that, again quoting Mr. Boulanger, the press aide for the Canadian Agriculture Minister:

She said their political system is different from ours because Congress has so much power. She said, Lyle, you have to help me lobby Congress.

I hope it is wrong. I hope the Secretary will today indicate she never made any such invitation, that she never made such a statement. If this is her statement, I think she has a lot of explaining to do. It probably should start with an explanation to the President of the United States, why a Secretary of Agriculture of the United States is imploring her Canadian counterpart to come to lobby the U.S. Congress against a farm bill that is pending before the Congress of this country.

TAX CUTS

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, on another subject, I noticed in today's Washington Times a story headlined: "White House to Show Triumph of Tax Cuts, Says Recession Stalled Jobs Added." This is a news story that comes as a result of a speech later today to the Council on Foreign Relations by Vice President CHENEY, and it indicates that he will present findings by the President's Council of Economic Advisers as an answer to Democratic critics of the tax cut. The findings the Vice President will discuss show the third quarter growth last year would have contracted at an annual rate of 2.5 percent instead of the reported 1.3 percent without the tax relief.

That should not be any great surprise to anybody. What is surprising is the Republicans attempting to claim credit for the tax cuts that occurred last year.

We should not rewrite the history of what occurred. Last year, it was the Democrats who were proposing much greater tax relief than the President's proposal because we believed we needed to give lift to the economy. Here are the facts. For 2002, the President's budget proposed almost no tax relief. The Democratic budget proposed \$60 billion of tax relief last year.

Those are the facts. Absolutely, Democrats were for more tax relief last year than the President proposed because we thought we needed to give lift to the economy. In fact, we actually passed even greater tax relief than that. But this is what was in our budget. That is what was in the President's budget. I don't think the administration should be running out and claiming credit for what was our idea.

This is what actually passed last year: a total of \$73 billion, \$33 billion in the form of the rebate, and corporate tax changes of \$40 billion. Some of the latter were just timing questions that had no impact on stimulus.

In terms of the fundamental question about differences in tax cuts, we were not in favor of as much of a tax cut over the 10 years. While we favored a much bigger tax cut last year in order to give lift to the economy than the President proposed, we proposed a much smaller tax cut over the 10 years because we were concerned about the impact on long-term interest rates.

Our tax relief proposal was \$750 billion over 10 years; the President's pro-

posal was \$1.6 trillion. We said at the time that we feared his tax proposal was too large and would threaten the Social Security and Medicare trust funds.

Guess what? We were right on both counts. We were right to support a bigger tax cut last year, to give lift to the economy. We were right to support a smaller tax cut over the 10 years because the larger tax cut endangered the trust funds of Social Security and Medicare. The facts are now in, and it is just as clear as can be, we were right. The President's new budget shows he will be taking \$2.2 trillion over the next 10 years out of the trust funds of Medicare and Social Security. In Social Security alone, the President will be taking over \$1.6 trillion of Social Security trust fund money to pay for his tax cut and his other spending priorities. That is a fact.

So, yes, tax cuts are beneficial at a time of economic slowdown. Democrats proposed them. Again, the budget difference is very clear. The budget difference, in terms of what was proposed, is right here. This is the President's budget: \$183 million. That is what he proposed for tax relief in his budget for last year. Our budget resolution had \$60 billion of tax relief. That is the fact.

Let's not get confused about the 1-year and the 10-year. It is absolutely true that over 10 years we proposed smaller tax cuts so as not to raid the Social Security and Medicare trust funds. But for the Vice President to run out now and claim the tax cuts of last year were really their idea—you have to go back and look at the budget they submitted. It was not their idea. It was the idea of the Democrats who proposed much more significant tax relief last year to give lift to the economy. That is the fact.

We also said last year that the 10-year tax cut the President proposed would have an adverse effect on long-term interest rates. Again, I think the evidence is now quite clear. Here is what we see in terms of short-term rates versus long-term rates. We have had eleven interest rate reductions by the Federal Reserve? You can see that by the short-term rates: 11 reductions, and the short-term rates have come down smartly.

But look at long-term rates. Long-term rates have been largely stuck. They have not come down. That was one of the concerns we had about the President's long-term proposal, that the markets could see that his budget plan did not add up and that would put pressure on long-term rates and keep them high. That is exactly what has happened. These rates are higher than we believe they would otherwise have been.

It is true that short-term rates have come down dramatically. Long-term rates have not. So we believe our position has been confirmed on all counts. No. 1, we supported more tax cuts last year in our budget than the President did in his because we wanted to give