

You cannot successfully wage a war on terrorism without the very best military intelligence, without the best information about those threatening the United States. It has to be credible evidence. The people in the intelligence agency have to have a sound working relationship with the White House and the Congress. What we saw in the State of the Union Address was a breakdown of that relationship. That does not make America safer. It makes us more vulnerable.

Secondly, this is a Nation now pledged to a policy of preemption. We are prepared, according to this President, to invade a nation that may threaten us, even if they do not apparently pose any imminent danger to us at the time. How do you reach the conclusion that a nation threatens us? Clearly from intelligence information. Clearly, the intelligence coming out of the CIA, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, and others has to be delivered to the National Security Council and to the President in a credible fashion. Yet we have clear evidence that the chain of communication which we count on for the security of our Nation broke down when it came to the President's State of the Union Address.

The credibility of our President is on the line. I believe he should move forward as quickly as possible to call for a full investigation. We should be able to point to those people responsible for putting this misleading language in the State of the Union Address. They should be held accountable, and they should be dismissed. That is inexcusable conduct by someone at that level of government to mislead the President or allow him to mislead the American people.

It is interesting to me that this issue is gaining ground and velocity as the President travels overseas. I certainly wish that were not the case. It would be better for him to be home because he has an important mission in Africa and a message that now will not be as clear because of this surrounding controversy. It is incumbent on us in Congress in our oversight role, and it is incumbent on the press corps in America to stand up to their responsibility to ask the hard questions and, in asking those questions, find out who should be held accountable for this misleading statement in the President's State of the Union Address. We owe it to the American people to give them the answers, to tell them that in the war on terrorism our intelligence sources are credible, that they have a good linkage and dialog with the White House and that the linkage will make America a safer place.

Someone made a decision to twist and distort this information for reasons which have yet to be disclosed. As we led to the buildup to the invasion of Iraq, that was one of the things the American people believed because they heard it from their President. The President in the State of the Union Ad-

dress speaks from the heart to the American people. He should be believed. In that situation, he needs to have the very best advisers and staff near him giving him accurate information. We now know that the President has been embarrassed by information which he said and has now had to say to the American people was not true. That has to change. People have to be held accountable. That should be done immediately.

If Congress cannot force this investigation, the President, as our leader, as the person responsible for the executive branch, should initiate this investigation on his own, find those responsible, hold them accountable, and dismiss them from the Federal Government.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH). The Senator from Louisiana.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 40 minutes.

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

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I come to the Chamber to speak about a very important subject, one we will be debating more vigorously next week when we return. Hopefully, we will be back on the subject of energy independence and energy policy for the Nation. The Chair and I serve on a subcommittee with responsibility in that regard, and we both work closely with Senator DOMENICI and Senator BINGAMAN on fashioning energy policy. We will soon be back on that. I wanted to make a couple of comments regarding several important aspects of the energy legislation.

Before I do, I would be remiss if I did not associate myself with the remarks of the Senator from Illinois. He raises a very important point, a critical point, one that deserves the full attention of the Congress and the administration.

As most Americans are well aware, we are going to be conducting war in a very different way than we have conducted it in the past. The visions we all have growing up, and some of us even from personal experience in fighting in World War I or World War II or Vietnam of Korea, are going to be very different than what we face in the future. Wars are not necessarily going to be fought nation against nation, army against army, air force against air force, but they are going to be fought by our military and our homeland security apparatus and our intelligence, along with multinational intelligence against terrorist cells, some of which are not state-supported. Some cells are very difficult to find, as we know from experience because we have yet to find the leaders of two of the worst terrorist organizations in the world.

Intelligence has always been so essential to war, having the generals on the battlefield know more about the enemy than the enemy knows about us. Intelligence has been critical in win-

ning in times past, and there is no substitute. No amount of manpower or womanpower, no sophistication of weapons systems, no strategic battle plans can take the place now in the wars we are going to face, because it is a war against terror, than complete excellence through and through at every level in our intelligence apparatus.

It does not have to be only American intelligence. We have to have an international intelligence network with our allies that is the most superior ever in the world if we are going to protect the American people and act in their best interest, to use our resources wisely and to win the war against terror.

This is not something in which I like to engage, not only as a Senator but as a mother. I am not engaging in a war on terrorism so this is going to be a permanent situation. I engage in the war against terror to provide for a world where my children, who are now 11 and 6, don't have to engage. We want to win the war and win it in 5 or 10 or 15 years. It is incomprehensible to the American people that we would be engaged in such a war over the next 50 or 60 years. We want to win. We want to show the world a better way. To do that, we have to have the very best intelligence we can. The Senator from Illinois raises a very important point. While there might not have been purposeful manipulation, while no one here wants to accuse the President in any way, there are clearly some problems right now, based on the information we are receiving about who knew what and what reports were adhered to, what were pushed to the side, what information was provided and what was not.

For the overall credibility of our intelligence, the credibility of our military, the credibility of our Government, this information must be investigated more fully. The truth must come to light. The appropriate actions must be taken so we can move on to improve the current situation, which is extremely difficult.

I associate myself with the comments of the Senator from Illinois regarding our intelligence personnel.

ENERGY

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I commend the majority leader from Tennessee who told us in no uncertain terms this week that the Senate will not be going to an August break until we have an energy policy adopted by the Senate. I thank him for his leadership, thank him for his vision, and thank him for basically drawing the line so that we in the Senate can get focused on bringing this important piece of legislation to a close, tying up some loose ends. There are some three or four major amendments that still need to be debated and discussed on the Energy bill, but we are close to the end under Senator DOMENICI's leadership, with Senator BINGAMAN. I have been proud to be a part of that effort. I look

forward to closing out the debate in the Senate with a very fine bill, a bill that is balanced, that encourages more production, encourages more conservation, and sets a framework for an energy policy for this Nation that we can be proud of, and equally important, if not more important, that can grow jobs, that can get the job growth trend moving back in the right direction. Not that this could do it all by itself, but having a strong, clear energy policy for this Nation could be a big boost in terms of getting jobs recreated in America and giving business the certainty they need so they can make good and wise decisions for their shareholders and stockholders and begin to increase the vibrancy of this economy.

I rise to talk about a very compelling presentation made by Chairman Greenspan yesterday on this subject. He shared a couple of his thoughts, and I thought it would be a good idea for me to try and express some of what he said in a way by adding my own thoughts and comments, because I think what he said and what he showed was quite compelling.

The energy situation is a hard subject for a lot of us to grasp. We cannot exactly see electricity. It is not like it is on every street corner. We know about schools and we can deal with health care, because there are hospitals and there are schools and we all have personal experiences. The energy issue is a lot harder for us even to grasp as policymakers and for our constituents to grasp because we cannot see big pieces of it. So it is a policy that takes extra time and focus, which Senator DOMENICI and Senator BINGAMAN have given.

I thought this chart would be helpful. This was a chart that was shown in the energy hearing yesterday with Chairman Greenspan, and I think more than any other chart it shows one of the major dilemmas facing the Nation right now in terms of energy policy.

We can see clearly that up until about 1996, we were generating capacity for electricity by fuel type in a variety of different ways: Petroleum in the dark purple color; hydrogen in blue; nuclear in green; gas in a fuschia color; and coal in black. We can see with one glance that it was a pretty interesting and balanced mix of what we were using to produce electricity in this country.

Then all of a sudden something pretty extraordinary happened, and one does not need a Ph.D. or an MBA or even be on the Energy Committee to understand this chart, and that is that in 1996 the world changed. All of the capacity, or virtually all of it, started to be built in anticipation of using natural gas. People say to me, Senator, why did this happen? Did the Congress mandate that everyone do this in the country? Was there major legislation?

The answer is, there was not one thing. It was not a Presidential Executive Order. We do not order our industries in that way. It was not one con-

gressional act. It was a confluence of things that had to do with a couple of big policy decisions the Congress made.

One policy was we must begin to clean up our air. Our air is too dirty. We need to clean it up. We have all of these coal-fired plants that, prior to clean coal technologies, were polluting our air. Our children were getting asthma. People were complaining, rightfully so, about some of the air pollution issues.

So Congress acted, and with the Clean Air Act of 1990, and then in 1996 when some rules and regulations came out, the industry said, let's move to a fuel source, natural gas, that meets these clean air standards, that helps to reduce air pollution. They began building, in anticipation of this regulatory mode and public demand for cleaner air, natural gas.

Although we do not produce a lot of coal in Louisiana, I am mindful of States such as West Virginia and Pennsylvania that do. Meanwhile, work has gone on in research to clean up the coal and we will anticipate in the future having coal become more of a mix, but it will be cleaner, it will be better, and it will be far less polluting than what was happening back in 1965, 1970, 1975, and 1980.

Great thanks goes to Senator DOMENICI, who almost singlehandedly can claim credit—he is too modest, but I can most certainly say he can almost singlehandedly claim credit for the revitalization of the nuclear industry. While it has its critics and while there are people who still do not believe in nuclear power, it is becoming clear, based on science and fact, not myth and fear, that as we begin to deal with the waste issue of nuclear power, just like gas, nuclear power produces energy in a way that does not pollute our environment and helps us to keep the air as clean as possible in the United States and, for that matter, in North America and the world, to clean up our Nation's air.

When our bill passes, nuclear will become a part of this mix. So we hopefully will see a little more black, a little more green, and petroleum will probably remain steady. We can see it is a very minor portion of our electricity.

We use petroleum to drive our cars and buses. It is used more in the transportation sector. But when we are talking about electricity, which underlies all of our economy, our manufacturing, our agriculture, everything, it is basically produced by natural gas.

What is the problem, then? The problem is that the prices of natural gas have tripled in the last 18 months. Whether one is in Oregon, California, or a State such as Louisiana, New York, Illinois, or New Jersey, believe me, our businesses are suffering. They are closing, consolidating, and laying off workers. Any businesses that rely in large measure on natural gas to produce their products, whether it is petrochemical or fertilizer or ammo-

nia, are feeling the brunt of prices doubling and tripling.

Why are prices doubling and tripling? Because the capacity has been built up, but there is not an adequate supply. At the same time, we have had policies promoting the use of natural gas at the very same time, in the very same Congress, we have then implemented policies that discourage the production of natural gas because we put moratoria down around the country. We cannot drill even though we know there is a lot of gas. Billions and trillions of cubic feet of natural gas on the Outer Continental Shelf, in the interior, in Alaska, are off limits from drilling. We are not encouraging as aggressively as we should the importation of liquefied natural gas, again based on myth and misinformation about the dangers or benefits of such a transfer, which brings me to what Alan Greenspan said.

Alan Greenspan said he is not an energy expert, but he knows something about jobs, he knows something about the economy, and he says we cannot sustain this imbalance. We cannot sustain the imbalance between the demand for natural gas and our lack of willingness to supply it because the supply and demand is so out of kilter that these high prices will damage the recovery of our economy and we need to increase the supply of natural gas.

He said two things. He said he would prefer to increase the supply of natural gas by domestic production.

But he realizes, based on all sorts of concerns—political and environmental—that in a short time that is unlikely. So the chairman, wisely—and I agree—said we should pursue a policy of importing liquefied natural gas production, but not just a plant, not to take the place of domestic production, but to complement it.

The people in Louisiana would think it is a reasonable policy. We first say let's open up areas of natural gas production. Louisiana already opened up much of its land, both offshore and onshore. We say over and over again we are happy to host the industry. We recognize we have made some environmental errors in the past. But today, these rigs are not your grandfather's oil rigs. They are run by computers. They are much more safe for the operators of the rigs—for their personal safety, as well as the safety of the environment.

In fact, there was a front-page article—and I will submit it for the RECORD—several weeks ago in New Orleans, where they claim—and I believe it because I have experienced this myself—some of the best fishing in the world is around the rigs in the Gulf of Mexico. Why? Because the rigs themselves create artificial reefs. You cannot have good fishing and the growth of marine life without good reefs. Coral begins to grow on and attach to these reefs as artificial reefs are created that are really increasing the health of the marine life in the gulf. A lot of people

don't want to believe that because they want to believe that everything associated with oil and gas is terrible and damaging, and actually the facts are the opposite.

So while Louisiana remains a promising place, and in Texas and Mississippi, and off the Continental Shelf, I must say there are many reserves in Florida and in other places in the Outer Continental Shelf that need to be pursued. Now, whether we decide to drill, that would have to be left up to the political establishment, the political framework. But we should have an inventory of where those reserves are. We should at least know what our reserves are, which is part of what is in the bill.

Chairman Greenspan agreed that we cannot sustain—if we want new jobs for the Nation, we cannot sustain this out of balance. How do we fix that?

Let me show another chart that is pretty startling. One of the ways is to ask every State and region to just pull their own weight. It is not a new concept in America. Our country was founded on a very simple principle: Those who work get to eat; those who produce should consume; those who are unwilling to work or do their part, unwilling to produce, and if they are able, should go without. All able-bodied men and women should pull their own weight. It is just a fundamental value and principle in America. Our country cannot operate on any other value. We do that pretty well in some areas, but we are not doing very well in the area of energy production.

You can see from this chart, which is colorful and easy to understand, that these States, starting with California and New York, and going all the way down to Louisiana and Wyoming—I should say all the way up in this case, as this is positive and this is more negative. These are the States that are consuming more than they are producing. This is the energy deficit in the Nation.

We talk a lot about deficits and budget deficits. We talk about health care deficits. But the energy deficit is very important to discuss and understand.

The United States imports more energy than we consume. Why is that? It is because some States and some regions are not producing nearly what they consume. We are relying on just a few States to be net exporters of energy. Those States are Utah, Colorado, North Dakota, Montana, Oklahoma, Kentucky, New Mexico, Alaska, West Virginia, Louisiana, and Wyoming. They are all net exporters of energy. We produce a lot of energy from a variety of different sources—maybe it is hydro, maybe it is coal, maybe it is oil and gas, or maybe it is nuclear. But we don't consume as much as we use, and then we send out our excess to other States.

You can see that Wyoming gets the prize. They are the top State for producing energy, consuming little and sending out 8,000 trillion Btu's in ex-

cess to be used by their neighbors and the rest of the Nation. One of the reasons is Wyoming is a relatively unpopulated State, with only about 450,000 people. They have a large landmass, and they are blessed with a lot of natural resources. They have a fairly pro-production mindset in Wyoming. So they produce all that they consume and then they help the rest of the States with their very difficult situations.

Louisiana, which is also a net producer, could also win first prize in the sense that not only do we have 4.5 million people, we produce enough for our own consumption, but we are also a highly industrialized State. Most of the petrochemicals, fertilizers, and many plastics are produced in Louisiana. Not only do we produce enough energy for our residents, but for the industry in our State, which sends their products into the country and the world. On top of that, we still send out electricity for everyone else. It is the same thing for West Virginia, which is more like Wyoming. They are not an industrial State, but they are blessed with a lot of natural resources. And there is also New Mexico, et cetera.

Let me talk about this part of the chart for a minute. They are big States. California is blessed with natural resources, and New York, Ohio, and Florida consume a tremendous amount of energy. Yet because of policies that their States have enacted, and maybe because of a lack of understanding about how much they actually are consuming, they basically refuse to produce any energy—or enough energy. Year after year, decade after decade, they consume and consume, and they refuse to produce. What happens, then, is because of that, the Nation has an energy deficit and we have to import oil or import liquefied natural gas from other places—sometimes places that are not friendly, sometimes places that are quite dangerous, sometimes countries that we would prefer not to be dealing with, except for the fact that they have the resources we need.

This has to change. Senators from these States would come to me and say: Senator, just because you want to drill for oil and gas in Louisiana doesn't mean we have to.

Well, they are right. If they don't want to do it, that is fine. But I say you have to produce it in some way. They can put up a nuclear powerplant, or two, or three, or four, or five, or dam some of their rivers to generate hydro power, or they can find some coal reserves and dig for some of their coal, or they can come up with alternatives, such as putting up windmills.

Interestingly enough, in one of the States—Massachusetts—which consumes more than it produces—there are some communities that are opposing the putting up of windmills offshore because people don't want to look at them. They don't like the way they look. They don't like the way oil rigs look or the way windmills look.

While they have a right to that opinion, I am not sure it is good policy for us just to completely eliminate sources of energy because some people might not like the way these structures look. They think "not in my backyard." But everybody wants to walk into a room and turn on the lights; everybody wants not one cell phone but several; everybody wants a laptop; they may want to own a business where they can use the energy sources and pay a little bit of money for that use, but they don't want to produce. It cannot sustain itself. We will either become more vulnerable to outside sources or we will drive businesses away from the United States and the North American Continent to other places where they can get an adequate supply of energy for cheaper prices. It will cost jobs in your State, in my State, or in New York or California.

When we lose jobs, we lose income from taxes. When we lose taxes for local government, the police force gets cut, the fire departments get cut, schools close. We have communities, perhaps in the State of the Presiding Officer, with 4-day school weeks. Who ever heard of such a thing? Four days of school? My children would like that, but I don't think for a nation trying to develop a skilled workforce we can afford to go to 3- and 4-day school weeks.

When we lose jobs, we lose income, the economy gets sluggish, we lose tax revenues, schools close, hospitals close, and it is a ferocious cycle.

Will fixing this fix everything? No. But fixing the energy deficit in this Nation will go a long way. It can be done if we come to grips with the facts.

Let me be clear because I don't want anyone saying the Senator's answer is for everyone to start drilling for oil and gas in their State. If some States or some regions do not want to drill for oil and gas, although they might have a lot of it, they need to think about what they will do. Will they dig for coal? Will they put up windmills? Will they construct nuclear powerplants? Will they use more hydro? Will they allow the damming of some rivers—not all rivers—to create the kind of energy they need?

What is not fair is to put these States in the position of having to produce all the energy for all the rest of the States and for these States to jeopardize the security of this Nation both from a national security aspect and an economic aspect because their policies will not be in line.

If any one of these States thinks they could enact within their States enough conservation to take up this slack, more power to them. If these States—whether it is Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Georgia, or Florida—think, fine, we decided we do not want to produce anything, we do not like the idea of producing, we do not want to produce any energy, we will conserve, then fine. They can go to all their businesses and tell them you can only use electricity between the hours of 8 in

the morning and 12 noon and close your business and come back the next day. If they think they could politically get away with that, that is a solution they also have—or coming up with alternative sources.

I am not trying to be unreasonable; I think the American people understand it. I don't know about the policy-makers, but I promise people in Louisiana, people in Florida, people in California understand they have to produce energy if they are going to consume it. They can either produce more or conserve more. But to just put your head in the sand and say, A, we do not have a problem, or, B, we can get ourselves out of it by conservation only, that is the wrong way to lead.

Sometimes I am accused of wanting to bend or modify environmental laws or regulations. The reason I feel so strongly is I believe in clean air standards. I want to keep the air clean. If we can produce more natural gas, if we can produce more nuclear, if we can continue, as this bill proposes, to invest in clean coal technology, we could increase the supply of energy and clean up our environment. I want to move in that direction. I don't want to have to back up from those environmental standards we have set for ourselves. I hope we can do this.

We have an energy deficit. It is a national natural gas crisis. Chairman Greenspan has said he believes one of the solutions is to increase the supply of natural gas domestically and to try to create a framework in this bill to at least make it optional to import liquefied natural gas not only from other nations but Alaska, which is a rich source of natural gas. However, we must do something not only as a nation but as regions.

This chart shows the U.S. census regions and divisions. The Pacific West is represented, and then the Mountain States, the West North Central, the Texas and Louisiana region, and then the Northeast. This is not in the bill as drafted at this moment, but I will work on language that would begin to help these regions focus on energy independence.

I am not pulling this concept out of the sky because I met with some leaders from Canada. Much to my amazement, Canada has developed quite a different way than the United States. Each of our States has acted, of course, independently. We are the United States of 50 States acting independently. Canada has developed its electricity and energy system on a regional basis. They have six distinct regions and each region is self-sufficient. They each generate enough energy in their region—which makes a lot of sense—based on the natural resources in the region. One region has a lot of nuclear power because that is what their region decided. Another region produces a lot from hydro because they have the ability to do that. Other regions have gas.

And then they have the mix of supply. When, say, there is a drought in an

area with the hydro and they do not have enough water, the other regions are able to meet the demand of that region because they have nuclear or they have gas. Say the price of natural gas goes up. That region, then, says no, we will not buy your gas; it is too expensive. And they get inexpensive hydro or less expensive nuclear. That competition is good. It helps everybody keep the price low and stable, which is the point. Canada operates in a very model way.

We are far from that model. We need to get closer to that model and eventually get Mexico in that model. Then we will have quite a robust North American model.

What we have now are individual States, and we are trying to break our States down a little bit, recognizing State rights and trying to work with the States but encouraging them to break up into regions and think about regional independence so Florida and Georgia and South Carolina can no longer say, we just want to consume, we want to get all of our power from Louisiana, or we want to get all of our power from Mississippi. This region should think, how are we going to sustain our region and come up with regional plans.

It will not be simple. It will not happen overnight. But this is a view of what potentially could be done.

Another chart demonstrates RTO, regional transmission organizations, which is happening now. This is not something in the far distance. This is underway now through regulation and through congressional bills and amendments we are passing, encouraging the development of these regional transmission organizations for the purpose of transmitting electricity.

On the same concept, we should be producing regionally a balance, so that no State should be allowed to simply consume and not produce. No region should be allowed to simply consume and not produce.

Different people say to me: Senator, some States produce wheat; your State does not produce wheat. But some States produce all the wheat and ship it to you and not every State has to produce wheat. That would be a pretty good argument except that people do not object to having wheatfields in their backyards. People want to grow crops; they want agriculture to be there. So we manage, as a nation. I grow a lot of wonderful cotton and sugar and soybean. We ship it up to the Midwest. They produce wheat and ship it down to us. That system is working fine because there are no environmental efforts to undermine the growing of our crops. But there are misguided environmental efforts to undermine the production of energy and electricity in this country, forcing some States to basically say: Not in my backyard, not today, not tomorrow, not anything—not oil, not gas, not coal, not nuclear, not windmills, not anything. And, by the way, we are not

going to conserve very much. We conserve a little, but we still want to use all that we want, 24 hours a day.

It is not going to work. It never has worked in the history of the country, and it is not going to work today. So we have a problem. This bill we are going to adopt, thanks to the leadership of many on the Senate floor, will begin to solve some of these problems. For Louisiana and for the Gulf Coast States I think it will be quite a victory because we have done more than our share of production. We are happy to do it. We want to be more fully and equally compensated for that production. We want to share in the taxes that are generated from the production so we can invest in our infrastructure, in our environment, in saving our wetlands that are somewhat damaged by the drilling.

But it is not the primary culprit. The primary culprit in our case, which you cannot see here—Louisiana through the Mississippi River drains more than 40 percent of the continental United States. It also serves as a river for commerce for the whole Nation. Where we dam this river, the Mississippi River, and as we have tried to tame it, which is an ongoing process over the last 200 years, so this country could grow and expand, we now do not allow the river to overflow and to replenish the marsh. So we are losing a lot of this extraordinary wetland in the southern part of the State. It is not due primarily to oil and gas drilling. It is due to the commercialization and the leveeing and dredging of the greatest river system in the world.

So the country has an obligation to help us. We have a plan, and with good help, in this Energy bill we will begin to solve our wetlands problems, maintain good commercial navigation for the international trade that benefits not only our State but the whole Nation, and hopefully begin to get this country on a more commonsense approach to energy production and electricity use.

A national energy policy must address the regional challenges that confront our country. It must call for each region to use wisely the resources it can access in order to supply its particular demand for energy. For too long, individual States have prevented regions of our country from producing the energy needed, creating an energy deficit, all the while continuing to consume the majority of that region's energy. This bill must address the national gas crisis and the emerging energy crisis in America.

I need to make this one final point. It is the subject of a whole other speech, but I don't want to finish without saying this about another consequence of relying on outside sources of energy. California says we don't want to drill, not on our State, offshore, Outer Continental Shelf. Florida says we don't want to drill; we don't want to produce. Illinois and others say the same. What

happens is, because we refuse to regulate our consumption or reduce it substantially—because, frankly, we can reduce some through technology and through alternatives, but we just can't restrict consumption because we will restrict economic growth, which we do not want to do.

But what happens, then, is we begin importing from other countries, countries that have lower environmental standards than we do, countries that have less capacity to enforce the meager regulations they have on the books, countries that are more desperate for jobs. Although we want them, there are countries desperate for them. So, inadvertently, we end up increasing pollution, damaging the world environment because we refuse to adopt common-sense principles, which are to extract national resources and develop energy on our own soil, off our own continental shelf, and minimize the degradation internationally.

If anybody wants to come to the Senate floor and debate that with me, I will be more than happy to debate it because I am scrambling for information. Perhaps I have gotten information incorrectly.

I am very concerned because America consumes so much oil and so much gas. I know a lot of that production comes from the Mideast. But now we are asking it of Venezuela and now we are asking countries in Africa. They want to, of course, because if they ship oil to us, their countries make money. They put their people to work. I understand that. We produce a lot of oil and gas.

But I am also well aware, as a producer, of the environmental degradation that can occur if we do not have strong rules and regulations, strong court systems, and a mature political system that can monitor it.

I say to the leaders in our country, when we force production off of our shore, we damage the international environment. It is not right. If some environmental organizations want to challenge that comment, then please do it. I urge them to send mail to me or send e-mails to me and tell me why I am wrong; that we can easily and clearly and without damage drill in other places of the world.

I don't believe it because I know what we went through in the Louisiana Legislature over 20 years ago, led by a group of very great legislators, to try to bring good rules and regulations to the industry. Now the industry is doing much better. But 30 and 40 years ago, people were not too interested in environmental rules and regulations. So I know what can occur when the rules and regulations are not there.

I wonder how the people of California or Florida might feel about the fact that, because they refuse to produce, somebody is producing somewhere for them, in places that do not have rules and regulations like they do, in places they cannot be enforced.

What about the children who live in those areas? What about the families

who are struggling with meager incomes? What environmental legacies are we leaving in Third World countries around the globe?

For all the reasons—for independence, for national security, for jobs, for the economy, and for making this world a more beautiful place than we found it when we got here—I urge this Senate to take seriously the bill that is being put forward by both Senators from New Mexico, the chairman, and the ranking member, to pass an Energy bill before we leave for the August break. I will stand with them. The people of Louisiana support this bill.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

I would like to describe a terrible crime that occurred in San Jose, CA. On September 14, 2001, a young Muslim university student was forcibly elbowed out of line in a coffee shop. After pushing the young student, the man then told the clerk, "I'm an American, serve me first."

I believe that Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

THE ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, in 1994 I supported legislation which President Clinton signed into law a banning of the production of certain semiautomatic assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition magazines. The 1994 law banned a list of 19 specific weapons as well as a number of other weapons incorporating certain design characteristics such as pistol grips, folding stocks, bayonet mounts, and flash suppressors. The 1994 assault weapons ban prohibited the manufacture of semiautomatic weapons that incorporate at least two of these military features and accept a detachable magazine. Pre-existing military-style semiautomatic weapons were not banned. This law is

scheduled to sunset on September 13, 2004.

Earlier this year, Senator FEINSTEIN introduced the Assault Weapons Ban Reauthorization Act, which would reauthorize this important piece of gun safety legislation. I am a cosponsor of this bill because I believe it is critical that we keep these weapons off the streets and out of our communities. Senator FEINSTEIN's bill also includes a provision that would ban the importation of large capacity ammunition feeding devices. This provision passed the Senate 59 to 39, as an amendment to the 1999 Juvenile Justice bill, and passed the House by unanimous consent. However, the 106th Congress never passed the Juvenile Justice bill because it got stuck in conference, and thus the import ban never became law.

Studies have shown that the assault weapons ban legislation works. According to National Institute of Justice statistics reported by the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, gun trace requests for assault weapons declined 20 percent in the first calendar year after the ban took effect, dropping from 4,077 in 1994 to 3,268 in 1995. This indicates that fewer of these weapons were making it onto the streets.

If the law is not reauthorized, the production of assault weapons can legally resume. Restarting production of these weapons will increase their number and availability and inevitably lead to a rise in gun crimes committed with assault weapons. The Congress should act this year to reauthorize the ban.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND MEDICAL CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I rise today to reflect on the recently passed Prescription Drug and Medicare Improvement Act of 2003, S.1. I am pleased to support this bipartisan effort both in the Senate Finance Committee and here on the floor. I believe this bill represents a positive compromise and a good start for America's senior citizens and individuals with disabilities who have relied on the Medicare Program for generations. I hope that the conferees act deliberately and fairly in the coming weeks to embrace what is good about this bill and to retain its bipartisan spirit. This process has been a long road for many of us who have worked on this issue for years but it has been an even longer road for America's seniors, who have watched drug prices escalate while Washington failed to act. Like all legislative products, this bill is not perfect. I have worked to improve this bill for Arkansas seniors in many ways, and I am committed to correcting any problems with it as it is implemented.

Despite its shortcomings, which I will detail later, S. 1 is much better for Arkansans than the plan President Bush proposed earlier this year. First and foremost, S. 1 gives all Medicare beneficiaries access to a prescription drug benefit. Under President Bush's