

Cuba, and penalizing him because we are upset with Fidel Castro.

PUBLIC BROADCASTING

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I want to make a comment today about actions taken yesterday by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. I have spoken about this on the floor of the Senate previously. Let me describe just a bit of the history here.

I read some while ago that Mr. Kenneth Tomlinson, who is the Chairman of the Board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting—again, Chairman of the Board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, was making the case publicly that public broadcasting has a liberal bias. He was relentlessly making the case that public broadcasting has a liberal bias—public television, public radio, and so on. Maybe he thinks Big Bird is a Republican—or a Democrat. Maybe he thinks the Cookie Monster goes to precinct meetings someplace for some political party or other. I have no idea what he thinks. Frankly, he was concerned about Bill Moyers, who was doing a program called “NOW.” He was sufficiently concerned about that, having made allegations that there is a liberal bias in the public television, that he hired a consultant to do an evaluation of the program that Bill Moyers does.

This consultant was paid for with public funds. So I wrote Mr. Tomlinson and I said: You believe there is a liberal bias here with public broadcasting. You have paid taxpayers’ monies to have a consultant—who himself, by the way, is a partisan—a consultant to evaluate a specific set of programming. I would like the results of that.

So he sent me the raw data, which is about I think maybe 70 pages. It is a rather large stack of raw data—no summary. So I called him back and said: I really want the summary. There wasn’t a summary, he said. He said he is making a summary, preparing a summary. He said he would have it to me, I think, a week ago now. And I have not yet received the summary, but the raw data was interesting. At least in portions, this program was evaluated, by a particular consultant who himself was a partisan, as is Mr. Tomlinson, the raw data was evaluating segments in public television, particularly in the NOW program, on whether they were anti-Bush or pro-Bush. Anti-Bush, anti-Bush, anti-Bush. Apparently the lens or prism through which they are evaluating public broadcasting was: Do they support the President or not?

One was interesting. For example, in one case, it was labeled “antidefense” because it was a program about waste in the Pentagon. My colleague from Oklahoma talked about waste a little earlier. He said there is a lot of waste in the Pentagon. If you talk about waste in the Pentagon, you, apparently, are “antidefense.” Unbelievable.

I mentioned previously, my colleague, Senator CHUCK HAGEL from Ne-

braska, a red-blooded American patriot who served this country, a Republican conservative, by all accounts, who serves in the Senate, someone with whom I am proud to serve, was on one of the programs. He apparently said something that was at odds with the President’s policy, so he was labeled a “liberal.” Yes, my friend, CHUCK HAGEL, conservative Republican Senator from Nebraska, is labeled liberal because he was on public broadcasting and said something at odds with the policy of the Bush administration. Unbelievable.

Anti-Bush, anti-Bush, liberal, antidefense. What an unbelievable thing to have done to hire a partisan consultant to evaluate for a liberal bias in public broadcasting.

Is Big Bird a Democrat? What a weighted question.

So Mr. Tomlinson, Chairman of the Board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, was not only embarking on this effort to prove an allegation he had been making—that is, there is a liberal bias in public broadcasting—but also working to put in a new president of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

So who does Mr. Tomlinson want as the head of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting? The former Co-Chair of the Republican National Committee. Yes, that is right.

You say, well, that cannot be.

Of course, that is exactly right. In fact, that person was just hired in a split vote by the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. It is unbelievable.

The Chairman spends his time alleging the organization he heads has a liberal bias, hires a partisan to try to prove it, to put together work papers that come from evaluating programming, and then embarks on an effort to decide there should be a former Co-Chair of the Republican National Committee to run the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

I don’t know, maybe it is hard to take a level look when you are a partisan. But public television has a program that deals with the Wall Street Journal editorial board. No one would suggest the Wall Street Journal editorial pages are anything other than solid, hard-rock Republican. No question about that. They don’t pretend. There is no veil over their secrecy about their politics. That is what they are.

They have a program on public broadcasting with Tucker Carlson. I don’t know Tucker Carlson. I don’t know Tucker Carlson from a block of wood. He wears a bow tie. He is a conservative Republican, and so they hire him to do a program. I think he has just left. It is not as if public broadcasting has not had conservative voices. They are just upset with the “NOW” program by Bill Moyers. Why are they upset with Bill Moyers? Let me give one example.

Public broadcasting tackles subjects others will not tackle. One subject is

the concentration of media ownership in this country. What has happened with the radio and television industry is it has been gobbled up into huge packages. One company owns 1,200 radio stations. The Federal Communications Commission, under pressure from the broadcast industry, was going to change the rules on ownership, and they did. Pressure from the publishers, pressure from the television, pressure from the radio industry. The Federal Communications Commission did the most complete cave-in to corporate interests I have ever seen in my life. They have new ownership rules that say, totus porcus, you can own everything. Here is what they said in the rules: In the largest city in this country, or in the largest cities, it is okay for one company to own eight radio stations, three television stations, the dominant newspaper, and the cable company. That is all fine. That is nirvana.

That is absolutely nuts. Yet that was the rule the FCC came up with. Majority party, representing the interests of the President, says this is what we are doing. We will allow more concentration in broadcasting so that four, five, or six people will largely control what the American people see, hear, and read.

Guess what. A Federal appeals court decided they were going to stay those rules. Three-quarters of a million people wrote to the FCC saying, do not do this. It was the largest outpouring of letters I can recall. The FCC did it anyway, caved in to the corporate interests, and the Federal court stayed the rules, it went up to the Supreme Court, the stay was not lifted and it is back to the FCC to do over. We will see whether they cave in, once again, or whether the public interest might prevail.

My point of telling that story is this: Bill Moyers did stories on this issue about the concentration in the broadcasting industry. Do you think anybody else was interested in doing big stories about this? Do you think CBS would do a story about that? Or FOX? Or ABC? Or NBC? Not on your life, because they are the beneficiaries of those policies. They want to be bigger. They want more. They think it is fine if you live in one city, that one company will call the tune on information. One company will own eight radio stations, three television stations, the newspaper, and the cable company. They think that is fine.

You are not going to see stories as you peruse the television dial about this subject from the major companies. They will not do it. Guess who did it. Bill Moyers, on a program called “NOW.” Did that upset some people? I suppose, sure. They do not like that. But the fact is, public broadcasting has been independent. It was created as the independent source of news, oblivious and impervious to the pressures and partisan wins.

So the “NOW” program does a couple of programs on concentration of broadcasting and they collect a firestorm of

protests by the big economic interests and by those who support the President's policies on this.

Let them all merge. They say, well, all these mergers do not matter. You have all these television channels these days, you have more opportunities. What you have are more voices coming from one ventriloquist. Add up where all the channels are owned and where they come from. It is exactly the same concentration.

There are investigations going on at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Mr. Tomlinson was named Chairman by the President, September 2003. He spends his time telling us there is a liberal bias in public broadcasting so he hired a consultant to track the political leanings of certain programming. He hired a conservative partisan to do that. Paid for it with taxpayers' money. That is now being evaluated by the Inspector General. He did not tell the Board of Directors about this expenditure. He, in a letter to me, said, maybe I didn't tell the Board of Directors but that is because the President of CPB signed the contract.

That is not accurate. He signed the contract several months before the President that he alleged signed it had actually become President at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Now they have appointed a new President at the urging of Mr. Tomlinson, a partisan former Co-Chair of the Republican National Committee. Some of the members of the Board of Directors of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting have alleged to me personally that the process by which that was done was a stilted process, not a fair and open process. I am going to ask the Inspector General to include that in his investigation as well.

I did not join all those in the Senate last week who signed a letter to suggest Mr. Tomlinson should resign. I was not one of those who signed it. But I now think he should. I think orchestrating the hiring of a partisan former Co-Chair of the Republican National Committee to run the Corporation for Public Broadcasting after he has made a mini-career here out of alleging there is a liberal bias, to suggest he should be the point of the spear to move it in a direction that clearly is partisan is unfortunate, in my judgment, and will do dramatic injury to public broadcasting.

My hope is public broadcasting will recover from these missteps. Public broadcasting has done a wonderful service in our country. I kidded about Big Bird. Big Bird is not a partisan. When American children watch "Sesame Street" and see wonderful programming—which, by the way, they took care of that program and it does not exist on commercial television—most Americans in the polls I have seen believe public broadcasting does a real service.

I don't think there is a better news-cast than PBS, Jim Lehrer. I think he

is incredibly good. You get it straight. You do not get it in 8-second sound bites as is the case with the network news. You get a discussion by both sides, in depth, about issues that matter to this country. Those who are deciding to take it upon themselves to try to do injury to public broadcasting did no service to this country.

I know there is a network of radio and broadcast opportunities out there for largely one voice, the conservative voice, that is relentless, every day, all over the dial. The fairness doctrine is gone so they can do that. There does not have to be balance on commercial stations. There used to be. It does not have to be anymore because under President Reagan the fairness doctrine was obliterated.

I know they do not like this message about the push-back on public broadcasting. In my judgment, when I see someone doing injury to public broadcasting, I think it is important to speak out. I think Mr. Tomlinson is doing injury to something that is very important to our country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the Senator from North Dakota was an important part of the work on clean energy that we finished work on last night and will vote on next Tuesday. I will make some remarks about that in a few minutes, but I acknowledge his contribution and that of the ranking Democrat, JEFF BINGAMAN, who worked with our chairman, PETE DOMENICI, and the Presiding Officer, who has experience in the House of Representatives on the Energy Committee.

These last 2 weeks have been extraordinarily good for the Senate. I think we got a good result.

ENERGY POLICY ACT

(At the request of Mr. REID, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

• Mr. KERRY. Mr. President, I support what Senator DURBIN is trying to achieve with this amendment regarding CAFE standards. Over the past few years, I have looked closely at this issue and believe strongly that we need a consensus path forward. I do not believe, however, that Senator DURBIN's amendment or Senator BOND's amendment will achieve that goal. I have followed closely the information available from the National Academy of Sciences and have spoken with labor groups, automobile manufacturers, and environmental groups. We can, and must, significantly increase the efficiency of our automobile fleet, but we cannot do it without creating new incentives for automobile manufacturers to retool plants to produce advanced technology, more efficient vehicles, and lead the way toward an energy-independent America. •

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I want to thank the bill managers, Sen-

ator BINGAMAN and Senator DOMENICI, for accepting my amendment calling for an investigation by the Federal Trade Commission into gasoline price manipulation and anticompetitive practices by oil companies and refineries. I also want to thank Senator DORGAN and Senator BOXER for their hard work on this issue.

We are living in a time when the average American family has no assurance from week to week that they will be able to afford to fill their vehicle with gas.

Over the past year, gasoline prices have increased by 23 percent. And since December the average price for oil has climbed 40 cents per gallon. To make matters even worse, prices fluctuate wildly from week to week and month to month, making it impossible for families to budget for the cost of gasoline. In fact, I heard from a constituent in Lansing on Monday that gasoline was \$2.10 a gallon at 7:30 in the morning and by 9:30 it had jumped over 12 percent to \$2.35 a gallon. Gas prices in the Upper Peninsula range from \$2.19 to \$2.24 a gallon. People in Detroit are paying the highest prices in the State at \$2.40 a gallon.

Furthermore, the Energy Information Administration estimates that pump prices for the summer will average about \$2.17 per gallon, which is 26 cents per gallon above the price from last year. So what does this mean for the average American family? Using the AAA Trip Calculator I discovered that a family driving their Ford station wagon from Grand Rapids, MI to Washington, DC, would spend \$89.82 on gas. These high prices may mean the difference between a family trip to visit grandparents and extended family and staying home. So you see we are talking about real impacts to working families.

At the same time that our families are struggling to find room for the cost of gasoline in their household budgets and canceling their summer vacations, oil companies are chalking up record-breaking profits for the first quarter of this year.

Families are worried about whether or not they can afford the gas to get to work, while oil companies are raking in billions of dollars.

I think my colleagues must agree with me that there is something seriously wrong when American families are struggling to make ends meet and the world's top five petroleum companies are reporting more than \$230 billion in profits since 2001.

Furthermore, when we consider that the cost of crude oil makes up less than 50 percent of the total cost of gasoline, there can be no doubt that oil companies and refineries are making their profits off the backs of hardworking Americans.

In a recent CNN/USA Today/Gallup poll, 78 percent of people surveyed said that gasoline prices are not fair.

I agree with them.