

computer equipment and services for the whole government. The Sun Microsystems contract was being re-negotiated right under his nose. He was the top official accountable for that contract. When he was informed in August 2006 by IG auditors about the alleged fraud on the Sun contract and the DOJ referral decision, he should have brought the Sun contract negotiations to a screeching halt. He should have called for a comprehensive, independent review and/or audit and assessment of Sun's corrective action plan. He should have carefully weighed the gravity of the fraud allegations before proceeding any further.

Mr. Chairman, instead of heeding all the IG's warning signals, Mr. Williams pushed the throttle to the firewall at Administrator Doan's direction. The record shows pressure was put on the contracting officer to sign a potentially bad contract. When the contracting officer refused to bend under pressure, Mr. Williams involved himself directly in the contracting process. He participated in the decision to remove that contracting officer from the Sun contract negotiations. His actions eliminated the last standing barrier to contract approval. In doing these things, he may have improperly interfered in the contracting process and hurt the taxpayers.

The alleged contract violations and alleged fraud on the Sun contract, which supposedly occurred over a long period of time, may have wasted tens of millions of dollars in taxpayer money. Mr. Chairman, there must be more accountability in the government contracting process. Elevating those who have been detrimental to this process would certainly be anti-accountability and anti-taxpayer. That would clearly send the wrong message to the whole contracting community.

For these reasons, I intend to oppose the nomination of Mr. Williams to be the next Administrator at GSA, and would expect your Committee to do so, too.

Your careful consideration of my concerns would be appreciated.

Sincerely,

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY,
Ranking Member.

CYPRUS

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, on July 20, 1974, Turkey invaded Cyprus. Thirty four years later, Turkish troops continue to occupy 37 percent of the land on Cyprus. During the occupation, some 180,000 Cypriots became refugees and over 5,000 Cypriots were murdered.

The European Court of Human Rights recently found Turkey guilty of violating the European Convention on Human Rights. Notably, 26 year-old Solomos Solomou, was killed on August, 14, 1996 after being shot three times by Turkish snipers while trying to climb a pole in order to remove a Turkish flag from its mast. The killing happened after the funeral of his cousin, Tassos Isaak, who was himself beaten to death on August 11, 1996 by a Turkish mob while taking part in an anti-occupation demonstration.

On March 12th of this year, I sent a congratulatory letter to the newly elected Cypriot President Christofias. In addition to a new President in the Republic of Cyprus, his election represents a new direction for the Republic of Cyprus. I commend President Christofias for the intensification of ef-

forts to reach a just, viable, and functional solution to the Cyprus problem. I believe this is a unique time to capitalize on the commitment made to find a solution and I am optimistic that the working groups and technical committees will prepare the necessary groundwork for full-fledged negotiation. However, I also believe that any solution that will reunite the island, its people, its institutions and its economy and must come from the Cypriots themselves.

On September 25, 2007, I introduced S. Res. 331, which calls on the United States Government to initiate a new effort to help Turkey understand the benefits that will accrue to it as a result of ending its military occupation of Cyprus. In addition, the resolution urges the Government of Turkey to immediately begin the withdrawal of its military occupation forces. Ultimately, it is on their shoulders to prove their good will and I hope they do so promptly.

As Cypriot-Americans join with Cypriots from throughout the world to help to rebuild their homeland, and as they seek to secure an economically prosperous state free of illegal occupation, I will stand by them. I will work to ensure that the Turkish occupation comes to an end.

This week, we remember those who perished on Cyprus, and honor those who survived and who continue to live under Turkish occupation. We have not forgotten and our thoughts and prayers are with them and their families.

Remembering together the events of July 20, 1974 in solidarity gives reverence to historical events we cannot afford to forget as we move forward to a peaceful, just solution and a hopeful tomorrow.

REMEMBERING SENATOR JESSE HELMS

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, today we remember and celebrate the life of the great Senator from North Carolina, Jesse Helms.

Senator Helms dedicated much of his life to serving his country and the people of North Carolina. He developed a lasting legacy as a man who held to his convictions and championed the causes he believed in so deeply.

He began his career in the U.S. Navy during World War II, where he was assigned as a recruiter. After the war, he became involved in North Carolina politics and campaigned for Senator Willis Smith, later serving on his staff. Senator Helms continued to establish himself, working as a political commentator for local Raleigh newspapers and radio stations. In 1957, Senator Helms was elected to the Raleigh city council, where he served with the same conviction that he would later bring to the Senate.

He was first elected to the Senate in 1972 and was reelected four more times, making him the longest serving U.S. Senator in North Carolina history. He

quickly became known for his unfailing dedication to uphold traditional American values and protect freedom. He said, "The challenge is always before us. Whenever we lose sight of the principles that mattered to our founders we run into trouble."

During his tenure in the Senate, Helms served on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and was chairman from 1995 to 2001. Under his leadership, the committee played a powerful role in setting U.S. foreign policy.

Senator Helms will be greatly missed and remembered as one of the most influential Senators of his time.

TRIBUTE TO DON MITCHELL

Mr. BOND. Mr. President, last week marked the end of a distinguished and honorable career in Government service for one of the most widely respected professional staff members on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Today, I wish to pay tribute to this gentleman—Mr. Don Mitchell.

For over 24 years, Don Mitchell devoted his life to public service. Remarkably, except for a 2-year period when he served as the Director of Intelligence Programs for the National Security Council, 22 of those years were spent here in the Senate, first as a national security legislative assistant for Senator John Glenn and then as a professional staff member for the Intelligence Committee. Senator Glenn knew a good thing when he saw it, so in 1989, he asked Don to move to the Intelligence Committee staff. As they say, the rest is history.

In a world where politics often seems to define who we are and with whom we associate, Don transcended those barriers. He earned the respect of Members and colleagues on both sides of the aisle. His work ethic—often evidenced by long days and late nights—was admired by all. It comes as no surprise that Don's reputation is well known not only here in the Senate but throughout the intelligence community with whom he worked so closely through the years. During my tenure on the Intelligence Committee, and in particular since becoming the vice chairman, I have benefited from Don's expertise and seasoned judgment in analyzing some of our most sensitive national security programs. We have been fortunate to have him for so many years.

We all know that the demands of working here in Congress often take the greatest toll on those who support us and sustain us in life—our families. For selflessly giving Don to us for so many years, his wife Grace, son Logan, and daughter Ella deserve our gratitude. We thank them for their sacrifices through these many years.

Ensuring our great Nation's security is a high calling and one of tremendous responsibility. Through his service to the Intelligence Committee, the Senate, and the United States of America, Don Mitchell has answered this call

with characteristic professionalism, integrity, and perseverance. We wish him the very best in his future pursuits. May God bless him and his family.

“PLANET’S” WORK AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

Mr. BURR. Mr. President, this week marked the 11th anniversary of the Professional Landcare Network’s “Renewal and Remembrance” event. Each year for more than a decade, hundreds of lawn care, landscape and tree care specialists from the Professional Landcare Network, PLANET, donate their time and expertise to refurbish the grounds of Arlington National Cemetery.

Arlington National Cemetery is one of the most hallowed places in all of America. President Lincoln established the grounds at Arlington as a military cemetery in 1864. By the end of the Civil War, Arlington housed 16,000 graves. It now serves as the final resting place for over 300,000 of our Nation’s most distinguished service personnel and public officials, including hundreds of distinguished North Carolinians. Veterans from all of the Nation’s wars are interred at Arlington, from the American Revolution through the present wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The gravesites of these men and women span an area of 624 acres.

The beauty and simple elegance of Arlington’s grounds is renowned throughout the world, drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors, mourners, and tourists every year. The work that goes into maintaining Arlington is a reflection of the honor and reverence that America has for our veterans and leaders. The members of PLANET share in this reverence. Through their work at Arlington each year, they have demonstrated a special level of commitment to the memory of our countrymen who have made some of the greatest sacrifices.

Many PLANET members who volunteered their time and expertise this past week have a personal connection to Arlington, either through relatives or friends who are buried there or through their own military service. But whether or not they have a family or service connection to the cemetery, all of the volunteers care deeply about maintaining Arlington as a place of dignity and respect in recognition of those who have served the public good and those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Their work does not go unnoticed by the family members of those who are buried at Arlington, nor does it go unnoticed by the membership of the U.S. Senate. I applaud the generosity of the PLANET members who devoted their work to honor our Nation’s servicemembers.

IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, in mid-June, I asked Idahoans to share with

me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering over 1,000, are heartbreaking and touching. To respect their efforts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through energy_prices@crapo.senate.gov to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent that today’s letters be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

Not affected much yet. But then we operate on a CASH basis around here, so we are not drowning in credit card debt while the cost of gas and food skyrockets. Do not drive 45 miles to Sandpoint just to shop anymore.
DOROTHY.

I want to thank you for keeping us informed of what is going on from your point of view. I, myself, am very disappointed in the lack of positive actions that affect the “people” of this great nation with regards to fuel. We have been listening to lots of talk and promises for years since the shot across the bow by foreign oil in the seventies. We are the father of nuclear power and seem to be last in the world to take advantage of it. Let us get with the program. There are far too many environmental laws that do not allow us to develop as we should. Let us look at these laws or, better yet, suspend all environmental considerations during this emergency until the economy and prices get back to normal. Let us start tomorrow and take advantage of our own resources in this country and get away from foreign oil, we can do it and do it fast. Let private industry do what they are capable of and let the government get out of the way other than to remove regulations that stop progress. There are too many regulations on the books now and, in many cases, they contradict each other.

[Some examples:] hydrogen fuel cells for housing and transportation, and solar energy for heating water and electricity. Every new house built in this nation should be required from now on to use solar and wind power as much as possible and be capable of upgrade as new technologies come on line. The power grid as we now know it is in big trouble, so let us start getting off of it. Do not even think about getting rid of hydroelectric power from our dams. We should be adding more as we should to supply the growing demands and not buckle under to a handful of tree huggers as was the case in Boise County on the Payette River a few years ago.

I think your estimate of \$200 a month for fuel is real conservative; in many cases, it is double that. I have watched mushroom soup go from \$.32 a can to \$1.50+, and that is totally unacceptable. To me, making fuel out of our food supply is a little crazy. Let us not get carried away with the biofuel stuff until we know more about it. As I understand ethanol, it is not good for the environment and it takes more fuel to make it than it will produce. Petroleum and corn are the main ingredients in many, many, many everyday items I do not think most Americans are aware of; we can do better.

I have been personally hit by this fuel and food crisis as I just retired from my state job to be able to visit my grandkids and relatives and peruse our family tree and to get a break. I joined the U.S. Navy in 1963 when I was seventeen and have been going like hell ever since. I was medically retired from the US Navy with a medical discharge and VA disability. I am now one of the folks on a fixed income, and these prices did not appear on the horizon when the plans to retire were made. I am not sure how this will affect the big picture, but I do know I cannot travel as I had planned, and that is sad for the whole family. I have folks from Wisconsin to all the states in the Northwest to California. I did a short trip to Winnemucca, Nevada, from Boise, Idaho, for a softball game my granddaughter was in; round trip gas was \$225 for my camper; it used to be \$50. Where will it stop? I thank you for your letter and please put pressure on whoever is in the way to immediate progress to get out of the way. Remember the Manhattan Project and the first moon shot; it CAN be done.

HAL, Boise.

My husband is a logger and, because of the high price of gas, he has been off from work for six months. I wish every Congressman had to live on the same amount of money a week that we have tried to live on \$300. We only go into town once every 8 to 10 days, and when we do go to town, we never go anywhere that is not on our list. Last month it cost us over \$100 just to go into town four times. It [seems that Congress doesn’t have] regard for the working man’s life. [Perhaps] they should [try living the same way] we do and I am sure their outlook on our future would be different. We need to drill for oil in our own country and then do not let the gas companies sell the oil to other countries. It is time for a change and please let the change start soon.

RUBY.

I do not like the high gas prices, but what I detest is that, for years, it seems that many have preferred to posture and bicker about drilling/not drilling for oil, expanding/limiting refinery growth, paying lip service to yet-to-be-available alternative energy sources, and demonizing the oil companies rather than making adult, farsighted decisions about our energy needs and creating a responsible policy to meet our needs.

The same actions that could have—and should have—been taken 10, 15, 20 years ago to put us in a better place today are still being proposed today and ignored again, often by the same people who made the faulty decisions about them originally. It is something that wouldn’t be tolerated in the private sector, where leadership would have been fired long ago for such incompetence. Congress needs to put the energy needs and associated security aspects of our country first and take prompt, forceful action or have the decency to get out of the way for someone who will.

If we are not currently knowledgeable enough or committed enough to quickly develop a full-blown, workable energy policy, here’s a temporary policy until we do:

Drilling may not be the answer, but it is what we need to do while we discover or develop the answer.

Spread the word, Senator, and leave behind the short-term thinking of the past!

GREGORY.

The fuel prices are totally out of control. My husband and I run a charter fishing business, which means we have to use hundreds of gallons of fuel every day. The most disappointing part of the whole process is that the government could change things in a