

Will any be sent to U.S. soil, even though the Senate voted against it 94 to 3?

Finally, what legal basis does the administration have to release trained terrorists into the U.S.?

Americans want answers. Unfortunately, the administration seems more comfortable discussing its plans for the inmates at Guantanamo with a European audience than it is discussing these details with Americans.

Senator SESSIONS wrote a letter to the Attorney General weeks before his trip to Europe asking about the legality of releasing trained terrorists into the U.S. He sent another one to the same effect on Monday. He still has not heard back.

During the same trip, Attorney General Holder talked specifics about Guantanamo with European leaders. He said that the administration has identified 30 detainees at Guantanamo who are ready for release and that he would "be reaching out to specific countries with specific detainees." And according to reports, the administration has presented at least one country with a list of detainees it would like that country to accept.

Americans want to know that on the issue of Guantanamo the administration is as concerned about safety as it is about symbolism. They are concerned about the administration's plans for releasing or transferring some of the most dangerous terrorists alive. They want to know that these terrorists will not end up back on the battlefield or in their backyards.

At the very least, they should know as much about the administration's plans for these men as our European critics do.

So this morning I would like to ask the Attorney General to provide Congress with any information he has provided to foreign governments about his plans for detainees at Guantanamo. If the administration will not relate its plans to the American people or their representatives in Congress, it should at least relate the details of its conversations on this issue with foreign leaders. This is not too much to ask.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to a period of morning business for up to 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the second half.

Mr. McCONNELL. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. JOHANNIS. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

DOMESTIC ENERGY PRODUCTION

Mr. JOHANNIS. Mr. President, I rise today to discuss some of the energy issues currently facing the American economy. First among them is our dependence on foreign sources of energy.

Last summer, we all experienced the consequences of serving the foreign masters who control most of the oil we consume. In July, oil prices climbed to just under \$150 per barrel. Policymakers wrung their hands and scrambled while Americans tried to control their frustration. What did Americans see? They saw prices rising uncontrollably on the global petroleum market. That was especially painful for families. At the same time some at least started to realize that we have abundant reserves right here at home. But these reserves have been actively blocked by Federal policy for over 20 years.

Just how import dependent are we as a nation? Last year we imported about 4.7 billion barrels of oil. Based on an average price of \$100 per barrel, Americans shipped about \$470 billion overseas, nearly half a trillion dollars. That was just for calendar year 2008 alone.

We need to address this problem by expanding every domestic energy source in an environmentally responsible way. This strategy should include clean and renewable sources. I believe in that.

But one might ask: Why raise this issue now? That was last summer, and this year prices are down some. I raise this issue now to note to Nebraskans and to my Senate colleagues that even though prices have relented, our exposure to foreign oil markets has not changed. That alarms me, and it should alarm my colleagues.

I fear the American people are getting set up again. Unfortunately, United States policy on domestic sources of energy hasn't changed much. For too long our Federal policy on domestic energy sources has consisted of three words: No, no, and no. Unfortunately, since this administration has taken office, we have seen evidence of more of the same tired no, no, no policies. First the administration in February canceled 77 leases for natural gas development in the State of Utah. Can we turn our backs on a domestic resource as critical as this one? We know that natural gas is clean relative to other fossil fuels. We know demand for natural gas is only going to increase. We need look no further than the Capitol's own power plant. The Speaker of the House and her own majority leader announced on Friday that we will no longer burn coal to heat the Capitol complex buildings and water.

What is the alternative? It is natural gas. Most troubling, perhaps, we know that natural gas is not easily transported. So increasing demand trans-

lates very quickly into increased price where additional supply is not available. This is not only true for heating; it is especially true for fertilizer and other industrial uses of natural gas. Fertilizer affects my State immensely. For the good of our farmers, for the good of manufacturers, for the good of the Nation, we need to find more domestic sources of natural gas.

If the administration says no to Utah, what about energy exploration in the Outer Continental Shelf, known as the OCS? Since the early 1980s, there has been in place a Federal moratorium of one sort or another on exploration in the OCS. Essentially, most of the Federal waters of the Atlantic and California coasts were off limits to energy development. This is worth repeating. For more than 20 years, Federal policy blocked energy exploration in many of the OCS areas.

Finally, last year, in the face of \$4 gasoline and very angry constituents, the moratorium on OCS exploration was lifted. Unfortunately, it appears to have been a short-lived victory.

In February, the administration announced a delay in the rules for exploration and utilization of the natural gas and crude oil off our shores. The administration assures us that the delay is only to pave the way for "wise decisions." But to a savvy American public, it sounds like more of the same. It sounds like a policy of no, no, and no or at least delay, delay, delay some more, especially when they hear that the same script was used for oil shale leases. That is right. The administration in February also withdrew leases for research and development of oil shale on Federal lands in Colorado and Utah where our oil shale resources are equivalent to 800 billion barrels of oil.

The reason: According to the administration, the leases had "several flaws."

So what is the promise? The administration would offer a new round of oil shale leases for research and development. I will take the administration at its word but, again, it does sound like a broken record: Delay, delay, delay. So Americans, Nebraskans, and this Senator cannot be faulted for being a bit skeptical, for thinking that the most recent delays are simply more of the same. The day will return—unfortunately, perhaps in the not too distant future—when fuel prices will shoot up. Promises that the administration is doing everything it can may very well ring hollow. Americans will know that 77 leases for natural gas exploration were canceled. Americans will know that OCS and oil shale development and exploration was delayed again. Meanwhile their commutes are not getting any shorter. Their electricity bills are not going down. Fertilizer and food prices are continuing to increase.

There has been a lot of talk from the administration about ending our dependence on foreign oil. I welcome that. I want to be a partner in that.

But so far the actions don't match the promises. The administration's only comprehensive policy document, which would be the budget outline to date, contains no effort to increase domestic production of critical oil and natural gas resources. Instead, the proposal raises taxes on the consumption of energy, spends a small fraction of the revenue on energy research, and claims that it is a strategy to end our dependence on foreign oil. Again, we see a policy of saying no to domestic energy sources.

Research and development in this field—don't get me wrong—is a good thing. It is a great thing, as a matter of fact. But we need to be candid with the American people. This should not be about bait and switch. We cannot promise a plan to end our dependence on foreign oil but give them the President's proposal to reach in the back pocket to take control of more of their money. With an abundant, largely untapped supply here at home, surely the administration can do better than to say their best idea is to restrict demand through an energy tax. That is essentially telling the Americans, your best bet is to buy a sweater because it is going to be costly to heat your home.

I am going to end my comments where I started. I am worried. Nebraskans are frustrated by a policy of saying no to American energy. I am in favor of the expansion of domestic sources of energy of all sorts—wind and solar, wave and tidal and geothermal, alternative biofuels and nuclear—a policy of doing all we can to end our dependence on foreign oil. But I am also for expanding domestic sources of natural gas and crude oil. We need them. It simply makes no sense to buy from abroad, indeed to beg for more oil at times, when we have made it a matter of Federal policy to place our resources off limits. I, as one Senator, will be watchful. The President will send up his budget this week. We will see if the President demonstrates a commitment to bringing on line American natural gas and oil resources. I hope he does. I will be anxious to support that. We will watch and see if the administration continues, though, the policy of no when it comes to energy that is right here at home.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

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

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

WITNESS TO HUNGER

Mr. CASEY. Mr. President, I rise this morning to talk about a very important and very moving exhibit I am

proud to host in the Capitol complex; in particular, specifically in the Russell Building. The name of the exhibit is called "Witness to Hunger." It is a project created by Dr. Mariana Chilton at Drexel University in Philadelphia, PA, and it is currently on display not far from here in the Russell Building.

To create this exhibit, Dr. Chilton gave cameras—cameras—to 40 women living in Philadelphia so they could document their lives, their struggles with hunger and poverty and so many other challenges. The result is a powerful exhibit of photographs giving us an insight—not the whole picture but an insight—into the lives of these women and the lives they lead and their children's lives and their struggles living today in Philadelphia.

Women who are living in this city—part of this exhibit—try every day to provide a safe and nurturing home for their children, while finding a job that pays a living wage. They labor every day to provide food and medicine for their children. These are women fighting to make sure their children, their families, can have the health care they need. I will have the opportunity today to meet with several of the women who participated in the "Witness to Hunger" exhibit and this project. I wish to thank them for their bravery and rare courage to be able to open themselves, open part of their lives to all of us, and for making the trip to Washington so we can hear about their experiences firsthand.

I have always believed that at its best, when it is doing the right thing, Government is about people. It is not, in the end, about budgets and data and information and numbers. That is important, but that is the means to the end. It should be about not every day do we meet this objective, but it should be about and must be about people. Today, we have a real example of that, a real living example of real people's lives. "Witness to Hunger" reminds us that the programs we advocate for and work on and new initiatives in Washington that affect people's lives are what we must be about. There is no better investment, in my judgment, than in the future of our children.

I also believe every child in America—every single child—is born with a light inside them. For some, that light will be boundless or scintillating or incandescent. Pick your word. There are no limits to the potential some children have; because of intellect or circumstance or otherwise, their future is indeed boundless. For other children, that light is a little more limited because of those same circumstances. But I also believe, at the same time, no matter whether that light inside a child is boundless or much more limited, it is our obligation to do everything we can to make sure that child's potential—that bright light—is given the opportunity to shine as brightly as possible.

Kids in school right now will be the workforce that will help us build new

industries and jobs and transform our economy into the future. The good news is we have already passed some important pieces of legislation that are improving children's lives. Last year, the farm bill included a very strong nutrition section to increase access and benefits for people who use food stamps, now called by the acronym SNAP, but food stamps and other nutrition programs. The Children's Health Insurance Program is another example which will bring the number of children in America who have the benefit of this good program—this time-tested, effective program—to almost 11 million American children. We will have an opportunity to do more because, despite the advancements we have made in children's health insurance, there are still 5 million more children, even when we get to the 10.5 million, 11 million children, 5 million more with no health insurance.

I have a bill on prekindergarten education, and I will be working on that to make sure children have an opportunity for early learning; nutrition programs which also include not just food stamps, as I mentioned before, but the school lunch program, the Women, Infants, and Children Program, and on and on. One of the most important endeavors we will be working on in the near term is the Child Nutrition Act, critically important to make sure children get a healthy start in life.

When we talk about that light inside a child, I do believe we have—all of us in both parties, in both Houses of Congress, and in the administration—all of us have an obligation to make sure that light shines as brightly as possible for each and every child. We do that by doing a number of things. One is to make sure the children have access to early learning, that they have nutrition in the early years of their life, and that they also have health care. If we at least provide that opportunity for every child—nutrition, health care, and early learning—not only will that child be better off, we are all going to be better off in terms of the kind of economy and, therefore, the kind of workforce that is the foundation of that economy we build into the future.

I hope my colleagues and their staffs have a chance to view this exhibit "Witness to Hunger." I also believe it is in keeping with and is consistent with that commitment to make sure the light in every child burns as brightly as possible for each and every child in his or her family. I know that is my obligation as a Senator from Pennsylvania, and I believe it is all our obligations as Senators.

Mr. President, thank you very much. I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Mr. GREGG. Mr. President, is the vote at 10:30?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. I believe it is 10:40.