

SENATOR SAM ERVIN SAYS



The United States, much to our sorrow, is rapidly using up lowest raw materials. Fuel, lumber, and many ores are getting scarce. Once we relied almost entirely on domestic supplies. This is rapidly changing and, last year, for example, this country imported about 28 percent of its petroleum. That figure may rise to 50 percent by 1980.

Not only is oil in critical supply, but so is natural gas. Certain types of coal are in great demand. With respect to ore, much of the high-quality iron ore in the Mesabi range in Minnesota is gone. The same is true of the best copper supplies in Michigan. Many once abundant soft-wood forests are logged out. This depletion of our natural resources is affecting all of us. Bargain raw materials have almost ceased to exist, and this has given a strong push to the chronic inflation which plagues our economy.

At the moment, a major problem is the fuel shortage. That problem has been building up for some time but has not been a household topic until recently. Why it occurred involves both foreign and domestic policies. Essentially, however, the reason boils down to the fact that the energy demands of this country are growing at a fantastic rate. Americans are consuming about 33 percent of the world's supply of energy even though we comprise only 6 percent of the world's population.

We face fuel shortages in many areas in the coming months. Some motorists may not be able to fill up the family car at their favorite station unless demand slackens. At the moment, the President's Joint Board on Fuel Supply and Fuel Transport is simply saying that "supplies of natural gas and gasoline will be very tight in the spring and summer."

Shortages have triggered charges and counter-charges as to who is to blame for the fuel crisis. New environmental policies, increasing consumption of gasoline by late model vehicles, a dwindling supply of Texas petroleum, an increasing reliance on foreign-produced oil, lack of sufficient refineries, and an imperfect distribution system have all contributed to the situation.

One critical factor in the oil shortage lies in the fact that not enough U. S. refineries have been built in recent years to process crude petroleum for our domestic market. Our refineries are running at near capacity with less than needed reserves in the event of any

breakdown. The supply problem has been alleviated to some extent by the President's April 18th order suspending oil import quotas, and this along with other policy decisions by the Administration, may improve the petroleum situation now existing. The perplexing fact is that traditionally Americans use much more motor fuel in the summer months than at other seasons, and if this occurs this year, current spot shortages may worsen.

Independent gas marketers have their own special problems. Last week, after a strong request by many Senators, the Administration announced voluntary guidelines to the petroleum industry to insure that independent gas dealers and other oil purchasers, including municipalities, are not cut off from their source of supply. In practical terms, the Administration is urging a voluntary allocation of the fuel shortage so that independent gas dealers can survive.

Congress is taking a two-fold approach to the problem. It is urging the Administration to use the legal powers that it already has to assure the country of a fair distribution of available petroleum supplies. Three Senate Committees—Interior and Insular Affairs, Commerce, and Banking, Currency and Urban Affairs—are also looking for long-range solutions to the problem.

The scarcity of supplies, and particularly fuels, is already one of our most pressing domestic concerns and, unfortunately, the situation may get worse before it gets better. I have sought to convey this message to Senate committees and the Administration in recent months.

MIRROR MORSELS

When once a man is determined to believe, the very absurdity of the doctrine confirms him in his faith.—Junius.

The difference between perseverance and obstinacy is, that one often comes from a strong will, and the other from a strong won't.—Henry Ward Beecher.

I'm proof against that word failure. I've seen behind it. The only failure a man ought to fear is failure in cleaving to the purpose he sees to be best.—George Eliot.

Is not prayer a study of truth, a sally of the soul into the un-found infinite? No man ever prayed heartily without learning something.—Emerson.

Nothing Destroys authority so much as the unequal and untimely interchange of power, pressed too far and relaxed too much.—Francis Bacon.

To be a chemist you must study chemistry; to be a lawyer or a physician you must study law or medicine; but to be a politician you need only to study your own interests.—Max O'Rell.

Politeness is not always the sign of wisdom, but the want of it always leaves room for the suspicion of folly.—Landor.

There is little pleasure in the world that is true and sincere beside the pleasure of doing our duty and doing good. I am sure no other is comparable to this.—Tillotson.

A true man never frets about his place in the world, but just slides into it by the gravitation of his nature, and swings there as easily as a star.—E. H. Chapin.

Philosophy alone makes the mind invincible, and places us out of the reach of fortune, so that all her arrows fall short of us.—Seneca.

Glory is safe when it is deserved; it is not so with popularity; one lasts like a mosaic; the other is effaced like a crayon drawing.—Boufflers.

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