Greenspan agreed, that using the SPR to manipulate prices, rather than adhering to its original purpose of responding to a supply disruption, is a dangerous precedent. Summers added that the move would expose us to valid charges of naivete, using a very blunt tool to address heating oil prices.

American refineries today have to make so many different kinds of fuel because of environmental protection rules that no one would believe they would be capable of doing. They were running at 95 percent of capacity last week. We have not built a new refinery in almost 20 years.

What has happened: America builds no energy, no refining capacity, because it is too tough environmentally to do that and live up to our rules and regulations. Yet you can build them in many other countries, and people are surviving and glad to have them—at least, new ones—because they are doing a great job for their economy and producing the various kinds of products that come from crude oil. Yet America, the biggest user in this area, has built none.

If we take the supply of SPR out of SPR, it will still need to be refined into heating oil. I have just indicated there is hardly any room because there is hardly any capacity.

The invisible policies wait ominously on the horizon, boding serious problems. We have found that natural gas produced in America, drilled for by Americans, offshore and onshore, is the fuel of choice. Now we are not even building any powerplants that use coal as the energy that drives them because it is too expensive, too environmentally rigorous, and nobody dares build them. They build them elsewhere in the world but not in America.

We use natural gas, the purest of all, and say fill your energy needs for electricity using natural gas. Guess what happened. The price has gone to $3.35 per cubic feet; 6 months ago it was $2.16. And the next price increase is when the consumers of America get the bills in October, November, and December for the natural gas that heats their house and runs their gas stove because we have chosen not to use any other source but natural gas to build our electric generating tower when hardly any other country in the world chooses that resource. They choose coal or some other product rather than this rarity of natural gas.

Now 50 percent of the homes in America are dependent upon natural gas. The companies that deliver it are already putting articles in the newspaper: Don't blame us; the price is going up.

Who do you blame? I think you blame an administration that had no energy policy and for whom energy was an ''invisible priority.'' It was an ''invisible priority'' because the solutions lay within EPA, the Interior Department, and an Energy Department that was paralyzed by an attitude of anti-production of real energy. That is the way they were left by Hazel O'Leary, the first Secretary of Energy under this President, and Mr. Pena; and Bill Richardson is left with that residue.

Fifty percent of homes are heated by natural gas. I predict the bills will be skyrocketing because we are using more and more of it because we have no energy policy, and American homeowners are the ones who will see that in their bills. When they start writing the checks with those increases, they are going to be mighty mad at someone.

Don't get fooled. The candidate on the Democratic side, if the election is not over by the time that happens, will blame those who produce natural gas for they are related to oil and gas production. Would you believe, as we stand here today, 18 percent of the electricity generated in America is produced by natural gas? Oh, what a predicament we have gotten ourselves into because we have an invisible energy policy ruled over by an Environmental Protection Agency that never asked a question about energy and an Interior Department that takes property and land of the United States out of production.

I want to tell you a couple of facts. As compared to 1983, 60 percent more Federal land is now off limits to drilling. On October 22, 1999, Vice President GORE, in Rye, NH, said:

> I will do everything in my power to make sure there is no new drilling.

Then we have ANWR. It is off limits.

Offshore drilling is off limits. We could double our domestic oil supply if we opened offshore drilling. Yet we will have more and more transports hauling in refined and crude oil products, creating more and more risk for our ports where they are bringing it in. Yet we maintain we cannot do any more drilling because it is too dangerous.

The multiple-use concept in our public domain is, for all intents and purposes, practically dead. We have 15 sets of new EPA regulations. Not one new refinery has been built since 1976. Now we have soaring gasoline prices. I understand my time is up.

Would Senator KENNEDY mind if I take 1 more minute? I will wrap it up.

I will close with one more fact, and I will put the others in the RECORD. Californians usually spend about $7 billion a year in electricity. The price spikes were so dramatic that they spent $3.6 billion in 1 month, the month of July—half of what they annually spend was spent in 1 month.

Why? California is a big electricity importer. There is growing demand. Silicon Valley companies are big energy users. Demand is up 20 percent in the San Francisco area over last year but no new capacity has been built.

Environmental regulations make building a new plant nearly impossible in California. I predicted exorbitant home heating bills this coming winter even while we were experiencing the gasoline price spikes in the Midwest.

It used to be that one type of gasoline was suitable for the entire country. There are now at least 62 different products. One eastern pipeline handles 38 different grades of gasoline, 7 grades of kerosene, 16 grades of home heating oil and diesel. Four different gasoline mixtures are required between Chicago and St. Louis—a 300 mile distance. As a result of these Federal/local requirements, the industry has less flexibility to respond to local or regional shortages.

We have 15 sets of new environmental regulations: Tier II gasoline sulfur, California MTBE phaseout; blue ribbon panel recommendations; regional haze regs; on-road diesel; off road diesel; gasoline air toxics; refinery MACT II; section 126 petitions; gasoline air toxics; new source review enforcement initiative; climate change; urban air toxics; residual risk.

The MTBE groundwater contamination issue is going to make the gasoline supply issue even more complicated and reduce industry's flexibility to meet demand.

S. 2962 includes a wide array of new gasoline requirements that are both irrelevant and detrimental to millions of American motorists. Legislation mandates the use of ethanol in motor fuel. This would cut revenues to the highway trust fund by more than $2 billion a year.

The U.S. Department of Energy has projected that S. 2962 would increase the consumption of ethanol in the Northeast from zero to approximately 565 million gallons annually.

Frankly, Mr. President, no energy policy is better than this administration's energy policy.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senator from Utah was to be recognized.

Mr. KENNEDY addressed the Chair.

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I am authorized to yield myself time from the time reserved for the Senator from Utah.

Mr. KENNEDY. Reserving the right to object, I have been allocated, I believe, 30 minutes. I was supposed to go after the Senator from Utah. Generally, we go from one side to the other, in terms of fairness in recognition. I have waited my turn. The Senator from Utah is not here. I am on that list. I have requested time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct. Under Senator HATCH's time, there was an order agreed to that there were two Republicans and then Senator KENNEDY for 30 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank the Chair.

Mr. GORTON addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is recognized.

Mr. KENNEDY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington is asking, as I understand it, unanimous consent to speak under the time of the Senator from Utah. Is there objection?

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I object to that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, we are trying to be accommodating here. We have had one Senator from that side. I understand if Senator HATCH was going to be here I would have to wait my turn, but I am here. I have been waiting. Under the fairness of recognition, I object. But I certainly do not object to the Senator speaking after my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts has a right to object.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, who has the floor?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts has the floor.

Mr. GORTON. Parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I do not yield for a parliamentary inquiry.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Massachusetts has the floor.

H–1B VISAS

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, for months, Democrats and Republicans have offered their unequivocal support for the H–1B high tech visa legislation. In addition, Democrats have tried—without Republican support—to offer the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act.

Democrats have worked tirelessly to reach an agreement with the Republicans to bring both of these bills to the floor for a vote. In fact, 2 weeks ago, Democrats were prepared to debate and vote on this legislation as part of their high-tech visa bill, but our Republican colleagues were unwilling to bring this measure to the floor and take a vote. And last Friday, Senator REID asked Senator LOTT for consent to offer the Latino and Immigrant Fairness bill and the Majority Leader objected. No matter what Democrats have done, the Republican leadership has been determined to avoid this issue and prevent a vote.

Our Republican friends tell us the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act is a poison pill—that it will undermine the H–1B high tech visa legislation currently before the Senate. But, if Republicans are truly supportive of the Latino legislative agenda, that cannot possibly be true.

If they support the reunification of immigrant families as well as the immigration agenda set by the high tech community, we should be able to pass both bills and send them to the President's desk for signature.

I have three letters from children who wrote to the President about the significance of the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act to families. I will read them quickly for the Senate.

Dear Bill Clinton.

My mom is a member of late amnesty.

That is the provision under which they would have received the amnesty. Then the INS put out rules and regulations so they were unable to make the application. Then they went to court and found out later they had legitimate rights and interests; they should have received amnesty. Nonetheless, their rights were effectively eliminated by the 1996 act. So now they are in serious risk of deportation.

Dear Bill Clinton.

My mom is a member of late amnesty. The Immigration wants to report my mom. They don't want her here. She should have permission to stay here because I was born here. Please don't take her away from me and my brothers. I'll trade you my best toy for my mom. Like my bike and my little collections of cars. Don't take her away from me! Please.

Signed Ernesto

Here is another:

Dear President Clinton,

Please don't take my parents away from me. I love them very much and my sisters too. We have been together for a lot of years and I don't want to be separated now so please don't separate us.

Signed Larry.

Hi. My name is Blanca. I'm 8 years old. I feel bad for my parents. I want my parents to have their work permit back so that they could work hard as they used to work to overcome our lives in Los Angeles. I am willing to give you, Mr. President, Bill Clinton, my favorite doll for my parents' work permit.

Thank you!

Blanca

These are real situations. We are talking about families who ought to be here as a matter of right under the 1986 immigration bill. Their cause has been upheld by the courts.

The 1996 act, intentionally or not, effectively wiped out those rights, and those individuals are subject to deportation. The children of these individuals are American citizens, born in this country, but the parents are subject to deportation and live in fear of this.

The 1986 act was a result of a series of studies done by the Hesburgh Commission, of which I was a member and so was the Senator from Wyoming, Mr. Simpson. There were a number of provisions in that act. Included in that act was an amnesty provision for people who had been here for some period of time, who had worked hard and were part of a community, trying to provide for their families. These letters are examples of individuals who are now at risk, and we are attempting to resolve their family situation. The Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act is a family value issue.

I suggest, that if we are talking about families and about keeping families together, that this particular provision is a powerful one.

The Chamber of Commerce and a long list of organizations including, the AFL–CIO, the Anti-Defamation League, Americans for Tax Reform, and various religious organizations, support this legislation and have pointed out the importance of it to the economy and the importance of it to keeping families together. They have been strong supporters for these different provisions.

There were other amendments we hoped to offer as well. They dealt with the training of Americans for jobs that would otherwise be filled by H–1B visa applicants. The average income for these jobs is $49,000. These jobs require important skills. There are Americans who are ready and willing to work but do not have the skills to work in these particular areas. We wanted an opportunity to offer amendments to deal with this. This would not have required additional expenditures. We were going to have a modest fee of some $2,000 per application that would have created a sum of about $280 million that would have been used for skill training and work training programs, and it also would have provided assistance to the National Science Foundation in developing programs, particularly in outreach to women and minorities, who are under-represented in the IT workforce.

There was some allocation of resources to reduce the digital divide, and others to expedite the consideration of these visas and make them more timely, which are both important. That was a rather balanced program. Members can argue about the size and the allocation of resources in those areas, but nonetheless, it appears those provisions are relevant to the H–1B legislation. But we were prohibited under the action taken to even bring up these matters.

These issues can be resolved quickly. Under the proposal that was made by Senator DASCHLE, we would have 1 hour of debate on the issue of skill training, which is enormously important. I personally believe we have to understand that education is going to be a continuing life experience. And for those who are in the job market, training and education is going to be a life experience if they are to continue to get good jobs and enhance their skills.

These are all related to the subject at hand, but we have been denied the opportunity to offer them. Instead, we have been virtually free of any serious work on the floor of the Senate since 10:15 this morning. Another day has passed. Under the deadline that was established by the two leaders, the Senate will recess at the end of next week. Meanwhile, another day has passed and we continue to be denied the opportunity to remedy a fundamental injustice. We continue to be denied the opportunity to bring up the Latino and Immigrant Fairness Act, and the opportunity to debate and reach a conclusion on these matters.

We are ending another day, but I wonder what the intention is and why we continue to have this circus, so to speak. Americans are wondering. We are in the last 2 weeks of this Congress, and we have passed two appropriations bills. What is happening on the floor of the U.S. Congress? What Americans have seen today is a long period of quorum calls and the denial of Members to offer amendments in a timely way to reach a resolution of matters of importance, such as the H–1B legislation and the Latino and Immigration Fairness Act.