

“The Gospel of Good Success: A Roadmap to Spiritual, Emotional, and Financial Wholeness.”

I have known Reverend Caldwell for a long time. He is also a friend to President George W. Bush. He is such an important person in the Houston community, looked to by business leaders, community leaders, and by the people in the community who need help. He is always there when called. I am very proud to welcome him to the Senate this morning.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will now be a period for the transaction of morning business not to extend beyond the hour of 11 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each and with the time equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, 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. REID. 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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.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. The Senator from Nevada.

TRANSPORTATION OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, if you picked up a paper yesterday, you would have seen stories about a transportation wreck again. It was all over the television. It was all over the newspapers. There was a train wreck on Sunday in Gainsville, VA, not far from Washington. Five cars on the train derailed, including two carrying propane, which is very explosive. Route 29—I have traveled that road many times going to Virginia to watch my boy play soccer—was closed for several miles. This is one of the main arteries bringing people to Washington from Virginia. The train derailment not only closed Route 29, but two nearby elementary schools were closed as workers tried to get the cars back on the track and also put the propane back on the railcars or remove them completely.

An emergency worker said if the train cars had rolled in the opposite direction, they would have hit an above-ground gas line, and there would have been a catastrophe. This is the third train wreck on that stretch of tracks since 1997.

Over the past few weeks, several tragic accidents on highways around

the country have raised the question: What if? Just this weekend, a dust storm reduced visibility to zero on a highway in rural southern Arizona. The result was a 26-car pileup. Another dust storm in Colorado caused a 30-car pileup on Interstate 70.

What if a truck carrying hazardous waste had been involved in one of these accidents? Less than a month ago at least five people were killed in a massive wreck caused by fog on Interstate 75 in northwest Georgia. That accident involved more than 100 vehicles, including 20 tractor-trailers.

In February, three accidents in 1 day claimed the lives of five people in Miami-Dade County, all involving large trucks. The accidents were attributed to human error.

We know accidents involving hazardous waste can and do occur on our highways and railways. We all remember the Baltimore tunnel fire last year which was caused when a train derailed. The resulting fire burned for 1 week, and an extremely dangerous acid was spilled in the tunnel. Baltimore was closed basically for 3 days. We are very fortunate this accident was not worse.

Each year crashes kill over 5,000 people—that is, truck crashes—and injure another 150,000 people. Over 50,000 people are killed in automobile accidents each year. Large trucks are involved in multivehicle fatal crashes at twice the rate of passenger vehicles. What if more of the trucks on our highways carried hazardous waste? How could we ensure the safety of our communities? Are local emergency teams fully prepared to respond when hazardous chemicals are released?

The answer to all of those questions is obvious.

I can remember being in Ely, NV—I have said this before—where I was visiting one of my friends who I went to high school with. He is a police officer in Ely. He picked up a teletype indicating there was going to be a hazardous load coming through his town. He said: Why did they send me this? I would just as soon not know. I cannot do anything if something happens.

He does not know. They do not have the equipment. He is not trained.

Last summer I introduced, and Congress passed, an amendment requiring the Secretary of Transportation to study the hazards and the risks to public health and safety, the environment, and the economy associated with the transportation of hazardous chemicals and radioactive material. This report should come soon. I am told it will be finished in the next couple of months. In the meantime, this is an issue about which we need to be concerned. These accidents are serious. We have a deteriorating infrastructure, and we have more and more pressure being put on this deteriorating infrastructure.

Serious accidents have happened and are going to continue to happen, and we need to be aware of this.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

NEED FOR A DOMESTIC ENERGY POLICY

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. President, we are prepared—I guess at 11—to move back to the issue that has been before us now for 3 weeks, and that is energy policy. It is probably one of the most important issues that has been before the Congress in this session and one of the most important with which we will deal.

Some important things have been with us for a very long time, of course, but now we find it even more important as we have national security issues, as we have a need for economic security, as the situation is changing in the Middle East that is even more pressing than it was before.

One of the issues that has been with us all along is the fact we have not had an energy policy. We have not had a policy that has directed the efforts in the United States, which I think in itself is probably one of the most important things we can do. It is hard to make decisions in the interim when there is no policy that says where we want to be and where we want to go. We need a policy so these interim decisions can add toward reaching the goals we have in mind.

We have a very broad policy before us. We have worked on it some in committee. Of course, the President and Vice President CHENEY have worked on a policy as well, the House has passed an energy policy, and the Senate is the one which has not yet done the job we really need to do. I am very hopeful we will come to the snubbing post and get that done as soon as possible.

A lot of things go into it. This has been covered, but I hope we are kind of reenergizing ourselves—no pun intended—as we come back from the recess to talk about a broad energy policy, one that modernizes and increases conservation. We all want to find ways to make better use of the energy we have, whether it be coal, oil, or electricity. We need to modernize and expand our energy infrastructure, and as things change we have to have an infrastructure, for instance in electricity, as we move towards now having more of a market segment in generation.

If that is going to be done, then there needs to be a transmission system that moves the generation to the market. It is a new thing for us, and we do not have that.

We have to have some diversity and talk about and maintain diversity in our supply so we begin to use renewables. We need to find new ways of doing that.

I will always remember a meeting in Casper, WY, years ago when someone said we have never run out of a source of energy because we continue to find and refine new sources. We will continue to do that and indeed need to do so. We need to improve and accelerate our environmental protection, of course. Maybe most of all now, we need to strengthen our energy security.