

1950s. Yet here we are, the most scientifically advanced nation in the world, worried about air pollution, worried about the need for low-cost, reliable supply of power, many are worried about global warming and carbon in the air, and we have not built a new nuclear powerplant since the 1970s. We should start.

The second best hope for transforming our way of producing a low-cost, reliable supply of American-produced energy is coal. We need a national coal gasification strategy. Again, both Democratic and Republican Members have been studying this very carefully. I suggest \$2 billion in loan guarantees for the deployment of six coal gasification plants by 2013 and \$2 billion for industrial applications of coal gasification.

Clean coal gasification, very simply, is taking coal, of which we have plenty, hundreds of years of supply, and turning it into gas and making electricity from it, either in freestanding powerplants or letting industries do that to produce their own power as, for example, Eastman does in Kingsport, TN.

Next we should focus on carbon capture and sequestration from coal plants. Coal gasification eliminates most of the problems we have with mercury, nitrogen, and sulfur, but it still produces carbon. If we could find a way to capture that carbon and put it away somewhere, sequester it, we would have created right there, in addition to nuclear power, a way to have a fairly permanent supply of low-cost, reliable, adequate American-produced energy.

That technology is not mature yet, but we need a research program to demonstrate commercial scale carbon capture and geological sequestration at a variety of sites as well as research to reduce capital costs of processes to sequester carbon. That is also one of the recommendations of the National Commission on Energy Policy.

As many leading environmental groups have pointed out, coal gasification and carbon capture is the best strategy for the rest of the world. Even if we clean up our air, even if somehow we limit our production of carbon, if China, India, and Brazil build hundreds and hundreds of dirty coal plants around the world, it will not matter what we do because the air goes around the world, and we will end up breathing it, too.

So it is urgent that we move ahead with advanced nuclear technology and with advanced coal gasification and carbon capture and sequestration, not just for us, but in hopes that the rest of the world will adopt our technology and, therefore, make our air safer and cleaner and make us less dependent on foreign oil.

We need to increase our supply of domestic natural gas, and there are specific ways in the Alexander-Johnson legislation to do that. I hope the Senate bill adopts those ideas.

No. 1, we should provide the Department of Interior with the legal author-

ity to issue "natural gas only" leases. Some of the oil companies are saying, "What do you do if you find oil?" We are not the experts; they are. If the State of Virginia or North Carolina, or some other State prefers to look for natural gas, I would like for them to have that option, and today the Secretary does not have that option.

No. 2, we should instruct the Department of Interior to draw the State boundary according to established international law between Alabama and Florida regarding lease 181 and lease portions of it not in Florida by December 31, 2007.

That may sound very technical, but here is what that means. The Secretary should draw the State line out into the water, which should have been done years ago. The part that is in Florida can't be drilled on because of the moratorium. The part that is in Alabama could be. Some estimates say 20 percent of the natural gas that is produced in the Gulf of Mexico over the next several years could come from that new part of lease 181 in Alabama. That would lower natural gas prices.

Finally, it allows States to selectively waive the Federal moratoria on offshore production and collect significant revenues from such production.

If Tennessee had a coastline—I know Georgia does—but if Tennessee had one, here is what I would do. I would put some gas rigs so far out in the ocean that nobody could see them. I would take that money and I would put it in an endowment of Tennessee colleges and universities so they would be the best funded and gradually the best colleges and universities in America. Second, I would take the rest of the money and I would lower taxes.

That would be a pretty good platform for a Governor. I wish I could do it in Tennessee, but maybe a Governor of New Jersey or Georgia or Florida or Virginia will want to do that. I think they should have that option.

Finally—I said finally, but one other thing on domestic natural gas. We should take part of these revenues from offshore drilling and create a conservation royalty. That royalty would be equally shared by all the States in the Land and Water Conservation Fund and wildlife grants. We should take that money and invest it in conservation so an environmental burden becomes an environmental benefit.

There are a couple of other things I would specifically like to mention. We are going to have to temporarily increase the foreign supply of natural gas. We have no option if we want lower natural gas prices. We do that by streamlining the permitting of facilities for bringing LNG from overseas to the United States. We need to give the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission exclusive authority for siting and regulating LNG terminals while still preserving States' authorities under the Coastal Zone Management Act, Clean Water Act, and the Clean Air Act. Renewable power is an important

part of what we ought to do. Regarding solar power, the production tax credit now in the law for solar power really isn't enough to make solar power a viable option. We should increase that over the next several years. We should adopt the work that many Democrats, and President Bush, and many Republicans have worked on to encourage hydrogen fuel cell initiatives.

We should require that FERC grant or deny a terminal pipeline application within 1 year. We should clarify the permitting processes for pipelines and natural gas storage facilities.

These are specific steps. They are aggressive steps. But they are the kind of steps we need to take.

I make these remarks, as I said at the beginning, because Senator DOMENICI and Senator BINGAMAN, both of whom have been here for a long time, have worked pretty hard to give us a chance to have the right kind of clean energy bill. I believe the American people expect us in the Senate to know that natural gas prices are driving jobs overseas and are raising prices for farmers. They expect us to know they are having a hard time affording the cost of gasoline. They expect us to take steps to do something about it. Only the steps like the ones I have mentioned will create a true Clean Energy Act of 2005. Only steps like these will produce adequate conservation and adequate supply of reliable, low-cost, American-produced, clean energy. Only steps like these will lower prices and save the United States from the next big surprise: The surprise to our pocketbooks because we failed to prepare for the oncoming energy crisis.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M. TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow morning.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 6:33 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, May 18, 2005, at 9:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate May 17, 2005:

COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION

REUBEN JEFFERY III, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A COMMISSIONER OF THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION FOR A TERM EXPIRING APRIL 13, 2007, VICE BARBARA PEDERSEN HOLM, TERM EXPIRED.

REUBEN JEFFERY III, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMODITY FUTURES TRADING COMMISSION, VICE JAMES E. NEWSOME, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

JAMES A. RISPOLI, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF ENERGY (ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT), VICE JESSIE HILL ROBERSON, RESIGNED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

LINDA JEWELL, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR.

JOHN F. TEFPT, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO GEORGIA.