

the consequences of this callous response are tragic. As precious time was wasted, what was already a terrible natural disaster became a manmade disaster of spreading hunger and disease. We have heard reports of aid workers being turned away and of visas for aid workers being refused on the grounds that consulates were closed for the weekend.

Today, finally, an American C-130 was permitted into Burma carrying desperately needed supplies. Two more flights are expected tomorrow. This is a positive development, but it is also an extremely modest concession.

It is my hope that these halting steps by the regime in the last day or so augur a greater openness to humanitarian assistance.

The people of Burma should know that, if permitted, America stands ready to help.

PEACE OFFICERS MEMORIAL DAY AND POLICE WEEK

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, all across the country this week, Americans will honor the law enforcement officers who keep our Nation safe and paying solemn tribute to those who have lost their lives in the line of duty. Peace Officers' Memorial Day and Police Week is a time to thank all those who keep us safe, and a time to be grateful for all who have served.

As the Jefferson County Judge Executive in Louisville, KY, I had a strong relationship with the local police force. I was always proud of the department and its leadership and the rank and file officers who worked hard to protect and defend Louisville. I remember the pride we felt when we brought county and city police together to create the Crimes Against Children Unit, and the pride the officers felt when they made it a model for the rest of the country.

Louisville has changed a lot since then, and so has America. On September 11 we awoke to an enemy that has no regard for human life and that has repeatedly expressed its intent to destroy our Nation. We have seen the horror these people can inflict on our cities. And we take them at their word when they say that they plan to do it again. It is because of this threat that today we have an even deeper appreciation for the men and women who enforce our laws, not just as first responders to crime, but as a first line of defense against potential terrorist attacks.

During this Peace Officers' Memorial Day and Police Week, we honor the contributions of our police officers and other keepers of the peace. We remember the sacrifice of those who have fallen in the line of duty, including Officer Jacob Chestnut and Detective John Gibson, who gave their lives right here in the Capitol ten years ago. It was July 24, 1998) when they, as it now says on the plaque commemorating their heroism, "bravely gave their lives defending the United States Capitol."

We express our gratitude to the families of America's peace officers and police, who make sacrifices large and small so their loved ones can keep the rest of us safe.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Colorado.

ENERGY PRICES

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I come to the floor again to talk about energy prices. Each week we must finally be at the tipping point where Democrats are at least willing to address high energy prices. Unfortunately, although energy prices remain at an all-time high, it seems we are not there yet. The average American uses 500 gallons of gasoline every year, with the average gas price at \$3.61 per gallon. That means the average American will spend more than \$1,800 this year on gasoline. That is almost \$300 more than they would have spent a year ago. But let's look at a slightly longer period. Let's look at the period since Democrats took control of the Congress and insisted that they had all the answers.

On January 4, 2007, a gallon of gas cost \$2.33. That means the average American has spent \$960 more on gasoline in the year and a half since Democrats took over. The question is, Why are we not producing the domestic oil available in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge known as ANWR? The U.S. Geological Survey estimates that the potential oil in ANWR would exceed that which is currently being produced in the lower 48 States. We hear a lot of moaning about how we should not open ANWR because that oil would not be available for 10 years. But I remember hearing that exact same argument about 10 years ago. If we had opened ANWR to domestic oil production 10 years ago, we would be less reliant on foreign sources for about 1 million fewer barrels each and every day.

The question is, Why are we not producing in the Outer Continental Shelf? Currently, 58 percent of this area is off limits to production. The National Petroleum Council estimates if congressional restrictions were lifted, we would have access to more than 300 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. This is enough gas to meet all of the current U.S. needs for more than 13 years. Current levels of production in the Outer Continental Shelf employ over 45,000 people. To those of us concerned about employment figures, opening additional areas offshore will lead to more jobs in addition to increased domestic energy.

The question is, Why are we not producing domestic oil from oil shale in Colorado, for example? The Democrats ensured that BLM could not write commercialization regulations by placing a spending prohibition in the fiscal year 2008 omnibus bill which is being applied this year from last year's action. Commercialization regulations do not authorize production or even lease. These

regulations simply allow the department to set out the rules of the road for companies so they can make investment decisions—matters such as the length and requirements for oil shale leases, the royalty rate, and reclamation requirements that would be set by commercialization regulations.

Considering there is well over 1 trillion barrels of oil locked in the shale beneath Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming, this is not an inconsequential amount of energy. One trillion barrels of oil would provide for the current consumption levels of 20 million barrels a day for over 136 years. If the numbers seem staggering, that is because they are. The question is, Why are we not addressing the restrictive policies on the construction of new refineries that have led to no new refinery capacity in this country since the 1970s?

We must encourage companies to build new refineries so not only can we produce more oil domestically, but we can refine it into a usable product as well.

The law of supply and demand tells us with high demand and low supply, prices will increase. This seems to have escaped the notice of the Democrat-controlled Congress, however. Oblivious to prices at the pump, this Congress is failing in its duty to the American public.

Each attempt to implement commonsense solutions to current energy problems is met with loud and vehement objections. At this point, these objections can only mean Democrats want energy prices to continue to increase. I can think of no other explanation.

The facts are rather simple. The Congress has blocked efforts to produce trillions of cubic feet of natural gas, trillions of barrels of oil, and prevent the construction of new refineries, nuclear powerplants, and hydroelectric facilities.

The longer we deny access to domestic supplies, the more our current energy shortages will climb. And the less energy we produce domestically, the more we will rely on foreign—and possibly hostile—sources for it.

It is time—it is time—for Congress to step to the plate and ensure this country remains one of the safest and most prosperous nations on Earth. That means increasing domestic energy production and decreasing our dangerous reliance on foreign energy sources.

We will vote in a very short time on whether to increase domestic energy production or whether to maintain the status quo. I can only hope each of us does the right thing and votes in favor of the McConnell amendment to stop the status quo and to ensure we can produce more of the energy we need right here at home.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Michigan.

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, have I been assigned a specific amount of time?

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator has been assigned 20 minutes.