

102



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

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DOLE REACTION TO FORD'S SPEECH

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Following is a statement issued by Senator Bob Dole concerning President Ford's energy policy speech last night:

LAST NIGHT, PRESIDENT FORD CORRECTLY POINTED OUT THAT OUR CONTINUED DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL, WHILE NOT AN IMMEDIATE CRISIS IS A GROWING PROBLEM THAT MUST NOT GO UNCHECKED.

IN SPITE OF OUR CONSERVATION EFFORTS SINCE THE 1973 EMBARGO, OUR USE OF IMPORTED OIL HAS RISEN TO 6.2 MILLION BARRELS A DAY WHICH AMOUNTS TO 37% OF OUR TOTAL PETROLEUM USAGE -- AND DOMESTIC PRODUCTION IS DECLINING WHEN IT SHOULD BE GOING THE OTHER WAY. THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION TO IMPLEMENT AN ADDITIONAL ONE DOLLAR PER BARREL IMPORT FEE IS GOING TO MEAN HIGHER PRICES AND NO ONE IS HAPPY ABOUT THE PROSPECT OF HIGHER FUEL PRICES.

BUT I DO BELIEVE THE PROTESTS OF SOME IN CONGRESS WHO HAVE CRITICIZED THE PRESIDENT'S ACTION ARE INVALID. THE DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY IN CONGRESS HAS TRIED FOR MORE THAN FOUR MONTHS TO DEVISE A BETTER PLAN. THEIR FAILURE TO ACCOMPLISH THAT INDICATES THERE IS NO EASY, PAINLESS WAY TO SECURE ENERGY INDEPENDENCE.

CONGRESS, AND THAT MEANS REPUBLICANS AS WELL AS THE DEMOCRATS WHO CONTROL CONGRESS, MUST ACCEPT THE REALITY OF THE SITUATION AND MOVE TOWARD A SOLUTION THAT DISCOURAGES IMPORTS AND GIVES PRIORITY TO EXPANDING OUR OWN ENERGY PRODUCTION.