l!S. to **the NEWS**

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IS THERE AN ENERGY CRISIS?

The Carter energy bill, which has languished in Congress for many months, is the wrong solution for the wrong problem at the wrong time. It is basically a major new tax bill which will put more Federal controls on the American people and promote scarcity instead of abundance.

The Car·ter energy bill will tax the production of domestic crude oil at the wellhead, tax large automobiles, tax industrial users of oil, and tax utilities which use oil and natural gas for electric power generation. The direct cost of these taxes is estimated to be more than $100 billion. The indirect cost over the next eight years is estimated at $250 billion plus the ripple effects in investment capital depletion, reduced expansion, and inflation. In addition the energy bill will involve the Federal Government in utility rate structuring.

The Carter energy bill will not merely cost U.S. taxpayers an average tax increase of $470 per year (and in an election year, yet!), but it wi11 expand government control instead of increasing energy. It seeks out new sources of tax revenue instead of new sources of energy.

The Administration is quite willing to make Americans pay higher consumer prices if they result from increased taxes on oil and gas, but not willing to let the same prices result from a free market price that stimulates new domestic production that might ultimately bring down the prices.

The two basic approaches to the energy prob1 em have come to be 1 abe11 ed " growth "and "no-growth." The no-growth advocates premise their programs on the dogma that natural resources are very limited. They then promote policies that promise to
solve the problem by redistributing available resources according to their elite notions of who should have access to them.

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The no-growth advocates have formed a coalition of environmenta·dsts, bureaucrats,

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and socialist planners. They successfully opposed the Alaska pipeline for years and now oppose construction of nuclear power plants.

The economic growth advocates on the other hand, reject the assumption that human ingenuity has already conquered all frontiers and exhausted possibilities for new inventions and discoveries. They reject the notion that we must all accept a lower standard of living and content ourselves with sharing the wealth already produced.

The growth advocates believe we should adopt proven techniques of producing more wealth. If we bake a bigger GNP pie, everyone will have a larger slice. The growth advocates believe there is no shortage of energy resources; there is only a shortfall in domestic energy production which makes us depend on foreign sources for about half our oil.

Within our borders, the United States has the following reserves of energy resources based on present rates of consumption: enough crude oil to last us for 84 years, enough natural gas to last us for 400 years, enough coal to last us for 600 years, enough oil shale to last us for 300 years, enough uranium to last us for 120 years, and enough geothermal energy to last us for 200 years.

Congressman Steve Symms proposes the following legislative actions to resolve the energy crisis: (1) The deregulation of all oil and gas wellhead prices; the repeal of the Emergency Petroleum Allocation Act and the Energy Policy Act. (2) An amendment to the National Environmental Policy Act so as to reduce the number of nuisance legal suits brought to halt the development of nuclear p er, coal resources, off-shore drilling, and power plant construction. (3) Streamlined ·1icensing procedures for power plants so that they can be constructed and begin operation without costly delays. (4) An across-the-board cut in personal and business income taxes with incentives for capital formation, investment, and private research and development.

Congress Symms is on the right track when he concludes that "the only positive answer to America's energy crisis is production." Conservation of energy is essential, but you cannot conserve energy unless it has first been produced.

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