P.S. to the NEWS
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GASOLINE SHORTAGE BLAME

Are the long lines of impatient California motorists waiting for gasoline a sign of what will plague all Americans during the long, hot summer to come? In the wake of predictions that the gasoline supply this summer may be 15 to 20 percent less than last summer, many of us are reevaluating our vacation touring plans.

The inconvenience is in addition to the additional cost of gasoline. Who is to blame?

It is true that some Iranian oil is no longer flowing to our country. But far more oil than Iran could produce has been discovered in recent years in North America. Most of this new North American oil is not even being produced.

Engineers of Dome Petroleum, Ltd., of Alberta, Canada, report in the "Northern Miner" published in Toronto, a leading Canadian oil publication, that "over 45 excellent geological structures have been outlined, many of which are individually large enough to contain a Prudhoe Bay oilfield where in excess of 14 billion barrels of oil and OEG (oil equivalent of natural gas) have been proven to date."

These 45 oil-bearing geological structures are in the Beaufort Sea -- one-third in Canadian waters and two-thirds in Alaskan waters. Oil-bearing formations there are reported to be of world record thickness.

One exploratory well in Prudhoe Bay produced 40,000 barrels of oil a day. The well was almost immediately capped and is not producing today.

In addition, Mexico has discovered immense oil and gas fields in the Gulf, rivaling those in the Middle East. Only about one-tenth of Mexico's potential oil territory has been explored, so it is possible that Mexico may have more oil and gas than the Middle East.

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Since North America has more than enough oil and gas to supply our needs for the rest of this century, who is to blame for our current shortages, which are predicted to get worse all the time? The blame belongs on our Federal Government which for four years has blocked efforts to build pipelines from the West Coast to the many refineries in the Middle West.

Most of the problem rests with the Department of Energy headed by Secretary James R. Schlesinger. It has 20,000 employees and costs the taxpayers each year more than the net annual profits of the oil companies.

Unlike Europe and Japan, the United States is surrounded by immense reserves of oil and gas. Yet our misnamed Department of Energy has blocked most of the United States from access to these large reserves by prohibiting or delaying the building of pipelines from the West Coast to the interior of our country.

Mr. Schlesinger rejected the offer of the Mexican President to sell us surplus Mexican gas and oil. When President Carter visited Mexico this year, he managed to irritate the Mexican President even further by making a public reference to Montezuma's Revenge.

President Carter's plan to cope with the gasoline shortage is basically a plan to share the shortage rather than to promote production of more gasoline. That's what rationing and closing stations at nights and on weekends would mean.

It is estimated that the oil industry needs $25 billion a year to finance projected drilling requirements. That sum will never be available if Carter succeeds in his plan to impose higher taxes on oil companies.

Money has to go down in the ground in order for oil to come up; money that goes into the U.S. Treasury can never pump oil. The longer we delay the essential task of producing more American oil, the more dangerously dependent we remain on foreign imports.

This summer when gasoline is short and expensive, remember that those responsible are the Washington bureaucrats who are using our tax dollars to block the production and distribution of the oil energy we so badly need.

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