# P.S. to the NEWS

RELEASE: May 6

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## CARTER'S ENERGY PROGRAM

It is difficult to select the right direction for the future if you don't know how you got where you are now. The Carter energy program is defective on both counfs. It doesn't explain why it is that our country is importing so much oil, and it offers no plans for increasing energy production in the years to come.

The United States is blessed with large oil reserves. Unfortunately, the development of much of our oil and gas reserves has been blocked for years by the Federal Government.

Development of Alaskan oil and gas was stalled for four years by the powerful environmentalists who argued that building the pipeline would damage the Alaskan permafrost and wildlife. These arguments were invalid, but they were persuasive with Federal bureaucrats and judges.

Meanwhile, our Government has prevented drilling for oil and gas off our East and West coasts and in much of the Gulf of Mexico. Only about two percent of our country and its continental shelves has been explored for oil and gas. A recent United Nations report quoted estimates of experts that the world has enough oil and gas to last another 100 years.

President Carter's two recent speeches on energy seek to solve the problem by restricting consumption instead of by increasing production.

Instead of encouraging oil and gas exploration, President Carter wants to shift our country to coal and solar energy and to impose a new "wellhead tax on existing supplies of domestic oil." This new tax would be equal to the difference between the present controlled price of oil and the world price.

White House aides called Carter's two energy speeches his "sky is falling" speeches because they painted the picture of an energy crisis as severe as war. They could also be called his "pie in the sky bye and bye" speeches because

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of the carrot he held out in terms of a promise to return some "of the money collected by this tax to the consumers and workers of America."

This is the typical pattern of the Big Brother-types in Washington who seek to Racify the voters by dangling the hope of a little return from our constantly increasing Federal taxes.

Our entire American experience is testimony to the fact that we have a better chance of solving the energy crisis by individual ingenuity and free competition than we have by Federal controls. The first ballpoint pens cost $15 each and the first pocket calculators $500 each. Despite inflation, business production experts reduced the prices to 29¢ cents for ballpoints and about $200 for new models of the $500 calculators.

A pound of plutonium will produce as much energy as 5,000 barrels of oil. The United States has 250,000 tons of uranium in storage and 700,000 tons of proven reserves, all of which can be converted to plutonium. This can produce energy equal to about nine tri 11 ion barrels of oi J. Fast-breeder reactors wi11 provide about 60 times as much energy from uranium as the present nuclear fission process.

Yet President Carter announced that "there is no need to enter the plutonium age by licensing, or building a fast-breeder reactor such as the proposed demonstration plant at Clinch River," in Tennessee. Much money has already been spent on this reactor plant.

Our Government's blocking of oil and gas exploration, as well as of construction of the marvelous new fast-breeder reactors, means higher electricity and fuel costs for all of us.

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