P.S. to **the NEWS**

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SOLUTIONS TO THE OIL SHORTAGE

Good news on the energy front occurred earlier this month when the President of Mexico announced that new discoveries show that Mexico has one of the largest oil and gas reserves in the world.

President Jos Lopez Portillo described these oil reserves at a minimum of 37 billion barrels and possibly as much as 200 billion barrels. This immense wealth lies along Mexico's shoreline and in the Gulf of Mexico. By contrast, Saudi Arabia, the world leader in oil reserves, has 170 billion barrels.

Until now, the prevailing federal ideology has been to assume continuing oil shortages and dependency because we are importing more than 40 percent of our oil from the Middle East. Closing our eyes to other sources gives the federal government the opportunity to impose controls, rationing, and price fixing, and to hire an army of federal employees to check up on all gasoline stations.

Even without the new gigantic Mexican discoveries, we have plenty of oil and gas. California's Governor Edmund Brown, Jr., took time off from his courtship of lovely Linda Ronstadt, our country's most popular singer, to testify that the West Coast is drowning in a glut of Alaskan oil. He pleaded for a pipeline to ship the oil east.

Northern Tier, a private pipeline company, has been trying for 18 months to get federal permission to build a pipeline from Port Angeles, Washington, to the middle west. The National Environmental Agency says that Northern Tier must file detailed studies on the biological, geological, and archeological effect of the pipeline, describing in detail the trees to be cut down, the streams to be tunneled under, the wild life that would be inconvenienced, and the alternatives to building the pipeline.

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This elaborate study must then be reviewed by the Departments of Energy, Commerce, Labor, Defense and Transportation, plus all the states through which the pipeline would pass. The minimum time required for this paperwork is estimated at two years, not to speak of the expense.

Another plan involves building a pipeline to transport Alaskan oil from Los Angeles to Texas. The bureaucratic red tape holding up that pipeline is at least as great.

By making it as difficult as possible for private citizens to solve the shortage of oil in the east and midwest, the Washington bureaucrats can then argue that federal controls, rationing, and additional taxes are the solutions for a coming oil shortage. They argue that the Administration's energy bill is the only solution to the energy crisis and the decline of the dollar.

Twenty-four years ago, the Senate Subcommittee on Minerals, Materials and Fuels, under the direction of one of the few engineers ever to serve in the U.S. Senate, reported on the "Accessibility of Strategic and Critical Materials to the United States in Time of War and for our Expanding Economy.[11] Chairman George W. Malone accurately forecast the importance of "eliminating our nation's present dependency upon remote and possibly unfriendly or neutral areas of the world for the critical materials.[11]

After an exhaustive study of the sources of the 77 strategic materials, the Malone Subcommittee concluded that "the Western Hemisphere can be made self-sufficient in the production of critical materials." The Subcommittee reconmended "the closest cooperation among the nations of the Western Hemisphere, which is the only dependable source of the necessary critical materials in time of war. [11]

The recent announcement by the Mexican President provides spectacular corroboration of the accuracy and prophetic nature of the 1954 Malone Report.

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