

FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (Senate - October 07, 1992)

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Mr. **McCONNELL**. Mr. President, as the Senate takes up the Framework Convention on Climate Change, I want to make a few observations on this important treaty.

This document is viewed by all as the most far-reaching environmental agreement ever negotiated and concluded by 156 countries. I think it is important to once again point out that President Bush's commitment to cost effective policies to prevent climate change will preserve jobs as they protect our environment. The President was farsighted in his regard for real long-term prosperity and environmental protection. This convention prepares the nations of the world to come up with a sober assessment of the climate change issue and calls for voluntary action plans to address the potential impacts of human activities.

I want to commend President Bush for his leadership at the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development [UNCED] in the face of outrageous criticism from those attempting to cloud our Nation's efforts to protect the environment. He braved a barrage of predictable rhetoric from the liberal media, the developing world, the developed world, and Congress.

Looking back at UNCED, there were several groups who delighted in bashing the administration, but whose true interests appear to be far from that of sustainable development.

Our European allies, appeasing their strong green lobbies back home, cynically cried alligator tears, with their pecuniary interests foremost in mind. Carbon dioxide targets and timetables would give these countries an enormous competitive advantage over the United States which relies on its natural endowment of coal. The representatives of Third World countries wanted more aid with fewer strings attached. The emotionally charged pleas of environmental groups trying to pump up their membership rolls make great direct mail, but poor environmental policy. And the politically driven diatribes of liberal politicians in the United States now appear to be their best bet at getting off the political endangered species list.

While most critics had agendas far removed from reasonable environmental protection, there were those critics with no hidden agendas: the apologists for U.S. policies who fail to recognize that no Nation has done more, or spent more, to protect the environment than the United States. A case in point was a news report that Fidel Castro received the largest round of applause of all the world leaders who spoke at the conference, while President Bush was only politely acknowledged. This reflects a world conference with a very warped view of our Nation's real, long-term commitment to the environment.

The President's firm stand against targets and timetables for greenhouse gases was not a fashionable position at UNCED. However, it was the only position supported by the facts. There is no conclusive evidence of significant long-term global warming. Our understanding of the Earth's climate is quite primitive and does not take into account the dynamic interaction of such factors as water vapor, sunspots, volcanic activity, variations in the Earth's orbit around the Sun, and the effect of oceans and ocean currents. While these forces have been at work for eons, some self-proclaimed environmental saviors can only cite the latest weather report, and prepare thirty second political ads.

According to a recent survey of the scientific community, 47 percent of scientists did not believe that current policies would lead to global warming. This is hardly a consensus on global climate change requiring us to limit economic growth for an amorphous fear that the sky is falling. Clearly, the potential for climate change is something that must be carefully watched. But based on our limited understanding of the atmosphere, we are not justified in pursuing drastic changes in our industrial policy.

I agree with many in the environmental community that measures must be taken to minimize the potential for climate change. But these measures should be the least cost alternatives in light of the many uncertainties. Many such alternatives have been incorporated into the President's national energy strategy.

The President led the way at UNCED by crafting a thoughtful, reasoned response in the face of shrill rhetoric. In the end, the President's initiative was adopted by the rest of the world. It requires Nations to submit action plans to monitor and limit greenhouse gas emissions. It provides for technology cooperation and commits funding.

The United States has pledged \$50 million in contributions to the World Bank's global environmental facility to assist developing countries in reducing greenhouse emissions. President Bush has proposed over a billion dollars per year in funding for climate change research in fiscal year 1991 and 1992. And this year the President requested \$1.37 billion.

Initially, I had reservations that the Framework Convention on Climate Change could be convoluted in a way that would devastate the U.S. economy and the economy of my State. I was concerned that it could be interpreted unilaterally by the executive branch to bind the United States to targets and timetables for greenhouse gas emissions. However, I am satisfied that we have clarified this issue in the Foreign Relations Committee.

In pressing for a unilateral interpretation to include targets and timetables, some draw a parallel to the experience we had with chlorofluorocarbons and the Montreal protocol: Once the United States signed the agreement, everyone else fell in line. However, there is no evidence, no experience, or no record to indicate

that developing countries will be willing to similarly commit to meaningful and binding reductions in carbon dioxide emissions.

The negotiations leading up to the Rio summit demonstrated the reluctance of the developing world to join in a binding interpretation of this convention to limit carbon dioxide emissions without broad disclaimers that they not interfere with economic growth. The commitments of this convention simply to study and analyze greenhouse gas emissions are subject to overriding priorities of economic development. An interpretation by the executive branch that would recognize binding targets and timetables would not be reciprocated by the developing world, and would do little to reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide levels.

A unilateral commitment to targets and timetables would be a tragic mistake. It would have a negligible effect in mitigating the potential for climate change, leave unchecked the burgeoning emissions from developing countries, and constrain our own economic growth.

Because of these concerns, I felt compelled to discuss the possibility of a unilateral interpretation with the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee who has given me his public assurances that if this treaty is amended or interpreted by the executive branch to commit the United States to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions, that it would be subject to ratification by the Senate. The Foreign Relations Committee has included language to this effect in the committee report accompanying this treaty to make the record on this point absolutely clear.

The executive branch is precluded from interpreting this convention as a binding commitment to targets and timetables unless ratified by the Senate. Interpreting the aim of this convention in binding terms would amount to a material change in the treaty requiring the Senate's advice and consent.

With the chairman's assurances, I am pleased to support this fine agreement. I congratulate President Bush on his courageous leadership on the issue of global climate change.

In this year of sloganeering and poll watching, it may be an irresistible urge to gloss over the facts, and smear prudent policies in favor of environmental extremism. I am heartened that the one-sided coverage of the UNCED conference did not undermine the level-headed policies advanced by President Bush, and adopted by the rest of the world in this important treaty.

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Mr. LOTT. Mr. President I shall vote in favor of ratification by the Senate of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change.

I believe that the approach to the issue of potential global climate change in the convention is responsible and realistic, considering the uncertainties of the science and the risk of tremendous adverse economic impacts from ill-advised policies. It

is clear that the convention does not obligate the United States or any other country to achieve any particular target or timetable for limitation of greenhouse gas emissions. The convention's statement of objective does not detract in any way from the fact that the commitments section contains no such requirement. To me, that is the correct and responsible approach and is the result which President Bush and his administration wisely negotiated and achieved.

We have a responsible approach to limiting the growth of greenhouse gas emissions. The U.S. national action strategy, outlined in the environmental documentation furnished by the Department of State to the Committee on Foreign Relations, is a bold strategy that fully meets U.S. obligations concerning greenhouse gas emissions. It contains initiatives in the areas of energy efficiency, transportation, energy supply, agriculture and natural resources, and technology research and development. Its estimated effects are to reduce otherwise projected emissions by the equivalent of 125 to 200 million metric tons of carbon in the year 2000, a 7- to 11-percent reduction from anticipated emissions levels.

Those results would mean that U.S. net greenhouse gas emissions in the year 2000 would be only 1.4 to 6 percent above 1990 levels. Some may say that is not sufficient. I say that such a result would be remarkable, given that greenhouse gas emissions typically bear some relationship to economic growth, and we all desire economic recovery that enables our gross national product to be substantially higher--far more than just 1.4 to 6 percent higher--in the year 2000 than it was a decade earlier. Even a meager 2 percent average annual growth in GNP during the decade would mean that our economy would be 20 percent larger in 2000 than it was in 1990. That economic growth would be more than 3 to 14 times greater than the projected increase in greenhouse gas emissions under the U.S. national action strategy, a very impressive result.

Growth of GNP is only one of several factors affecting the level of greenhouse gas emissions. Others include population growth, the resource mix in the energy sector, the penetration of energy efficiency technologies, reforestation programs, and efforts to constrain methane emissions from landfills and natural gas pipelines. Those important variables are extremely difficult to predict with confidence.

The Climate Change Convention wisely takes all these factors into account. It rejects the artificiality of rigid emissions levels, which no nation could be assured of meeting by prescribed deadlines. This was articulated by Mr. Jean Ripert, the chairman of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change. On May 4, 1992, in response to a reporter's question as to why the draft of the convention he supported did not contain targets and timetables, he replied: 'No government is in the position to guarantee levels of emissions.'

Some have suggested that carbon taxes could achieve specified emissions levels. I disagree. Carbon taxes could not give us that assurance if for no other reason

than that we cannot know with confidence what the price elasticities of different types of energy supply and demand would be at any particular tax level. Nor would carbon dioxide emissions caps on major sources of emissions give us the assurance. This is because, unlike the case of sulfur dioxide emissions, carbon dioxide, not to mention other greenhouse gases, comes from so many different sources--including millions of homes, automobiles, trucks, and small businesses.

The Department of Commerce engaged DRI/McGraw-Hill to conduct a study on the impacts of carbon taxes. That study forecast that carbon taxes necessary to keep carbon dioxide emissions in the year 2000 at 1988 levels would deprive American workers of more than 560,000 jobs and reduce our GNP by \$92 billion from what we otherwise would expect.

A newer study by the same firm, 'Potential U.S. Regional and State Impacts of International Carbon Taxes,' shows electricity prices in the year 2000 up 53 percent in the Pacific Northwest over the base case; and up more than 65 percent in the east north central region of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin. As for manufacturing employment in the year 2000, almost 12,000 lost jobs in Missouri compared to the base case, more than 15,000 jobs lost in Florida, and more than 21,000 lost jobs in Texas. Nationally, this new study forecasts over 800,000 nonfarm jobs lost by the year 2000 as a result of carbon taxes.

As the new DRI study points out, 'because manufacturing accounts for a high share of my own State of Mississippi's economic activity, the effects of the carbon tax on the State's

economy would be significant.' Personal income in the year 2000 would drop by 3 percent from the base-case forecast for that year; employment in electrical machinery manufacturing would decline by 4.6 percent from the base-case forecast; nonelectrical machinery manufacturing would suffer an employment loss of 5.2 percent; and lumber and wood products manufacturing would face a 3.7-percent job loss. The people of Mississippi cannot stand such impacts.

Some say that taxation or regulatory schemes to limit carbon dioxide emissions would not hurt the economy. This is based on some pretty amazing economic assumptions. For example, the assumption that there is perfect and instantaneous movement of both labor and capital from one industry to another. If that were true, policies could cause tens or even hundreds of thousands of coal miners and steelworkers to lose their jobs, but they instantly--without substantial retraining--could be reemployed as computer operators or insurance agents; and the huge investments in idled manufacturing plants would be turned overnight into investments in activities not as severely hurt by the taxes or regulations, such as video stores. As Raymond J. Kopp, senior fellow and director of the Quality of the Environment Division of Resources for the Future, an environmental group, noted this year, 'while environmental programs may be desirable, they are not free.'

Unless and until we can develop at least a general consensus among economists as to what the most probable results would be of Federal schemes to achieve specific levels of greenhouse gas emissions, my view is that we simply cannot gamble with the economic future of American workers and consumers. Not with information before us such as I have described.

The need for deliberateness has been underscored by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, whose findings and recommendations are quoted so often by others. In its formal report, it cautioned:

The consideration of climate change response strategies presents formidable difficulties for policymakers. *The information available to make sound policy analyses is inadequate* because of (a) uncertainty with respect to how effective specific response options or groups of options would be in actually averting potential climate change; (b) uncertainty with respect to the costs, effects on economic growth, and other economic and social implications of specific options or groups of options. [Italic added].

We all should applaud those who understand how complex these issues are and who, therefore, negotiated a climate change convention that provides for flexibility, and rejects arbitrary rigidity, in light of the enormous economic, not to mention scientific, uncertainties that confront us.

I urge my colleagues to support ratification of this convention.

Mr. PELL. Mr. President, I am very pleased that the Senate is able to consider the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, and I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of granting advice and consent to its ratification.

The Convention on Climate Change marks a significant advance in international efforts to address the threat of climate change caused by anthropogenic emissions of green house gases. However, it is only a first step, more is needed. In my view, the parties to the convention should begin now to negotiate a protocol to establish targets and timetables for reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

The administration has objected to the adoption of targets and timetables out of two principal concerns: First, that the uncertainty associated with projections of climate change precluded us from taking serious action; and second, that efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions will be extremely costly and harmful to the economy.

I disagree with both of these propositions, and will address each of them in turn. First, the issue of uncertainty. It is true that there is uncertainty about the timing, magnitude, and rate of climate change, and that this presents policymakers with difficult decisions, but uncertainty must not become an excuse for inaction. Indeed, Congress regularly makes decisions in the face of uncertainty.

The budget resolution, for instance, depends heavily on uncertain projections of GNP growth.

In light of some of the misleading statements that have been made about our state of knowledge about climate change, I think it is useful to summarize the current best available scientific projections of climate change. At the fifth round of INC negotiations, the administration submitted a document entitled 'U.S. Views on Global Climate Change' which presented a consensus view of scientists on climate change:

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While scientists cannot yet establish that a human-induced warming has already occurred, best estimates indicate that increased concentrations of greenhouse gases are likely to increase atmospheric and ocean temperatures and alter their associated circulation and weather patterns. However, the magnitude, timing and regional details of these changes cannot be predicted with much certainty. Climate models predict changes in the average temperature of the globe's atmosphere as consequence of a doubling of atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide are unlikely to lie out the range of 1.5« to 4.5«C (2.7« to 8.1«F), with a best estimate, based on model results taking into account the observed climate record of 2.5«C (4.5«F). Associated sea-level rise has been estimated to range between a few tens of centimeters and approximately 1 meter (less than 1 foot to approximately three feet). In addition, observed warming in recent years is of the same magnitude as that predicted by the models but also of the same magnitude as natural variability. Thus, the observed increase could be due predominately to natural variability or could be part of a larger warming offset by other human factors.

Another way to look at the issue is that the current rates of increase in greenhouse gas concentrations are faster than at any time in the past 10,000 years and will result in a doubling of preindustrial atmospheric CO₂ equivalent concentrations by the middle of the next century. The rate of increase in CO₂ emissions is 30 to 100 times faster than the natural rate of fluctuation indicated by the climate record, the rate of increase of CH₄ is roughly 400 times that of natural fluctuations.

In its report 'Changing by Degrees: Steps to Reduce Greenhouse Gases,' the Office of Technology Assessment stated:

(W)e appear to be pushing the climate system beyond the limits of natural rates of change experienced by the Earth for hundreds of thousands and probably millions of years. The projected rate of climate change may outpace the ability of natural and human systems to adapt in some areas.

In my view, these facts suggest that we should begin now to examine limiting emissions of these greenhouse gases. My views are reinforced by the fact that, contrary to the claims of opponents of such measures, authoritative studies

indicate that U.S. emissions of greenhouse gases could be stabilized at little or no cost or perhaps even a profit.

By the administration's own estimate, by adhering to existing measures, projected U.S. net emissions of greenhouse gases in the year 2000 will be 7 to 11 percent below emissions otherwise projected or 1 to 6 percent above 1990 levels. These projections depend in part upon GNP and population growth, the energy intensity of economy, and the rate of diffusion of energy efficiency technologies. These measures nearly stabilize emissions and are voluntary as well as profitable.

It is notable that in statements up to the release of this estimate, the administration had asserted that there were no programs beyond those in the national energy strategy, that could reduce greenhouse emissions without additional costs. The new estimate suggests that the original estimates were inadequate, and that indeed there may be even more opportunities in this area.

This view is reinforced by authoritative studies released by the National Academy of Sciences and the Office of Technology Assessment. In its study of climate change, the National Academy of Sciences concluded that:

The United States could reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by between 10 and 40 percent of the 1990 level at very low cost. Some reductions may even be at a net savings if the proper policies are implemented.

In testimony before the committee, Dr. John Gibbons, the Director of the Office of Technology Assessment stated that the United States could return to its 1990 level of carbon dioxide emissions 'at little or no net cost until 2005 if we start now.'

Dr. Gibbons went on to note that:

The longer we wait to make the commitment to stabilize or reduce greenhouse gases, the more difficult it becomes. The short term goal of emissions reductions becomes less attainable because more retrofits are required. The long term goal of concentration reductions fades into the more distant future because of a momentum similar to population momentum. We know that the delay between the time the gases are produced and the time when the climatic and ecological impacts are fully felt is considerable (many decades).

Early in this administration, then-Secretary of State Baker addressed the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and articulated four principles to guide the international response to climate change.

They are: First, that we cannot afford to wait until all uncertainties have been resolved before we act; second, that while efforts to refine our knowledge are underway, we should focus immediately on prudent steps that are already justified on grounds other than climate change--this has come to be called the no regrets

policy; third, that actions taken to address global climate should be as specific and cost effective as possible; and fourth, that the solutions should reconcile the need for economic growth and environmental protection.

Unfortunately, the administration appears to have abandoned these principles. This despite strong evidence that controlling emissions of greenhouse gases will be essential in limiting the increase in atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases and thus in limiting climate change, and authoritative analysis which shows that such measures would not adversely affect the economy, and could in fact promote economic growth.

Indeed, as was noted at the committee's hearing, faithful implementation of the convention may be essential to future U.S. competitiveness in world markets. In his testimony, Dr. Gibbons noted that:

(A)nalysis underway at OTA and in other organizations reveals potential negative repercussions for the U.S. economy if we fail to adhere to commitments and objectives such as those established in the Convention. If other countries, for instance Germany and/or Japan, elect to engage in a more rigorous pursuit of emissions reductions, more efficient products and industrial processes, and nonfossil energy sources, their industries and products may become more competitive than ours.

In light of the key role energy efficiency will place in future U.S. economic competitiveness, I had hoped the administration would have pursued an aggressive program to increase energy efficiency and to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The administration is pursuing policies that reinforce the status quo, or may in fact actually be making matters worse.

For example, the national energy strategy will continue our Nation's unfortunate reliance on imported oil and in fact is likely to increase them in the future. Further, the NES fails to pursue aggressive energy conservations policies; OTA and National Academy of Sciences analyses identify two to three times the low-cost energy conservation that the NES does. Moreover, the NES will actually reduce the percentage of electricity generated in the United States from renewable energy sources.

Mr. President, all of this points to the fact that the administration has simply not responded adequately to one of the most serious environmental and foreign policy issues facing our Nation today. The convention we have before us is an essential first step, but it is only that. The Senate should advise and consent to its ratification and then push for the initiation of a new round of negotiations on a protocol that would limit anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.

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Mr. BAUCUS. The Framework Convention on Climate Change before the Senate is a first step toward addressing this Nation's need to curb its greenhouse gas emissions as part of a global effort. We are playing roulette with the planet by not taking more aggressive action to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

The President claims it costs jobs to protect the environment. This is an old-fashioned way of thinking that is simply not supported by the facts. In today's highly competitive, computerized marketplace, pollution itself is a sign of inefficiency. This inefficiency costs jobs when our competitors eliminate this inefficiency.

Japan has set up the International Center for Environmental Technology Transfer. You can be sure they are most interested in transferring Japanese technology to developing countries. America should be in the forefront of such efforts. Thirty-five percent of our exports go to developing countries. An international environmental agreement on greenhouse gas emissions would only increase the demand for U.S. environmental goods and services.

But the President's turns his back on these types of jobs. He wants to give workers in the 1990's jobs of the 1950's. Only we aren't building Studebakers anymore, Mr. President. We are building electrostatic precipitators, computerized monitors for a wide variety of air pollution, and a host of other technologies.

We need to provide Americans jobs with a future. These are high-paying, skilled jobs; not just flipping burgers at minimum wage.

The President seems blind to the opportunities he is missing. He cannot lead us forward, he can only turn toward the past.

I attended the Earth Summit and I was astonished at how out of step the administration's negotiating team was from the rest of the industrialized world.

Other nations--and business in those nations--recognize this rare opportunity to gain market share in a bull market. Other nations understand we can have greater prosperity and better environmental protection.

I was deeply disappointed in the failure of American leadership at the Earth Summit. I support the climate change treaty before us today, but only as a minimal first step. There is more we must do.

We must prepare an action agenda, to which we are committed by the terms of the treaty. We must have public comment on the agenda so that it can be a document we can all support.

Parties to the convention should meet soon to decide on the next step. We can start this process at the next meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee.

We run the risk of losing an enormous trade and economic opportunity if we remain imprisoned by past ideas.

The administration needs to change its outlook on the environment and see the opportunity that exists. Jobs are created when we improve our environmental performance. I hope we are not the last nation to recognize this truth.

Mr. MITCHELL. I am pleased that the Senate today is prepared to consider the Framework Convention on Climate Change. This convention does not take the action I believe is necessary to adequately protect this planet from the risks associated with climate change. The Bush administration prevented a meaningful convention from being signed at the Earth summit last June.

The Bush administration resists agreements for meaningful reductions in greenhouse gases because it says that controlling emissions will harm the economy. This is false reasoning on two counts.

First, controlling pollution can create jobs and enhance our economic health. In fact, pollution may be the most tangible sign of economic inefficiency. Reducing pollution can create jobs by increasing efficiency and creating products in demand elsewhere. A global effort to protect the environment would create demand for environmental goods and services. Japan and Germany are already consciously targeting this market. We need to seize the opportunity if we are to compete successfully in this growing international market.

Second, the administration claims a need to wait for more scientific certainty. There is not certainty on every aspect of climate change, but there is consensus that greenhouse gas emissions from industrialized societies are placing the globe at risk. This was the conclusion of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Waiting for absolute certainty as to every aspect of this risk is a delay we cannot afford.

The administration seems to assume that more science will justify their delay. But experience teaches us otherwise. In the case of ozone depletion, another, major international air pollution issue, science, showed us that the situation was worse, not better, than science first anticipated. We need not wait for more science to adopt a prudent course of action and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

Despite my great concerns about the shortcomings of the convention before the Senate, I recommend we ratify this convention as a first, small step.

The treaty calls for an action agenda on climate change by January 1993. We need to move quickly to act on this agenda. The public must be involved and able to comment on development of such a plan, and justification for the various provisions of the plan should be made public.

There should be a meeting of the parties to the convention to review progress and we should begin to take action now to develop a protocol to the convention. That

protocol should address the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, not merely count them. We have an opportunity to take the next step at the meeting of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee in December.

The IPCC must also continue its work. We need meaningful information, not a political analysis, about the science of climate change and what strategies can best counter the program.

It is within our power as a Nation to address this program. It only remains to see if the administration has the will to do so.

Mr. GORE. Mr. President, I rise today to urge my colleagues to join me in support of the Framework Convention on Climate Change that the president signed in June at the Earth summit in Rio de Janeiro. While I believe that this treaty falls far short of what is necessary effectively to address the serious threat of global climate change--and I think it is clear that the responsibility for the treaty's shortcomings rests squarely with President Bush--it is nevertheless an important step forward and a foundation upon which responsible policy can be built.

The process leading to the conclusion of the Climate Change Treaty was initiated--and driven--by the virtual unanimous opinion of the world scientific community that, by overloading the atmosphere with carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, we are risking disruptions in the climate system more severe than any in the past 10,000 years. More severe storm systems in some areas; intense bouts of drought in others; rising sea levels and flooding of coastal communities would be among the consequences. The imperative--to most of the world community--was clear; we need to take action now.

What became clear during the course of the discussions--again, to most of the world community--was that taking action to combat climate change is also an economic imperative. The fact is that cutting CO2 emissions can most readily and effectively be achieved by improving efficiency in every sector of the economy. And improving efficiency means reducing waste; enhancing productivity and profits.

Apparently all of this was lost on President Bush. As we all are now all too well aware, the Bush administration was--throughout these negotiations--the single largest obstacle to progress. While our major industrialized trading partners and competitors called for decisive action to forestall this global threat, the United States alone refused. Germany, Japan, the United Kingdom--all of our G-7 partners--urged our President to join in a treaty with substance to its emissions limitations commitments. But we stonewalled the world and in the end, our intransigence meant that the final agreement is completely devoid of any legally binding commitments to action.

As I mentioned, we signed the convention at the Earth summit in Rio. The real meaning of the Earth summit was also lost on the President. This is a turning point in history. Leaders of nearly every nation on Earth gathered together in a

profound awareness of the true nature and magnitude of the global environmental crisis we face.

Perhaps even more significantly, they realized that the alleviation of human suffering around the globe is inextricably intertwined with our efforts to relieve the building pressures on the environment. They understood that--to combat the poverty, suffering, and pain that afflicts so many in the world today--we have to pursue economic growth that is not destructive of the environment.

In addition, while clearly a milestone in terms of international diplomatic relations, the Earth summit was also a powerful coming together of concerned citizens from all parts of the world. They were parents who are concerned about the quality of life their children will enjoy; they were children who are determined to clean up the damage that has been done and move forward to a brighter future.

Citizens of the United States were there too, in strong numbers. Proud of the many positive steps we have taken in this country to clean our air and water, they wanted to demonstrate United States resolve to lead the world in confronting the larger, global challenges we now face.

They were disappointed. Together with a bipartisan delegation of Senators, I travelled to Rio hoping to amplify their voices. All of our voices were drowned out, however, by the firestorm of protest against the United States. Rather than lead the world, President Bush had instructed our negotiators to block progress and drag the talks to a halt. This was nothing new, of course, it had been the President's tack throughout the negotiations. But the world community had had enough of his obstructionism and in Rio, the depth of their disdain and frustration became clear.

In response to the outcry, President Bush presses on the American public a false choice. He says that we can't take a lead on environmental issues if we want to have a strong economy. This just isn't so. The truth is that we won't be able to revitalize our economy unless we move aggressively forward--away from the polluting ways of the past and toward the cleaner more efficient means of production that are the way of the future.

Japan and Germany are sounding an economic wakeup call. Honda's new president, for example, made 99 speeches to his employees around the world on the imperative of environmentally sound production processes. Specifically with regard to increased fuel efficiency--a policy that President Bush has strongly opposed--he stated in an interview with Business Week that 'If a car maker doesn't build more efficient cars, it can't survive.'

Mr. Bush should know that taking action to protect the environment will also help our economy. Indeed, the reports of his own experts say just that. A recent report by the EPA, for example, concludes that effective policies to stem carbon dioxide emissions will increase economic growth.

The National Academy of Sciences, the Office of Technology Assessment, and other private analyses all point to the same conclusion: job creation; increased efficiency; enhanced productivity and competitiveness will come with progress in confronting global climate change.

The environmental and economic imperatives are therefore clear. It's time for us to move ahead.

While the climate change convention--at Mr. Bush's insistence--is a nonbinding and very weak document, it does lay an important foundation on which we can build.

We need to move quickly to ratify the convention and then to begin discussions with the conference of the parties to develop a protocol to the convention that would contain effective and binding commitments to action. We also should act quickly to develop a national dialogue on climate change and specifically, provide a forum for citizens groups, scientists, and industry to help craft and comment on our action strategy to stem greenhouse gas emissions.

The challenges that the threat of climate change poses are not too great for the world to meet--if there is strong U.S. commitment and leadership. I believe that our Nation can, and must, meet the challenge. Our industry is innovative and resourceful. In the past, as we have committed ourselves to achieving serious goals in solving environmental problems, our industries have risen to the occasion to meet--and not infrequently exceed--the mark. Our effort--and remarkable success--in phasing our ozone destroying chemicals pursuant to the precise target and timetables laid out in the Montreal Protocol is but one example of this. Let's ratify this convention and work with industry and with concerned citizens to regain the leadership position on the environment--and on the economy--that the United States has always proudly held.

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Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. President, I trust that all of my colleagues will vote in favor of ratification of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, as I shall. The formal negotiations lasted almost 17 months and were difficult. Notwithstanding the many differences that existed among the parties before the final document was agreed upon, there was unanimous agreement, upon conclusion of the negotiations, as to what the convention meant in terms of the issue that had captured so much of the attention of the media and the public. President Bush deserves a great deal of credit for negotiating a realistic agreement.

Specifically, as we vote to ratify the convention, we do so with the confidence that all of the participants in the negotiation of the convention and many of the observers of that process understood and agreed that the wording of the convention was carefully chosen so as not to constitute or imply the commitment, binding or otherwise, of any country to a specific level of carbon dioxide or other greenhouse gas emissions at any time.

Instead, the convention provides for a flexible approach by which nations will develop action plans appropriate to the specific circumstances of the country. For example, industrialized nation's plans to limit greenhouse gas emissions may take into account important factors such as economic structures and resource bases, the need to maintain strong and sustainable economic growth, available technologies, and other individual circumstances. The U.S. national action strategy fully meets our Nation's obligations concerning greenhouse gas emissions.

Some of the participants were pleased with the convention's approach to commitments to limit emissions, and others were not. But, the important point for the Senate, Mr. President, is that, regardless of their policy preferences, they had a common understanding of what the convention did and did not prescribe. I would like the record to reflect some examples of this unanimous understanding, which was contemporaneous with the final negotiation of the convention text and the agreement to its provisions by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change [INC] the international negotiating body that had been established by resolution of the U.N. General Assembly.

Mr. Jean Ripert, chairman of the INC, spoke with reporters concerning his proposed text of commitments by the industrialized countries to limit greenhouse gas emissions, which text subsequently was agreed upon by all the participating nations. The May 4, 1992 issue of the Bureau of National Affairs' Environment Reporter reported: `Explaining why his draft did not contain targets and timetables, Ripert said `No government is in the position to guarantee levels of emissions.'

On May 8, 1992, once the parties had agreed to the provisions concerning commitments regarding limitations on greenhouse gas emissions by the industrialized countries, as set

forth in article 4, paragraph 2 of the convention, Clayton Yeutter, who then was Counselor to the President for Domestic Policy and who was coordinating the administration's negotiating policies and position, wrote to Chairman **John Dingell** of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce.

With reference to convention article 4, paragraph 2(a), which refers to `recognizing that the return by the end of the present decade to earlier levels of anthropogenic emissions * * * would contribute to * * * modification' of long-term emissions trends, Mr. Yeutter's letter stated: `But there is nothing in any of the language which constitutes a commitment to a specific level of emissions at any time.' With reference to convention article 4, paragraph 2(b), which refers to reports of nations about their policies and measures, `with the aim of returning' greenhouse gas emissions to their 1990 levels, Mr. Yeutter stated: `The word `aim' was carefully chosen, and it does not constitute a commitment, binding or otherwise. Nor does this sentence prescribe or imply any kind of timetable.'

The Department of State has furnished the Committee on Foreign Relations with a comprehensive document, entitled 'Environmental Documentation: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,' dated September 1992. Among other things, that document was intended to 'provide a description of the obligations parties will undertake on ratifying the Convention and upon its entry into force.' Included in its description of the goals sought to be achieved by the convention is 'specifically avoiding the imposition of uniform, rigidly specified requirements--in favor of a more flexible approach enabling countries to develop strategies that best meet their individual situations, needs and capabilities.'

The many environmental groups who had been active in the negotiations from the beginning also understood this. Their joint, formal policy statement, delivered to the plenary session of the INC on May 4, state: 'And yet in front of you is a text which not only does not commit the developed countries to reducing carbon dioxide emissions, it does not even guarantee stabilization * * *'.

There are many other illustrations that the governments which negotiated the Climate Change Convention, as well as the environmental and business organizations participating in those negotiations, were in total agreement, at the time the convention was agreed upon, as to what its provisions were intended to mean. I have set these matters forth, as part of the record of Senate ratification, so that, as we vote, we, too, have a clear understanding of the meaning and intent of these important provisions of the convention.

I want to add that I am pleased the United States stood up to certain interest groups and foreign governments and did not go along with pressure to turn political rhetoric into legally binding commitments.

My point, Mr. President, is that accusing the United States of having frustrated a more far-reaching convention, as some nations advocated, presupposes that it makes more sense to listen to rhetoric than to look at real plans. As demonstrated by the U.S. national action strategy, our country has a real plan, not an illusory one, to deal with the issue of potential global climate change.

I am glad we saw through the posturing of others and that we effectively resisted them. My hope is that we will continue to do so in the interest of the American people.

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Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I will be voting in favor of Senate ratification of the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change.

At the same time, I strongly disagree with those who argue that the convention did not go far enough and that the United States should have agreed to legally binding targets and timetables for limitations on U.S. emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. Those who make such criticisms, in my opinion, fail to reckon with facts concerning the issue of potential global climate change.

Interestingly, one of the most important of those facts has been acknowledged by the junior Senator from Tennessee, our colleague **Al Gore**. On April 7, 1992, during Senate debate on comprehensive energy legislation, as reported in the **Congressional Record** at page S4890, the Senator stated:

If the United States not only stabilizes emissions but reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent, and if every other industrial country also reduces greenhouse emission by 50 percent, and the developing countries continue on their current path, then worldwide greenhouse gas emissions will, by the year 2030, increase by 250 percent.

Senator **Gore's** observation was confirmed by the Department of State's Environmental Documentation, which it submitted to the Committee on Foreign Relations. Commenting on the thinking of the nations that negotiated the Climate Change Convention, it noted:

[T]here was awareness that the `savings' achieved by the industrialized countries--the only countries to which binding limits would apply--could be eclipsed by increased emissions of developing countries.

The industrialized countries now account for around half of global greenhouse gas emissions. However, the relative contribution of different countries is shifting. Emissions from the developing countries are increasing rapidly, as their populations grow and they seek improved standards of living through economic development. Once the countries of the former U.S.S.R. and of Eastern Europe make the transition to market economies, their economies will grow, rather than shrink, as has been the case during the last few years. That means more emissions from those nations. As a consequence of the increased greenhouse gas emissions from these other countries, it is estimated that, by 2025, the net carbon dioxide emissions from developing nations and from those with economies in transition will constitute two-thirds of the world total, and, when all greenhouse gases are considered, the emissions from these other nations jumps to as much as three-quarters of the world total.

The correct point made by Senator **Gore** and by the State Department is that the projected growth of developing countries' greenhouse gas emissions will more than offset--indeed, will dwarf--any amount of greenhouse gas emissions that would be avoided by the United States and other industrialized countries if they and we had agreed in the Climate Change Convention, or in the future would agree, to so-called stabilization of such emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000.

What we have to remember, Mr. President, is that proponents of limiting carbon dioxide emissions of the industrialized countries in 2000 to their 1990 levels simply cannot tell us how much unacceptable, potential global climate change, if any, would be avoided during the next century as a result of such policies. Moreover, even if there were some *de minimis* avoidance of climate change, as a result of what industrialized nations did, there is no credible scientific evidence

that it would last more than a very few years at most, because of the huge, ongoing increases in emissions from the developing nations in particular.

We also have to consider the economic cost of such proposals. There are studies by eminent economists that policies necessary to stabilize U.S. carbon dioxide emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000 could cost American workers hundreds of thousands of their jobs and cost the economy more than \$90 billion of gross national product. Whether those predictions are better than those which forecast less drastic consequences ignores the crucial point, which is this: Now is not the time to gamble recklessly with our Nation's economic future, especially when, as on this issue, nobody can tell us how we or the world would benefit from that gamble.

Unless and until we have persuasive evidence that binding emissions targets and timetables for the United States and other industrialized countries will actually avert any material amount of global climate change, there is no justification for our taxpayers and consumers to be asked to endure the economic burdens.

The Climate Change Convention, as written, goes quite far enough from the standpoint of U.S. obligations. We should only ratify it and talk about increasing the burdens on our citizens, if ever, when we have sound scientific reasons for doing so.

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Mr. BIDEN. Mr. President, I have supported efforts to put global warming on the U.S. agenda and to create national and international strategies for lessening the threat posed by accumulating greenhouse gases. So it is with mixed emotions that I support ratification of the U.N. Framework Treaty on Climate Change that is only a faint call to global action.

I am encouraged by the participation of nearly every country in the world in the arduous task of negotiating the global responsibilities of nations. The countries of the world, the United State included, have recognized the magnitude of the dangers of the current emissions trends. One of the positive elements of the treaty is a call for a coordinated global research effort to further document the climate changes that are underway and understand their effect on our global environment.

However, I am disappointed in the short-sightedness of the agreement. The convention creates no targets or timetables to stem the documented increases in carbon dioxide, methane, chlorine and other greenhouse gases. Due to the administration's efforts, the treaty mandates only good intentions.

The climate convention declares a goal of restoring emissions of greenhouse gases to 1990 levels by the year 2000. But, participating countries are not bound by this goal. Section 4 of the document, which contains the binding elements of the agreement, commits the countries to inventory their emissions and issue progress

reports on reduction efforts to a conference of the parties. This is much closer to the pledge and review approach, which was widely criticized for its inadequacy to the task at hand, than it is to a global response to this threat.

The Rio treaty was intended to couple worldwide recognition with an international commitment to reduce the threat of global warming. An obligation merely to assess emissions and report on efforts to reduce them does not create the depth of commitment many of us had envisioned. In an effort to block any commitment by the United States, the administration's negotiators deprived everyone of assurance of mutual commitments.

In 1988, President Bush used the White House effect to battle the greenhouse effect. But, in my quarters, the United States' role in the treaty negotiations has been assessed as a failure. In one respect, though, the final treaty is a testament to United States' influence and leadership, to the `White House effect.'

At the outset, the United States stood almost alone in opposing targets and timetables, but the administration triumphed over the wishes of more than 150 countries to have its way. The White House effect was shown to be a truly powerful influence in international environmental affairs, although in exactly the opposite manner that the President had promised. The true judges of the success or failure of these efforts will be future generations who will live with the administration's results.

We need to take steps now to avoid the worst effects of global climate change. Contrary to the administration's predictions, these steps do not involve drastic lifestyle changes or economic ruin. We can admit the dangers of our current wasteful ways and we can take steps to change them.

The framework convention is not what we need or what we hope for to address emissions of greenhouse gases. But it is a foundation we can build upon in the years ahead. Although some may be tempted to eject this treaty for falling far short of its goal, truly we will be better off with the convention than without it, providing that we do build upon it and not allow it to languish. That will be one of our challenges for the years ahead.

Mr. FORD. Mr. President, I ask for consideration of the resolution before the Senate by a division vote.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. A division vote is requested.

All of those in favor of the resolution of ratification will please stand and be counted.

Those opposed please stand and be counted.

On a division, two-thirds of the Senators present and voting having voted in the affirmative, the resolution of ratification is agreed to, as follows:

Resolved (two-thirds of the Senators present concurring therein), That the Senate advise and consent to the ratification of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, adopted May 9, 1992, by the Resumed Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change ('Convention'), and signed on behalf of the United States at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro on June 12, 1992.

Mr. FORD. I ask unanimous consent that the motion to reconsider the vote be tabled, that the President be notified of the Senate's action, and that the Senate return to legislative session.

END

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