

Tuesday, July 11, 2006

A few weeks ago, we solved our nation's dependence on foreign oil. Or so House Republican leaders would like you to believe when they declared the last week in June "Energy Week." OPEC, beware! Breathe easy, you inhalers of carbon-based smog. Our long national nightmare with energy is over. We had "Energy Week" in the House of Representatives!

Who knew that solving a generational challenge and ending our perilous and dysfunctional energy policies was this easy? Why waste time fashioning an energy policy that looks beyond the horizon when all we had to do was talk about energy for a week?

What chumps we have been all these years, listening to Lincoln, Churchill, and Roosevelt, and their "sacrifice is good for you" speeches dripping with castor oil; succumbing to their appeals for selflessness, endurance and fortitude. If only they knew then what Republican Congressional leaders know now:

White House Press Release: Dec 8, 1941: FDR DECLARES "WIN WORLD WAR II WEEK" ON JAPAN Describing yesterday's attack on Pearl Harbor as "a day of infamy," President Roosevelt promised the American people that they would "gain the inevitable triumph through a week-long series of legislative proposals on Capitol Hill." Demonstrating national resolve, Roosevelt and congressional leaders gathered near a vivid blue backdrop stenciled with "Win World War II Week" logos. Roosevelt proclaimed: "With confidence in our armed forces, with the unbounding determination of our people, with a week of debate in the House, we will gain the inevitable triumph -- so help us God."

From John F. Kennedy's Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961: J.F.K. TACKLES LIBERTY AND JUSTICE DURING FIRST WEEK OF FEBRUARY "Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe, in order to assure the survival and the success of liberty. That covers the first week of February. Now let's move on to week two."

From Winston Churchill's Radio Address to the British Empire, February 9, 1941: CHURCHILL PROMISES TRIUMPH BY NEXT SATURDAY

"Here is the answer which I will give to President Roosevelt... We shall not fail or falter; we shall not weaken or tire. Neither the sudden shock of battle nor the long-drawn trials of vigilance and exertion will wear us down. Give us the tools and we will finish the job. But we have to finish by Saturday, because next week is 'National Food Quality Improvement Week.'"

From press reports of Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, March 4, 1865: LINCOLN

UNVEILS FIFTEEN-POINT "UNITE AMERICA PLAN"

President Lincoln today launched his second term, promising to unite America with his fifteen-point "Malice Toward None And Charity For All Act of 1865." Lincoln abandoned his usual soaring oratory, preferring instead to inspire the nation with "my specific and detailed plan to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan - to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations." The President challenged Congress to debate and pass the measure "ASAP."

From John F. Kennedy's Address to a Joint Session of Congress, May 25, 1961: PRESIDENT KENNEDY EXHORTS AMERICA TO LAND MAN ON THE MOON:

"I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to Earth. If that's asking too much, I think, before the week is over, we can send a guy to Des Moines. Whichever is easier. You tell me."

From President George W. Bush's State of the Union Address, January 31, 2006:

"Breakthroughs on this and other new technologies will help us reach another great goal: to replace more than 75 percent of our oil imports from the Middle East by 2025. By applying the talent and technology of America, this country can dramatically improve our environment, move beyond a petroleum-based economy, and make our dependence on Middle Eastern oil a thing of the past."

The President didn't need a week to implement his vision. The very next day, his Secretary of Energy stated that "He didn't mean it literally." So, call me the "Energy Week Scrooge," but when we're really serious about energy policy, we will ask the American people for more than a week. We will ask them for sacrifice.