



UNITED STATES SENATE
**REPUBLICAN
POLICY COMMITTEE**

Larry E. Craig, Chairman
Jade West, Staff Director

December 8, 1997

Krauthammer's Op-Ed Summarizes Gore's Intolerance Toward Doubters

Gore Undermines U.S. Position To Promote Binding Treaty

Today in Kyoto, Vice President Gore gave his long-awaited speech to climate change negotiators in which he continued his self-righteous commitment to lock the United States into dramatic energy cuts. However, when it came to offering meaningful policies to address the global warming issue without crippling America, Gore had no details or new ideas. Rather, the sum total of his Kyoto speech was to undermine the U.S. position by instructing U.S. negotiators there to use "increased negotiating flexibility."

Senator Chuck Hagel, in Kyoto as head of the official Senate delegation, said today, "I think the U.S. has been too flexible. . . I'm afraid it means an agreement at any cost." Wednesday, the final day of the talks, will tell the tale, but Senate staff accompanying the delegation warn that the U.S. is poised to accept a "compromise" that would mandate a more stringent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions than the stated U.S. position of achieving 1990 levels by 2010. It is currently rumored that the U.S. may accept a compromise target of 5 percent below 1990 levels by 2010 to get a deal.

Lock in the Targets and Leave Compliance Issues Until Later?

Also today, (according to the AP wire) Senator Byrd (co-sponsor of the Byrd-Hagel resolution that calls upon the U.S. not to sign any treaty that would economically harm the U.S., or would not require the developing world to also undertake new commitments) said that "although any Kyoto agreement probably will not be complete enough for Senate approval, the Clinton Administration could work on a 'step-by-step' approach the next year or two to present a fuller proposal to the Senate."

Senator Byrd's recognition that the time is not ripe for a comprehensive agreement in Kyoto raises a concern that, indeed, the Administration will sign an agreement in Kyoto that is only the first part of a two-part treaty. If so, will this first treaty be by its own terms contingent on successful negotiations of a second agreement down the road that will include the key issues that could not be resolved in Kyoto, including Third World

participation, trading, and sinks? In either case, whether the first treaty is contingent on a second treaty or not, it would be wrong from a constitutional perspective and bad negotiating tactics to lock the United States into targets and timetables now, and "sit on" the treaty until the follow-on treaty is negotiated. In September, Senators Lott and Hagel warned the President that "it would be grave error to go forward with this kind of strategy and treaty, with the explicit intention of withholding such a treaty from the Senate for domestic political considerations."

Op-Ed Reminds Us of Shaky Footing of the Kyoto Conference

Columnist Charles Krauthammer makes a number of interesting points in his column "Global Warming Fundamentalists: This is Nuclear Winter Without the Nukes." [*Washington Post*, 12/5/95]. Krauthammer notes that Stanford scientist Stephen Schneider, a participant at the President's Global Roundtable last summer, said that when it comes to global warming, it is "journalistically irresponsible to present both sides." Yet that same scientist was vociferously denying global warming 25 years ago, instead arguing that the real threat was *global cooling*. Krauthammer further notes, "Ironically, as climate change predictions become more malleable and contingent, climate change activists become more inflexible and intolerant," noting that Vice President Gore's attempts to make skeptics "into the moral equivalent of tobacco executives."