

Laxalt Joins Israelite On Gas Ripoff

By Jack Tell
Sen. Paul Laxalt, campaign manager for Ronald Reagan, who almost maneuvered the former California governor

into the Presidency, agrees with the ISRAELITE on the gas rip-off. Here's what Laxalt had to say:
BY PAUL LAXALT

The Nation's energy situation is "approaching the frightening stage," Nevada Sen. Paul Laxalt said, as evidenced by problems stemming from turmoil in Iran.

"Can you imagine this tremendously powerful country being brought to its knees because 10 percent of its energy has been cut off as a result of social unrest in a country thousands of miles away?" Laxalt asked.

"What clearer proof is there of the fragility of our position?" he asked in urging strong new energy policies in an appearance before the Reno Rotary Club.

"I believe much of the problem is political," he said. "For too long, the various administrations -- both Republican and Democrat -- have failed to face up to the problem."

"In the process we have increased the dependence of this country on imports of foreign oil to a frightening degree. We are importing about half of what we need and that means the future of this country economically, and even worse militarily, is dependent to the extent of one - half



SEN. PAUL

on strangers," the Nevada Republican said.

He warned the capacity audience of the dangers of problems such as occurred in Iran spreading to Saudi Arabia, the source of a great deal of the nation's oil.

"I pray we never get into another war, but the ingredients of a major war are right there," Laxalt said. "If the facts point in the future that we are losing the Saudi and that oil, with our heavy dependence on it, we'll have no option but to defend our interests."

The Senator said the key to achieving energy independence in the U.S. is to free oil and gas pro-

ducers almost totally, letting them use their know-how and financing to help solve the problem.

"We are told the oil and gas people are rip-off artists, that they'll steal us blind," Laxalt said. "I for one am willing to take that risk. If they get out of control, we have the power to tax them if their profits get too high."

In addition to de-regulation, Laxalt said a meaningful energy package will depend on conservation by consumers, a more aggressive policy on nuclear energy and coal and improved technology for solar, wind and geothermal power.

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