

Promises Without a Plan:

The Last 35 Years of Energy Leadership

NIXON



“Let this be our national goal: At the end of this decade, in the year 1980, the United States will not be dependent on any other country for the energy we need to provide our jobs, to heat our homes, and to keep our transportation moving.”

Richard Nixon, “State of the Union Address,” January 30, 1974

FORD



President Gerald Ford moved the date for achieving American energy independence back to 1985.

“A massive program must be initiated to increase energy supply, to cut demand, and provide new standby emergency programs to achieve the independence we want by 1985.”

Gerald R. Ford, “State of the Union Address,” January 15, 1975

CARTER



“I am tonight setting a clear goal for the energy policy of the United States. Beginning this moment, this Nation will never use more foreign oil than we did in 1977—never. From now on, every new addition to our demand for energy will be met from our own production and our own conservation. The generation-long growth in our dependence on foreign oil will be stopped dead in its tracks right now and then reversed as we move through the 1980’s, for I am tonight setting the further goal of cutting our dependence on foreign oil by one-half by the end of the next decade”

Jimmy Carter, “Crisis of Confidence” speech, July 15, 1979

REAGAN



“We need more energy and that means diversifying our sources of supply away from the OPEC countries. Yes, it means more efficient automobiles. But it also means more exploration and development of oil and natural gas here in our own country. The only way to free ourselves from the monopoly pricing power of OPEC is to be less dependent on outside sources of fuel.”

Ronald Reagan at the New York Hilton, November 13, 1979

BUSH 41



“And in some cases, the gulfs and oceans off our shores hold the promise of oil and gas reserves which can make our nation more secure and less dependent on foreign oil.”

George H.W. Bush, “State of the Union Address,” January 31, 1990

In 1991, in the prelude to the First Gulf War, President George H.W. Bush announced a National Energy Strategy. Naturally, one of his strategy’s guiding principles was “reducing our dependence on foreign oil.”

CLINTON



“We need a national energy policy focused on the following goals: get off of cheap oil and more nuclear plants and focus on the use of natural gas which is cleaner, cheap, and abundant.”

Bill Clinton, March, 1992

In 1996, Clinton proposed a comprehensive energy plan that did not pass Congress.

BUSH 43



“Our third goal is to promote energy independence for our country, while dramatically improving the environment.”

“Join me in this important innovation to make our air significantly cleaner, and our country much less dependent on foreign sources of energy.”

George W. Bush, “State of the Union Address,” January 28, 2003