Mr. CRANSTON. Mr. President, on July 28, Santa Barbara, Calif., will observe a day of infamy in its history. On that day 6 months ago an oil well on Federal tidelands 5 ½ miles offshore in the Santa Barbara Channel blew out and went out of control, pouring thousands of barrels of oil into the sea and onto the beaches of southern California. Today, oil is still leaking from the sea bottom, still fouling the sea and the beaches, and there is no end in sight.

Secretary of the Interior, Walter J. Hickel, termed the oil spill "a disaster." The former Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall, said it was "a conservation Bay of Pigs."

People from all over the Nation and the world are asking why this disaster happened and what, if anything, Congress and the Government will do to prevent future disasters like this one which threatens one of the most beautiful coastal and marine areas in the world, enjoyed every year by millions of Americans and foreign visitors.

People are asking if the despoliation of this area by pollution of the waters by leaks, blowouts, and spills and pollution of the landscape by the erection of enormous drilling platforms in the channel waters truly is in the national interest. They are asking what values justify the risk of potential destruction of an environment cherished by millions. They are asking if it is really necessary to continue to drill for oil in the Santa Barbara Channel.

I ask these same questions.

Clearly, in Santa Barbara as in other parts of our country and this planet we live on, it is time to ask what we are doing to our environment and whether the slow destruction of our air, our water, and our land may not threaten man's own demise.

The national policy issues of the use of our natural resources—our land, water, and air—have once again been brought into focus by the Santa Barbara disaster.

Once again we have an opportunity to study the effects of national policy on our environment and review that policy in light of our experience at Santa Barbara and other parts of the Nation.

For 300 years we have exploited our land—too often with few safeguards for the environment, too often with no thought for conserving our resources or properly utilizing them.

The lands that lie along the great coastal regions of our Nation contain trillions of dollars of national treasure, encompass great scenic and recreational areas, provide employment and a special environment for millions of shore residents, and sustain the rich and varied marine life which supplies us with food and sport.

The area indeed vast, measuring 805,300 square statute miles under the usual Federal claim of jurisdiction and an additional 478,700 square statute miles measured by international standards which the United States might be expected to invoke. The combined areas are about 35 percent as large as the total land of the United States and its territories.

The amount of proven reserves of oil and gas alone on the shelf is 2.9 billion barrels of oil and natural gas liquids, and 30.3 trillion cubic feet of gas. Sulfur reserves are estimated at 37 million tons, and there are an estimated 100 million tons of phosphorite deposits off California alone.

What has happened at Santa Barbara, and what is happening in other parts of our country both onshore and offshore, suggests that this national treasure, which is both our economic and defense security, is in danger of being squandered in a way that may permanently impair our environment and future security.

All of us in Congress have heard this story of deprecation and neglect many times. We have seen it at firsthand right here in Washington where a once beautiful river has been defiled by actions of man along its banks. We see it in the strip mining in Appalachia, in the destruction of rich farmland by suburban sprawl, in the denuding of our forests and the alteration of our streams by dams and powerplants.

Each passing day and year sees the spread of this careless growth and exploitation.

Then one day an oil well blows out in the Santa Barbara channel or a Great Lake is found polluted, and we once again call into question our values, our national priorities and the policies which affect those values and priorities.

California, our Times and priorities are clearly out of focus.

It is time that we asked how this happened and whether the national policies which guide development of our resources are adequate for the times we live in.

The question posed by the Santa Barbara experience is whether drilling for oil in the Santa Barbara channel is safe, given the geological conditions existing there and the current state of the technology of offshore oil production.

California is known as earthquake country, and Santa Barbara is very much in the geological center of earth movements. In the last 150 years there have been at least 10 major earthquake occurrences in the Santa Barbara area. By way of illustration, in 1812 a huge tremor generated a tsunami tidal wave 30 to 50 feet high. Another "major quake" in 1925 caused $20 million damage in Santa Barbara, and in the summer of 1968 a so-called "swarm" of 66 small quakes centered right in the channel.

Today, although drilling is going on right now and the oil companies are planning to build huge platforms and drill hundreds of wells in the waters above the earthquake area, we still do not have an authoritative analysis of what might happen if a major quake or submarine landslide strikes the area.

And we are told by the Nation's most competent earthquake experts that there is almost a 100-percent certainty that California will be rocked by quakes at some time in the future. Charles Richter of the California Institute of Technology, a world authority on earthquakes, points out that because geologically California is still young, quakes and earth movements certainly can be expected in the future.

What would be the effect of a major earthquake on the wells and on the drilling and pumping platforms? What would happen if a large tsunami or tidal wave struck the platforms and wells? What effect would a submarine landslide have?
We have no definitive answers to those questions. Furthermore, all the expert testimony I have heard suggests that there is a good chance of another blowout, spill or accident of some kind that will produce another disaster at Santa Barbara in coastal drilling and producing operations.

The technology of offshore drilling and producing still is too new to provide assurance that there will be no future major pollution events.

In Santa Barbara, where there has been a tremendous amount of faulting, producing uncertain geological formations, we can certainly expect numerous technical problems that almost certainly will result in "accidents" of one kind or another.

Yet, in his testimony before Senator Muskie's subcommittee, former Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall, reviewing the decision of his office to drill for oil in Santa Barbara, said:

"The idea of a massive blowout that couldn't be controlled was not a fear that anyone raised and therefore never became a major policy consideration."

This failure to consider the major environmental threat from off-shore drilling illustrates a point I have made many times before: We cannot reasonably expect that people who profit from a program will give adequate consideration to the possible environmental dangers of the program. The demand for environmental safety and sanity will always come from the general public. Therefore, it is critically important that all governmental policy affecting the environment includes public hearings and participation as a mandatory part of the decisionmaking process.

In Santa Barbara, the Department of the Interior clearly evaded the environmental issue by proceeding with the leasing program in the channel without adequate hearings.

In a memorandum dated February 15, 1968, while the leases still were being discussed, an aide to the Assistant Secretary of Interior said:

"The department should not go the public hearing route—that we had tried to warn the Los Angeles district engineer of the Corps of what he faced and we preferred not to stir the natives up any more than possible."

"I say to you, Mr. President, and to the American people, it is time to begin listening to the natives. They are telling us that our values and priorities are out of whack, and that the disaster off the coast of Santa Barbara is the latest stunning example of our folly."

The Federal Government has a special and overriding responsibility to States and local communities.

Santa Barbarans historically have fought the development of oil onshore and offshore in the area.

Santa Barbara is one small city of 70,000 citizens who are proud of their community and their long record of preserving it against commercial depredation. The citizens see themselves now as the victims of an all-powerful Federal establishment against which they have no recourse.

Under our system of government there will continue to be clashes between the interests of one group or one community against the wishes and needs of all of the Federal system. But if our system is to be wholly effective and representative, the wishes of one State and one community must somehow be given proper consideration and weight.

I raise these points because the Nation is confronted with serious problems that involve our resources, our environment, and the clash of technology with the desires of our people.

For too long the interests of technology, industrial development, and exploitation of resources have been paramount over environmental interests.

The balance may already have tipped too far, if we are to believe the warnings of some scientists that our atmosphere already has been changed so radically that it may alter the climate, our polar icecaps, and, eventually, the depth and character of our oceans.

It is not too late to reverse the process of destruction and change at Santa Barbara and elsewhere.

The Subcommittee on Minerals, Materials, and Fuels, under the Judicious and concerned leadership of its distinguished chairman, the Senator from Utah (Mr. Moss), is now considering an amended version of my bill, S. 1219, to ban drilling in the Santa Barbara channel. The amendments would suspend drilling temporarily and instruct the Secretary of the Interior to report to Congress on various environmental, legal, economic, and technical aspects of further drilling versus no further drilling.

To the oil-drenched swimmers of our California beaches, and to the angry and disillusioned property owners of the Santa Barbara coastline, such a temporary suspension would be viewed as a very small step toward ending the oil disaster.

Yet, I believe, such legislation would be a giant step for all of our Nation. Congress would in effect be declaring that environmental concerns in Santa Barbara are preeminent over the business-as-usual demands of our economy. Now, after 6 months of the oil leak below platform A, we cannot deceive ourselves that there is any other issue in the Santa Barbara channel.