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prices are high, they're unnecessarily high--the inventories of oil have reached such a level that OPEC is not going to increase its output, because there is plenty of crude oil available. Prices are inching down.    But Americans have been made to believe that these high prices at the pump are a fact of life now.   So the prices stay high, and the petroleum industry is gouging the public.    But the federal government will not do anything about it, because big oil, as it's called, also contributes to the campaigns of politicians.

SENATOR CUDABACK:  One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS:    Ethanol is one of the most politicized industries in this country. Why will ADM continue to produce it when there's a glut overall?   Because they like the federal subsidy.    And if anything is done to compel the petroleum industry to use more ethanol as a blend, ADM is going to get the lion's share, just as is the case with farm subsidies now.    The big operations get the money; the little ones, who are supposed to be benefited, don't get anything. People have this romantic notion about saving the family farm, and federal subsidies doing it.   And the subsidies don't even reach them. And not all areas of agriculture get the subsidies.    They don't.    People in a state like Nebraska don't even understand.    I'll put my light on, Mr. President.

SENATOR CUDABACK:     Thank you, Senator Chambers.    (Visitors introduced.)  On with discussion.  Senator Beutler, followed by Senator Bourne.

SENATOR BEUTLER:  Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, I support this...all parts of this bill.   I hope it will have some significant positive effect on the various rural areas where it might be employed.  The one section of the bill that I'm most unfamiliar with is Senator Cunningham's section.  And I don't know if he's here now, but I wanted to go over a part of the bill with Senator Cunningham, if I could.

SENATOR CUDABACK:  Senator Cunningham.

SENATOR BEUTLER:  First of all, just one general question,  both