

NINETY-THIRD CONGRESS

HARLEY O. STAGGERS, W. VA., CHAIRMAN

TORBERT H. MACDONALD, MASS.	SAMUEL L. DEVINE, OHIO
JOHN JARMAN, OKLA.	ANCHER NELSEN, MINN.
JOHN E. MOSS, CALIF.	JAMES T. BROTHILL, N.C.
JOHN D. DINGELL, MICH.	JAMES HARVEY, MICH.
PAUL G. ROGERS, FLA.	TIM LEE CARTER, KY.
LIONEL VAN DEERLIN, CALIF.	CLARENCE J. BROWN, OHIO
J. J. PICKLE, TEX.	DAN KUYKENDALL, TENN.
FRED B. ROONEY, PA.	JOE SKUBITZ, KANS.
JOHN M. MURPHY, N.Y.	JAMES F. HASTINGS, N.Y.
DAVID E. SATTERFIELD III, VA.	JAMES M. COLLINS, TEX.
BROCK ADAMS, WASH.	LOUIS FREY, JR., FLA.
W. S. (BILL) STUCKEY, JR., GA.	JOHN WARE, PA.
PETER N. KYROS, MAINE	JOHN Y. MC COLLISTER, NEBR.
BOB ECKHARDT, TEX.	RICHARD G. SHOUP, MONT.
RICHARDSON PREYER, N.C.	BARRY M. GOLDWATER, JR., CALIF.
BERTRAM L. PODELL, N.Y.	NORMAN F. LENT, N.Y.
HENRY HELSTOSKI, N.J.	H. JOHN HEINZ III, PA.
JAMES W. SYMINGTON, MO.	WILLIAM H. HUDNUT III, IND.
CHARLES J. CARNEY, OHIO	SAMUEL H. YOUNG, ILL.
RALPH H. METCALFE, ILL.	
GOODLOE E. BYRON, MD.	
WILLIAM R. ROY, KANS.	
JOHN BRECKINRIDGE, KY.	

W. E. WILLIAMSON, CLERK

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce  
Room 2125, Rayburn House Office Building

Washington, D.C. 20515

January 10, 1974

Mr. Michael Proudfoot  
P. O. Box 474  
Ridgeley, West Virginia 26753

Dear Mr. Proudfoot:

Thank you very much for your letter of January 2. I appreciate your writing me and want to assure you of my desire to be of service whenever possible.

I have read your thought-provoking communication with a great deal of interest and can certainly understand your feelings with reference to the "energy crisis" and other "emergencies" which seem to be facing our Nation today.

I agree wholeheartedly with your sentiments about verifying whether or not there are actual shortages. We are doing our best to determine the correct information. In fact, that is one of the main reasons the House did not approve the Energy Emergency Act before adjournment of the First Session. This will be one of the first items on the agenda when the House reconvenes.

It is good to have your constructive suggestions and I do want to commend you. I shall certainly pass them along as I too feel our great democracy is being endangered.

Again, thanks a million for taking the time to write me. I am also deeply grateful for your comments in my behalf. It is my sincere hope to continue doing the very best job possible for the Second District, West Virginia and the Nation.

With every good wish and kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

HARLEY O. STAGGERS



JAN 4 1974


P. O. Box 474  
Ridgeley, WV 26753  
January 2, 1974

The Honorable Harley O. Staggers, M. C.  
House Office Building  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Sir:

There is only one word that applies to the current shortage of vital energy in the United States, and that word is "disgrace." Aside from the chronic lack of planning that, if done in the fifties and sixties, could have averted this crisis, the conduct of this Administration in meeting the dangers is appalling. The American people, now well-educated in the ways of government since the Watergate disclosures, now no longer believe that there really is a shortage of oil and gasoline. I am not even certain that I believe we are in the midst of a genuine shortage rather than a clever, monstrous ploy by the President's campaign backers, the oil barons, to eliminate smaller competition and squeeze the very life's-blood from their hapless, helpless clientele. Rumors persist that tankers, station-keeping off our coastlines, are waiting there because the on-shore tanks are full, or worse, as one angry woman put it to me, because they want the prices to ascend before they off-load their cargoes. The profit margins of the oil companies in the most recent quarter tabulated are up astronomically--Texaco with something like forty-eight percent increases, and Gulf with a staggering ninety-one. These last are verifiable facts, but about those nagging rumors--who is checking? Certainly not the Justice Department of an Administration that has proved itself time and again to be the most corrupt we've ever had, each disclosure, each scandal more disgusting than the one before.

I realize, however, that our dependence on oil as a fuel supply is too great, and that alternative sources of energy must be developed not only to supplement and replace oil as a fuel but to destroy the tight grip that the oil industry has on American politics. I am asking, therefore, that you help achieve several objectives. The first is a large-scale investigation--a real investigation by members of Congress without large oil holdings that might sway their judgment--of the oil shortage to determine its full extent and stop the nagging rumors once and for all. Second, I ask that the Congress set up a special committee on energy sources, uses, and practices that will review the Nixon plans and come up with some



constructive suggestions on its own. Third, I wish the Congress would encourage the Rodino committee to hasten and intensify its probe concerning the impeachment of the President. I think that I can go far beyond the easy excuse that I want to use Nixon as a scapegoat for our current troubles. He has helped to cause many of them. Since his inauguration as President, our country has seen deception, unwarranted secrecy, and pressure on our journalistic institutions unequalled since the Alien and Sedition Acts, and perhaps since the founding of our Republic.

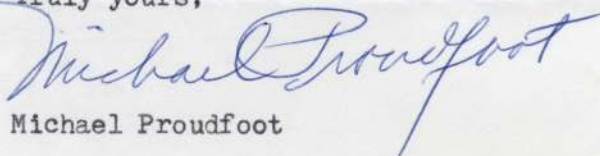
That is what it is all about: our Republic is in danger, more danger than ever before, because in all our past crises, we were able to trust our Government to see us through. We could believe what the President told us. We no longer can. Imagine, if you will, how terrible it would be to be in the middle of a domestic crisis only to find that a secret war had been waged by Americans in some other country: but this is precisely what happened in the midst of the Watergate mess when we learned of the secret Cambodian war. People are beginning to think they have no voice in governing the country--and when an electorate feels that way, a democracy is finished.

You are among the most powerful men in Congress. Your committee is one of ~~the most effective and prestigious.~~ The ~~time is upon you, and all the Congress, to find a Speaker or Majority Leader~~ who can bring the full weight of Congressional power to bear when the Executive can no longer do its job or when it is so corrupt that it cannot be trusted to do anything. Right now, we are plagued by both.

This is not a letter of criticism of you or the job you have done in the past--certainly not. It is more of an entreaty, in which I am nearly begging you and the rest of the Congressional leadership to take what is rightfully yours for the good of America.

Thank you for your attention; good luck in your endeavors.

Truly yours,

  
Michael Proudfoot