

machine gun emplacement, he stands up, he eliminates three of the enemy and throws a hand grenade in and destroys the machine gun emplacement. But it does not stop there.

They go to the next hill and after reaching the crest of that hill, once again they are pinned down by enemy fire, and once again Private Crawford decides unilaterally to do what he can do to save the platoon. He moves forward once again in the face of intense fire and here, instead of one machine gun emplacement we have two machine gun emplacements, but they are side-by-side. As Private Crawford crawls up, he goes first to the left and is able to engage in a hand grenade throw, throwing a hand grenade into the first emplacement, destroys that one and then stands, throws a second hand grenade and using machine gun fire of his own is able to kill the members or eliminate the second machine gun emplacement. But the machine gun was still able to be used, so he jumps into the emplacement, takes over the German machine gun and then turns it on the German troops who were then retreating and was able to provide cover for his platoon while they move into a safer location.

That takes a lot of guts, and for that he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. His passing is something that we all see with sadness, but I can tell my colleagues that during his 81 years, he lived a good life. He was properly recognized by his country for being what an American is all about, and that is putting duty and honor ahead of self, and that is exactly what Private Crawford did.

GASOLINE PRICES OUT OF CONTROL

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, if I could move to another subject. I want to visit with my colleagues a little more, and I have read with some interest about the administration's policy on these high gasoline prices. I am not sure and, in fact, I would guess that the President and the administration and probably all of the cabinet officials, I would be surprised if they pump their own gas.

Mr. Speaker, I have news for my colleagues out there. Somebody better take a look at that price at the gas pump. Now, I know our economy is in the best shape it has been in the history of the country, and we could go into that in some detail. So it gives cause to some people to say oh, well, it is just something we have to live with. But there are a lot of people out there who have jobs, who are just getting by, and that high gasoline price has a huge impact on them. The cost of oil does not just affect gasoline in one's vehicle, by the way, it affects everything we use, everything we use in this country: medicine, production, plastics, rubber, generation of heat, generation of energy, you name it, the list could go on and on and on. This high price of

gasoline is something that the administration's policy, in my opinion, needs to be more focused upon.

Now, it is not like they are ignoring it, but they are not standing up to the cartel. What do you mean the cartel? What is the cartel? Let us talk about what a cartel is first.

I pulled it out of the dictionary. A cartel: a combination of independent, commercial or industrial enterprises, a combination of industrial or commercial enterprises designed to limit competition and fix prices.

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, talked about a cartel, and the cartel, of course, as my colleagues know, is OPEC. So first of all, let us define what we are dealing with out there and then we will move on, because that helps us have a clear focus on the problem and then we can move on to what I think some of the solutions are.

Let me point out that I think the administration understands, somewhat, the problem. I think they have discounted it because we have such a good economy, and I do not think the administration, the Democrat administration has moved to come up with any kind of solution. I will point out that the policy of the Secretary of Energy is to go over to OPEC and negotiate with them, and the Department expects the price to fall sometime in the future. It actually fell a little today. Well, that does not take a rocket scientist. I think OPEC is realizing, and they are right about at the point where the ball will bounce to bring it down just a little. These negotiations are not going to result in something coming down. The price of oil is probably going to go down anyway in the next couple of months, but not to the extent that it should. That cartel still operates.

How do we deal with a cartel? That is what the administration ought to be looking at. That is the key here. How do we deal with a cartel like OPEC? Let us go back just for a moment, because I know it is somewhat boring, perhaps, but let us look at the books. Probably, in my opinion, one of the greatest philosophers and writers about capitalism in this country, or in the history of the world was Adam Smith. Adam Smith says a cartel, he did not use the word cartel, he called it a monopoly, "A monopoly granted either to an individual or to a trading company has the same effect as a secret in trade or manufactures. The monopolists, by keeping the market constantly understocked, by never fully supplying the effectual demand, sell their commodities much above the natural price, and raise their compensation, whether they consist in wages or profit, greatly above the natural rate."

So we have a system in balance out there. The natural rate is what Adam Smith refers to. But the monopoly allows one to exceed the natural rate.

"The price of a monopoly is upon every occasion the highest which can be gotten. The natural price, or the price that is the result of the market,

on the contrary, is the lowest which can be taken, not upon every occasion, but for any considerable time together. That is the one that is struck by competition. The one that is upon every occasion the highest which can be squeezed out of the buyers, or which, it is supposed, they will consent to give. The other is the lowest which the sellers can commonly afford to take, and at the same time that the sellers can afford to take, but at the same time continue their business." That is an important last few words, continue their business.

My colleagues may be able to pay this price of oil for some period of time, but can we continue our course of business?

"Such enhancements of the market price may last as long as the regulations of police which give occasion to them.

"Monopoly, besides, is a great enemy to good management." Let me repeat that. "Monopoly is a great enemy to good management, which can never be universally established but in consequence of that free and universal competition which forces everybody to have recourse to it for the sake of self defense."

What does all that say? What it says is we have a system in balance out there and if we allow the cartel to proceed on the basis of which this cartel called OPEC is proceeding, these gas prices which are not their natural price, they are the highest price you can pull out, when you allow that cartel to exist without some type of repercussion, it upsets the apple cart, it upsets the market cart, and that is where it comes down. The interpretation is maybe not for those of you who are wealthy, but for those people in this society who are not wealthy, they are the ones that are stung first and they are the ones that are stung the hardest.

I can tell my colleagues that many times in the chamber we deal perhaps with the wealthier class of society, but there is huge part out there that we cannot ignore. There are a lot of people out there that this gas price is hurting and it is stinging, and the administration has an obligation to stand up to this cartel. The administration's policy should be very clear on its action.

The United States has allowed itself to become more and more dependent on foreign oil over the years. There are a number of different reasons. One, the United States has become much less friendly in exploration on its own continent. In fact, many other countries are saying, why should we allow the United States to come into our country to do exploration for oil and take our oil while they are reluctant to do exploration in their own country. That is one factor that has caused our dependence, more dependence on foreign oil.

The other, in my opinion, is that the administration's policy is asleep at the gas pump, let us put it that way. They have been awakened recently, not suddenly; it is kind of like a bear that is

in hibernation: Kind of a slow awareness that there is a gas price problem out there on the market. There is a gas price problem for the average working American, and it impacts their families and it impacts education and it impacts jobs and it impacts our economy.

□ 2215

What do we do about OPEC? Well, let us talk about OPEC first of all. What are the countries of OPEC? I think we should take a look at that: Algeria, Libya, Indonesia, Nigeria, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Venezuela. But there are few of them I want to point out specifically. That is the cartel. Those are the countries.

Remember one of the countries I mentioned, Kuwait. Remember how, just a few short years ago, it was American forces that got together and led international forces to take Iraq and force them out of their invasion of this country, Kuwait. We lost American soldiers. We lost young American soldiers, men and women, for this country Kuwait. This is how they show appreciation; they become a member of a cartel to stick it to the United States.

Now, I am not saying they are not entitled to a fair price. The market determines a fair price. Everybody is entitled to a fair price if the product has demand and if you supply what the consumers want. But to go outside the model of the marketplace and put together a monopoly which, by the way, is illegal in our country under most circumstances, to put that together under the form of a cartel, that is where we are out of kilter here.

Now, what do we do? What kind of relationship do we have with some of these countries? Well, some of these countries, we do not trade with them. Iran, although my colleague, I believe the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN), noted that last week the Clinton administration's new policy is on caviar and some other products, the United States has now opened the market to Iran. So while this cartel is forcing gas prices to unprecedented highs in this country, the administration's policy is opening up more free trade with Iran.

Let us talk a little about some of the exports. This is kind of a two-way street. In my opinion, the Democratic policy here is kind of close your eyes, it will go down here by its natural self. Let us pretend it is not happening. Stall for a few weeks. Then if we get in a real crisis right before the election, our policy ought to be stand forward and hammer it. But right now, let us just kind of hope it goes away on its own. Well, even if the price drops a little, even if this price goes down, this thing is not going to go away.

We have got to use some leverage. Do not be mistaken. All of the leverage does not belong to OPEC. It does not belong to that cartel. The United States of America and other free countries in this world have some leverage in this situation.

Number one, we ought to go back to our friends, like Kuwait and say, how many years ago was it that we came into your country and gave you your country back? It cost American lives. It cost Americans billions of dollars. But we did it, one, because it was the right thing to do; but, two, we think there should be some appreciation in the future, not to put together this cartel. So that is one point of leverage, we can go to Kuwait.

But we can go to any number of countries. We can go to Algeria. We can go to Indonesia. We can go to Iraq. We can go to Nigeria. We can go to Saudi Arabia. We can go to the UAE and say, hey, do you know what, we do buy oil from you, but you buy products from us. You buy American products. Then we ought to take a look at what those American products are.

Do my colleagues know a lot of the oil that comes out of the ground that OPEC takes out of the ground, they do it with American ingenuity. It is American ingenuity that takes a lot of that oil out of that ground over there in the OPEC nations. So they are using our product.

Take, for example, the steel casing that they put into the well, the drill bits that they go down into the well, the engineering technology of how to make it all come together, a lot of that is American product.

In my opinion, the administration has some leverage there. The Democratic administration needs to stand up and say, wait a minute, what is good for the goose is good for the gander. You guys want to stick it to us on the price of oil. Maybe we ought to stand back up and renegotiate what the price of engineering services from America are. Maybe we ought to talk about the price of American products upon which you are dependent. Maybe we ought to do a little negotiation on products versus products.

Oh, it is great to send over a Secretary and have a cup of coffee and talk to them and say, look, you are really offending us. Let us lower these prices. You have got to get tough. This is the business world out there.

Do not discount this cartel. These are smart people. They figured out America is pretty easy to stick it to because they do not fight back. It is pretty easy to negotiate with this administration because they do not stand up and get tough on some of these issues. I am saying you have got to change that policy.

I think we here in the House should encourage the Clinton administration to be more direct, more forthright, and more forceful, especially stress on the last, more forceful on the leverage that we have with these OPEC nations. Our consumers will be better for it.

Now, I know that the President's policy came out in the last couple weeks and says, well, we need more energy conservation, and we need more solar energy, and we need more efficiency. That is all well and good. I mean, that

is fine. I agree with some of those things. That is not going to happen tomorrow. That is not going to happen next week.

We are spending hundreds of millions of dollars trying to do that right now. Do my colleagues know what, the Government has really never come up with the solution. The people that have come up with the best solutions are the people that have the most to lose. Car efficiencies are not determined by the Government or invented by the Government. They are created by the car manufacturers who know that the consumers out there want more efficiency in their automobiles.

But the point I am trying to make here is that this administration, with our support, ought to stand up to OPEC and say, hey, we are going to talk about these American products. Maybe we ought to put a special fee on American products, maybe 1,000 percent fee or something on those products until you begin to negotiate a little on your oil prices.

As I said, these are smart people. The only way, in my opinion, you can negotiate with tough people is you send tough people in to negotiate with them. You cannot go in to a tough negotiator, show your hand, and frankly, act weak. They smell weakness. They can see it a mile away. They are like a good poker player. They can sense it a long time before you know they have sensed it.

We do not have any reason to go in there with weakness. The United States of America is a strong country. It is a country that has a lot of leverage on this cartel. It is a country that ought to use it so we can bring those gasoline prices down at the pump so that we can get a barrel of oil down to a price that we are not going to impact everything from education to our economy.

Now, we say education. Now that we get education in here, I just saw it the other day that some school has had to curtail their field trips because of the price of fuel to take their buses on these trips. They have had to cut back. That is the only place they thought they could cut back. It is having an impact, I say to the President. The administration ought to know this.

Now, I know in Washington, D.C., there is a lot of black limousines and big fancy cars, and the price of gasoline may not be such a big deal with a lot of the people in the Government. But I am telling my colleagues, even here in Washington, D.C., there is a lot of people that go to work every day that do not drive in a black limousine; and there is a lot of people being impacted by these prices. I think the administration has an obligation to be tough, to get in there and wrestle with these people.

Take a look at what we ship Kuwait, for example. Again, as a reminder, this is the country that we went to war for a few years back, 7 or 8 or 9 years ago. It is a country that we gave lives for.

Here is what Kuwait buys from us: aircraft and associated equipment, civil engineering products, contractor products, pumps, air or other gas compressors, fans, motor vehicles, chemical products, analysis and measuring tools, instruments, heating and cooling equipment, pumps for liquids.

Every category I just mentioned to my colleagues is necessary for the production of oil. Yet, the administration has not mentioned one of those products to the best of our knowledge in their negotiations with OPEC about this cartel that has been formed to stick it to the free world.

So I hope that, although I am not sure, I would hope that some message gets through to the administration that we have got to be a little tougher on these prices, that these prices are having a huge impact, a huge impact on the consumer in America.

Today, we just saw the interest rate go up another quarter of a percent. Well, this is just the beginning of our problems if we do not do something about that gasoline price and the cost of oil.

This last weekend, Mr. Speaker, there was an interesting article in the Denver Post. We are moving to a new subject. I want to talk about guns here for a little while. Last week, I talked about guns. I talked about OPEC as well, because I have not seen anything positive happen in regards to OPEC.

But let us talk about guns. It is a sensitive issue. It is an issue that everybody in the country is concerned about. It is an issue that responsible gun owners are concerned about. It is an issue that manufacturers of guns are concerned about. It is an issue that the Government talks about being concerned about. It is an issue that every one of us in these Chambers are concerned about.

What is responsibility in gun ownership? What is government responsibility in regards to gun ownership? What is the manufacturer's responsibility in regards to gun ownership? Let us visit for a few minutes about that.

Let me begin by saying that the Denver Post ran an article this last weekend. In the Federal Government, we have an agency whose focus is to look and to inspect on behalf of the Government people who sell guns, illegal weapons, and so on. It is called the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, not an agency that has a good reputation, as my colleagues know, because of the disaster at Waco and a number of other issues. They do not exactly have the kind of reputation that the Federal Bureau of Investigation enjoys.

But the ATF, that is the agency we are talking about, they have responsibilities. As I mentioned to my colleagues, when we talk about guns, we want to look at a number of different responsibilities: first, the gun owner; second, the gun manufacturer; third, the gun retailer; and, fourth, the Government.

So the Government's primary agency here is the ATF. Those are the people

that go out into the field. They go, for example, to a gun shop and see if the owner of the gun shop, the proprietor of the gun shop, is in compliance with the law.

Well, the Denver Post is a major newspaper in the State of Colorado. We have two major papers statewide, the Rocky Mountain News and the Denver Post. The Denver Post ran, I guess, a full disclosure or full story on the ATF and what they have done in Colorado. I will tell my colleagues, when they are done reading that story, it is the prime example of bureaucrats that are not doing a darn thing in my opinion. That is a bureaucracy that we ought to take a very close look at.

Look, I am not one of these fanatics that says, get rid of the ATF, or the Government does not have a role in responsible gun ownership. We do have a role in responsible gun ownership. But we ought to begin by cleaning our own house. My colleagues ought to read this story about the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in the State of Colorado.

Let me go through some of it for my colleagues. The title of the story, "Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms called slow to act."

"Federal regulators let two Colorado gun stores stay in business long after investigators reported they had sold guns to criminals and were operated by men forbidden to possess the weapons."

So the Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, this bureaucrat agency that we have got, knew that the owners or the proprietors of these gun shops, one, should not be selling guns, had violated criminal statutes, and, yet, they continue to allow them to operate in their operation.

Two examples. One of them happens to be in my district, by the way. Lakewood, Colorado, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms granted a new firearms license to one Lawrence Lockert after State investigators concluded he had repeatedly sold handguns to people disqualified on background checks, including the convicted felon found running his shop.

□ 2230

Lockert kept the license, despite a 1998 restraining order prohibiting him from having weapons as well as bond conditions regarding that restraining order and a 1999 guilty plea to domestic violence charge.

A further comment on that: The records show that the ATF was informed that Lockert sold handguns to people with criminal records nearly 4 years before the agency took action.

So in this Lakewood case, they knew there was a problem. The Colorado Bureau of Investigation, which is a good solid agency in Colorado, informed Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms that the problem existed, Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms knew that the problem existed, and they sat on it for 4 years. For 4 years.

How can we in Washington, how can those of us in elected office from our

local States talk about responsibility of the gun owners when the government itself continues to drop the football on the very basic laws that are already in existence? How can we talk about rushing to the House floor to pass more and more gun laws when the current gun laws we have are being ignored by our own agencies? We need to clean house, and Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms is a place to start.

Let me go further. In CBI, which I mentioned before is the Colorado Bureau of Investigation, they found 10 instances in Lakewood in 18 months in which customers had acquired handguns despite being denied criminal background checks. So, remember, we put in criminal background checks. I happen to agree with that. I do not have a problem with background checks. We put that in effect and, despite the fact that is in place, this dealer ignored it on 10 different occasions. Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms found out he ignored it on 10 different occasions and just turned the other way.

Now, when they were asked for a response, they gave two excuses. One of the excuses was, well, we just kind of lost track of the case. Now, that sounds reassuring. That sounds pretty good to hear from the government. We have a problem out there. We have somebody who ought not to be selling guns, it is against the law, who violated the law on a number of occasions, and they just kind of lost track of the case.

The second excuse here, and I should point out here that I used to be a police officer, and I know when there is a problem, when a mistake is made, the easiest thing to do, as a cop, is to blame it on lack of resources. It is kind of like education. We never hear about the fact we need higher standards. People say, well, we did not have enough money. And that is exactly what Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms said to the Denver Post. We had very limited resources.

Well, that does not work this time. Does not work, Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms. That agency has received increase after increase after increase in their budget, and they are still negligent out there with some pretty critical cases.

Let me talk about the second case. Delta, Colorado, in my district. It is a great community. I hope some of my colleagues have an opportunity to visit. But let me talk about the situation with a gun dealer out there. In Delta, State and Federal agents discovered in 1996 that a man in prison three times on kidnapping and weapons charges was operating a store with a Federal license to sell guns. The ATF let the shop, licensed in the names of his wife and son, sell guns until its license expired more than a year later. Despite the fact there were clear grounds for charges, no charges were filed.

I mean, come on. We need to go after these people. And we need an agency that can do it. Look, I represent the

West, and we have a very independent nature out there. We are not sold that we need big government coming into our back yard there to help us. We are not sold that we need more and more regulations. We happen to believe there are a lot of laws on the books that if enforced could go a long ways towards solving the tragedies that we all acknowledge exist out there. But, dadgummit, every one of us have a right to look at these agencies and tell these bureaucrats to get off dead center.

Today, I am sure that the director of the ATF had on his desk a copy of the article from the Denver Post yesterday morning when he got in, I would hope by 9 a.m. in the morning. When he got in and looked at that article, he should have been on the phone 2 hours later saying, all right, which agents were responsible for this? What kind of action have these agents taken? What is being done by the supervisor for the Colorado region to make sure it never happens again? What is being done to make sure it does not repeat itself? I mean this guy ought to be, or this gal, ought to be enraged. Whoever runs that agency ought to be enraged.

My bet is not much has happened over there at the slow moving Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms. Now, I am not talking about all of the agents. We have some good people that work for that agency out there. But we have to look at the historical basis. We look at performance. We look at standards. In my opinion, the Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms, on a number of occasions, whether we talk about Waco or any number of cases, but when we talk about Colorado, the ATF has failed us. They have failed the people of the State of Colorado and they have failed the people they work for, which are the people of the United States. We are not enforcing the laws that are on the books.

Well, that moves me into the next subject, a subject that is dear to my heart. We will have a bill introduced tomorrow by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. McCOLLUM), the prime sponsor. It is a good bill and it highlights a project that I talked about last week, but I think it is important enough to talk about it again. We are trying to do everything we can and all of us, colleagues, every one of us in this chamber, we need to help step up public awareness of this project.

This project, Colorado Project Exile, now, obviously the bill the gentleman from Florida is introducing tomorrow is Project Exile from a national level, but I want to talk a little more about what we are doing in Colorado. We all know that the Columbine situation that occurred there. We know the sensitivities that are happening across this country. So Colorado is a good place to talk about. It is a State that prides itself on its independence. It is a State in which a lot of its citizens own weapons. It is a State that has belief in the second amendment of the Constitu-

tion, but it is also a State that has stepped forward and taken a very aggressive stance on its Project Exile.

Colorado's Project Exile has received bipartisan support from Democrats and Republicans. Our Democrat Attorney General Ken Salazar and his staff, very competent, they are in the lead on this. Tom Strickland, Democrat U.S. Attorney, he is the guy that put this project together in the State of Colorado. Our governor, who in my opinion is the finest governor in the history of the State of Colorado, Bill Owens, and his cabinet, they are behind us 100 percent and helping us with resources. Every sheriff's department, to the best of my knowledge, every police department, every newspaper in the State of Colorado, has endorsed this project.

The beauty of this project is it does not require one more law. Not one more law. It is not saying, U.S. House of Representatives get together and put together some more gun legislation. It is not going to the State legislature of the State of Colorado and saying we do not have enough laws on guns. It is a focused effort to take a look at the laws we have and how can we enforce that to bring about responsibility.

Now, I can say, and I should say, to do credit to Richmond, Virginia, that is where Project Exile got kind of its original start, to the best of my knowledge. What happened in that community is that in 1997, Richmond, Virginia, suffered the second highest per capita murder rate in the country. They implemented this project, what they called Project Exile. And why the words Project Exile? Obviously, project is self-explanatory. Exile is, hey, you do the crime, you do the time kind of philosophy; except here, you break the law, we exile you to prison. You are going to pay the price. There is going to be a consequence for breaking the law.

And there ought to be a consequence. And the consequence in Richmond, Virginia, is going to be immediate. It is going to be severe and it will mean something. And in Richmond, Virginia, we are going to go out and do public awareness. And in Virginia we are going to go out and have the public help us with public awareness. Just like the crime marches program. We want the people to get the word out.

The second amendment is an amendment worth standing up for. But if someone abuses the responsibility, if they are violating the law, they are going to pay a price for it because we do not want to tolerate it. It is kind of like good cop, bad cop. The best thing good cops could do, the best thing good cops could do, having been a former cop, is get rid of the bad cops. That is the best thing to do. It is the same thing here. The best those of us who believe in the second amendment could do is do something about the people who violate the law. And that is what Project Exile is about.

In 1998, after they initiated this, their homicides dropped by a third. Al-

most immediately their homicides dropped by a third. Their project involved Federal, State and local authority, and so does ours in Colorado, and we will go through that in a little more detail here in a bit. Under Project Exile in Virginia, 390 defendants were prosecuted in Federal Court in a very short period of time.

What we did in Colorado is we have adopted the same program, and this is a poster that I have here that is a duplicate of billboards that we have gone out with throughout the State of Colorado. And let me tell my colleagues that we have also had not just participation from Tom Strickland and Ken Salazar and Bill Owens and Russell George and Ray Powers, who is president of the Senate, president of the House respectively, we have also got help from the business community. We have got help from the citizens of Colorado.

We have made this a partnership. We have got assistance from the Federal government. And the McCollum bill, which will be introduced tomorrow on Project Exile, will go a long ways in helping make the Federal Government a bigger partner. But we have taken the U.S. Attorney's Office, who has coordinated it with the State Attorney General's office, with the State governor, and then we have gone to the business community and said help us fund this advertising campaign; help us get out the message that in Colorado if you break the law, you pay the price, and help us pay the price.

That is why I am so upset with the ATF. They have dropped the ball in Colorado and, darn it, they ought to get back there and do their job. They have an obligation to us to do their job.

Well, what our exile law does, and, as I said, it does not require one more new law, no more new laws, it goes out and says, hey, first of all, we want to make sure every police officer in the State of Colorado knows what the Federal gun laws are. We are going on the assumption, and it is a good assumption to make, that every police officer in the State of Colorado already knows what their municipal laws are in regards to guns, they already know what their State laws are in regards to guns, but they probably do not, understandably, know quickly what the Federal gun laws are. So we are giving them each a laminated placard, just like this, and very briefly it states what the Federal gun laws are. So if they make a stop or they have a contact with a suspect who has a weapon, they can very quickly scan this card. And if they see a violation, they can do something with it.

What we have decided to do under our Project Exile is, any time a suspect is arrested with a gun violation or some kind of criminal activity that involves a gun, we immediately coordinate our municipal laws that are already in existence, our local laws, county laws that are already in existence, and our State and Federal laws

that are already in existence. We then send it over to what we call our gun squad. The gun squad is a squad made up of prosecutors in these different agencies, primarily led by the U.S. Attorney's Office, again Tom Strickland. And what they do is they quickly do an evaluation on these violations and say, hey, this fella violated a Federal law. We can be tougher under the Federal law than we can the State law, so let us prosecute this in the Federal courts.

In other words, what we are doing is we are putting an awareness campaign out there that if a violation of the law in Colorado in regards to guns, is going to be met with the toughest law we have on the books, we are going after that violator with the toughest law we have on the books. Why? Because the people who are breaking the law, frankly, are putting a bad reputation on those who are following the law.

And, remember, possession of the weapon is not the big problem, it is misuse of the weapon. A lot of times in these chambers what we focus on is possession of the weapon. It is a diversion. It is a red herring. What we need to focus on is the misuse. And that is what Project Exile does.

Now, in our public awareness campaign we put, pack an illegal gun, pack your bags for prison. Report illegal guns, and we give a 1-800 number. One of the more successful programs we have had, as my colleagues know in their own neighborhoods, is crime watchers.

□ 2245

You call up, we give 1-800 names to turn in people. We offer rewards. We do not have to know your name; Crime Stoppers, different programs, Project Thief, things like that.

We think we can reach the same kind of success here. If we know somebody has a fully automatic weapon, it is obviously illegal. Call us on the 1-800 number, we will go after them. We have got response teams. We are going to respond to this, just like we respond to bank robbers. The alarm goes off, we respond. We hit it hard. We hit it fast.

There was a day where bank robberies were out of control in this country. We put together a responsive effort; that is what we are attempting to do here too. We have got some bad characters out there who are abusing the responsibilities, who are breaking the law, abusing the responsibilities as a citizen; we want to make them pay the price.

Project Exile in Colorado is working, and it is only a few months old. We have seen dramatic results. We have seen excellent cooperation between the different law enforcement agencies. It is working. We did not pass the new law in Colorado in regards to this. We have gone into the books, we dusted them off, and it is working.

We are also advocating and going after, and kudos to the Denver Post in Colorado for looking at the Federal agencies that are responsible and have

a responsibility in this partnership who are sitting on their duffs, and that is exactly what the ATF in Colorado has done.

You can be assured that when I go to Colorado, the ATF is not going to be very happy with me. I do not care. Do your job. You have got an obligation.

Back to Project Exile. Let me say a few concluding remarks. This is important. This will work. I know that there has been a lot of propaganda out there. There has been a lot of people on both sides of the aisle. You have got the handgun control outfits. You have got the NRA, all of these people.

There has been a lot of discussion out there about guns. Most of the discussions that are taking place out there, especially in regards to more laws, and more laws are not going to have the kind of impact that we are led to believe they will have. Do not be misled. It feels good. A lot of the propositions that come before us on this House floor are feel-good propositions. They make you think that you are doing something to help address this gun violence problem we have in this country.

There is not a Member in this Chamber that does not want to do something about this violence. We are sickened by it just like our constituents. We want to do something, but do not be misled on some of these feel-good bills. This is not a misleading deal. This is not feel-good.

This is, where is the meat? There is the meat right there. Project Exile has the meat. Project Exile raises the stakes for the people that want to break the law. Project Exile incorporates a partnership, our citizens, our constituents, our businesses, to help us pay for those billboards, our law enforcement agencies, in coordination to go after these people. It will work, give it a chance.

It worked in Richmond, Virginia. It is working in Colorado. It is going to work clear across this country as more and more communities adopt the Project Exile philosophy.

Let me move to an entirely different subject, one I want to visit for a minute about the death tax. It is kind of interesting. I met a young person today. I guess this young person was about 15 years old. He talked to me about his family, his grandpa. Apparently, his grandfather is sick or has passed away; and he said, my family is getting hit real hard with this tax. Can you tell me a little about the tax?

Well, I did not have an opportunity to visit with the young person, but I hope to later. Let me tell you what this country does. As you know, we have to have taxes. Obviously, we have to have taxes in this country. We need to fund our defense. We need to fund our transportation, et cetera, et cetera. But years and years ago, because some people in this country thought that other people in this country were too wealthy and that we really ought to transfer wealth instead of through work or instead of through the ADAM

SMITH philosophy, we ought to transfer wealth by going to the wealthy people and saying we taxed you throughout your life; but upon death, we are going to go ahead and tax property that has already been taxed. That is a clever way to redistribute wealth.

Let us just defy the age-old proven theory of ADAM SMITH and the open market. Let us just transfer, redistribute wealth by taking from the rich and giving to the poor, the old Robin Hood philosophy. That is kind of the beginnings of the death tax in this country.

Is the death tax justified? No. It defies the logic of what our system is built upon. We all carry a fair share, but redistribution of wealth through taxation does not work. What does the death tax do?

I will tell what kind of impact, and colleagues you know this. If you do not, go out there and look at any small business in this country, if they have been in business very long, if their business has grown very fast, or if the homes that your constituents reside in for very long, they can easily be facing the punitive action of the Federal Government coming in upon their death and imposing a tax on their estate. It is called the death tax. It is unfair.

Now, remember it would be fair, I would guess, if you had some property out there where the fair share of tax had not been paid on it and you came in and said, you know, you have not paid your fair share of tax, so we are going to assess a tax. But that is not what happened in the death tax. In the death tax, you are being taxed, with the exception of some IRA accounts; but that is very limited. You are being taxed on property that you have already paid taxes on at least once, probably two or three times.

It is devastating. In districts like mine, where we have lots of ranches; we have lots of small family operations. These families cannot go out and afford the life insurance. I had one fellow say to me, look, just tell these ranchers to go out and buy life insurance, so when they pass away they can still pass the property on to their family, because the life insurance pays for the taxes.

I said wake up, you are going on the assumption that there is enough money made in ranching and farming and small business to pay the kind of premiums that are necessary to give the Government that kind of money. It does not happen.

And what happens in Colorado? For example, take a ranch, take a family ranch, one of the things that we are proud of in Colorado, you are proud of in Pennsylvania, you are proud anywhere that you have got open space, is we have families who have generation after generation worked and tilled the land that they support themselves and their neighbors off of, and they take a lot of pride in that.

Now, they face all kinds of obstacles in being a small rancher, a farmer, the

market, number one, the commodity prices falling, the costs of doing business. Do you think on top of it we ought to give them the biggest obstacle of all, and that is their own government coming in and saying, upon your death, we are going to tax you again on this property?

In Colorado, when you go into a small ranch and you do that, you know what then, instead of ranching being, perhaps, the use of the property that is desired, it then develops into highest and best use theory, which means you take that 3,000-acre ranch and divide it up into 35-acre partials and build homes all over it. It is the only way really in a lot of circumstances, if you do not have the wealth to afford life insurance, you can get out of this taxation.

I want people to be aware that there is a distinct difference between the Democrats, the administration's policy on the estate tax, the death tax, and the Republicans. The Republicans have, and I am not trying to be partisan here, but this is a partisan issue. This death tax has become a partisan issue. The Republicans are saying that this is an unfair tax on its face.

It is punitive on its face. The Democratic administration has come in and now this year in their budget, in the Clinton-Gore budget, they have proposed an increase in the estate tax, an increase, not help us get rid of it. I mean, the least they could do is help neutralize it or not raise it, but the Clinton-Gore administration has come in and said we are going to raise the estate tax.

And for any of my colleagues that might shake their heads, cannot believe it, take a look at the budget proposal. It is in there, a \$9.5 billion increase. The estate tax is fundamentally unfair, and we should do something about that.

In conclusion, as you know, we covered a bunch of different topics this evening. If I were to say what was the most important, it is, one, Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, get out there and do your job in Colorado. You have got the resources. Do not use it as an excuse. The people deserve more from your agency.

Number two, Project Exile will work. Help us. Adopt it in your States; talk to your constituents about Project Exile. And, congratulations, by the way, to all of the partners in our Project Exile partnership in Colorado, whether it is Tom Strickland; Ken Salazar; my friend, Bill Owens; Ross George; Ray Powers; whoever it is out there, you are doing a good. We are going to make it work.

□ 2300

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WELDON of Florida). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 11 p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 2317

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WELDON of Florida) at 11 o'clock and 17 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF S. 1287, NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2000

Mr. DIAZ-BALART, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-532) on the resolution (H. Res. 444) providing for consideration of the Senate bill (S. 1287) to provide for the storage of spent nuclear fuel pending completion of the nuclear waste repository, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3822, OIL PRICE REDUCTION ACT OF 2000

Mr. DIAZ-BALART, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-533) on the resolution (H. Res. 445) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3822) to reduce, suspend, or terminate any assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 and the Arms Export Control Act to each country determined by the President to be engaged in oil price fixing to the detriment of the United States economy, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BECERRA (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of official business.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of being unavoidably detained.

Mrs. LOWEY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and the balance of the week on account of official business.

Mr. McNULTY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of official business.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and the balance of the week on account of official business.

Mr. CRANE (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today and the next month on account of medical reasons.

Mr. GREENWOOD (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today and the balance of the week on account of participating in a CODEL to India.

Mr. ROYCE (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today and the balance of the week on account of participating in a CODEL to India.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. FORD, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. BERKLEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. RAMSTAD) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. NORWOOD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MILLER of Florida, for 5 minutes, March 22.

Mr. RAMSTAD, for 5 minutes, today, March 22, and March 23.

Mr. CAMP, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, March 28.

Mrs. BIGGERT, for 5 minutes, March 22.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SOUDER, for 5 minutes, March 27.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, today and March 22.

Mr. PAUL, for 5 minutes, March 22.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REFERRED

A concurrent resolution of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. Con. Res. 96. Concurrent resolution recognizing and honoring the members of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) who are being awarded the AHEPA Medal for Military Service for service in the Armed Forces of the United States; to the Committee on Armed Services.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 17 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 22, 2000, at 10:30 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

6694. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Importation of Pork and Pork Products From Yucatan and Sonora, Mexico [Docket No. 97-079-2] (RIN: 0579-AA91) received January 20, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C.