

Madam Speaker, I commend the commitment of Armenian-Americans who continue to strive for world recognition of one of the greatest atrocities of the 20th century.

EARTH DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, as one who came to Congress committed to having the Federal Government be a better partner in making our communities more livable, making our families safe, healthy and economically secure, this last weekend in the celebration of Earth Day was a special time.

Every April 22, around the world, there is recognition of the Earth Day celebrations. This was an undertaking that was founded in 1970 by then U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson, who proposed a nationwide environmental protest to, quote, shake up the political establishment and force this issue on to the national agenda.

Well, Senator Nelson succeeded, I think, even beyond his expectations, as he was able to encourage this recognition internationally. I think it was appropriate that he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his role as the founder of Earth Day.

This year, as we reviewed the news accounts, there was a great deal of energy, excitement and indeed some good news for the environment around the world. Part of it was the environmental activism itself. There were over 800 rallies held across the United States, and internationally there were more than 100. In honor of Earth Day, the Wilderness Society named the White House as an object of their future concerns about national parks and monuments.

There was in Washington, D.C. a forum on solar energy held to celebrate the advances made in the technology, economics and prospects for the use of solar energy. There was a massive Trees Are My Friends campaign that helped to educate urban residents about the value of street trees in the urban forest canopy, helping residents connect with tree care and planning activities in their community.

This last weekend, I joined with people in my community in Portland, Oregon, to celebrate a successful tree-planting undertaking. They have successfully planted now 207,000 trees. During the month of April, citizens in a variety of cities in the West, including Portland, Seattle and Denver, were engaged in races and walks to raise the awareness of climate change, to help stop global climate warming.

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There were rallies in India by cycling organizations to push for the creation

of no vehicle zones in major cities. Additionally, there were events to protest deforestation in Mexico, children rallying for the protection of endangered species in Estonia and Russia; and there were tree plantings in Burmese refugee camps in Thailand.

There was good news on the State level. One in particular that caught my attention was in the State of California where the Department of Fish and Game has issued draft regulations to protect sea otters and other marine mammals from deadly gill nets. These regulations are going to make a huge difference in the protection of marine mammals.

In Massachusetts, that State will become the first on a State level to limit carbon dioxide emissions from power plants under their own clean air rules. The new standard, which will go into effect in June, will also limit mercury emissions, acid rain causing sulfur dioxide, and smog-causing nitrogen oxide. It will apply to the State's dirtiest power plants that are contributing to global warming.

There were very significant developments in the Pacific Northwest, including in British Columbia where the government of that province, in coordination with environmental groups, logging companies and the first nations of Canada announced the plan to prohibit or defer logging on 3.5 million acres of the Great Bear Rain Forest, an area 4 times the size of Rhode Island.

This is one of the largest rain forest conservation efforts in North American history and will protect the only home of the white Spirit Bear, a rare subspecies of the black bear.

Madam Speaker, on occasion I have taken to this floor because I have taken offense with some of the activities of this administration as it relates to the environment. Admittedly, I was more than a little concerned when some of our predictions were borne out with the release of President Bush's recommended budget. He has decided to recommend major cuts in the EPA enforcement budget and to slash by 87 percent a global tropical forest program which he had endorsed on the campaign trail, I believe pledging \$100 million.

The budget also shows that the President has a mixed reaction to what is proposed as an energy crisis by recommending that the Department of Energy research on renewables be slashed by nearly 50 percent and that energy efficiency funding be cut by 23 percent. It simply, from where I stand, is a little disappointing to say the least; but I must confess that there have been a number of announcements and activities from this administration in the course of Earth Day, Earth Week activities that do, I think, bear commendation; and I think we should come forward and express appreciation for steps that are, in fact, positive.

The President announced that he will sign the international agreement on persistent organic pollutants to halt

the worldwide spread of these dangerous chemicals, such as dioxins. I think that is a positive step.

On Saturday, April 21, the day before Earth Day, at a meeting on free trade in Quebec, the President promised to link trade with a strong commitment to protect our environment, a movement that reinforces the work done by his trade representative, Ambassador Zoellick, who is working hard to see if we can reach some bipartisan accord to protect environmental values in the area of trade, and I commend them.

The administration has at least agreed to attend the next round of international talks on global climate change, even though they continue their opposition to the Kyoto protocol and have not expressed a willingness to compromise and a willingness to move forward. I hope cooler heads hopefully will prevail because it is inappropriate for the United States to abrogate leadership in the international arena.

I appreciated the fact that the President has decided to allow a ban on snowmobiles in Yellowstone and Grand Tetons National Park to take effect. It was my pleasure recently to meet with Mike Finley, the outgoing superintendent of Yellowstone National Park, who has done an outstanding job for the Park Service. This ban was an important part of Mike's legacy and will phase out snowmobiles in these critical parks in the next 3 years.

The administration has also decided to uphold a Clinton administration rule to dramatically expand reporting requirements for the emissions of lead. This is a step in the right direction to deal with a serious toxic metal which is linked to learning and behavior problems.

In the area of wetlands, the administration announced last week that it will uphold a wetlands development regulation that requires developers to get an Army Corps of Engineers' permit for various activities that would modify the wetlands.

And in the area of home appliances, the White House will keep Clinton administration energy conservation rules on washing machines and water heaters, measures which will make clothes washers become 22 percent more efficient by 2004, 35 percent more efficient by 2007, and will make a big difference in terms of saving energy and conserving water.

While I was disappointed that the administration is weakening the air conditioning rule by some 50 percent, nonetheless it still represents a substantial improvement and a move in the right direction.

Madam Speaker, I notice that I have been joined by my colleague, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), a gentleman known for his zeal and concern for protecting the environment and his environmentally sensitive State, and I would yield to the gentleman for some comments.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank my colleague from Oregon who has always played such a

leadership role on environmental issues for organizing this special order this evening. It is 2 days after Earth Day, but this is the first day that we have been back and can talk about Earth Day.

I want to express my disappointment with the Bush administration and what has been happening for the last 3 or 4 months since President Bush took office with regard to environmental issues. Sunday was the 31st anniversary of Earth Day, and I took part in those first Earth Day celebrations when I was in college at that time in Vermont.

I have watched pretty much over the 30 or 31 years since the first Earth Day, we have seen significant progress on environmental concerns. I know in my own district we have done a lot to clean up the ocean along the Jersey shore. We have seen the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act, all of these major pieces of legislation which have made significant progress in cleaning up the environment.

So it is very disappointing to see President Bush in the actions that he has taken in the last few months basically, I think, try to reverse that trend in very negative ways. I am joining the gentleman from Oregon tonight in saying that not because I am looking to attack President Bush and just say the Republicans are bad and be partisan about it, that is not my goal.

Madam Speaker, what I want to do is see this administration change course and basically recognize that the environment is a major concern of the American people and that these problems are not going to go away and we need to take progressive steps to improve the quality of our environment.

But it is disappointing, and I want to outline if I could maybe in 5 minutes or so where I see major problems in what the President has done in the last few months, but at the same time kind of show a bit of optimism about what I think we can do to change it so that he does not continue on this course. And I want to talk about energy policy first and then talk about some other environmental issues.

With regard to energy policy, and you already mentioned it, this signal about not really caring about global climate change, scrapping the Kyoto treaty and maybe suggesting that we not talk about it much in the future, I think is a grave concern.

Also the President's switch on carbon dioxide, to say that is not one of the air emission controls that we are going to put in place. And although we have not really received the report, I guess, of Vice President CHENEY's energy task force, that is going to come around mid-May, we keep hearing that the energy goals of this administration are more production of fossil fuels rather than conservation, and they do not talk about increased technological efficiency or much about the use of renewables.

Much attention has been focused on ANWR, that we should start drilling in ANWR and possibly other offshore areas around the United States.

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Mr. Speaker, I find it particularly unfortunate, because we keep seeing signals at the same time that President Bush is saying these things and doing these things, these negative things, we keep seeing signals that the consensus, not only the American people, but the Congress I think, is very much to the contrary of most of his public pronouncements.

I got a little whiff of that again, if you will, this weekend when my former governor, now the EPA Administrator, Christie Whitman, suggested that the Bush administration may be backing off from drilling in ANWR. But as has been the case so often with Mrs. Whitman, the White House came back after she made those statements and sort of scolded her for her comments and said that they are going to continue the effort to try to drill in ANWR and to get congressional authorization to do so.

I think that Whitman was really basically commenting on the political reality, that the votes are really not there for ANWR in the Senate and probably not in the House as well. Basically, I think she was indicating that there really is a consensus in the Congress, I believe in both Houses, not to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

I see so many things like that, when we think about every one of Bush's major pronouncements that I have been critical of: the Kyoto Treaty, the CO₂ emissions. We have to realize that over the last 6 months or over the last year, there has really been a bipartisan consensus of most Democrats and some pro-environment Republicans, who have expressed support for the global climate change talks. We have recognized that this is an issue that we have to deal with.

With regard to CO₂ emissions, we have had a number of pieces of legislation introduced in this House on a bipartisan basis that would address the CO₂ emissions through market trading legislation. I have introduced a bill like that. I think also, if we look around at some of the utilities in various parts of the country, including in my home State of New Jersey, we have seen them start to implement new technologies that would actually cut down on carbon dioxide emissions. So it is just very unfortunate.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that these positive forces, these pro-environmental forces here in the Congress, have not gone away, and maybe they are underground right now, but hopefully, over the next few months or certainly this session of Congress, we will see them come forward with the support of the American people and demand that we address global climate change, demand that we address CO₂ emissions, and not allow drilling in the ANWR.

I just wanted to express to my colleague with regard to those energy issues that I really am a lot more optimistic about what is going to happen here, even though I keep hearing these negative pronouncements on the environment from the Bush administration.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to talk about a couple of other areas that are not energy-related, but fall within the rubric of my subcommittee. I am the ranking member on the Subcommittee on Commerce, Environment and Hazardous Materials, and we have jurisdiction over Superfund, over Brownfields, over safe drinking water, and if I could just comment briefly on some of those issues. It was very disappointing to me to see President Bush's efforts to tear down the environment and the good legislation and the good initiatives that we have had in the past also translated into his budget. I mean, if we look at the budget, it is a cutback in the Department of Energy, it is also a cutback in the EPA, the Environmental Protection Agency. In my home State, we have more Superfund sites than any other State in the country, so we really care about Superfund and whether the funding is going to be there to actually do cleanup.

What President Bush proposed in his budget is that for the next fiscal year, we could clean up only 65 Superfund sites as opposed to the 85 sites on the average that we have cleaned up in the last 4 years under the last administration. But even more important, he did not include the Superfund corporate tax in the budget as a method of paying for cleanup.

Now, that may have been okay in the last few years when the Republicans cut it out of the budget that President Clinton submitted, because we still have money in the trust fund to pay for a significant portion of Superfund cleanups. But if we do not reauthorize the corporate tax this year or even next year, we are simply going to run out of money in 2003. There will not be any money from the Superfund Trust Fund to pay for cleanups. I do not see us going ahead and allocating money out of general revenue sources to pay for it. So that program is also seriously threatened.

Mr. Speaker, I know the gentleman from Oregon mentioned our problem with safe drinking water. Again, I could talk about what this administration is doing not only with standards with regard to arsenic, but also with the infrastructure. We have heard about the way he just threw out the arsenic standard and basically was not willing to change the status quo down to the 10 parts per billion that was recommended by President Clinton and also by the National Academy of Sciences. Well, again, I guess in part because the President and this administration realize that this is a problem that the American people do not like to ingest arsenic, over the last week or so we have seen the EPA Administrator, Mrs. Whitman, come out again

and say, oh, no, we are going to set up a new rule, we are going to take a year and study this, but I promise that by the next year, we will impose a rule that cuts back at least 60 percent on the existing standard.

Well, I can figure out what 60 percent is of 50 parts per billion, but I know it does not get down to the 10 parts per billion that President Clinton proposed. So, again, they are playing games.

She came out and said that she has convened this new panel at the National Academy of Sciences and asked them to look at the arsenic standards, but again, I get the impression from what I read and from what people tell me that this panel is somewhat rigged and that it is not inclined to adopt a more strict standard.

In the same way, I saw Mrs. Whitman come before our subcommittee a couple of weeks ago and talk about the tremendous need for resources, Federal or otherwise, to address the backlog of infrastructure needs for clean water in various States and various communities around the country. There was a report that she mentioned actually that came out in February that identified \$102.5 billion in infrastructure needs for safe drinking water. But when we looked at the Bush budget and when it came out a couple of weeks ago while we were back in our districts, it actually level-funded the amount of money that would be available for these infrastructure needs. So we have \$102.5 billion in needs and authorization in Congress for \$1 billion, and Bush's budget comes in at \$823 million.

So needless to say, there is a real gap between what the Bush administration has said in the past or during the campaign about environmental issues and what the EPA Administrator continues to say about concerns that she has for environmental issues, and what this administration actually does and its actions to address those issues.

I am also concerned about the fact that we have reduced the amount of funding at the EPA. We are not going to see enforcement of a lot of the good environmental laws that are on the books. However, again, I do not think the public is going to stand for this.

I really believe that ultimately this Congress will heed the public's wishes and not go along with a lot of these pronouncements that are coming out of the White House. But I know that we have to continue to identify all of these different negative actions that are being taken by this administration against the environment, and we have to speak out and we have to tell people over and over again what they mean, because a lot of them are not easily explainable and they are happening so quickly over the last 3 or 4 months of this administration that it is even hard to keep track of them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from Oregon again for his part and what he is doing to try to bring attention to this. I think we have

an obligation not only today in remembering Earth Day, but throughout the next 2 years of this session, to constantly focus on what this administration is doing to gut environmental concerns.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's observations, the hard work that he has done in protecting the environment, and the admonition that we need to be vigilant not just on Earth Day, but this is an ongoing effort. I must confess that I share the gentleman's observation. My assessment is that our commitment is to protect the environment. I have deep concerns about some of the administration's policies, as the gentleman mentioned. I hope, however, that we can on this floor reach common cause across party lines, geographic and philosophical divides, because the American public desires that we are able to move forward and be productive in this fashion.

Mr. Speaker, I came from a very environmentally aware State. I think we both share that kinship and that consensus. In our State, in Oregon, much of the environmental leadership transcended party politics. It came from an era, particularly in the 1970s, where half the time there was a Republican governor who was working with Democrats in the legislature; and when the Democrats took control of the State house, the governorship, it continued on.

Most of the major pieces of legislation that we are working on actually have bipartisan support, and if we could ever get them to the floor of this chamber, I think we would find that there would be strong votes, including significant Republican support.

I think it is important for us to walk that line, to fight back when there are items that are at odds with what the American public wants. As the gentleman pointed out with the budget, we need to acknowledge some of the positive things that are not where that takes place, and Congress must be willing to step up and lead by example in terms of walking the walk.

I had a couple of other observations that were positive in nature that I wanted to share, because I thought they were very significant. Joe Albaugh, the new director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, FEMA, maybe created some waves the last couple of days when there was high water around Davenport, Iowa, but I think he raised an important issue about the responsibility of the Federal Government to help, but not to continue to step in and subsidize areas where it appears as though people are not moving out of harm's way. There are in this country over 8,000 properties that have a history of repeated loss claims from floods. Over the last 8 years, we have lost over \$89 billion of damage as a result of flooding. We have lost over 800 lives. And there are still a number of people who live with Federal subsidy in places where God has repeat-

edly shown that he does not want them to live.

I appreciate that this administration is willing to raise the issue. In the budget there are some budget savings that have been claimed as a result of modifying and reforming the Federal flood insurance program. The gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and I have legislation that we have introduced, the "Two Floods and You're Out of the Taxpayer Pocket," which would help provide a mechanism to claim the savings that the administration is interested in; and I appreciate what the FEMA Director is doing, and I know there will be support in Congress to come forward to try and make that important reform.

Mr. Speaker, it was my pleasure earlier this week to share a platform with General Robert Flowers, the head of the Corps of Engineers, who made, I thought, an extraordinary, extraordinary statement. I commend people to perhaps go to the Web site, to the Corps of Engineers, look at General Flowers' statement. It was one that I think any Member of the House of Representatives would have been proud to make. The General committed to environmental sustainability, that all Corps of Engineers work will be based on the need for people and nature to coexist in a healthy, supportive, diverse and sustainable condition; to recognize the interdependence of activities, that we will recognize interdependence with nature, we will consider the possibility of second- and third-order effects on his projects; that the Corps would be responsible for cumulative impacts.

The Corps would accept responsibility for the consequences of planning, design, and construction decisions upon the continued viability of natural systems and human life. The Corps would be committed to long-term public safety, creating engineered objects of long-term value; that it would support a systems approach in all aspects of design and construction.

The Corps will evaluate and optimize the life cycle of products and processes so that as much as possible, we approach the natural state of systems in which there is no waste; to understand and utilize the dynamic nature of the environment. Their products will continue to rely to the fullest extent possible on renewable energy sources and recyclable products, and to seek continuous improvements, seeking constant improvements by sharing, promoting, collaborating and integrating knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, I thought it was an outstanding statement by General Flowers, and I, for one, am standing willing to help him achieve that with the Corps of Engineers in terms of policy and budget and to make sure that Congress is supporting, rather than interfering.

□ 2045

I wanted to acknowledge that as, I thought, one of the most important

statements that I had heard in the course of the week of Earth Day celebrations.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman will continue to yield, he is bringing up, I think, a very important issue. In sort of a general sense, when we talk about the environment, there are a lot of new technologies and new ways of doing things that really can make a difference.

That is one of the reasons I find what I have been seeing from this administration so disappointing, because I really believe that the environment and industry or business can work together, and that there is no reason why a pro-environment position cannot be also a pro-jobs creation, or a pro-economic development position.

Certainly, when we talk about new technologies, that is so true. Last week during the congressional recess we did a bus tour, I guess it was last Wednesday, where myself and the gentlemen from New Jersey, Mr. HOLT and Mr. PASCRELL, went to various parts of the State to highlight some of the concerns we had with what the Bush administration was doing.

One of the stops was in Linden, New Jersey, which is a town that has a number of utilities and also refineries. We were there with Public Service Electric and Gas, which is one of our major utilities in the State. They were actually building a new plant that was going to be gas-fired, natural gas-fired, and that was replacing some older oil-burning plants to generate electricity. They estimated that the new plants would cut down on the amount of carbon dioxide by one-third.

I just could not help it, I am standing there and talking to these business leaders, people representing the utility, who by no means would be perceived as Democrats or liberals or anything like that, and they are just explaining why this can be done and how easy it is to do, how it saves money and cuts down on carbon dioxide.

For the life of me, I do not understand the theory of this administration. The gentleman talked about the energy efficiency of air conditioners, as the gentleman mentioned before. We can talk about so many ways. In fact, the United States really is taking the leadership in terms of new technologies that would cut down on air emissions, and make it so that not only us but other countries would not continue to contribute so much to the problem of global climate change.

These are new technologies that we can sell to other parts of the world that would create jobs here at home because they are high-tech. There is absolutely no reason to perceive that environmental initiatives are somehow going to be too expensive or lose jobs or hurt industry. I think it is just the opposite. It is just another reason why I am very concerned about what is happening with this administration.

We talked about the budget. I think the gentleman mentioned renewables. I

believe that with regard to research on renewable resources, solar power, wind power, that the budget the President came in with cuts the amount of research money in half.

This morning I was down with the group of American Indians that are concerned about the environment, I think it is called the National Tribal Environmental Council. I spoke with them. It is amazing to me, they were talking about how, with wind resources in the Great Plains area, we would actually be able to generate enough power through wind on the Great Plains to produce enough electricity for the whole continental United States, the 48 States outside of Alaska and Hawaii, if we were to take that initiative.

The ability and the will is there if only this administration would wake up. I do not want to keep harping on it, but the gentleman said it when he pointed out that historically these issues, these environmental concerns, have been bipartisan.

The great conservationist leader was Teddy Roosevelt. It was Richard Nixon who signed so many of the environmental laws that we are talked about tonight in the seventies.

I think what happened, and frankly I am going to be partisan, now, when we had the changeover in the Congress from Democrat to Republican and we had Newt Gingrich come in as the Speaker, all of a sudden there was this great interest on the part of the Republican leadership to do the bidding of big business, big oil, big mining companies.

That is what we are seeing with President Bush as well. Most of the decisions that he is making seem to be contrary to a lot of the Republicans in his own party, but he is catering to the big oil and the big mining and these other special interests that are very shortsighted about the future and what can be done.

So again, I know we have to keep up the effort here, but I think there is good reason to feel that we can change things, because what is being done by this administration is not only not in the best interests of the country, but it does not even make sense from an economic development point of view or a money point of view, ultimately, I do not think.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I thank the gentleman, Madam Speaker.

I was particularly taken by a comment the gentleman made about the opportunities to build the environment, to create jobs, to build the economy; that these are things that can be done concurrently and actually add value, being able to help make our families safe, healthy, and economically secure.

I had an opportunity this last week to tour a location where actually what the gentleman is talking about could have a tremendous effect. In the metropolitan Portland area, across the river, it is not in my district or in my State

but it is a very short journey, there is a large formerly-used defense facility called Camp Bonneville, 3,800 acres that has been used for the better part of this last century for military purposes.

The community has a plan where they would like to take this area that has been off limits, that has not been subjected to development. It has a potential for wildlife, for recreation, that is almost unsurpassed, just a few minutes from the core of a major metropolitan area, but it is going to require that the Department of Defense step up and provide the resources to decontaminate the area.

We do not know what is on the 3,800 acres. There is not money budgeted, although we recently had a reversal of a decision by the Department of Defense to go in and help us with that survey. It is critical that we examine areas like this.

When they first went in, there were 105-millimeter shells on the ground that they could find. These are items of high explosives, 7½ pounds of blasting powder, that could do tremendous damage. Now we have an opportunity perhaps, if the Department of Defense, the Corps of Engineers, and this Congress steps forward, to be able to make a difference for the people in the metropolitan area of Portland-Vancouver-Washington. But it is an example of what we can do to balance the environment, provide jobs, and give back precious resources in terms of open space and re-development possibilities.

But while we were on recess this last week, there was finally the long-awaited report from the General Accounting Office that deals with the environmental liabilities of just training range cleanup costs. The report was rather startling. It indicated that while the Department of Defense thought that its liability for the cleanup of training ranges was about \$14 billion, they find that other estimates show that liability could well exceed \$100 billion just for training range cleanup. Without complete and accurate data, it is impossible to determine whether these amounts represent a reasonable estimate, or what the implications are.

We have not performed a complete inventory of the ranges, identifying the types and extent of the unexploded ordnance and the associated contamination. We have a long list of areas that are formerly-used defense sites, training sites, base closures. We do not have the top management focus and leadership necessary even to get reliable report estimates at this point, and sadly, there is no specific program for unexploded ordnance remediation policy, goals, or program.

Now, we have been writing as Members of Congress, bringing this to the attention of the appropriators, to our fellow Members of Congress. This is a situation that affects not just metropolitan Portland, but it is something that touches people all across the country.

Two weeks ago, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) and I led a trip to the American University campus and Spring Valley residential development here in the District of Columbia, where they are still excavating the hillside, removing arsenic. There is a child care center on the campus of American University that was closed because of intolerably high arsenic levels.

In our Nation's Capitol, from coast-to-coast, border to border, we have over 1,000 of these sites that need to be addressed that represent a threat to the public safety and health, and if done properly, represent an opportunity to have a transformational effect on communities in terms of the economic activities associated with cleanup and then the reuse of these facilities.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman will yield further, in my State, of course, we have so many opportunities like that. The list is endless.

I mentioned that we have more Superfund sites than any other State. I think we have over 6,000 hazardous waste sites that have been identified by the State of New Jersey outside of Superfund, most of which would be eligible for a brownfields initiative. Obviously, the Federal government needs to do more in that respect, as well.

I would like to think of ways, as the gentleman is pointing out, to do progressive things on Superfund, on brownfields, on other hazardous waste and other types of environmental cleanup. That is really what I hope that the gentleman and I and others who are concerned about the environment would be concentrating on. We do not want to spend our time trying to prevent good laws from being gutted, which is essentially what we have been doing for the last couple of months.

My district, I think the gentleman knows, a significant part of it is along the Jersey shore, along the ocean. When I was first elected in 1988, I was really elected on an environmental platform, because that was the year when all of the beaches were closed. The tourism industry is number one in New Jersey. People think of New Jersey as the petrochemical State, but we actually earn more dollars in New Jersey from tourism than even from the petrochemical industry. I think we were losing \$5 billion that summer because the beaches were closed.

A number of initiatives have been taken since then in Congress on a bipartisan basis, as well as in the State legislature. When the current EPA administrator, Ms. Whitman, was the Governor of New Jersey, she presided over a lot of these initiatives to clean up the ocean. Yet now we see the opposite happening here on the Federal level.

One of the things that happened in New Jersey that was used as an example nationally, and now faces a budget cut, was the Beaches Act. New Jersey

was the first State in the country that passed a law that said that we had to do testing on a regular basis during the summer months when people can swim at the Jersey shore. We have to test the beaches, and if they do not meet a certain Federal standard, then the beach has to be closed. Rather, we have to test the water, and if it does not meet a certain standard, the beach has to be closed and it has to be posted that one cannot bathe. This was a result of the wash-up of all the debris in 1988.

We put this into effect, and I and some Republicans on the other side, the gentleman from California (Mr. BILBRAY) was a sponsor with me, we actually moved a bill in the last session of Congress called the Beaches Act that implemented that nationally. It was signed by President Clinton I guess in October, before the end of the last session.

That said that now every State would be mandated to do the same type of testing for water quality, and close beaches and post signs and publicly announce if the water quality was not up to snuff.

We authorized \$30 million under that legislation that was signed last fall to implement that program. Again, our EPA administrator, Ms. Whitman, was touting that program early in this administration, about how it was a great program and it was modeled after New Jersey. Then when I saw the budget a couple of weeks ago, I saw that the President's budget, instead of appropriating \$30 million, it appropriated something like \$2 million or \$3 million, which would not even allow more than a handful of States to implement the program.

So again, it just seems so unfortunate. I do not want to keep harping and being so partisan about it, but it just seems so unfortunate that at a time when there are a lot of progressive things that could be done, proactive things that could be done around here, like what the gentleman just described, we still have to talk about just trying to make sure that things do not get worse.

I do not want to be pessimistic because I am still optimistic, but it is unfortunate to see what we have had to contend with in the last few months.

□ 2100

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's somber reflections because we need to look at this in a balanced and objective fashion. I would just conclude my remarks this evening on a note of optimism and hoping that we will be able to work in a bipartisan fashion to do something about having the Federal Government step up and lead by example.

The United States Government is the largest Superfund polluter in the United States, the government itself. The military waste, the toxics and explosives that we have littering the landscape constitute a battle right

here on American soil 26 years after the Vietnam war, 56 years after the conclusion of World War II, 83 years after World War I. It involves mines and nerve gases and toxics and explosive shells. It has claimed at least 65 lives that we know of, most of them since World War II.

There is a strong likelihood, I am told, that there are more people who have lost their lives that we just as yet do not know about, and there are many more who have been maimed and injured.

What, I guess, shocked me the most were two young boys who were killed as a result of an explosive shell that they found in a field in a subdivision in their hometown of San Diego that was a formerly used military defense site. Three boys found the shell. They were playing with it. They detonated it, and two of them were killed. This danger continues every day. If we are not careful, at the rate we are going, it could last for another 500 or 1,000 years.

Now, this toxic waste of military activities in the United States could potentially contaminate 20 to 25 million acres, and some estimates are as high as 50 million acres. As I pointed out, we do not have a good inventory. We do not know. But what we do know is, at the current rate of spending in a budget that is not yet adequate, it will take centuries, potentially 1,000 years or more to return the land to safe and productive use and to protect children who may be playing, wildlife.

Fire fighters in the forests who were a couple of summers ago in a forest fire in New York State, all of a sudden they were out in the forest, and there were huge explosions because buried shells from artillery practice that did not explode were suddenly being detonated by the forest fire.

Congress needs to report for duty. It needs to provide the administrative and financial tools that are necessary. What I am talking about here is not going to affect active ranges and readiness. My concern is for closed, transferred, and transferring ranges where the public is already exposed or soon will be.

I hope that we can make every Member of Congress, every aspect of the Department of Defense, the Corps of Engineers understand what is going on in each and every one of our States, because every State is at risk.

We can make sure that somebody is in charge, that there is enough funding, and that we get the job done so that no child will be at risk of death, dismemberment or serious illness as a result of the United States Government not cleaning up after itself.

In the course of our conversation this evening, we have talked about some positive elements and some that were perhaps a little disconcerting, but I

think this is an area that we can commit ourselves to working in a bipartisan way. I can think of no more positive aspect for claiming the true purpose and spirit of Earth Day than acting to make sure that the Federal Government is doing all it can in this important area.

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman will yield a little time, I would say this. The gentleman from Oregon talked about optimism. I am going to be optimistic in the last thing that I say here this evening. When I mentioned over the weekend to my children who are fairly young, I have a daughter who is 7 and a son who just turned 6 and another daughter who is 3, and when I mentioned to them that it was Earth Day on Sunday, of course they got all excited about it.

But it really dawned on me that they are all in school in some way, either school or preschool at this point. I have watched over the last few years that they just have an incredible sort of environmental consciousness, more so than I do. I do not think it comes from me. I think it mostly comes from what they learn in school and what they see on TV. They remind me that one has to recycle this or that. They talk about the ocean and how it has got to be kept clean. They participated in a couple of cleanups that we have at this time of year, either along the beach or in some of the wooded areas.

So I mean there are many things that came out of Earth Day since 1970, the last 31 years, but I think maybe the most important thing is the education aspect that people, particularly the younger generation, younger than me, are very environmentally conscious. We talk about how younger people maybe are not as conscious or politically conscious, but I definitely believe that they are environmentally conscious.

So I just think that any effort to try to turn back the clock on the environmental movement is ultimately doomed to failure. So that is my optimism, and I know that we are here to make sure it is not doomed to failure, and we are going to keep it up.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Indeed.

ECONOMY, ENERGY, AND THE DEATH TAX

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. Jo ANN DAVIS of Virginia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. McINNIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MCINNIS. Madam Speaker, good evening. Welcome back to Washington. As my colleagues know, we have all had about a 2-week recess. I spent my recess back in the district going around, as many of my colleagues have done, to town meetings, talking with people on the street and talking with the different interest groups out in our district and taking kind of a general overview of several things.

One of them of course is our economy. I had plenty of opportunity to discuss with people our economy.

I also discussed with many of my constituents our situation with the energy crisis that we are coming upon. As many of my colleagues know from their own constituents, we have seen gasoline prices just explode in the last couple of weeks.

Then of course I heard from a number of people in regards to the death tax. I went out firsthand and again witnessed the punitive action that the estate tax, the death tax, has worked upon people of this country, that has worked upon people of my district, the devastating results of people who have already paid their tax, who have the unfortunate situation of a death in their family, and here comes Uncle Sam to finish the devastation as if the family had not had enough.

So I want to visit about these three issues tonight, about the economy, about energy, and about the death tax.

Let me start off, first of all, talking on the economy. We have seen a lot of criticism lately about President Bush. I was listening to public radio. I listen to public radio quite a bit. I was driving in my district. Now, mind you, my district is larger geographically than the State of Florida so I do a lot of drive time in my district. I was listening to public radio. It is interesting. One of the commentators on public radio or one of the guests on public radio was talking very critically of President Bush and how he has soured the economy. President Bush has been in office, what, 12, 13 weeks. President Bush was handed this bad economy.

Now, this economy could get a lot worse if we do not do something pretty quickly. Frankly, I think the responsibility to do something about this economy falls to some extent on our shoulders in these Chambers. It falls to also an extent on the shoulders of the President of the United States. I do not think this President has shunned that responsibility. In fact I think President Bush has stood up to the challenge. He started off by proposing a tax cut.

Let me tell my colleagues this tax cut that the President has proposed, let us put it in its proper proportions. The President has proposed over a 10-year period, not a 1-year period, over a 10-year period, a \$1.6 trillion tax reduction. Now in addition to that, what he said is that this tax reduction should benefit the people who pay taxes. It is not a welfare program intended to go to people who do not pay taxes. It is a tax reduction program intended to be more equitable and fair to the taxpayer of this country.

As all of my colleagues and I know in these Chambers, we do not earn that money. We do not go out and create capital. We do not come up and figure out a better idea or a better mousetrap. All we do is go out to those people who toil, who come up with a better mousetrap, who come up with a better idea, all we do is go out, reach into

their pockets, and tax them. That is where the revenue in here comes.

When we have reached too deep into their pocket, which we have done over the last few years, do not my colleagues think they ought to be considered? That is what this tax cut does. It considers that. It says, if one is a taxpayer, we think there ought to be a little something in it for one. Now, one does not get the whole piece of pie. That would be much too imaginative for someone to think that, when the government taxes one, one is going to get a big chunk of the pie as a taxpayer. But the President has said one deserves a part of the pie.

Now, what part of the pie is that. Over the next 10 years, to put this in proportion, over the next 10 years, and the estimates vary a little bit, but approximately there is going to be \$33 trillion coming to the government from these people out there, the taxpayers, the citizens of this country who go to work every day, who come up with a better idea, who put in their shifts, who pay their taxes fairly and pay their taxes on a timely basis. \$33 trillion will be gathered from those people in the next 10 years.

Of that, if we take a look at the spending that we now have, we take a look at the spending that is forecast, our guess is we are going to spend about \$28 trillion of that.

So if we have about \$33 trillion, and we are going to spend about \$28 trillion, that leaves us about \$5 trillion in surplus. Of that, the President has asked for 1.6, \$1.6 trillion. About a third of that goes back to the taxpayer. Now is that too much to ask?

When I was out there visiting with my constituents over this last recess, I do not think my constituents thought that was too much to ask. In fact, I found my constituents saying, how do you justify the level of taxation that you have placed upon us, especially when we talk about things like the marriage penalty, especially when we talk about things like the death tax. Are we getting a bang for our dollar back there in Washington, D.C., Mr. Congressman? That is what those people wanted to know.

Now as we know, the President's tax policy is a long-term policy. This plan was designed when he was running for President. It has been fine-tuned since he has been elected to President. But as we know, we also need, on top of that, we may need an additional stimulant to put into the economy.

In order for us to avoid a downward or a spiral so to speak that gets out of control and takes this economy into a recession, we need to come up with a strategy. That strategy really is multi-leveled.

The first level of that strategy is the President's tax reduction, and everybody in these Chambers ought to be giving serious consideration to it. I would tell my colleagues, especially the liberal side of the Democratic Party that opposed any kind of tax reduction, then came out with their