

Saudi Arabia. "High oil prices are not good for consumers, and low oil prices are not good for producers." The country also said it remains in contact with President Bush. The 11-member Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries voted Wednesday to cut production 1 million barrels a day, angering U.S. lawmakers who partly blame OPEC for record gasoline prices in the USA.

[From the Times of Oman, Apr. 3, 2004]

HIGHER OIL PRICE TO TAKE ECONOMY TO NEW HIGHS

(By K. Mohammed)

The Sultanate's economy is poised for better performance this year if the spiralling oil prices are any indication. Omani crude price, the single most important factor which drives the Omani economy, is currently staying at \$31.44 per barrel and the market expects crude prices to stay at the current level in the rest of the year. According to statistics, the Omani crude prices realised \$29.91 per barrel in January 2004, which is significantly higher compared to prices realised last year. Last year, the government had budgeted oil price at a conservative \$20 per barrel but the actual realisation was much higher at \$27.84. This had resulted in a substantial rise in government revenue with all sectors of the economy witnessing significant growth in 2003.

The government has budgeted Omani crude price at \$21 for the current fiscal (2004) but the actual realisation may be much higher than the prices realised last year, considering the present buoyancy in the international oil market. The most heartening fact about AGCC economies, and Oman in particular, is that international oil prices have been staying above the Opec basket price band of \$22-\$28 per barrel in the new year, significantly higher than the prices achieved last year, and Opec is expecting a steady market this year. International oil prices are currently staying at around \$34 a barrel.

Considering that the oil production will be maintained at the present level the prospects at the oil price front remains brighter for the country.

Government's revenue receipts and public spending are other indicators of the economic growth. Last year, the corporate sector fared well on account of increased public spending. The government's actual public spending has increased from RO2,367.9 million in 2002 to 2,638.5 million as at the end of November 2003, an increase of 11.4 per cent. The budget for the year 2004 has estimated total spending at RO3,425 million. The actual public finance deficit for the year 2002 had come down drastically to RO124 million from the budgeted RO380 million. When government spending goes up the gross domestic product (GDP) will expand, triggering increased economic activity and generating more job opportunities and more revenue for the government. The increased spending coupled with the prevailing low interest rate scenario is expected to give the much-needed impetus to economic growth this year.

Figures on the revenue receipt side looks rosier. As of November-end 2003, the government's total revenue stood 8.7 per cent higher at RO2,942.5 million compared with RO2,705.9 million mainly on account of increased oil price realisation. As the average price for Omani crude stood \$29.16 a barrel in December 2003, the government is expected to report a lower actual deficit for the year 2003 as against the projected RO470 million.

The country saw inflation remaining below 1 per cent last year. This year too, the inflation is expected to remain below 1 per cent level. However, the weakening of the dollar is a cause for concern as it may put down-

ward pressure on the local currency triggering a mild flare up in the prices of euro-denominated goods and services. Like other AGCC countries, Oman too imports from European countries and euro-denominated goods are bound to become costlier with the weakening of the dollar.

The increased activities in the non-oil sector, especially a significant rise in LNG production will also contribute much to the strengthening of the economy.

Reflecting the pulse of the economy the local stock market has scaled new highs. The Muscat Securities Market General Price Index rose from 272.67 points as at the end of December 31, 2003 to 296.10 points on April 1, 2004, scoring 23.43 points. This shows a handsome gain of 8.59 per cent. The buoyancy is also reflected in the various sector indices.

On the economic reform front, a lot of action will be seen in the rest of the year. As part of its commitments to the WTO, the government is expected to divest a significant stake in Omantel. Last month, the much-publicized initial public offering of Al Maha Petroleum opened. The opening up of the telecom sector will see a second GSM licensee entering the market soon, paving the way for competition in the telecom market with consumers ultimately emerging as the winner with better and cheaper services.

[From Reuters News Service, Apr. 2, 2004]

BUSH IN TOUCH WITH SAUDIS, NON-OPEC ON OIL—W. HOUSE

HUNTINGTON, WV. (Reuters).—President Bush and the Saudi crown prince have been discussing oil prices for some time, and the administration is also talking with other OPEC and non-OPEC oil producers, a White House spokesman said Friday.

"We remain actively engaged with our friends in OPEC and other producers around the world to address these issues," White House spokesman Scott McClellan told reporters. "Bush and the (Saudi) crown prince have been in touch on this subject for a while now."

Earlier this week, OPEC agreed to a production cut of 1 million barrels per day despite Bush administration requests to delay it.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ARMY PRIVATE BRANDON LEE DAVIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a true American hero who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving his country with honor and courage. 20-year old Army Private Brandon Lee Davis of Cresaptown in Garret County, Maryland, was among five soldiers killed when a bomb exploded under their vehicle in the Al Anbar province of Iraq.

The soldiers were conducting security and stability operations in the region just north of Fallujah. They were from the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Brigade, based in Fort Riley, Kansas.

I offer my deepest condolences to the family of Private Davis during this difficult time. I, along with the other Members of the Maryland federal delegation, mourn their loss. Our prayers are with Private Davis' mother, Jackie Weatherholt; his father, Jeffrey Davis; and his two siblings. Words cannot express the sense of loss felt by the Maryland community when one of our own, a young man who offered such promise and hope for the future, is taken

from us. This tragedy makes the war in Iraq more personal for all of us.

Private Davis joined the Army shortly after graduating from Fort Hill High School in Cumberland, Maryland. Like many young men and women who seek direction in life after high school, Private Davis hoped to learn a trade while serving his country. His dedication to service to others would not have rested with his duty in the Army.

Private Davis dreamed of using his life to protect men and women by becoming a police officer. Sadly, that dream will never come true. The deadly consequences of war are a reality that all of us must face. However, the knowledge of what may happen in war does little to diminish the pain and anguish when that reality reaches your front door.

Mrs. Weatherholt will never have the opportunity to feel the joy of a mother who watches her youngest son experience all of the milestones in life. Mr. Davis will never get to see his son teach the lessons he learned about how to be a man. All this Maryland family now has are memories. Mrs. Weatherholt must hold on to the memory of that last telephone conversation on March 20th, when she gave her son these words of caution, "Watch your back, Brandon."

These parents have the memories of their son making others laugh with his outgoing and upbeat personality. They have the memories of their son going out of his way to show kindness to strangers and make his friends and family feel happy. There were no limits to Brandon's loving generosity. He gave up the opportunity to come home to his family for a two-week break in February, and, instead, donated his leave time to an Army buddy who wanted to return to the United States to get married. I am sure Private Davis longed to be with his family during this time, but he gave his priority to his desire to help a friend.

The Army deployed Private Davis to Iraq nearly six months ago. He never discussed his fear or worry with his family, although he was stationed thousands of miles from home in a foreign land with death and destruction as his bedfellows.

This brave young American knew of the dangers of the high-risk areas into which he was being sent, but he was proud to be a soldier. He was proud that, by serving in the United States Army, he was not only making a better for himself, but he was trying to make a better, safer life for us all.

Mr. Speaker, I must say that I opposed President Bush's decision to go to war with Iraq before exhausting every diplomatic measure and without clearly demonstrating an imminent threat of attack on the United States. But I will do everything within my power to support our men and women in uniform. I stand behind our troops in Iraq and pray for their safe return home.

Although I did not know Private Brandon L. Davis personally, I consider it a privilege to honor his life and to pay tribute to the sacrifice that this young man made for all Americans. This country has lost a true leader. Private Davis gave his life to set the Iraqi people free. I pray to God that we succeed.

God Bless you, Private Davis.

ENERGY AND JOBS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Iowa

(Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, first, I would like to thank my colleague on my left, the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE), who has pointed out quite accurately and correctly that if one side of the aisle is down here carrying a message to the American people relentlessly, if not logically, day by day by day, that is the only subject matter that Americans have to discuss.

As I sat in here for the last hour preparing, apparently, for this Special Order hour, and I have considered that I really did not have to do that, it was great preparation to sit and listen to the rhetoric that came from the string of Members, I think probably not coincidentally, from Ohio. So I am just going to start up working backwards through the list of things that were raised here while they are freshest in the minds of the people that are listening, the Members of the other body, and those in this Chamber and the people that are listening around the country.

The first is with regard to OPEC and the criticism of OPEC for the position that they have taken to limit the supply of hydrocarbons to the United States. Certainly that has been a factor in the 1970s. It was a factor in our Presidential elections after that, and we came out of that.

Our dependency has increased on foreign oil, and I regret that. But OPEC has taken a position that is going to be reflected by the Saudi Arabians who ruled more of the OPEC oil than anyone else.

I have with me a document that I will just read some quotes.

Prince Bandar has made some remarks speaking for the increase in supplies because he says the President and the Crown Prince have been in touch on this subject for a while now. Both leaders feel strongly that higher energy prices have a negative impact on world economy.

So I happen to know that there is a delegation on its way over to Saudi Arabia right now to thank the leadership in Saudi Arabia for their efforts to increase supplies as a way of holding down increases in costs of gasoline in the United States and thank them for the efforts that they have gone through to help us in the war on terror.

There have been significant improvements in that country over the last couple of months.

□ 1430

So these remarks that are made on the floor of Congress are not conducive to us solving the oil supply problem and I think are not conducive either for us solving this problem of worldwide terror.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. KING of Iowa. I yield to the gentleman from New Mexico.

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I heard the lady that preceded us on the floor

say that we needed to do something about OPEC. I am sorry, what are we going to do? It is a free nation.

We did something about Iraq, and the accusation from their side of the aisle was that we went in to take the oil. When that was not proved correct, when it was absolutely proved false, now then they are here saying we should do something about OPEC. I am so sorry. What about the free nations? They can produce what oil they would like to.

I would continue to point out that the reason that the production in this country is decreasing is exactly the policies that our friends on the other side of the aisle insist on, that is, the lack of access to the public lands in this country. It is going to drive the cost of gasoline and electricity up throughout this country because of their restrictionist policies that they have put into place, and those policies live today from the Clinton administration on through this administration from the field level.

It is a question that I recently took to the BLM head, and have asked her what is she going to do to increase access to public lands so that we are not so dependent, she said, frankly, some of the extremists in our country will block every single attempt to drill more on American soil. Even the debates on this floor regarding ANWR say that we do not need that energy, that we do not need the oil; and the other side has persistently blocked every effort to try to drill in ANWR.

Mr. Speaker, also, the energy policy that currently resides in Washington, but unfulfilled, is not something that the administration is blocking. It is not Republicans who are blocking the energy bill in this town.

Mr. Speaker, the energy bill would not only create access to more domestic oil and gas, but it would begin to encourage the alternative sources of solar, wind, hydrogen, biomass, nuclear. If we will begin, Mr. Speaker, to deal with some of the pressures on the demand cycle for our energy with some of our alternative resources, then we can begin to see the prices of gasoline and electricity go down; but I will guarantee my colleagues, the headlines that I cut out from the Denver Post of last year telling the people in August of 2003 that they would be facing 70 percent increases in electrical costs because of the price of natural gas, those are things that we are going to continue to experience in this country until we pass an energy bill.

The energy bill by itself will create 100,000 jobs, and we have been treated by our friends across the aisle to continued talk about the lack of American jobs. We have seen the dramatic report from March where 300,000 new jobs were created. That is 600,000 now in the last 6 months since we passed the jobs and tax bill.

Mr. Speaker, the policies that the administration is submitting to us and that we are carrying out into actual

votes and into bills are dramatically changing the environment for investment in this country.

EDUCATION IN AMERICA

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, when we begin to look at the growth of jobs, we have to understand the importance of education in this country. No Child Left Behind is one of the dramatic things, dramatic policies that have been issued. It is a reform into the education system which literally says we are not going to leave any child behind. The President has dramatically increased funding, regardless of what our friends across the aisle say.

Under President Clinton, the spending on education through the Federal Education Department was about \$27 billion. Under President Bush, the funding has increased to \$60 billion, over a 100 percent increase, and yet somehow we get on the floor day after day that we are underfunding education.

Our friends especially like to talk about the way that we are not funding IDEA, our individuals with disabilities; and that has such a dramatic difference in previous funding levels under this President, that it is important to talk about funding levels.

The bill was passed in the 1970s, and historically throughout its tenure has had about \$1 billion funding. It could never get up, and keep in mind, that was under 40 years of Democrats ruling in this House. It stayed at the \$1 billion level. Finally, under President Clinton, it went up to \$2 billion.

Now, what would my colleagues estimate that the actual spending on IDEA, the individuals with disabilities, is actually today under President Bush? If you were to listen to the rhetoric that is thrown out day after day, you would say, well, obviously it is much, much less. Actually, it is much, much greater.

The funding this year under IDEA will exceed \$10 billion. That is a five-time, a 500 percent increase in the 3 years under President Bush; and yet we hear the shibboleth on the floor of the House that tries to put a truth out, put a falsehood out in the guise of truth.

The truth is that President Bush understands that if we are going to have careers for our young people, if our young people are to have expectations and hope into the future, they need more than jobs. They need educations. They need careers. They need a progression of learning throughout their lives.

No Child Left Behind is guaranteed to put those young people in a position to where they can continue the lifelong learning process.

We have moved from a time in our history when we could just learn one single task and do that our whole lives. For us to access the technology, the innovations, the creativity that is at move in the world today, our young people absolutely must be given every tool during their 12 years of public schools on into the junior college and

college years; but then throughout their entire life, we must continue to have on-the-job training. We must continue to have training when people are displaced.

Recently, this last week, I went into my district into Belen, New Mexico, and met with a group of employers there. We met at Cisneros Machine Shop. The Cisneros brothers really are one of the small businesses that characterize the desire on the part of our employers right now to be training their employees every day to a higher level, understanding that they cannot produce the same things yesterday that they produce tomorrow. Otherwise they will not continue to fight off the tremendous international competition that faces us.

I think the recognition of people like the Cisneros brothers will bring us all, in this Nation, if we will continue these training programs, no matter what stage of development our employees are in, if we will recognize that and continue to train, then we are going to be in good shape. But we have to ask the question, when jobs are moving offshore, when jobs are moving overseas, we have to ask ourselves why; and the education system is, at base, a root cause of the problem.

Under No Child Left Behind, one of the most important things we are striving to do is to put a competent teacher in every single classroom and especially those classrooms that teach math and reading. Those two basic skills are the foundations for the education process; and without them, our students simply do not have the tools to compete when they graduate.

We have seen dramatic changes even in my district in the education process. About 2 weeks ago, I recognized Roswell High School on this floor as being one of the 12 breakthrough schools in the Nation. That principal believes in No Child Left Behind. He has seen it work in his classrooms, turning around a population in his high school that is both high minority and then also lower-income status students, and he has turned that around into one of the 12 breakthrough schools in the Nation. It is the kind of example that No Child Left Behind is supposed to be creating in our schools.

I see the gentleman from Iowa standing.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I would like to give a perspective of No Child Left Behind that is a little bit different perspective for some of the other States, those States that may not believe there is a significant advantage to them.

I have the privilege of being from the State of Iowa, and we rank in the top three every year in ACT tests; and we have for years put out Iowa basic skills and Iowa tests of educational development, that analysis that we do of students every year, comparing them against their growth from year to year, in a number of different subjects and a composite score that we do, something

that goes back to the time that I was at least in grade school, and that is some years ago, and before that actually, and those tests have been given around the world, places as far away as China.

So the credibility that the Iowa public school system has worldwide is high, and our competitiveness in our graduates, particularly measured by ACT test scores and also the success of our young students as they go off and go on to higher education, is also high.

Arguably, the public school education in K-12 in the State of Iowa ranks in the top three, maybe as the best in the country; and so because of that long-standing tradition to education that we have, we have those kinds of results and standards, and yet we are faced with a No Child Left Behind policy that is a one-size-fits-all.

Those States that have high excellence in education may not see a significant marginal improvement, but we really do need to help those students in those States like Mississippi and Arkansas. We really need to lift them up and get them back into this educational stream.

I yield to my colleague from New Mexico.

THE SHOCKS TO OUR ECONOMY

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

In addition to our energy bill, which would create jobs, we begin to defuse the increasing price of natural gas and fuel at the pump for our cars. In addition to those two important elements of the legislative agenda that we have passed in this House last year, this transportation bill that just was passed out of the House today is poised to create another 700,000 jobs.

Mr. Speaker, when I look at the continued bills that we are passing out of the House, I see responsibility. I see a patient attempt to cure the many problems that we are facing in this country; and keep in mind that we are facing the problems through no fault of our own, but 9/11 changed everything.

The first thing that happened in our economy that cost us jobs was the collapse of the dot-com industry. You all remember in the late 1990s that dot-com ramp-up where stocks were selling at an inflated price, sometimes \$200 per share of a stock that really had no product, had no cash flow, had no sales, no revenue, no net profit; and yet enthusiasm was that these stocks are going to be great value. Well, that enthusiasm eventually will have to come home. A corporation either had to build a product or create a revenue of some sort; and when they did not and could not, the dot-com stock market price of those stocks collapsed down, and we found that it shocked our economy pretty drastically.

The second thing that shocked our economy, of course, was 9/11. The estimates are as high as a \$2 trillion shock in one day, over 2,000 lives lost. I will tell you that businesses are still paying the cost for 9/11 today, and we cannot

forget that the economy and the culture in this Nation changed so dramatically on that day when the unprovoked attack of terrorists, who would kill innocent lives in order to destabilize an economy, in order to destabilize a political system, after they made their attack, we in this country have got to deal with the results.

Now, the President has been very patient. He has worked very hard at going and taking away the root causes of terrorism. He has taken the Taliban out of Afghanistan. Al Qaeda is on the run. The training camp that used to crank out terrorists every month, who would spew hatred and anger toward the United States and try to sow destruction throughout our economy and throughout our Nation, that training camp has been closed down and the terrorists are on the run.

We continue to capture and to kill the terrorists who are here to kill us. This is not a police action. This is not something we can take into the courts and deal with there. This is an action where it is either their ideology or ours.

The insistence of terrorists to destabilize the entire world is one of the most looming threats that any of us face here.

□ 1445

It affects our ability to raise our children safely on the streets. It affects our ability to conduct just everyday commerce throughout our land. Terrorism seeks to destabilize. The paradigms of security and stability cannot exist coincidentally with terrorism and instability. The world is going to make a choice, and the United States is making a tremendous decision here to take on the fight.

It is like the Prime Minister of Britain said when he spoke on this House floor: You, as Americans, should ask, why us? Why would we be in this role? It is a fair question. His answer to us on the floor of this House, Mr. Speaker, I will remind you, was simply that destiny has placed the United States in a position where it can act and it must. That means that we have the resources, we have the will, we have the leadership, and if we do not respond, the world will suffer for it.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the leadership of our President as he pushes forward the concept of No Child Left Behind, as he pushes forward the idea of the tax cuts that are creating this economy which is growing at a tremendous pace, and the job growth is exactly what we were hoping for.

Mr. Speaker, as he has encouraged us to pass the energy bill, I would simply say to our friends, do your part to see that the energy bill is passed, because it is not the Republican side which is holding it hostage.

Mr. Speaker, I now yield back to the gentleman from Iowa.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I yield now to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BEAUPREZ).

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me. It is good to join my colleagues, and I thank the gentleman from Iowa for taking this special order on a very timely topic.

My colleagues, today in this city, in this Chamber, there are a whole lot of people saying hallelujah and holy cow, because we have created some jobs, and there is news out saying just exactly that. Just a short while ago in this Chamber, we passed a transportation bill, and that transportation bill is going to put Americans to work, and it is going to put Americans to work building infrastructure that is critical to this Nation. Transportation is a jobs bill.

But there are also numbers out from the Department of Labor that are really encouraging. We have heard that 308,000 jobs were added in the United States in the month of March. That is 308,000 new payroll jobs. Now, everybody has a right to say, well, what does that mean? Compared to what? That is the strongest number in 4 years, the strongest in 4 years.

We have been through a bit of a tough cycle. Four years ago right now, we were in a recession. So 308,000 new jobs in the month of March and, in addition to that, numbers that we thought were a little softer than we expected in January and February have now been revised upward. So we are increasingly in better and better shape.

Now, that is good news. That is good news. And here is how I characterize it. Almost anybody can hang onto the wheel of a ship going through calm waters. But it takes a pretty good captain to guide a ship through a stormy sea. If we go back to late 2000, we were slipping into some rough waters. We now know that the recession was upon us in late 2000 when this President was sworn in. He grabbed ahold of a ship that was going into troubled waters. Then it really got rough, with 9/11 happening and SARS happening and on and on and on. We all know the litany.

Where are we today? We are in an expanding economy, with job creation now under way, which, as everybody knows, every economist will tell you, that is the lagging economic indicator.

So I will say it again, because it is happy news. We have 308,000 new jobs in the month of March alone. It is astounding. The policies of the captain of the ship, the Republican leadership in this House, the Republicans in this Congress, have set us on the right path and are calming the waters. It is not the time to change captains nor change course.

I was listening a moment ago to my colleague from New Mexico as he was talking about energy policy, and I could not agree more. Everybody is saying jobs, jobs, jobs; and that is why I am so happy right now, is because we have evidence we have jobs coming back. That is really good news.

But if you want to know where the jobs went, ask the people who have got

a different policy. Ask the people who have got a different policy than the one that righted the ship, calmed the waters and set us on this course, the people that have been talking about raising taxes.

What did this House and this President do to set us on this course? We provided some tax cuts. We invested right back in the people in the United States of America who create jobs and who increase consumer demand. That is how an economy works. We understand that on our side of the aisle, and the President certainly understands that. So he set us on the right course. We passed the jobs and growth bill, and here we are, and it is good news.

Now there are some out there saying, no, we need to rescind those tax cuts, we need to increase the strong hand of regulation, and, worse yet, they have fought us on an energy bill, and they are still fighting us on an energy bill.

Now what have we got? Our own Department of Commerce tells us that for every \$1 billion spent on imported oil that means 12,389 jobs. Maybe somebody does not think 12,389 jobs is all that much, but I submit, Mr. Speaker, when taken in the context of the billions that we are spending on imported oil, it adds up in a big hurry. How big a hurry? Well, by today's dollars, the amounts we are spending on imported oil equates to 1.7 million jobs, American jobs that are now somewhere else.

The very people who fought us on that energy bill are the ones screaming about outsourcing of jobs. They not only got outsourced, they got outforced, and they were forced out by the very people who fought us on the energy bill and now are raising their hands in wonder saying, where did our jobs go? Where did our jobs go?

What has happened since we have not had an energy bill? Gasoline prices have increased 30 percent; U.S. imports of oil increased another 10 percent. We are about two-thirds import, one-third domestic production. The price of crude oil has increased 65 percent. Natural gas has increased 92 percent.

That is especially sensitive for people like my colleague from New Mexico and me, from Colorado, from the Rocky Mountain States, and my friend from Iowa. You bet. Because we know where it is. It is right there underneath our ground, a lot of it Federal ground. And in places like Iowa, being an old farmer myself, I know how important energy is. It is not just gas and diesel, it is our commercial fertilizer that is produced from those same petroleum products.

Mr. Speaker, I have a potato farmer back home who told me that 35 percent of his operating overhead, 35 percent of his entire cost of production, is energy related, 35 percent. Fire up the electric motors to run his sprinklers to irrigate the potatoes; the commercial fertilizers, the diesel and the gasoline he puts in his vehicles, 35 percent.

Now when you have inflation of energy costs like I just cited, you know what that does to that potato farmer

who is operating on a margin that thin already? Where did the jobs go? They were outforced. That is where they go when we have wrong-headed Federal policy like we have right now.

It is not a case of us needing to improve an energy policy that is already out there. We have none. We are just trying to establish one that is so woefully needed. Well, it is time. It is time we act. We need to pass not only an energy bill but continue on this course that has been charted that has got us finally into some calmer waters and headed on the right path. We need to continue that course, not alter that course. We need to stay the course on tax cuts, on deregulation, on sound policy, and bring American jobs home to Americans.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BEAUPREZ) for his comments.

Picking up on that theme, I appreciate the gentleman's remarks about how sensitive natural gas prices are to the Corn Belt and the fact that the gentleman's background and experience as a dairy farmer and a banker and someone who has been all involved in this economy understands that the very foundation for all economies is that all new wealth comes from the land.

In our State, it is corn and beans and oats and hay and grass in our pastures, and we value add to that as close to the cornstalk as we can, as many times as we can; and we need the energy from the gentleman's State and from the State of New Mexico because we are extraordinarily susceptible to natural gas. We use it to dry grain with, we use it for anhydrous ammonia, our nitrogen supply, and we use it for all the other uses that the rest of the world does as well.

So I am extraordinarily sensitive to that and the significant point that the natural gas pipeline in the energy bill brings gas down now that is already discovered and already tapped into from the North Slope down to the lower 48 States.

The other tax is the outforcing, but I will also declare there is an "E" tax on everything we buy. That means there is an energy component. But the "E" does not stand for energy, it stands for environmental tax. It has become a cult in this Congress, a religion in this Congress to the extent that we cannot pass drilling in ANWR, as the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) said earlier, which is the most logical place in the world to go get oil. It is up there and identical to deposits on the North Slope.

There has not been a single environmental problem on the North Slope since 1972 when they finally lifted the environmental embargo, which, by the way, kept me from going up there and actually actively participating in real jobs up there. So now today that oil sits under ANWR and we have gas on the North Slope that we cannot get here to the United States. We cannot get gas out of the State of Colorado.

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield for just a moment.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I would be glad to.

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. It is estimated that if we could construct that gas pipeline that my colleague referred to from ANWR, 400,000 new jobs, direct and indirect jobs, would be created from that one action alone, including increasing dramatically the supply of natural gas to the lower 48. I repeat, 400,000 new jobs and lower gas prices.

Now, the gas my colleague referred to, and I referred to as well under the Rocky Mountain States, I held a hearing in my district recently on this subject, and I learned a lot. I learned, for example, that under nonpark, non-wilderness Federal land, I repeat, nonpark, nonwilderness Federal lands, we have enough natural gas to take care of the demands of 100 million homes for 157 years.

Now what I cited earlier here, natural gas prices up 92 percent, this is akin to the old biblical tale of the people going through a famine, the granaries being full and the pharaoh being unwilling to unlock the doors.

We have natural gas. It is those crazy, environmentally overly-sensitive policies that have restricted us from going to get it; and the same people who now restrict us from going to get it were the very people who told us a few years ago that we need to convert to natural gas. Why? Because it is affordable, it is clean, and it is abundantly available.

Well, now they are telling us we ought to go get it somewhere else, from abroad, and ship it here in tankers as liquified natural gas. We do not have the storage for it. Somebody says we have a storage problem. Well, we have a storage problem: The natural gas is stored under Federal land. That is the storage problem.

The people that are in the way are us, the Federal Government. We need to change that with an energy policy.

I yield back to the gentleman and thank him.

Mr. KING of Iowa. An environmental tax.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to yield to the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE).

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, some of our friends on the other side of the aisle really do, when we are talking off the floor, ask us, can we do this in an environmentally sensitive manner, this drilling for oil on American soil? The case on the North Slope of Alaska is a really good case example.

When we first went there, we were building pads out of gravel or rock or stone. But we have stopped that now, and we build paths to put the equipment on out of ice. We build the roads into the pads out of ice, so that the equipment that goes into the location and then when it sits there to drill the hole in the ground, they are on ice roads and on ice paths.

□ 1500

When spring comes, the ice thaws and there is actually just the pipe sticking out of the hole that is causing the production to come to the surface. We have showed that we can dramatically change the way that we do our drilling and our exploration. We have the necessity in this country to find the balance, to balance our environmental concerns with our need for jobs and with the need for affordable electricity, with the need for affordable gasoline to put into our cars.

I think as we see gasoline approaching \$3, we are going to find that the consumers in this Nation demand that we begin to produce in some of the areas where we can do so without destroying the environment. My friend from Colorado adequately pointed out that we have got a trillion cubic feet of natural gas available under his State. That gas, as he said, is not under national parks. It is not under environmentally sensitive areas. In fact, much of the gas is located in fields that have already been drilled. It is not like it is a pristine area there.

Yet we have extremists in this society who are willing to bring lawsuits. Every time an application for a permit to drill is issued by the BLM, they bring a lawsuit to stop that production. We must decide if we are going to have affordable energy in this country, keeping in mind that affordable energy is what drives this economy. We see that it is used in the production of fertilizers. Fertilizers are used in agriculture. Natural gas is used in the production of electricity because it is the cleanest fuel. We must begin to drill for more fuel, or we must begin to accept the fact that our utility bills are going to be double and triple, that our gasoline is going to actually cost three or more dollars per gallon.

Again on the subject of jobs, I have got friends on the other side of the aisle who maybe have not run a business. The gentleman from Iowa and myself and the gentleman from Colorado all come here as previous business owners. My friends on the other side of the field who maybe have not had a business, they really do have a curiosity. Why do we have this growth in our economy, why do we have an economy pushing upward at 8.2 percent in the third quarter, at 4 percent in the first quarter of this year? Alan Greenspan said it looks like we are on a sustained growth period for 4 percent through this year, probably next year. Why are the jobs not coming around?

If you will simply think about it, Mr. Speaker, in terms of when you had your first job, many companies are afraid to add people on for fear that they will have to lay them back off if the economy is still dipping up and down. We find that, as business owners, we do not hire immediately when we have a need. We begin to expand our capacity by increasing overtime hours. Maybe we just stay late and work every evening and have everybody

work on the weekends. But you cannot sustain that, you cannot wear your people out, you cannot treat people like a commodity. You cannot do that indefinitely. In my perception, I have never expected to see the jobs react immediately when the growth in the economy came because I, as a businessperson, would not hire people right away.

But now we are seeing that our businesses are sustaining this growth, they are sustaining increased demand, they cannot continue to take care of the demand for labor with overtime hours, with temporary workers; and so it is not surprising that this job growth has lagged behind the growth in the economy. I would expect, Mr. Speaker, that we have such a volatility in the world economy that we will probably peak out and we will stabilize and level off here on job creation, and then we will see another ramp-up a couple of months down the road. It is just the way that I think businesses are very careful in these times to not hire too soon.

When we talk about the number of jobs being created and the number of jobs lost, a lot of times our friends on the other side of the aisle are talking about the number of jobs lost in the last couple of years and they make the numbers sound very good. It is important to remember, Mr. Speaker, that America has about 138 million jobs. While we hate to see any worker displaced, we have to keep it in perspective. We have to understand the balance that is there between 138 million jobs and even the creation of these 300,000 jobs, no matter how important it is, is still just a very small change, that most Americans are finding great stability and they are seeing in their daily lives the stability that this economy is bringing in.

We have to understand that the changes that occurred on 9/11 really were systemic changes. For a narrow period of time, people began to stay home. They did not travel. They did not go to the bowling alley at night. They did not go out to eat quite as much. The spending in this economy after 9/11 changed dramatically and shocked our economy into a recession that we are just now coming out of. It is not possible for an economy just to change itself and to grow out of its recession.

I think the stimulating effect of the President's tax cut is one of the most important things that we did. When people on the other side of the aisle are saying that we should give tax increases back to a certain piece of the population, we have to keep an element in mind, that when government spending increases beyond a certain level, and in general economists think that within the 20 to 24 percent level, if government spending increases beyond that, then the economy does not have the capital to reinvest in growth, to reinvest in new jobs and in new factories and in new equipment. What a tax cut

does is it lowers the amount that the government is actually spending as a piece of the gross domestic product.

If we want a good example of what high government spending will do to an economy, we look at Europe and especially we look at our friends in Germany. Their government spends approximately 40 to 44 percent of every dollar spent in Germany. Because of that, they have a sluggish economy that cannot create jobs, and they have been wrestling with that for some time. I visited in Germany on my way back from Iraq in early November. The Germans were telling us that maybe if you get your economy going in America that we can get our economy going here. They are unwilling, though, to give the tax cuts or to cut spending. Either one would cause a lessening of the percent of gross domestic product. Because of their unwillingness, their economy stays mired and stagnant.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be a part of the Republican Party, which has cast a pro-growth initiative in this entire 2 years that I have been in Congress. I am proud as a freshman to have participated in creating policies that will educate our young people, creating the opportunities for them for a lifetime, giving them hope and access to the potential that this great Nation has. I am proud that the President has created an initiative to continue that lifetime training for those young people as they prepare for technical careers. I am proud to have passed this transportation bill which will create many, many new jobs. I am proud to have voted for an energy bill that will create more domestic sources of energy, less dependence on international sources of energy. That bill needs to be passed. There are people in this town who are blocking it from being passed and it needs to be passed.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from New Mexico, and I would address some of the cleanup issues here. I would like to point out, also, that as Republicans, we stand here in this Congress together and we work toward a common goal. Those who have been listening here will hear a consistent voice about the progress that we have made, the Jobs and Growth Act, the transportation bill that just passed here in this Congress this afternoon, a number of other initiatives that have been good on balance for all of America. That is not to imply that we think our work is done. It is not to imply that we think our work is perfect. In fact, one of the approaches I have to life is I am always looking back and seeing what should we have done better, the lament I have about how we had an opportunity that could have been better capitalized on than the opportunities that we have had; and those are the things that motivate many of us to go forward into the future and try to perfect a policy that we always recognize is imperfect.

Some of the pieces hanging around out here that do need to be addressed is

the regulation burden that is on the backs of American businesses. How do we move to another level? We have the strongest growth of any industrialized country in the world right now. We heard that in the President's speech in this city last night. We have the strongest growth, but that is not good enough. Those who rest on their laurels will soon be swallowed up by those who do not. It puts me in mind of a quotation that I recall, I cannot attribute it to an individual, but someone will know and, that is, that history is the sound of hobnail boots storming up the stairs and silver slippers coming down. That is what we are in danger of, is moving into these silver slippers and being complacent and settling into our easy chairs while those folks that are a little more hungry and a little more aggressive, those folks that will get out of bed and go to work a little earlier, work a little later and will maybe work for a little bit less are putting pressure on this economy. We need to do a number of things to improve our economy in the direction we are going.

We talked about energy. I am pleased with the animation that comes out of my colleagues on energy. It animates me. I was able to go to Alaska with the gentleman from New Mexico to ANWR. I recall flying over that 19.5 million acres of ANWR. Of that 19.5 million, 1.5 million is the area that has oil underneath it. It is the coastal plain. It is an arctic desert coastal plain. The elevations vary just a little bit from sea level across there. We flew over 1.5 million acres of that coastal plain looking for wildlife. ANWR stands for Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. One would think that place would be teeming with wildlife. In fact, they told us that the caribou come for about 4 to 6 weeks in the spring, have their calves and go back to Canada. The rest of the time they are gone. We looked around for wildlife from that plane ride over and back along that coastal plain, two different routes, all of us searching. I saw two white birds and four musk oxen. I did the math on that. I divided the 4 musk oxen into 1.5 million acres of coastal plain. It comes out to 375,000 acres per ox. I did not see them all. There were some more there, but there is plenty of room for people and for musk oxen and for caribou. In fact, the caribou herd on the north slope, a different herd that has lived now with the pipeline since 1972 when it began, that herd was 7,000 in 1972, and today it is 28,000. Caribou do very well in that kind of an environment.

But aside from energy and the policies that we need to promote ethanol, promote biodiesel. I have got wind in my district. Some of that wind is getting cost competitive. It is not just some States like New Mexico or Colorado that are energy States. Iowa and the Fifth Congressional District of Iowa is an energy export center. All of those policies we need to do to move forward with our domestic production puts me in mind of a commercial that

I watched on television. I have to phrase it this way. The apparent Democrat nominee for President of the United States has a commercial that ran in Iowa for months and months. It made three points. It said, I blocked the oil drilling in ANWR, and I will never send your sons and daughters over to the Middle East to fight for foreign oil, and I will create 500,000 new jobs. That was the equation.

There are some smart people in this Congress, but I have yet to find anybody that can put that equation together and reconcile those three points. Stop domestic production and be proud of that and why, I have no idea. I want to promote domestic production consistent with sound environmental science, not religion, but science. And so blocking that production does not help new jobs except exports them overseas. And then never sending sons and daughters over to the Middle East to fight for foreign oil. If you declare it to be a police action, then you can fight on this country and you will turn this Nation into one huge Israel where we can only then guard every theater, guard every bus stop, guard every school and every hospital and every church and still see our women and children blown to bits. This is not a police action. This is not a law enforcement problem. This is a war on terror, and we are not in Iraq fighting for foreign oil. We are in Iraq having freed 25 million people in Iraq. And so that equation does not work.

And creating 500,000 new jobs, well, at the rate this economy is going, in another couple of weeks, we will have that done within the last 6 weeks. I can do the math on that. I did the math. 308,000 new jobs in the last month, times 12, that is just one month of growth, that comes out to be 3,696,000 jobs. That is an annual rate of job growth. I maybe would take issue with a couple of the gentlemen that spoke ahead of me. We do want job growth to go on. If it goes on at this pace, we will soon run out of people willing to do the work at any price. We will not have enough bodies to do it. This is excellent, extraordinary economic growth. I do not know that it is sustainable, but it is awfully good news.

One of the things we need to do to sustain our economy is to reduce this burden of litigation and regulation that is on us. I sat in on a presentation by some business executives, it has been about a year ago now, up in New York City. The presentation came down to this final number: 3 percent of our gross domestic product is being consumed by the litigation process, class action lawsuits. If you eat too many French fries, sue McDonald's, those kinds of ideas. The tobacco lawsuits which put a price on the cigarettes that goes regressively against the people that are the greatest users, Mr. Speaker.

And so as you add up the cost of the litigation in this country, and it adds up to 3 percent of our GDP, and you

think in terms of about 3.5 percent GDP is required in order for us to move forward and grow with our economy and sustain the necessities for the infrastructure that we need to build out, 3.5 percent required for that, but the trial lawyers get 3 percent off the top.

□ 1515

That means we have got to grow at 6.5 percent to sustain that, and I think we need to do some things with regard to tort reform. In the Committee on the Judiciary, we have passed a number of them. Nothing broad enough. Nothing broad enough that may have a real impact on this 3 percent.

Plus the burden of regulation in this country, just Federal regulations that are on the backs of all those businesses, the gentleman from New Mexico's (Mr. PEARCE) business and my construction business before I sold it to my oldest son, actually less than a year ago, and the gentleman from Colorado's (Mr. BEAUPREZ) business as well, the burden of those Federal regulations adding up across this country to over \$850 billion a year. That is wasted money. That is not productive. It is not things in the productive sector of the economy where jobs are created.

Where we have jobs created in the productive sector of the economy, there are contributions that come from taxes that help to fund government, and when that happens then there is a little money left over for No Child Left Behind, and that is some cleanup.

The gentleman from Ohio made a statement that they are underfunded on No Child Left Behind by \$1.5 billion. Well, I hope he is sitting over in his office listening to this, because he needs to take a look at the real process here, and America needs to understand it as well.

There is authorization, and then there is appropriation. Those two numbers do not match. Authorization says we can go ahead and appropriate maybe up to this amount, cap it there, no more, but use judgment to hold this into fiscal restraint. This number that is being claimed by the gentleman from Ohio on No Child Left Behind, this \$1½ billion, I can only assume, if it is anchored on anything, it is anchored on authorization, not appropriation. There is not a way that one can calculate that and make that allegation that we owe \$1½ billion to Ohio unless it has been appropriated, and if it is appropriated the money would be there, and the difference needs to be understood.

This claim, by the way, if we look back through the records, the last time the Democrats had a majority in the House and the Senate and the Presidency and they got a chance to fund education to their will, they had an authorization number and then they had an appropriation number, and they did not match. But the folks on the other side of the aisle were not here saying, "We are underfunded, Mr. President." That is the issue here, is the credibility

aspect between authorization, appropriation.

I yield to the gentleman from north New Mexico.

Mr. PEARCE. Southern New Mexico, Mr. Speaker, I border on the Mexico border, and my district is about as large as the State of Iowa.

I would like to go back to the cost of lawsuits to American business and what it costs each individual. Basically, the frivolous lawsuits in America cost each one of us 5 percent off of our wages. That is an approximate cost of \$807 per U.S. citizen. That is across the board. Litigation costs increase insurance premiums, create higher medical costs. They cause less disposable income in our homes. They raise prices on goods and services. Businesses have to charge a higher price in order to cover the cost of litigation. This slows job growth and expansion of the economy.

The U.S. Chamber last year in my district ran ads. They were telling the New Mexico citizens that for every new car they buy, they pay over \$500 for the costs of litigation that are acquiring on that car manufacturer somewhere.

One of my friends from Ohio said that we must stop making policy based on the contributions to campaigns. I would like to hold him to that statement. The single largest contributor to our friends on the other side of the aisle are the personal injury lawyers. They are the ones who are buying influence, and they are the ones who are blocking the reforms of lawsuit litigation abuses in this country.

This House has passed medical liability reform, it has passed asbestos liability reform, it has passed class action lawsuit reform, and they sit stalled out because of the special interests who are buying influence here exactly like my friend from Ohio from the other side of the aisle was talking about. I hope that he will join me with as much enthusiasm as he was displaying on the floor of the House to talk about the special interests purchasing the system here in Washington, and that special interest group being the personal injury lawyers of America.

Mr. Speaker, if we are going to consider the environmental cost, the environmental tax on each product in America, we also need to consider the lawsuit cost, the litigation cost, on every product in America. Because it comes from each one of us every time a lawsuit is filed. No one of us would block access to the courts for people who have a serious, legitimate legal claim, but the frivolous lawsuits are designed never to go to court but instead to extract a payment from a company without going to court for a perceived injustice.

Very rarely do the members of the class, those people, the class of the class action, the hundreds and hundreds of thousands of people who are put on the class action lawsuit by the lawyers, very rarely do they get any-

thing. I have heard payments as low as 25 cents for each claimant in a class action lawsuit, while the lawyers get millions and sometimes billions of dollars.

If we are going to improve the business climate in America, if we are going to stop the outflow of jobs from this country, we will deal with the frivolous lawsuits that really affect the ability of any company in this country to continue to produce goods and services and produce jobs for the people who want to live here and to raise their children in just a peaceful, quiet neighborhood, knowing that they have the security of a job for tomorrow. Lawsuit abuse is one of the greatest penalties in our system, both personal and corporate, that we face.

I yield back to the gentleman to conclude. This is all of my statement, and I do thank the gentleman for bringing this conversation to the floor of the House on this day when it is announced that, under the President's policies, under President Bush's policies, 308,000 new jobs have been created in March. I thank the gentleman for his leadership on this issue.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Mexico (Mr. PEARCE) for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, another subject matter I would like to raise is in rebuttal to the remarks made by the previous speakers from the Ohio delegation, and that would be with regard to unemployment and the very strong statements made on why we need to extend and expand unemployment benefits. We have done that in this Congress, and it has been up for a vote twice in a little more than a year that I have been here, and I will tell the Members that I come to the table with a little bit different viewpoint on that.

That is, first of all, the demand on a minimum wage increase and possibly the discussion that has to do with a living wage; and I want to argue that there is hardly a legitimate minimum wage in this country at all. Most people are working for more than the minimum wage. Our economy has grown past that, and the minimum wage itself sometimes keeps people from getting in entry level.

I pointed out that it used to be one could drive into a gas station anywhere and some young person would come out there, entry-level job, and wash the windshield, check the oil, check the air in the tires, and fill the gas tank up and bring them their change and send them along their way. That was kind of a nice service, and they learned a work ethic. We do not do that anymore, and one of the reasons is because of minimum wage.

But labor is an equation just like any other commodity. Labor is a commodity, and it is like corn and beans or oil, as we talked about earlier, or gold or shares in the marketplace. The value of labor is predicated upon two things: the supply and the demand of labor, just like the supply and demand of gold or oil, controls the price. So

when we start to interfere with that cost and we raise that cost of entry level labor up, then we are going to have some people who lose out on jobs.

If we can legislate, by the way, a minimum wage, then I would challenge then the next step is legislating a living wage. As I hear about living wages, then I say, well, if we can raise that price up, and living wage used to be claimed to be something like \$8.56 an hour. So if we could legislate a living wage, then why in the world could we not just go ahead and legislate prosperity? If it does not cost jobs, if people are not going to get unemployed because of raising a minimum wage or moving up to a living wage, then let us all just be rich and let us set that level someplace at \$20 or \$25 or \$30 an hour, and then we can all just share in this prosperity that would be legislated by the wise people from over here on the other side of the aisle.

That does not work, because it is supply and demand. It is working. That is why the real minimum wage is substantially higher than the legislative statutory minimum wage.

Transportation, we passed that today. That puts dollars and jobs out there. Transportation is the fundamental, foundational first building block in economic development. Transportation, education, high-speed telecommunications are those components today. Transportation was the first component. It is the most essential component. We have now started down the path of providing for those jobs and building the American economy, but it can be stronger, and the bill could have been better.

I cannot leave this closed without addressing some things that need to be better, and that is the environmental burden on the transportation cost. Eighteen point four cents of every American's gas, when they put the nozzle in their tank, goes into this highway fund. But of that 18.4 cents out of every gallon comes about 28 percent just to feed the E-tax, the environmental monster, the cult, a religious type of environmental cultism, rather than a responsible way of dealing with our environment. We cannot even inventory the offshore natural gas reserves off the coast of Florida because of the barrier here in this Congress because of the E-tax that is on us. So there is an environmental piece to this.

Then there is a wage scale piece to this, the Davis-Bacon wage scale. That will increase the cost of wages from 8 to 38 percent and actually some statistics show 5 to 35 percent. But I will just say average that all out and that comes to about 23 percent of this; this is higher than it needs to be because of federally mandated wage scales. So we add the 28 percent for environmental, let us say 20 percent for the wage scale. So we are at 48 percent, and we have not even dealt yet with mass transit, bike trails, money for scrubbing the graffiti off the walls. Come on. Do we not have some people in our prisons

that we could give them a wire brush and send them out there? Why are we imposing that upon the taxpayers of America to clean off the graffiti? Is that not a local issue?

So when we add all these pieces up, I will argue that we can come to 68 percent, maybe 71 percent of this can go somewhere else to be funded if, in fact, we believe it should be a priority whatsoever. I want every dime possible out of those transportation dollars to go into concrete and earth moving and pipe work and transportation that can be used to grow our economy, and I pledge here and now to move forward with this over the next 6 years if they send me back to do so in order to try to turn those dollars in a more responsible fashion for transportation.

We are doing a lot of the right things, Mr. Speaker. We need to continue improving on every single component where we claim credit. We will get better, and we have got a lot to claim credit for, including 308,000 new jobs just in this past month alone.

OUR POROUS BORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURGESS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Speaker, we have a couple of towns in Colorado that are approaching 500,000. I believe a town in my district, Aurora, Colorado, would be in that area somewhere. Just the last 6 months this Nation has added at least one more, Aurora, Colorado, and not by the fact that a group of American citizens or anybody presently living in the country had a number of children that all of a sudden would create a whole new city. We got this because we have porous borders and because, from October 1 last year to the end of March, approximately half a million people came through just one sector of our southern border, just one sector, the Tucson sector. We can be sure that it was at least that many because we know from experience, by how many we catch coming into this country, that there are at least two to three that get by us.

So from the first of October to the end of March to the first of April, about a quarter of a million people were interdicted in that southern border in one sector, just the Tucson sector.

This is astronomical. The numbers are unbelievable. They are up like 50 percent. For every single person that we stop at the border, remember, two or three get by us, get by the Border Patrol. So that is why we know that in that 6-month period of time, a half million people came into this country illegally; and they did so in just one sector. We are not talking about the entire border of the United States of America, north and south.

What does this mean? And, by the way, why do my colleagues think they

are doing that, Mr. Speaker? Why, I wonder, are we having so many people right now coming into this country illegally? Every year we have literally hundreds of thousands of people who sneak into the country. We take in a million and a half people approximately every year legally. We are one of the most generous nations in the world.

□ 1530

It is certainly the most liberal policy when it comes to immigration. But beyond that, beyond the people that we bring into this country every year legally, another 1 million or so come in through the back door, another 1 million or so we do not know who they are, we do not know where they are, we do not know what they are doing here. We trust most of them are "doing these jobs," I hear this constantly, "that no one else wants." They are only coming to do jobs that no other American will do.

I tell you, Mr. Speaker, with between 10 and 18 million Americans out of work today, I will bet you anything that there are millions of Americans who are willing to do the jobs, but they have been underbid, if you will, by people who have come here illegally. Their jobs have been taken by people who have said, I will do it for less.

Then the next wave of immigration comes, and they do the same thing. They take jobs from the people who just came in. So that over the last 10 years, our wage rates in this country have stayed flat; and wage rates, especially for low income people, have stayed very, very flat, because it is a depressing effect on wage rates when you have millions of people coming into the country illegally, especially people who are low-skilled and therefore low-wage people.

But half a million through just one sector over the last 6 months. And why? I will tell you why, because the President of the United States made a speech, and in this speech he said that he wants a program of amnesty. And there is no other way to put it.

He connected it with his plan for a guest worker program; but, in fact, because he allows people to stay in this country even if they are here illegally, it is an amnesty plan.

Every time I go to the border, and I go down to the border quite often, Mr. Speaker, and up to our northern border, and every time I do I talk to someone who is Border Patrol, and they will say to you every single time, they will say, whatever you do, do not even use the word "amnesty" when you start talking up there in the Congress, because every time you do that, then the flood that I am trying to stop down here turns into a tidal wave.

That is exactly what happened. The numbers went up dramatically right after the President gave his speech, and they continue to go up. On the border, our Border Patrol people are even asking the people they interdict, why