

people, will overcome them as we have triumphed over other challenges in the past 2 years. To succeed, we ask for your continued investment. Afghanistan is open for business and American companies are most welcome. Together we will make Afghanistan a great success and an enduring example of a prosperous democratic society.

Our shared success in Afghanistan is vital to achieving victory over the greatest menace the world faces today, terrorism and extremism.

Long before the horrific tragedy of September 11, terrorists subjected the people of Afghanistan to unspeakable brutality and oppression. Even though we were among the most pious Muslims in the world, we were the first and foremost victims of al Qaeda. In the name of Islam, a religion of peace and tolerance, they terrorized and killed the Muslim people of Afghanistan and deprived us of our basic rights. These atrocities continued for many years, and the world remained unengaged.

The tragedy of September 11 once again tied the destinies of our two nations. You came to Afghanistan to defeat terrorism, and we Afghans welcomed and embraced you for the liberation of our country. Together we ended the rule of terrorism.

Ladies and gentlemen, this was not the first time America confronted a great evil and rescued the world. Two weeks ago, on Memorial Day, you remembered the hundreds of thousands of American soldiers who gave their lives for defending democracy and freedom around the world. You led the world in eliminating fascism. You stood with the Afghan nation in our heroic fight against the former Soviet Union. Just last week, we honored one of our great fellow freedom fighters in that struggle, the late President Ronald Reagan.

Today, the United States is once again leading the global effort to defeat terrorism and extremism. Afghanistan is a central front in the war against terrorism. The Afghan people are and will remain with you in this struggle.

Ladies and gentlemen, in this great Chamber, in the House of the American people, democracy and liberty thrive. Afghans are honored to have become partners in this noble tradition. The Afghan people will not forget your help and will always remember and cherish your friendship. The Afghan people desire to further build on this solid foundation of mutual trust and friendship by creating a strong partnership between our two nations.

We must build a partnership that will consolidate our achievements and enhance stability, prosperity, and democracy in Afghanistan and in the region. This requires sustaining and accelerating the reconstruction of Afghanistan through long-term commitment, a free trade agreement between the United States and Afghanistan, and providing incentives to the private sector for investing in Afghanistan. We must enhance our strategic partner-

ship. The security of our two nations is intertwined.

In December of 2001, a U.S. bomb went astray and exploded a few meters from where I was staying. This was the last day of our resistance against the Taliban. This was the day that the Bonn process announced me as the chairman. This was the day the Taliban were to come and surrender. This was also the day that the stray bomb came to us and killed more than 20 of my people and also four U.S. soldiers. In the midst of all that confusion and pain, an old man walked up to me. I did not know him. I had not seen him before, and I have not seen him since then. He came to me and said, "Mr. Karzai, go to the Americans. Tell them that in a war like this, things like that happen. Tell them not to lose heart. Tell them that we shall continue to fight and we must win."

Ladies and gentlemen, upon my arrival in the United States last week I stopped at Fort Drum, New York, to meet some of your troops who had served in Afghanistan. Senator CLINTON graciously came to receive us. We honored two American soldiers who recently returned from Afghanistan and who a few months ago in Kandahar were traveling in a vehicle. Somebody, a terrorist, threw a grenade at them. The grenade landed in their vehicle. They took the grenade. Instead of throwing it into the street where there were people around them, civilians, these heroic men stuck the grenade under their seat. The grenade exploded. Fortunately, they survived. But they were badly injured. To us, this was also an example of heroism and care for humanity, and we are proud of these two American soldiers. These stories tell a tale of partnership, tell a tale of joint struggle, tell a tale of care and courage and care for humanity.

Ladies and gentlemen, together we have a long road ahead, but we will move forward to make the world a better place. For us in Afghanistan, we remember you for every help that you have given us, and we will have that in our books written in golden letters. This road, this journey is one of success and victory. We will continue to triumph and win the war against terrorism and make the world a better place for us and the rest of the world. May God bless America and Afghanistan and our two nations. Thank you very much.

[Applause, Members rising.]

At 9 o'clock and 56 minutes a.m., His Excellency Hamid Karzai, President of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The members of the President's Cabinet.

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

JOINT MEETING DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The purpose of the joint meeting having been completed, the Chair declares the joint meeting of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 9 o'clock and 58 minutes a.m., the joint meeting of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The House will continue in recess until 10:30 a.m.

□ 1030

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BASS) at 10 o'clock and 30 minutes a.m.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS HAD DURING THE RECESS

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings had during the recess be printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nebraska?

There was no objection.

CONTRIBUTION OF AMIGOS FOR KIDS

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, our children are the hope of our world. "Los ninos son la esperanza del mundo," said Jose Marti, the Cuban freedom fighter; and from humble beginnings that helped to form their character, they become tomorrow's leaders.

Amigos for Kids, a most worthy non-profit organization in my hometown of Miami, Florida, is helping our precious youth to realize their true potential, a potential that may never have been uncovered without the intervention of such esteemed individuals such as Jorge Plasencia, a dear friend of mine and cofounder of the organization.

Jorge is an outstanding member of our south Florida community and founded Amigos in response to the diverse needs of the abused, neglected, and less fortunate children and their families. Throughout his 13-year history, Amigos has come to the aid of many of the children through education, prevention and community involvement. Jorge's hard work with Amigos is a testament to his strength and unwavering commitment to our cherished children.

Muchisimas Gracias, Jorge. Thank you so much for your help to our south Florida's children.

APPRECIATION FOR THE WORDS OF PRESIDENT KARZAI

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to add my appreciation and applause for the words of President Karzai of Afghanistan. We had the great pleasure as members of the Afghanistan Caucus, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY) the Chair, and myself as cochair, along with other Members of Congress, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. KANJORSKI) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) to visit most recently in Afghanistan and to see the real examples of progress that have been made and particularly the provisional reconstruction teams of our military who are engaged in building clinics and schools, hospitals and homes.

We do know that there is more work to be done. There is work to be done with the warlords and the militias. It is imperative that we stay the course as it relates to the war on terror in Afghanistan and to focus on not having distractions that keep us from finishing our commitment there. It is not going to be easy to have unfettered elections, safe elections; and it will take the will of the people of Afghanistan as well as the will of this Nation.

At the same time, I would hope that we would focus on other issues of concern as we work toward a free and independent and secure Afghanistan.

DRILLING IN ANWR

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, energy and independence should be a goal of this Congress. Worldwide demand for petroleum has increased in the last decade. The growth in production has been relatively flat. The inevitable result is in higher prices at the gasoline pump. This reality is that it takes time to go from an oil field to the gasoline station, and we have lost a considerable amount of time.

In 1995, the 104th Congress passed H.R. 2491, which would have allowed oil exploration in the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. The Department of Energy has estimated that between 1 and 1.3 million barrels of oil a day could be derived from this source.

Unfortunately, this legislation was vetoed by President Clinton, and that was nearly 10 years ago. Given a time line of 7 to 14 years for building a pipeline structure, it is time we could scarcely afford to waste.

Mr. Speaker, I have been to ANWR. The vast coastal plain is unsuitable for habitation during the summer months because of the marshy consistency of that plain. Any caribou unlucky enough to calve in this region would

likely die from exsanguination at the hands of mosquitoes there.

The people who live in ANWR are counting on this Congress to do the right thing and allow them, the rightful owners of these mineral rights, to begin developing resources.

WE NEED A PRESIDENT NOT TIED TO THE OIL INDUSTRY

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the administration's energy program will be rubber stamped once again by this Congress. It is the rubber stamp Congress; anything the president wants, they get it.

Let me summarize it. The Vice President holds secret meetings with oil representatives, and then gas prices soar to the highest levels in two decades; American consumers pay \$25 billion more; oil companies make \$34 billion more; oil company profits increase 165 percent at one company and 294 percent at another company; and now the administration wants to drill in ANWR, the fragile Arctic National Wildlife Reserve.

At this rate, the administration will make an oil drilling rig part of the new Visitor's Center complex out in front of the Capitol.

This administration has sold out the American people to big oil. It is time for that well to run dry before there is more damage to the wallet of American consumers or the fragile environment that we need to protect. We need a President who is not tied to the oil industry.

CALLING FOR A COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY POLICY

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, last week the Associated Press reported that Iraqis are paying 5 cents for a gallon of gas; 5 cents, a nickel. Why are the Iraqis getting such a good deal while the rest of the world has an energy crisis? Because the American taxpayer is subsidizing the Iraqis to the tune of \$167 million a month so they can get discounted gasoline. This comes to \$500 million every 3 months, \$1 billion every 6 months, \$2 billion over the year.

Here in America, hard-working families are paying close to \$2, if not more, per gallon, up 50 cents since the beginning of the war in Iraq.

Since this is energy week here in Congress, what are we doing? We are bringing up a piece of legislation that a Republican Senator dubbed the "No Lobbyist Left Behind" bill for the energy industry. For too long, this administration has two sets of books, and values: One for Iraq and one for America.

We cannot deny Americans the same dreams of affordable health care, quality education and affordable energy that we promise Iraqis. The same values that we hold for Iraq, we must pledge to Americans.

Mr. Speaker, this week we should work to solve the Nation's energy needs, and not retread bad policy.

AMERICANS TIRED OF BIASED, LIBERAL, SHODDY NEWS RE- PORTING

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, last week on the evening news, Dan Rather, nicknamed "Rather Biased" by those of us who are conservative or those of us who just like fair reporting in general, spent 2 minutes reporting a story about 1,300 layoffs in Ohio. That certainly is something that is of concern, and yet at the same time he only spent 20 seconds reporting that 947,000 new jobs have been created in the last 3 months.

I realize that the media loves to dwell on the negative, but they also completely can ignore the fact that the unemployment rate is down to 5.6 percent, which is a lower rate than it averaged in 1970s, 1980s and 1990s; home ownership has risen to its highest level at 68 percent; and real disposable income is up nearly 4 percent this year. The economy is coming back and coming back strong, and yet the media still wants to dwell on the negative.

But then again it is no surprise. Their real goal is not journalism, but to get JOHN KERRY elected president. No wonder Fox, "fair and balanced news," has come on as one of the strongest cable networks that there is, Mr. Speaker. I think Americans have absolutely had enough with biased, liberal, shoddy reporting.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4513, RENEWABLE EN- ERGY PROJECT SITING IM- PROVEMENT ACT OF 2004, AND H.R. 4529, ARCTIC COSTAL PLAIN SURFACE MINING IMPROVMENT ACT OF 2004

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 672 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 672

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4513) to provide that in preparing an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement required under section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 with respect to any action authorizing a renewable energy project, no Federal agency is required to identify alternative project locations or actions other than the proposed action and the