

FREE ENTERPRISE CAPITALISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege to be recognized to address you and the House of Representatives and the people of the country who listen in on these types of discussions.

As I listened in on the gentlelady's remarks on the global war on terror, particularly in Iraq, and I hear the words "war of choice," I actually expect that the historians will write it differently. And you can never write history from a contemporary perspective. That has to be done a generation or so down the line so you can see how things actually unfold.

When I look back at the time when this country was attacked, we've been attacked any number of times for the 18 previous years; but September 11, 2001, is a date that we will always remember. And as the President made his decisions, as he rose up and really took on a leadership mantle here, he was the Commander in Chief, but he stepped up to leadership on that day and on the days subsequent to September 11, and he had to make some tough decisions. One of them was to engage in combat in Afghanistan.

He ordered troops within a little more than 30 days into battle. And everyone said you can't be successful in Afghanistan; no one in history has been successful in Afghanistan. And, in fact, history is replete with the examples of the outside military operations that have gone into Afghanistan and failed. I can't tell you from this point, Mr. Speaker, whether history will write that Afghanistan is a resounding success, but the contemporary analysis at this point is that it is a resounding success.

As I listen to the gentlelady talk about a war of choice, I would submit that the President had no choice. He had no choice. We had been attacked. Remember, all the planes were grounded. We didn't know if there were more in the air, if they were coming to more places. The one that went to the ground in Pennsylvania may well have been targeted to the White House or this very Capitol Building that we are in.

And all the intelligence in the world concurred on one thing, that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction in significant quantities. And the gentlelady that would submit otherwise would have been one of the first to raise an objection if the President would have ordered troops into battle in Iraq without proper protection from chemical weapons, for example. No one believed otherwise, not Hillary Clinton, not the United Nations, not the Israelis, not the French, not the Russians, not the CIA, and not George Tenet.

So to take us back through this, there was a time and a moment in his-

tory where decisions had to be made within that context, within the context of what did we know at the time, what did we believe at the time, and what were the consequences and what were the alternatives.

Now, the alternative that the President had to be considering, and I don't believe that he has ever spoken about this publicly, and I'm not implying that he has spoken to me about it privately, but the alternative that the President had to consider was, if I do not take action, then what? What will be the response of the American people if we are attacked again and I sit on my hands, like happened in the aftermath of the attack on the USS Cole or the U.S. embassies in Africa or the circumstances within Mogadishu when we retreated and gave up that piece of ground and sent a message to the terrorists that we didn't have the resolve? What would have been the consequence?

What if the United States had been attacked again, not on September 11, 2001, but maybe September 11, 2003, and we hadn't taken action? What if those resources had come out of, and, in fact, some of the resources were coming out of Iraq that were targeted against us, what if America had lives that had been lost in significant numbers? What then would the gentlelady say? What then would the critics to the President say?

They would say he didn't take action when he should have. They would say he should have gone into Iraq. But he had to deal with the information he knew when he knew it. And the decision that was made, as historians will evaluate, I believe, will be that the President didn't really have a choice. And this Congress endorsed that decision with a vote here on the floor of Congress in the House of Representatives and in the Senate that was the authorization to use military force.

So we need to stand behind our decisions here as well as stand behind the Commander in Chief. And I would submit that the advocacy for an immediate pullout of Iraq, that's actually a tired, threadbare argument today. It's been a threadbare argument for a long time, but it was illuminated pretty well when General Petraeus came to this Congress in those days, September 12, 13 or 14 of September, when he delivered his report to the House of Representatives and the following day delivered his report to the United States Senate.

And, Mr. Speaker, as we saw the things that transpired in Iraq at the beginning of the surge, and I recall being there last Thanksgiving and trying to go into al Anbar province, trying to get into places like Ramadi and Fallujah, and I couldn't go because it was too dangerous, the stability was not there, the marines had written off Anbar province. The map was colored all red. The map of the tribal zones that actually are the local government in Iraq was colored all red, red being

the color that denotes al Qaeda; al Qaeda being in control of and having the dominant influence in those tribal zones in Anbar province. So I couldn't go into Anbar, couldn't go to Fallujah, couldn't go to Ramadi, couldn't go to a number of those other communities.

That was last Thanksgiving. However, the last part of July this year I did go. I went into Ramadi and walked the streets of Ramadi. That's where they had the 5K run here I think just yesterday or maybe the day before. Hundreds and hundreds, in fact, thousands of people in the street out there doing a recreational 5K run, something that you would only see people running in Iraq if they're running from an explosion or a bullet or towards where that bullet or explosion detonated. But today, there is recreational running going on over there in a place like Ramadi, where it has been the center of death. And those tribal zones in al Anbar province that were all colored red now on the map are all colored green, supportive of U.S. coalition and Iraqi defense forces.

And I would point out that the liberation, the freeing, the driving of al Qaeda out of Ramadi was done with 85 percent Iraqi defense forces, 15 percent U.S. coalition forces. The Iraqis are more than fighting side by side. They're leading in this battle in many of the places over there in Iraq. And you have seen, also, American casualties down to the lowest levels we've had in over a year. And you're seeing Iraqi civilian casualties down to a level that is less than half of what it was a year ago.

Now, none of these are good circumstances for permanent conditions, but this is a good direction and a good trend. And the agreement that was reached in Anbar province where the sheiks came around on our side and said we're going to throw our lot with you, we're going to drive out al Qaeda, what they really said was, We want to kill al Qaeda with you. It wasn't some politically correct statement like, We would like to join with you to try to improve the stability or security here in our region. They said, We want to kill al Qaeda with you.

And they actually have a reconciliation plan. Some of those young men over there have been taking money from al Qaeda and setting roadside bombs, detonating roadside bombs or attacking Americans, U.S. coalition troops or Iraqis. They've been paid for; they've been mercenaries for al Qaeda. And some of them are there because they philosophically think it's the right thing to do, too. But the reconciliation plan is this, if you have attacked our side and you want to come forward and make a confession, if you're not standing there with blood on your hands and we can work this thing out, then you make a public declaration as a former al Qaeda supporter that you're going to support the Iraqi defense force, the Government of Iraq, U.S. coalition forces, and fight on our side.

□ 1545

If you make that pledge, and by the way, it is a public pledge and your name goes up on a bulletin board, then they take you back in. So it is possible to switch sides. It is possible to come over. And many are coming over to our side. You have to be wondering, Mr. Speaker, then, what are the consequences for one who doesn't keep their word to fight against al Qaeda, to stand on the side of the Iraqi people, the side of U.S. Coalition Forces? I asked that question over there in the briefing. They answered, the penalty is death. They are serious. This is serious business. This is life and death for thousands of people. It is also life and death for a number of nations.

That is a crucible in the world right now where if this place is allowed to melt down, if we pulled out of there, as the gentlewoman recommended, did a pullout of this conflict that is going on, then you look at the void that would be created. Nature abhors a vacuum. Power abhors a vacuum. The struggle there has been a power struggle. Yes, there are different competing philosophies that have lined up in different political spheres. At one time I could list you off about seven different power centers within Iraq that are competing for power. But we don't. We have the Shias and the Sunnis. We have the Badr brigades, and we have Moqtada al-Sadr's JAM brigade, and some that are just plain criminals. And you have the former Baathists, and again the Shias and Sunnis of different stripes, the different allegiances that come out of all of that, they were all competing for power. That is sorting itself out now.

As this power struggle works its way through, as the sheiks line up and decide they are going to cast their lot with the Iraqi nation, the Iraqi Government and the Iraqi people, as well as the U.S. coalition forces, they lined this up. They have done this same kind of thing in Taji in the north. They have done this in the south in Baghdad, and made their agreements where the map of that country today is far more green with very little red in it where al Qaeda has an influence. Some of those places where they have an influence is there because they just simply, the influence is there because al Qaeda has been driven out of some of the other regions and they had to go somewhere, didn't leave the country.

There is reason for optimism. And there always should be cautious optimism when it comes to war. But the other side has reason for pessimism. They have reason to believe that they have been driven out of al-Anbar province. And they have been driven out of many areas of Iraq. The country is safer today than it was a year ago. Much of the country isn't as dangerous as we are lead to believe that it is. I listened to the gentleman from California, Mr. HUNTER's remarks earlier about some State Department personnel who decided they don't want to

go to Iraq because it is too dangerous. Yes, there is danger there, but our military is facing that every day. And they are re-upping in greater numbers than ever imagined. That is why we can keep our recruitment up, because they believe in the mission.

As DUNCAN HUNTER said, when you go to Bethesda or Walter Reed or Landstuhl in Germany and visit our brave wounded there, those that have maybe lost a limb, those that are in a long recovery process, those that may have had a pretty large chunk of shrapnel taken out of them, they want to get back with their unit. They want to finish their mission. Some have gone back with a prosthetic in place of a limb. That is real, true courage and patriotism. These are the people that say, I am a volunteer. I volunteered for this branch of the military at this time. I volunteered for this mission or at least I knew there was a high likelihood I would be deployed to this mission. I want to complete my mission because it is important. It is important for the freedom and the safety of the American people. It is important for freedom in the world. It is important for the dynamics that are taking place in that part of the world today where they realize that if the Iranians are allowed to continue their proxy war against the United States and flow their power over into Iraq, that would fill in the vacuum if we would do as the gentlewoman recommended and immediately pull out. The Iranians would sit astraddle of 42.6 percent of the world's export oil supply. That is not just the valve on the oil; that is the valve on the world's economy. They could control our economy by deciding what comes in and out of the Straits of Hormuz.

We understand that. That was an issue back in 1979 when the U.S. fleet was making sure the straits were kept open. So I want to emphasize that this direction of this battlefield of Iraq, which is a battlefield in the global war on terror, is going in a good direction. If we were to turn our back on all that sacrifice today, I don't know how I would look in the eye of the family members who have lost a son or a daughter over there who tell me, It is different now. The soil in Iraq is sanctified by the blood of my son; that being a son of a gentleman from California whose first name is John, whose last name I have forgotten. He said, You can't pull out now. That soil is sanctified by his blood.

I will stand with them. They are volunteers. The President had to make a decision. He made that decision. This Congress made the same decision, and we ought to have the courage of our convictions and stick by our decision instead of seeking to undermine that effort.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that addresses the issue of the previous speaker. I have a couple other subject matters that I wanted to bring up here in the time that I have. One of them is

that this Congress is busily overspending again. It has been a constant for a long time. There is something endemic within the electoral process that there are people that believe they need to purchase votes with taxpayer dollars. So they want the programs for their district.

Well, I think the measure of these programs should be measured on a higher standard than what they do for political gain. I think when you look at the earmark system that is here and the larger dollars that go to people that have the seniority, they are on the Appropriations Committee, Republicans or Democrats, you can chart that out and see where the money goes. It goes to the people that are sitting in a position here to broker it into their districts. Now, I have argued many times that there isn't a single constituent in their district that deserves any more representation than the constituents in my district. We each represent 600-some thousand people. I am not quite ready to go the path that we distribute earmarks equally to all population bases in the country. I think they need to be evaluated. I think they need to have sunlight on them. I think the American people have to have an opportunity to look at the spending that goes on in this Congress and evaluate it on a line item by line item basis.

When I first came to the Congress 5 years ago, one of the first big bills to come to me to make a decision on was the 3,600-page omnibus spending bill. I don't know how tall 3,600 pages are, but I imagine it is up there pretty high. We tried to get that information to find out what was in it because we naively thought we were going to analyze the information that was in that bill and the spending that was in that 3,600-page omnibus spending bill. So it finally became available to download it off the Internet. And we began downloading it off, I imagine it was a secure connection over in my office over here in Longworth. As we downloaded it a page at a time, the 3,600th page, the last page became available 20 minutes before the bill was brought up for a final vote on the floor of this Congress. Twenty minutes to evaluate 3,600 pages. Now, that is a daunting task, Mr. Speaker. In fact, it is an impossibility. If I had one person assigned to each page that had a degree in law that could analyze it, I still couldn't get this sorted through and get the response back in 20 minutes. I know there were others who had a head start on this ahead of me. Sometimes you have to take that leap of faith. But the functionality of 20 minutes to analyze a piece of legislation is not the way to do business. And that 20 minutes to analyze what is in it, think, Mr. Speaker, how difficult it is to go through 3,600 pages and find out what is not in it. A far more difficult thing.

Yet, here we in this Congress have worked for a long time to grant the President a line item veto. So the

President can look at 3,600 pages of appropriations that is hundreds of billions of dollars and go down through that with his ink pen and mark a line through there and say, I don't like this one, I don't like this one, I don't like this one. Now, I think it is appropriate for a President to have that power. The court doesn't necessarily agree with that, I do. And yet to put that responsibility on the President and not demand it for this Congress I think is ducking a duty and responsibility that we have as Members of Congress.

Who in the public, Mr. Speaker, would believe that Congress is just simply powerless to bring up line item votes on the appropriations that we spend in here that, who would understand the fact that the rules were set up in such a way that we don't vote up or down each line item in there. We don't vote up or down each earmark that is in the legislation. We package that up and push it along and essentially vote on it en bloc. Yes, I know those appropriations bills come to the floor under an open rule, at least they generally start under an open rule. But if you turn around once and blink twice, there is a unanimous consent agreement, and then it gets packaged up and it goes under a unanimous consent rule that prohibits the Members from bringing amendments to the legislation that is in front of us, let alone to a line item strike. So, I believe that we should be accountable and responsible for every line in every piece of legislation, whether it is policy or whether it is appropriations.

But on the appropriations, this Congress should have its own line item veto. With that in mind, I have dug through the rules, I have looked at the statutes, and I can figure a way that we can, in very simple language, that we can have a line item veto that is imposed upon this Congress so we have to accept the responsibility that we are charged with constitutionally.

It works like this. It is pretty simple. It is once every quarter, once every 3 months, under an open rule, there would be a bill allowed in order on the floor, a shell bill, if you will, Mr. Speaker, that was under an open rule that would allow any Member to come to the floor and offer an amendment to strike out spending. This is spending that would have already arrived at the President's desk, gotten his signature on it, but spending that hadn't yet been spent. So the appropriations that are in the chute, so to speak, that hadn't been turned out into the expense arena would be the appropriations that we would have a shot at, once a quarter, once every 3 months.

So let's just play this through the mind's eye, Mr. Speaker. Let's say it is the first day of the quarter and the leaders, neither one of them come to the floor to offer the bill that would be the line item cut act bill, which, by the way, that is the name of my bill, the Cut Act, the cut unnecessary tab bill, and any Member can stand up and say,

Mr. Speaker, I have a bill at the desk, and it is in order under the rule. And then the result would be Members would come pouring to the floor with their amendments. One of them would be the bridge to nowhere. One of them would probably be the cowgirl hall of fame, and I get off into some of these things that I don't want to say into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, but they are there. They are line items we have appropriated, some of the earmarks we have appropriated that are downright embarrassing. And those line items would be brought to this floor one bill at a time, or maybe in packages, and we can vote them up or down. We can have a recorded vote on every single line item in an appropriations bill. We could have a recorded vote on every earmark. That would mean that every Member of Congress would be responsible for everything that is in the legislation. We can no longer go home and say, I know I voted for that silly thing but I had to because I needed to have this piece of appropriations that was essential to your district. That money that is going to be spent in your backyard was in the same bill, so I had to vote for the cowgirl's hall of fame or a bridge to nowhere.

Now, this structure of these rules doesn't allow for responsible appropriation. The Cut Act provides for responsible appropriations and it reaches out to the cyberspace modern technological world that we have, because it reaches out and recognizes that we have bloggers out there. We have people that now have instant Internet access to the legislation that we pass, the appropriation bills that we have. I trust the American people to be drilling down into these line items and bringing out those line items that are overspending, that are outrageously blowing the budget, and be able to make an issue of them, carry those issues to us. And we can write them in the form of amendments and bring them to the floor once a quarter and do an act of the Cut Act so we can strike those line items out and be responsible for every single line item in the budget.

I think that does a lot more for the responsibility of this Congress, a lot more to control out-of-control spending. I think it does a lot more for us to step up to our constitutional duties and all the discussions that we have had about how we might define earmarks, because everybody has a different definition of earmarks. But when you put it out here on the floor for a vote, it is "yes" or it is "no." It is a green light or it is a red light, Mr. Speaker. And there is no equivocating on it, unless you want to vote "present," which doesn't work so well in an appropriation bill.

□ 1600

I have introduced the CUT Act. The bill number is H. Res. 776, the Cut the Unnecessary Tab resolution. It's something that has, at least right now, the

support of, in the beginning, 33 Members of Congress. There will be more. I trust they are going to stand up. We are going to ask at some point the Speaker to endorse the kind of a program that will make every Member of Congress responsible for every single line item in the entire appropriations process.

By the way, as I look at this appropriations process, Mr. Speaker, I will submit that we have got to move this system along. Yes, we have passed some appropriation bills here in the House, and we have moved that along pretty well. They are stuck over in the Senate. As I heard from the President last week, there hasn't been a time in history that Congress has delayed so long in getting the appropriations bills to the President's desk. Not one appropriations bill has yet arrived at the President's desk for this fiscal year.

This Congress gaveled in, as I recall, the third day of January 2007. Not one bill has made it from the House, through the Senate, back through conference committee for final passage, and to the White House, to the President's desk for signature. Not one. Not one appropriations bill. There have been a number of others that have.

This puts us in a situation where there is an impending train wreck. This impending train wreck is this: the longer it goes, the closer we get to running out of funds to keep this government running, the closer it comes to the day we will see another 3,600-page omnibus spending bill stacked up in the Senate, stacked up and brought over here and dropped on our desk, well, sent to us by Internet, and be asked to vote again up or down on something we can't measure the contents of.

Again, the political games begin, because that 3,600-page bill that I saw the last time, and it may be bigger or smaller than that, is like a great big accordion. It can have anything in it. Sometimes the staff in the middle of the night puts language in the bill that no Member directed. It's just there. They are just confident that the Member they work for thinks it's a good idea. We don't have a way of knowing.

It comes to the floor; we get a few minutes to debate it, not very many minutes to evaluate it. Even if we did, there's not time to debate all the components of a piece of legislation like that. That is why we have a subcommittee process, the full committee process, the floor debate. That is why we have a bicameral legislature, so it can go over to the Senate and they can do the same thing, the subcommittee, the full committee, the committee, the floor action, and then bring it together in a conference committee. While all this is going on, the public is supposed to be looking at this. We need to ask you for your help out there in America so you can point your fingers back at us.

Mr. Speaker, I point this out because there are 300 million people in America, and it's a huge budget, and the

budget approaches \$3 trillion. It's more than the people that we have here in Congress can drag our fine-tooth comb through and do as good a job as we can do when we elicit the help of the American people.

So that is where I want to go with this. I want to pass the CUT Act, I want to pass H. Res. 776, I want to see a bill, a shell bill come to the floor of the House of Representatives, and then I want to see the Members come down with their amendments and say, I don't like this spending. This is outrageous. We don't need it. I want to put it up for a stand-alone vote, ask for a recorded vote on it.

After awhile, we will have a list of those egregious line items, earmarks and then just plain overspending that aren't earmarks that can be gleaned out of the bill. We will be responsible for everything. That is the kind of Congress we need to have, that is the kind of Congress we need to become, that is the kind of Congress that was envisioned by our Founders, the kind of Congress I believe we were, and the kind of Congress I believe we need to be again. That, Mr. Speaker, is my statement tonight on fiscal responsibility.

There's another piece of subject matter that I wanted to take up before the body and that is this renewable energy issue, the energy issue altogether, and I should broaden this picture out. We have worked the last few years to try to provide more refineries. We have tried to drill offshore in the Outer Continental Shelf where there are 406 trillion cubic feet of natural gas. Ninety percent of the cost of fertilizer is the natural gas that is feedstock for the nitrogen; 90 percent of the cost. Yet we make it harder instead of easier for natural gas to become available here in the United States. It comes off the market, not on the market.

We are watching the liquefied natural gas plants being built in places like Venezuela so they can ship their natural gas to us across the Caribbean, here in the United States, sailing right over the top of huge natural gas reserves that we are not able to drill into. We are watching the liquefied natural gas come across from the Middle East with the same kind of a thing.

There are tremendous reserves offshore in the United States, and it's very difficult to find a place to drill that doesn't have some kind of a regulation that prohibits it. That is the struggle that has gone on in this Congress for a number of years, drilling the Outer Continental Shelf. I believe we ought to drill there for natural gas, and I believe we should drill there for crude oil as well. Those are our resources.

Some will say, Well, wouldn't you want to conserve those resources? Why would we use them all up? One thing is that as the cost goes up, the exploration and the cost to bring this to the market becomes more viable economically. So oil that might have been out of reach, gas that might have been out

of reach for the dollars one can get out of it is not out of reach today. We are always discovering more and more.

Additionally, even if it were a zero sum game, even if there was a limited number of oil and gas underneath the territory of the United States, even if that were limited, we also believe that we will get to the point where we replace these energy sources, and we are moving in that direction.

So we should keep this Nation as competitive as possible. That means use the resources that we have and reduce and get to that day when we can end dependency on Middle Eastern oil. That means drilling ANWAR, drilling the Outer Continental Shelf. That sounds probably, Mr. Speaker, that I am just for drilling. The real answer is this: it's a lot bigger picture and a lot more difficult a puzzle. The answer is we have so many BTUs out there today in the market. Let's say this is the energy pie. The answer is we have to grow the size of the energy pie. Not this many overall BTUs in the market for all kinds of energy, but this many. When you think about the energy pie, the size of the slices can be defined with so much for gas, so much for diesel out of crude oil, so much for propane, so much for natural gas, and this all adds to the overall BTUs. Some of it is nuclear, some of it is hydroelectric, some is solar, some is wind, some is coal. You add up all these pieces of this energy pie.

There's another slice of that pie that is also a component of the overall 360-degree pie and that's the conservation component. We need all of those components to solve the problem in this country, this problem of economic energy. Energy affects everything we have, everything we are. If you buy a cup of coffee, it takes so much fuel to get that coffee harvested, transported here to the United States, processed, delivered, marketed. You can put a little gas in the car to go to the store and drive back home. There's an energy component to everything we buy. Therefore, when costs of energy are high, it also raises the cost of everything that we have.

For our Nation to be competitive, we need economic goods and services. They need to be competitive with the rest of the world. We can do that if our energy prices are low and they are comparatively low and competitively low. I submit we grow the size of the energy pie and we put more BTUs on the market, we provide more of our own crude oil that we can drill for in places like ANWAR and in places offshore, like the Outer Continental Shelf.

Then, in addition to that, we open up more of our ethanol production, more of our biodiesel production, the corn-based ethanol, the cellulosic ethanol, the biodiesel that comes from soybeans and other kinds of plant oil and animal fats. We put that altogether. And expansion of the wind generation of electricity is also significant. The more

BTUs we put on the market, the more supply there is. And we know this is supply and demand. Being a function of supply and demand, it will either drive down the price of overall energy, or it will slow the growth in the increase in the overall energy.

I expect that there is going to be some other discussion about the availability of crude oil and ethanol, and I will submit that there are some components here that are important facts for the public to understand, Mr. Speaker.

As I look at the reports that have come out of places like Cornell and UC Berkeley, and you see numbers down there that say that it takes something like seven times the energy to produce a gallon of ethanol than you get out of it in BTUs, we have had some people that are scientists that seem to be on some kind of endowment to try to undermine the efficiency of the ethanol argument. I have been in the middle of this ethanol debate for a long, long time; and I would suggest it goes back 25 or maybe 30 years. I would argue that if there is a BTU deficit, it would have collapsed on its own by now.

But there are numbers out there that are not based on science. They are simply numbers that are produced by people that oppose renewable fuels ethanol. This is the kind of data that has been in the Wall Street Journal and New York Times of late. I don't know what their motive is, but the arguments look to me like they are contrived arguments. Here are some facts that I just had delivered to me, and it works out like this:

A gallon of ethanol is 76,100 BTUs, and a gallon of E-10 is 111,836 BTUs. The gallons of diesel fuel and biodiesel are comparable. But if you are going to get one BTU out of ethanol, it takes .67 BTUs to produce it. If you are going to get one BTU out of crude oil for gasoline, it takes 1.3 BTUs to produce it. So in these numbers, it takes more energy to crack the equivalent BTUs of a gallon of gasoline out of a barrel of crude oil once it arrives at the refinery than it does to produce the same BTUs in ethanol once the bushel of corn arrives at the ethanol plant.

The numbers that have been produced otherwise by the folks in places like Berkeley, I was on Iowa State's campus here some months ago and talking to an undergraduate student who began to quote those numbers from Berkeley to me. She is going to school at Iowa State.

I said, Why did you go to Berkeley to get your data on ethanol? She said, That was the report I read. That is the one I studied. I said, You are right here at Iowa State University. We are the number one State producing ethanol in America. The data you are looking for is right here under your nose. Is anyone teaching you critical thinking here on this campus?

Apparently not.

So another piece is the 2006 LDP and CCP, the countercyclical payments, for corn were \$6.8 billion. That will be the

other argument, that the dollars that go into the farm program and the dollars that go into the ethanol subsidy are this huge cost to taxpayers. That is the Wall Street Journal's position.

If you look at the real numbers, if you accept the idea that we have a farm program and it has been here since FDR, and I don't know if I would have voted for that if I had been here since FDR, but it is here, and if it has been here this long, it is unlikely it is going to go anywhere.

So if we accept the idea that there is a farm program, and we look at how the countercyclical payments and the loan deficiency payments actually function, in that if you have high markets there is less demand for subsidy, in fact, it has taken out all the demand for those subsidies because we have had high demand for those grains. And this is just using the corn calculation, not the increase in our commodities that have been there in record prices for soybeans and for wheat and some of the other commodities that have been increased in their value because there has been more demand for corn acres and because now we have more corn acres and we raised the largest corn crop we have ever had, 13.3 billion bushels of corn.

Those payments, though, for 2006 were \$6.8 billion. Then the blenders credit is a component that we put in place so we could attract the capital to build the infrastructure in order to be able to produce the gallons of ethanol that we can use to blend our ethanol into our gasoline, at a 10 percent blend, for those folks that don't see that every day.

The blenders credit is 51 cents a gallon. When you calculate that across the gallons that were sold this year, that comes to about \$3 billion. When you do the math on that, the \$6.8 billion in subsidies and the \$3 billion in blenders credit, we have gone from \$6.8 billion in subsidies on the loan deficiency payment and the countercyclical payment down to zero. That is \$6.8 in savings. We spent \$3 billion on the blenders credit so that we put an incentive in place to build the ethanol production facilities. That is a net savings of \$3.8 billion just in the last year.

Now, I will admit that number doesn't extrapolate back across 2005 as well as it does 2006 or 2004 or 2003 or on back, but we are building an infrastructure and investing in that infrastructure; and we are building a capability to replace Middle Eastern oil, to some degree, with ethanol.

□ 1615

I carry this equation out, 13.3 billion bushels of corn this year, we will easily be at 15 billion bushels of corn. Our target was by 2012, we will make it before then. This year tells us we will make it before then.

With 15 billion bushels of corn and if we only used a third of that corn to produce ethanol at 3 gallons a bushel, and we are right at that threshold, 2.9-

something, so that is producing 15 billion gallons of ethanol. And we are burning today about 142 billion gallons of gasoline.

You can see we get to the point where we reach the 10 percent blend across this country. Actually, we are up to that threshold in a lot of places today, but we can't distribute well enough to be able to distribute the ethanol that we are producing within a 10 percent limit. We need to increase the limit. But 10 percent of the gasoline is about what we can produce with the corn that we can produce in this country. That is why the push to go to cellulosic.

I can submit here we can reach the 15 billion bushels. With a third of that, we can produce 15 billion gallons of ethanol. With that, we can replace approximately 10 percent of the gasoline we are currently burning in this country. We can go up with that, but if we open this up with cellulosic, as came out in the President's State of the Union address, I believe the most recent one, then we can arrive at a substantial portion of this energy pie that is renewable fuels ethanol.

And we add to that the biodiesel that comes from our soybeans and the animal fats and oil from other plants, and we have taken a segment, this energy pie, and a slice of that, and we set aside and say this will be renewable fuels ethanol, this will be renewable fuels biodiesel, and some more energy will be wind. And we build a lot of infrastructure for that. Wind energy works well. From my yard where I live in rural Kiron, I can step outside the hedgerow and look out to the horizon and I can see 17 wind chargers from my yard. They are surreal and they are environmentally friendly. Yes, it takes a tax credit, but we are building infrastructure to replace some of our energy production with renewables such as wind.

Another point raised is that producing ethanol takes too much water. Whatever the number was in the most recent publication, whether the Wall Street Journal or New York Times, it was a number that took my breath away. The order of magnitude of its, let me say, lack of indexing into my experience, we build a lot of ethanol plants in my district.

There may have been a day or there may be a day this fall when the Fifth Congressional District of Iowa is the number one in ethanol production for congressional districts in America. We are number one in biodiesel production. We rank in the top, at least in the top four, in wind generation of electricity. And I am very confident that the Fifth Congressional District of Iowa is the number one renewable energy district in America.

I believe I will be able to put the numbers together to demonstrate that we will be the first congressional district to power all of the energy needs for every home in the district all on renewables. I think we are there now. I

just don't have the numbers quite together to say that definitively. But I think we are there now.

But the consumption of water to produce the ethanol, that number was outrageous in multiples of hundreds of gallons. So I went back to our people who are actually producing the ethanol, the ones who have to get the Department of Natural Resources' permit and meet the EPA standards and know how many gallons they are discharging and how much water they are pumping out of their wells in the ground to utilize production of ethanol.

Their numbers come out to be this: To produce a gallon of ethanol takes 2.8 gallons of water. To produce a gallon of gasoline out of a barrel of crude oil, and of course there is more than one gallon that comes out of there, but per gallon is 8 gallons of water.

So if you want to measure against the consumption of water to produce gasoline from crude oil compared to the number of gallons of water to produce ethanol out of corn, then you are looking at 8 gallons of water to 1 gallon of gasoline compared to 2.8 gallons of water to 1 gallon of ethanol.

By the way, we are reusing water. We are using gray water from the sanitariums out of some of our communities. And in particular, there is a new plant coming online at Shenandoah, Iowa, Green Plains, that will be using gray water from that community. We are conserving water, and it takes less water than it takes to produce the gasoline.

So even though there are arguments up and down on this, but the 51 percent blender's credit is the incentive to attract private investment capital. If we should lose even one penny of that blender's credit, what we will lose are millions and probably billions of dollars of private capital that is currently attracted into the production of ethanol, the building of ethanol production facilities.

When capital is no longer attracted, the momentum of this industry would be stalled and we would be sitting here with ethanol plants out in the plains within the heart of the corn belt, but not built out to the limits of the corn belt.

We would be sitting here also with biodiesel plants in the heart of the soybean belt but not out to the limits of the soybean belt, and we would have given up on renewable energies as even a partial substitute for Middle Eastern oil.

When I give you the math and lay out these costs in this fashion, I am not calculating in the cost of the military that it takes to be able to do what we can to provide some stability in the Middle East. But I will remind you, Mr. Speaker, that if the instability we have seen in places like Afghanistan were found in places like Saudi Arabia, you would see not the highest price for crude oil like we see today at \$96 a barrel, the highest price we have ever seen, you would see it perhaps double

from there. You would see it north of \$150 a barrel if the instability we have seen in places like Afghanistan, if there was that kind of instability in Saudi Arabia.

Because there is a kind of stability, because that supply hasn't been severely threatened, that is why we have taken an interest in that part of the world.

I will submit to every extent we can find an economic way to bring BTUs on the market that are our sources of energy, we should do that. Yes, there has to be a return on capital investment, and it needs to be reasonable and offset the interest. And to get things started and develop a technology, sometimes we have to have a blender's credit of 51 cents. Sometimes we have to have a 54-cent tariff on Brazilian ethanol coming into the United States.

They would like to have us loan them about \$8 billion so they can double their ethanol production in Brazil and take off that 54-cent tariff so they can produce ethanol in Brazil and ship it here in the United States, but we would find ourselves dependent on Brazilian ethanol production when we have the crops, we have the climate, the know-how and the distribution system to do that here.

So the facts go back to, and I just would reiterate, this ethanol production and biodiesel production has saved the taxpayers billions of dollars in the last year. We were spending \$6.8 billion on crop subsidies on the farm program that goes back to FDR in the 1930s. That number for the LDPs and the counter-cyclical payments has gone essentially, I will say virtually, in the language used today, to zero. And the cost of the 51-cent blender's credit has been about \$3 billion. That is a \$3.8 billion savings off the farm bill because we have a renewable fuels program here.

And to the extent that we are moving towards a 10 percent blend across the Nation with our ethanol, and we will be to that functional, that is 10 percent less that is coming out of the Middle East. That frees up that much more of our freedoms to make these decisions.

The assault on renewable energy that is coming from some of those business places, I would like to see them answer some of these points that I have made. I don't believe that their positions are grounded with the information that comes from the folks that are actually producing the ethanol.

And there have been significant discussions about how quickly one gets a return on investment off ethanol plants. I will say there have been some very good returns that have taken place in the last 2, 3, 4 years. But that cash flow doesn't project out like that any more, Mr. Speaker. Even though we have seen some return on investments that one could measure in just a few short years, most calculate out to be longer than that, and it is harder to attract the capital, not easier, even though oil is at \$96 and gas has gone

over \$3. The dynamics of this and the economics of this change significantly.

So I strongly support the blender's credit. I support keeping the tariff in place on Brazilian ethanol. I believe we need to build the infrastructure here in the United States and kick the ethanol production up to maxing out on the corn crop that we have and developing the enzymes and the technologies so we can produce ethanol out of the cellulosic. That will be a far more difficult task than producing the ethanol, because to handle grain, we have the infrastructure. We have the combines and the drying systems, the wagons and the trucks so we can take that grain out of the field and deliver it and store it and do so efficiently. Not so easily with the cellulosic.

We don't yet know what kind of crop is going to be the most efficient, how we might harvest, how we might store it or how we might transport it. But most of that cellulosic is in a form, whether it is corn or whether it is hay or whether it is switchgrass, sunflower stalks, whatever it is, there is a lot of air in cellulose which means it is large volumes and low tonnage. And low tonnage means there is a lot of freight involved in trying to get that product to a processing location. That would tell me we would have, if the cellulosic develops as it is envisioned, we will have more plants located in closer areas than you will see with ethanol because we won't be able to afford to truck that cellulosic as far as we can the corn or the soybean oil that goes into the biodiesel.

We will get there on energy, Mr. Speaker, but I want to reiterate, I believe we need to grow the size of the energy pie. We need to take that overall 360-degree picture of all of components of our energy, the ethanol and biodiesel and wind and nuclear and hydroelectric and clean-burning coal and all of the other components that we have, gasoline, propane, natural gas, solar, each one of those has a certain percentage of the overall.

Then another slice of that pie is energy conservation. That is insulation. That is high-mileage vehicles. All of these things need to be brought forward, and we can get where we need to go with energy. We cannot do that if this Congress is determined to raise the cost of energy.

And I will submit that any piece of legislation that has been brought to the floor of this Congress in the 2007 calendar year has all raised the cost of energy, not driven the cost of energy down. It has made the circumstances less stable, not more stable. It has made the investors step back and say, "I don't think I want to invest" rather than "I can't wait to get invested in this because I believe I can get a return on my profit."

Mr. Speaker, let's face it, free enterprise capitalism has done more for the well-being of humanity than all of the missionaries who went to Africa. God bless them for going, and we need more

missionaries to go to Africa. We need them to go everywhere. We need missionaries in this country. But free enterprise capitalism has provided the infrastructure. It has built the Golden Gate Bridge. It has built the interstates. It has built the military industrial complex. And it has developed our educational system. It has developed our pharmaceuticals and our medical services in this country and in many places around the world.

And if you point to something that is an improvement of the quality of life, I will point to a profit motive in there that has developed the ideas, the creativity, the inventions, that have brought about this improved standard of living that we have.

And if we think that because a company has made some money because they have invested capital and provided good inventions and infrastructure, they need a return on that investment. And for this Congress to decide somebody made some money and then they want to come back and do a windfall profits tax after the fact, one of those retroactive deals, one of those things that says, well, I really didn't mean it to, let's just say Exxon, for example, Chevron for another one, the leases that were reneged here off in the gulf coast when no one was going to be there holding the oil company's hands if they drilled dry holes.

□ 1630

I never heard NANCY PELOSI say, well, some company got a dry hole that cost a few million dollars; I think we ought to take some of that load off of them and send them a check from the taxpayers. They don't believe in that, but they believe in taking some of that money away when it's duly earned.

The risk capital that's out there is what drives the lower cost of energy that we have today that we wouldn't have if it weren't for that.

So we need to set up an honest business structure; and when we have leaseholdings, we need to sign those leases and say that's it, we've cut our deal. If you make 10 times the money we thought you were going to make, you also made 10 times the money your competition thought you were going to make or they would have bid against you and taken that over and raised the price.

I've spent my life in the contracting business, not much of it drilling oil, and not any oil came out of the hole I did get involved in. But I've bid a lot of projects as low bidder, and I recall having the owners come to me and say, you're making money on this job. Happens more than once, Mr. Speaker, but not once has anybody come to me and said, I see you're losing your shirt on this job, can we give you a little more money that will help you out? Never happens, but that's the philosophy that comes from that side of the aisle.

We see somebody making a little bit of money, let's take it away. Well, if I'm on the board of directors of a company that has Congress changing the

deal, I'm going to take some of that capital, and I'm going to invest it in another kind of a business where Congress isn't as likely to change the deal.

So when you raise the taxation after the fact and you change the leases and force them to be renegotiated, there will be less exploration dollars going in, which means we'll find less gas and less oil. There will be less on the market, and supply and demand still works in this country. If you have a little bit and a lot of people want it, it will be a high price; and a whole lot of something that not many people want, it'll be a low price. That's the case we have today with the energy prices.

This still is a global market, too. This \$96 oil is out there, and that's the price, not because we set it at that. That's what competition sets the price of oil at. We need more of it on the market. We need more drilling. We need more transportation.

By the way, we need to build those pipelines down from Alberta where they have the tar sands. We have good neighbors to the north with more oil than they know what to do with up there, and they're happy to sell it to us. I'm happy to pipeline it down here and refine it in the United States and refine it up in the neighborhood where I live and distribute that to the rest of the country. That will hold the prices down, Mr. Speaker.

So the points that I came to this floor to make are two big ones. One is producing a gallon of BTUs out of ethanol, out of the equivalent to a gallon of gas, takes less energy than it does to crack a gallon of gas out of a barrel of crude oil. Let's just say that we set a barrel of crude oil up at the refinery in Texas and put your \$96 price on that, by the way. That's what this barrel is worth in the open market, and you set a bushel of corn outside the ethanol plant in, let me say, Marcus, Iowa.

And what's it going to cost to get me a gallon's worth of BTUs? Let me see, a gallon of gasoline is 108,500 BTUs. What's it going to take to get 108,500 BTUs out of this barrel of crude oil, and how many BTUs is that? 1.3 times the amount you get out of it. Thirty percent more BTUs to crack it out than you get out of that gallon of gas, and it takes .67 for every BTU to take that gallon of ethanol that's going to be produced out of that bushel of corn that's sitting outside the plant at Marcus, Iowa.

So when you look at the difference, it can be argued that, yes, it takes energy to turn corn into ethanol, but it can't be argued that it doesn't take energy to turn crude oil into gasoline. And the facts come down to it takes less energy to produce the ethanol BTU equivalent than it does to produce the gasoline BTU equivalent, side by side, bushel of corn sitting at the gate of the ethanol plant in Little Sioux Corn Processors outside of Marcus, Iowa, versus the refinery down in Texas.

And what it really comes back to is we have to have energy put together

and a kind of form that we can use it. We have to be able to transport it, we have to be able to handle it, we have to be able to convert it into heat or kinetic energy. And you can do that with a liquid. Ethanol is a liquid. Gasoline is a liquid. You can do it with a gas.

And I will submit that we have found a way to be able to produce billions of gallons of ethanol, and those numbers are going up; and if they ever level off and stop because this Congress made a turn against the renewable fuels industry, that would be a tragedy for our environment. It would be a tragedy for our economy, and it would cost the United States taxpayers if they were going to continue with the current deal that they have, with the farmers and the producers here in the United States, the numbers that I've given you, the \$6.8 billion last year versus the zero dollars this year, compared to \$3 billion in subsidy. Net savings on the two is \$3.8 billion.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, thanks for recognizing me. I appreciate this privilege and honor.

SINGING THE BLUES

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, radio stations pay a set contract amount for recording label companies to play their songs. Part of that money goes to the writer of the songs for each time the song is aired. But the performers get a set fee from the record label company, no matter how many times their songs are played on the radio.

Now the performers want the Federal Government to charge radio stations a performance fee each time the song is played. That money would go to the performer. In other words, tax radio stations to subsidize the performers because, God bless them, they just don't make enough money.

The Federal Government has no business interfering in the free market and subsidizing performers at taxpayers' expense. The music artists and their agents should work out a better contract with their recording companies.

The proposal to subsidize recording artists would require the cost to be passed on to the consumers by higher advertising fees. Plus, the whole concept smacks in the face of freedom of the airwaves.

The Federal Government needs to stay out of the radio control business, even if performers are just "Singing the Blues."

And that's just the way it is.

THE FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHT TO SPEECH

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Jefferson once stated, "A democracy can-

not be both ignorant and free." Our Founding Fathers shared that attitude. They knew that if American citizens failed to share information and were unable to speak freely, they would be worse off than they had been as subjects under Britain's King George III.

Our Founding Fathers were former colonists under a tyranny that controlled information and freedom of expression. King George III suppressed free speech, especially speech critical of the Crown or the government.

As the Founding Fathers debated what the new Nation of America should look like and stand for, they were determined free speech would be a basic right for all of us.

After the States ratified the Constitution, our Founding Fathers set out to enact a declaration of rights. They knew that this was essential for our country. That declaration of rights later became the Bill of Rights, which includes the first 10 amendments.

The Bill of Rights, Mr. Speaker, limits government control over us. The government does not have any rights. Government has power. It has the power we give it when we give up our rights that are listed in the Bill of Rights. This is an important concept that unfortunately many Americans fail to understand.

And the first amendment is first because it's the most important. The first amendment states in part: Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech.

Without the first amendment of free speech, freedom of the press, religion and assembly, the rest of the amendments are meaningless. The purpose of the first amendment is to permit free and open discussion about important public affairs. This is exactly what was forbidden under King George, so it makes sense that this was most important to our Founders.

The Founding Fathers intended free speech to include criticism of the government and advocacy of unpopular ideas that are distasteful or even against public policy or even controversial issues. Freedom of speech allows individuals to express themselves without interference of the government.

For over 200 years, the first amendment has endured without substantial alterations or limitations. This is a testament to the first amendment's importance. There are a few instances, however, in our history where the first amendment has been set aside, including a few instances of government censorship, such as sedition acts and war-time censorship.

The most volatile and controversial types of speech are political speech and religious speech. That's why they should be protected the most, because they are so controversial.

Congress would do well to stay out of the speech control business, especially trying to control the open and free discussion of America's two controversial and passionate pastimes, which are politics and religion. And besides, the