

Now, of course, we live in a plastic world. And all of these plastics are made from oil. If you will look at your car, if you look at your home, you look at your television set, you look at almost anything in your environment, and I suspect this rug was made out of oil. Our pesticides, our herbicides, our pharmaceuticals, our make up, this is all made out of oil or a great part of it is made out of oil. So there is an interest in getting the things we make out of oil, much of our clothing is made out of oil, interested in being able to get these fibers, this material from something else, and so this is an article, "Corn Based Plastic Coming Soon."

Every bushel of corn that we produce requires a lot of fossil fuel energy. And almost half that energy comes from natural gas, which currently is used to make nitrogen fertilizer. Corn, as a plant, is a pig. It requires and uses incredible amounts of nutrients. And we have now engineered hybrid corn so that it can be planted close together. It grows rapidly. It uses the sunlight efficiently, and it uses enormous amounts of energy. And so, this corn based plastic that they are talking about, I don't know what the efficiency there is. But if it is no better than the efficiency of making ethanol, and ethanol, remember, every gallon of ethanol represents at least three-fourths of a gallon of fossil fuel to make it. Some, Dr. Pimenthal, for instance, believes that if you really cost-account all the energy that goes into producing corn, that you use more fossil fuel energy to produce the corn than you get out of the corn. I hope he is wrong. I believe he is wrong. Anyway, after you have produced the ethanol from the corn, you still have a pretty good feed left, and I don't think his calculation took that into effect.

So this corn based plastic really is, in large measure, just recycling fossil fuels. It may make you feel good to say that my shirt is made from corn. But when you recognize the incredible amounts of fossil fuel energy, if it is the same efficiency as using ethanol, at least three-fourths of the fiber of your shirt might just as well have been made from oil because that oil or some fossil fuel source was used in growing the corn from which the plastic was made.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue next week.

#### FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate agreed to the following resolution:

S. RES. 97

Whereas Thomas F. Eagleton spent his 30-year career in elected office dedicating himself to his country and his home state, representing Missouri in the United States Senate for 18 years;

Whereas Thomas F. Eagleton served in the United States Navy from 1948 until 1949;

Whereas Thomas F. Eagleton, a graduate of Amherst College and Harvard University Law School, launched his political career with his election as St. Louis Circuit Attorney in 1956 and was elected Missouri Attorney General in 1960 and Missouri Lieutenant Governor in 1964;

Whereas Thomas F. Eagleton was elected to the United States Senate in 1968, ultimately serving three terms and leaving an imprint on United States history by co-authoring legislation creating the Pell Grant program to provide youth with higher education assistance, helping to create the National Institute on Aging, and leading the charge to designate 8 federally-protected wilderness areas in southern Missouri;

Whereas Thomas F. Eagleton continued to contribute to his community, state, and nation following his 1986 retirement by practicing law, teaching college courses, writing political commentaries, and encouraging civility in politics;

*Resolved*, That the Senate has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the Honorable Thomas F. Eagleton, former member of the United States Senate.

*Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate communicate these resolutions to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy thereof to the family of the deceased.

*Resolved*, That when the Senate stands adjourned today, it stand adjourned as a further mark of respect to the memory of the Honorable Thomas F. Eagleton.

#### RENEWABLE FUELS

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

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate being recognized and the privilege to address you here on the floor of the United States Congress this evening. And I appreciate the previous speaker, who has brought up the issue of renewable fuels and the overall energy situation that America is addressing here. And this dialogue has got to be expanded and continued, and so this input that comes from the gentleman from Maryland is an essential part of our discussion and our debate. I know that when Professor Bartlett digs up some scientific information and lays it out here for us, we know that it is well researched and it is well founded and well grounded, and that it becomes a significant part of the overall debate.

And I would add some more things to this overall debate as we talk about energy and then, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, I will move into some other issues as well that are of important concern to the American people.

On this energy that we are dealing with, I have continually heard from the other side of the aisle, well, we can't drill in ANWR. I haven't heard why. We can't drill in the outer continental shelf. I haven't heard why.

I have heard that we have to conserve energy. I think that is good, but it is hard to do that without having the proper financial incentives in place. And one thing we haven't done is reward the companies for doing the exploration, particularly, the exploration for American oil, Mr. Speaker.

And so, as I look at this overall picture, I will submit this scenario that we need to do, and that is, we must grow the size of the energy pie, this overall circle pie chart that we use that is the 100 percent model. And in there are the components we have today called gasoline, diesel fuel, coal, natural gas, nuclear power, hydroelectric, solar, wind; the list goes on of those components, some hydrogen. But it is a smaller size of supply than we need, and that is why our energy prices are high. And that is linked with the rest of the world, certainly.

But here in the United States, we need to be looking at this from the perspective of reducing and eventually eliminating our dependence upon Middle Eastern oil. That is essential that we do that because the funds that are going into Middle Eastern oil, when we are buying oil on the market, those funds, some of them, end up in the hands of our enemies, in the hands of the terrorists, in the hands of the Islamic jihadists. And that is the strongest incentive to becoming more dependent upon domestic energy and less dependent on Middle Eastern energy.

But additionally, our balance of trade goes the wrong way for us. When we are importing energy from overseas in places like the Middle East, that transfers the wealth of the United States over to and puts it into the countries of the Middle East. And so our approach here needs to be the expansion and the continued promotion of these energy supplies that we have that we can develop here in the United States.

The most obvious of those are the biodiesel components, which have been expanding rapidly here in the United States, and particularly in Iowa and particularly in Iowa's Fifth Congressional District, the western third of the State. We are now and have been for some time the number one congressional district out of all 435 in biodiesel production. And that biodiesel production comes from animal fats and soybeans, and the extraction of that processed into diesel fuel, that has proven to be a very effective and reliable, and much of it a biodegradable type of a fuel, much more environmentally friendly than the diesel fuel that is on the market that comes out of the sands of Saudi Arabia, for example. And so our leadership there in the biodiesel production needs to be expanded, and we are on a track to do that.

We are also, in the district that I represent, ranking number two of the 435 Congressional districts in ethanol production. By some time this year, in 2007, we will be number one in ethanol production. That will rank us first in the Nation in ethanol production of the 435 congressional districts, and also first in the Nation in biodiesel production.

We rank currently today about fourth or at least tied for fourth in wind generation of electricity. That will go up to at least second time this year, and perhaps it will be first.

But some of the things that we are creating here is an intellectual property, Mr. Speaker, a knowledge base that, of the billions of dollars of capital that we have poured into renewable energy, primarily in the ethanol and the biodiesel, but also in the wind generation of electricity, that capital investment produces the energy out of our crops and out of our wind. But additionally, we are building a knowledge base, an understanding of what enzymes work best, what practices work best. We are squeezing more ethanol out of a bushel of corn than we have ever squeezed out of there before, and we will soon be up to that 3 gallons a bushel of ethanol production. And as the enzymes get better and the process gets better, we will also be able to extract ethanol out of the cellulosic, which is about any kind of plant product that is made out of cellulose and other products as well. But that would be the primary ones.

And as we develop our skills, I run into people around the country, especially in our hearings for agriculture, and they will come up to me and say, really, the future for our energy is in ethanol. We need to learn how to do that. We need to go to Brazil and see how they make ethanol in Brazil. And my response to that is, why don't you come to Iowa, see how we make ethanol in Iowa? I have been to Brazil to see their operations down there. They need to come to Iowa to see how we make ethanol in Iowa.

And, in fact, the United States has surpassed Brazil in ethanol production. They make most of theirs out of sugar cane. We make most of ours out of corn. But we passed up Brazil a couple of years ago in overall gallon production of ethanol.

And Iowa produces 26 percent of the ethanol that is produced in the entire country. And our plants are far more modern than those that you see in Brazil. Technology a little different because there they will some days make sugar out of the sugar cane when the market is right, and other days they make ethanol out of the sugar cane. But ours are still far more modern. We conserve energy. We have got efficiencies there. We have software packages that manage and control the flow of all the operations within the plant. We have one or two people sitting there monitoring that 24/7. But an impressive combination of technology and people and know-how pulled together.

And I often, Mr. Speaker, use the model of how Texas was the place where they discovered oil. And among the places, and Texas produced a lot of the oil back starting in the teens to some degree, but more like the 1920s and the 1930s. And as they, the boom State of Texas hit oil, and they began to develop and produce oil and distribute and refine it and distribute it around the country, they also developed the skills, the skills and the expertise of deeper drilling and other ways to extract oil out of the forma-

tions, fishing skills to fish broken bits out of wells, Red Adair's oil well firefighters, some of those examples, and then of course the seismic technology and all of the things that go along to making an oil industry profitable.

Well, as the oil began to play out in Texas, the expertise kept growing, and there is a tremendous amount of wealth in Texas that comes from the intellectual property that has been created, the common knowledge or the knowledge base that has been built.

We are doing the same thing in the Midwest in the renewable fuels category, Mr. Speaker. And as that knowledge base grows, there will be people that are brought up, educated in, work in and nurtured within this epicenter of renewable fuels that we are today in the neighborhood that I have the privilege to represent. And as they look around, they will move outside the area, and they will begin to add their skills to ethanol biodiesel production plants that move out to the limits of the corn belt and the soybean belt.

And as that happens, there will be, of course a center of knowledge, a center of technology and people, can-do people with know-how, that emanate from the epicenter of renewable fuels. That is a big future, I believe, for us. And that is one component in this overall energy pie that we need to grow.

So as we grow our ethanol production from corn and grow our biodiesel production from mostly animal fats or mostly soybeans, but also animal fats, that would be a processing product that comes from our plants. As that grows, we also are looking at developing the cellulosic ethanol, and that can come from any kind of plant. And we are 5 to 6 years away from being able to produce the cellulosic ethanol in the kind of volume where we can see how we might be able to add a lot more gallons to the overall supply of gasoline type products that are consumed on our vehicles on the roads.

□ 2100

And yet where we are, that cellulose comes in the form of corn stalks and cane products and switch grass and the list goes on, wood chips. Anything that has plant and fiber in it is cellulose that can be converted into ethanol. So we don't know to the extent that that will be built out across the country, but I believe this: I think you can draw circles on the map in the corn belt where there will be ethanol plants and they will draw corn from those areas. And then there will be other circles where the biodiesel plants draw soybeans particularly or else extracted oil from soybeans into that area. And the gaps, I think, get filled with cellulosic. And there will also be dual crops that come out at least for some time that convert the shell corn into ethanol and the corn stalks into cellulosic ethanol. That kind of thing will happen too to the extent that the economics will drive this.

Capital makes good decisions on where it goes. It will always being at-

tracted to where there is profit. It will always shy away from places where there isn't profit. And right now the capital is being attracted to the renewable fuels. That is a piece of this overall energy pie, and the size of the piece that is ethanol today and renewable fuels needs to get bigger.

Also, we look out on the Outer Continental Shelf. There are 406 trillion cubic feet of natural gas that we know of offshore, a lot of that offshore in Florida. We opened up a tiny little sliver of that, I think it was Lease 181, to allow for a little more drilling way offshore in Florida, but we are wasting or ignoring a tremendous resource where we should be down there tapping into that massive supply of natural gas, pumping it into our markets here because of the foundation for a lot of our production in our plants, particularly plastic production, is in natural gas, is in feedstock, as well as natural gas is a feedstock for commercial fertilizer, and the control of that fertilizer will also be part of the control for the overall food production in the United States.

So it is essential that we keep at an economic and I will even say a cheap supply of natural gas on the markets. And it is foolish for us to ignore the supply that we have and not be out here extracting that natural gas out from underneath the seabed. There has never been a spilled natural gas that had any environmental damage. It has always been one of the safest things that we can do and certainly one of the cleanest things that we can do. Natural gas is a wonderful product, and that natural gas needs to be put into our markets to keep our fertilizer costs down, to keep our production costs down, and to be used more sparingly in the production of electricity because that is a higher cost type of an item, and that can be done more with coal or with clean burning coal.

And we need to also be expanding our energy use beyond the natural gas. We should look at our domestic supplies of crude oil, and offshore there is also a significant amount of domestic supplies of crude oil. One of the largest fields discovered is southwest of New Orleans, offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. And that supply down there, that find that is discovered by Chevron, can be something that will rival and perhaps exceed one of the large finds up on the North Slope. But the North Slope needs to be opened up too, and I mean specifically ANWR, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. That is an area up there that if God was going to put oil somewhere that we ought to go get that is not going to impact on very many species or on human population, that, Mr. Speaker, is the place.

I have traveled up there, and I have looked at the fields in ANWR. I looked at the oil that is developed on the North Slope of Alaska. And I can see, and I don't think there is a disagreement, that it has been a very environmentally friendly development that

took place up there in the 1970s, and we can do better yet just a little ways to the east in a similar type of a terrain, because we have the technology to allow us to do directional drilling. So we can sit in one spot and we can drill in an area out in multiple directions and extract that oil in a single location with a very minimal footprint on the area up there in ANWR.

There is no justifiable reason not to tap into that. Whatever the promise happened to be back in the 1970s that some people here on the floor of the House have said, well, there was a promise that we would never drill in ANWR or we would never let you drill in the North Slope, well, I don't know who made that promise. I don't see that that promise is in law. I know it is not in the Constitution. But even if it is in law, and I don't believe it is, Mr. Speaker, one legislature, one Congress can't bind a succeeding Congress. They can't make a decision in 1970 that keeps us from doing the right thing in 2007.

And our Founding Fathers would have never taken a position like that. So whoever thinks that they have been disenfranchised by a promise shouldn't have been willing to accept that kind of promise back in the 1970s, if it was ever made. But what would we get out of that, foolishly hanging on to somebody's idea that because it is called the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge that somehow we can't have a little spot there that is equivalent of a postage stamp on a football field to go set a rig there, drill some holes in the ground, and pull that back out and only have a little rock pad about 50 feet wide by 100 feet long that even Dennis Kucinich wouldn't recognize as an oil field except you would have to take him up there and show him. And that is the case for many people that oppose drilling up there.

The oil is there. It is there for a reason. We need to dump it on our market and do it now. A million barrels a day could be coming back down into this market here in the United States, and that is a million barrels a day that we wouldn't be drawing out from Middle Eastern oil, and the profit from that million barrels a day would not be going into the hands of jihadists or potential jihadists or neighbors to jihadists. It would be going into American companies, and it would be saving money in the pockets of the American people, Mr. Speaker.

And those are two logical things that we need to do: drill the Outer Continental Shelf for oil and gas everywhere that we can find it, go up to ANWR and drill up there because we have already found it. We know it is there.

And so those two are simple commonsense inarguable points that can only be addressed in opposition by emotionalism and hyperbole, not by rational logic or empirical data.

And as we look across at the rest of the energy that we need to produce, we are doing a great job with the wind en-

ergy. We have got the wind chargers pumping out electricity. One thing about it, the air really never gets where it wants to go. It keeps traveling around this globe. And we can harness that tremendous amount of energy, and we do so, and turn it into generated electricity, a very clean, a very safe supply of energy. I am glad to see those tall surrealistic windmills churning out all at an identical speed, pumping electricity down through the cables into the ground and on off to our customers. That is a very gratifying thing.

And we would have difficulty, with the political climate that we face today, in expanding our hydroelectricity capability. Whether we can do that or not, I would like for any opportunities and be supportive of the rational ones, but we must keep alive the hydroelectric generation of electricity that is taking place across this country. That is some of the cheapest electricity that we have and some of the safest electricity that we have and some of the most environmentally friendly electricity that we have.

We will have flood control projects on these rivers, or we will have bottoms flooded out continually and, since we built those, particularly Pick-Sloan on the Missouri River when you take advantage of the gravity situation of the water dropping down off of the dams down through the generation plants.

Another place that we need to expand is going to be our nuclear capability. I don't believe we built a new nuclear plant, nuclear electrical generating plant, in the United States since the mid-1970s. And yet statistically nuclear power is by far the safest form of electricity that we have that we can generate. If you want to count the accidents, the fatalities, all the records about the safety of nuclear stand up to support that nuclear is safer than any other. And when you look across the world in places like France, we make a little fun of the French, but they made a good decision on their electricity. They have a different kind of demand than we have, different levels of resources. But their prudent decision sets up nuclear plants in France, and 78 percent of their electricity is generated by nuclear plants.

To the extent that we can generate more electricity with nuclear, that would take the load off the natural gas that is being used in particularly these new plants where they are burning natural gas to generate electricity. That, I believe, is an imprudent path to go down, to build generating plants that plan to burn natural gas, especially if you are doing so in States like Florida that oppose drilling off their own shores where there is gas sitting there in massive quantities but still are building gas-fired generating plants across the State of Florida. Those things add to the negative and make it harder for us.

And I know that there are States that have an ability and a confidence

that they can produce cleaner burning coal, and coal-fired generators have been a very effective and efficient way to generate electricity, the base plants in particular, and there is coal that is hauled all across this country by rail from Wyoming all the way to Georgia, if I remember right, 16 million tons going into Georgia out of Wyoming coal because that is the most economical way they can generate electricity in those areas in Georgia that receive that coal from up in the Powder River Basin in Wyoming.

But the point is to continually grow the size of this energy pie, put more Btus on the market. One of those pieces of the pie needs to be conservation, to save the part that we are wasting, and then expand the size of the pie for the renewable so that there is more ethanol, more biodiesel, more wind-generated electricity, nuclear-generated power, more base plants for coal-fired generating plants and other means that we can use more coal; and in the process of doing that, we have taken the pressure off. There will be less pressure on gasoline, on diesel fuel, on the places we are most vulnerable, from the Middle Eastern oil and Middle Eastern energy.

That is the path we need to follow, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that is the path that is mostly going to be consistent with that that was presented by the gentleman from Maryland who spoke just ahead of me.

But I wanted to talk about the energy issue in the beginning because I intend to, in what is left of this presentation this evening, Mr. Speaker, talk about how we fix our problems here in the United States, how we address our global problems. And I have addressed the energy issue. And when we have cheap energy, we are going to have at least a foundation for a strong economy. That is why energy is important. We can't be hostage to other countries. We can't have someone else draining the profit and the lifeblood off of the workers of Americans by pocketing high profits because they happen to be sitting in a place where there is a lot of energy supply themselves with low input costs. That is the case today with Middle Eastern oil. That is why I raise the energy issue.

The second thing that matters is how we deal with our foreign relations. We are vulnerable to Middle Eastern oil today. Some 60 percent or more of our oil is imported from overseas. And whether you take that directly from places like Saudi Arabia or Iran or Iraq, other countries there in the Middle East, Kuwait, for example, or whether you buy it from the Canadians, and we don't have much access to markets from the Russians, but from the western shore of Africa, wherever that oil comes from, you are taking it from the world market, the overall supply of oil in the world market. And if you do that, it is essentially the equivalent of purchasing the Middle Eastern oil. And when that happens, of

course, as I said two or three times, that money gets into the hands of Islamic jihadists.

And so today we are in a global war against terror and these terrorists are Islamic jihadists. They live scattered across most continents, if not all continents. There are enclaves there, cells where they are training and planning to attack us. They believe they are called by Allah to kill us because they label us as infidels. It says so in their Koran.

Thomas Jefferson bought a Koran or acquired a Koran, and in there he studied it so he that he could begin to understand the Islamic enemy called the Barbary pirates. And the language is the same. It says the same thing today, and the extremists believe that directs them to kill the people that they define as infidels and infidels being described as nonbelievers in their religion.

□ 2115

So, that is the root of this belief. They believe they are commanded to fall upon us and attack us with every stratagem of war and to continue doing so until such time as the infidels either convert or pay tribute.

That was their demand at the beginning of the wars with the Barbary pirates that began in 1784. That war, the long-lasting war with the Barbary pirates, with the same kind of philosophical enemy and nearly same location, that lasted over 30 years, by my calculation 32 years before it was wrapped up. In fact, it may have been a little longer than that.

The resistance finally stopped in 1830 when the French went in and occupied Algiers. We did our part up to that period of time. It is my recollection the United States was in combat about 32 years, or through a drawn-out war for 32 years, about 6 years of intense combat through that period of time, beginning in 1784, the year after hostilities with the British ceased.

So this is not anything new for us. We just need to go back and read our history and understand that they believe they have to kill us, that that is their religious belief to do so. And Thomas Jefferson said so. All we had to do was read Jefferson. He studied. It reflects today about the enemy we are up against.

Now, this even my needs to have some bases to operate from. They had a base to operate from in Afghanistan. The Taliban and the al Qaeda working with the Taliban, they need anarchy. They need a failed state, a state that doesn't have the rule of law, that doesn't have security, that has a collapsed economy, a place where they can operate freely. They had done so with the Taliban, working with al Qaeda in Afghanistan.

When September 11 came, we went to Afghanistan and put an end to their terrorist camp. When it came time to liberate Iraq, it was a similar motive. And we know that al Qaeda has always

seen Iraq since the victorious liberation in Afghanistan, they have always seen Iraq as the central battlefield in this global war on terror, Mr. Speaker.

So, this is the nature of our enemy. And wherever we fight them, they populate most of the continents all around the globe. We have seen the second generation Pakistanis rise up in Great Britain and turn around and plot to and ultimately attack the British people, their hosts in Great Britain. Those kind of cells exist in the United States, they exist in many countries of the world, and that is some of the nature of the enemy we are up against.

So, how do we deal with this kind of enemy? We have addressed it to the extent that we brought a measure of freedom to Afghanistan. We are surely not done there. There is more violence there in the last year, not less. That is a bad sign. We are more aggressive than we have been in the past, not less. That is a good sign. And we have NATO in there now working directly with us, and that is also a very good sign. They have started a spring offensive, and that is going to keep al Qaeda back on their heels. But we may not for a long, long time put this enemy a way to where they quit attacking us.

They don't really have a head leader. They don't have a capital city. They don't have a definable military that we can attack and destroy. But they do attack us with whatever they have, with the resources that they have, and we know that they are in Iraq in significant numbers and we have been fighting there, along with somewhere between five and eight different factions that are engaged in the violence there in Iraq.

But the most pervasive concern that I have, Mr. Speaker, is that Iran has been fighting a proxy war against the United States in Iraq. I have known for approximately 2 years that the Iranians were funding the insurgency there, that they were making munitions, that they were shipping those munitions into Iraq, that they were training and supporting the insurgency in Iraq and committing and fighting a proxy war against the United States within Iraq, from Iran.

Yet the information that we had at the time wasn't quite solid enough to go public, not quite solid enough to accuse the Iranians of what I have known for 2 years they were doing. But today we know. We know they have infiltrated people, military personnel and trainers into Iraq. We know that they are making sophisticated devices to knock out our armored personnel carriers and our tanks and armored Humvees. And we have had at least 170 Americans who have been killed because of these devices, these sophisticated improvised explosive devices. That is an act of war against the United States troops that is taking place in Iraq at the hands of the Iranians.

Now, the downside, the worst case scenario of this is, as I listened over on

this side of the aisle a couple of weeks ago, 2½ weeks ago when we had our debate about the resolution that did this contradictory thing, respected the troops and opposed their mission, a disgraceful debate that we had on the floor, but many Members on that side of the aisle said it is a civil war, that we should get out, we should not be engaged in a civil war.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, it is not a civil war in Iraq. There is not a force in Iraq that is seeking to unseat and depose and replace the duly elected democratic government of Iraq. You have not heard that out of the mouths of the leaders of the insurgencies that are there. They are not there to destroy the government in Iraq. So, that is rule number one. If they are not trying to depose the government, probably it is a pretty good sign it is not a civil war.

Rule number two is there are hundreds of thousands of Iraqis in uniform today that are defending and fighting for Iraqis. These uniformed Iraqi military and security personnel are not choosing up sides to shoot at each other. If they did that, we would maybe have a definition of a civil war. So, since the Iraq military and the Iraq security personnel are not fighting against each other, but they are fighting to provide security in Iraq, that says there is not a civil war. Because no one is trying to depose the legitimate government of Iraq, that says it is not a civil war.

So that puts the argument I think away on that. You can argue there is unrest, and there is, and there are fighting factions that are competing against each other for power in a relative vacuum in some of the areas, but that doesn't constitute a civil war.

But even if it were, Mr. Speaker, I would point out the United States has engaged in a number of civil wars to try to put down the kind of unrest and been successful to some degree. One of those places would be in Kosovo. We have been in there now for more than 10 years. We have suppressed a civil war there and saved a lot of lives and had a measure of safety because of that.

So, it is not a civil war, but if it were, that is not a reason not to be there, Mr. Speaker. There is a very good reason to be there, and I will point out that very good reason, and that is the Iranian hegemony is pervasive in Iraq. They are bonded with and are a powerful, strong influence with the two largest Shia organizations in Baghdad and the areas outside and south of Baghdad, all the way to the southern border.

The Shia region of Iraq would be taken over by the influence of the Iranians. If we pulled out of there, the Iranians would fill that vacuum. Yes, there would be some fighting amongst the other factions, but I believe the Iranians fill that vacuum.

If the Iranians fill the vacuum through their relationships with the

Shia leaders that they have already been nurturing and funding and supporting, one of them would be Moqtada al-Sadr, who has absconded to Iran with his leaders, with the commanding officers of his militia, if that happened, those people get propped up. Sadr gets propped up, Hakeem gets propped up, and the Iranian influence gets ahold of the 70 to 80 percent of the oil in Iraq that is in the area of the Shias today. Maybe eventually all of it, but almost immediately they get their hands on 70 to 80 percent of the Iraqi oil.

Mr. Speaker, if that happens, then you have the Iranians sitting there where their cash boxes will be flushed, their war chest be full. They will be overflowing with cash. They will be able to will buy any kind of nuclear power that they want to buy, any kind of nuclear material they want to buy. They will be able to accelerate and buy more centrifuges and process fuel and develop nuclear weapons at a faster pace, and they aren't far from having that accomplished now.

They will be able to develop a means to delivery that nuclear capability in the form of missiles, and if they aren't able to develop that technology there in Iran, they can pay for it and accelerate their research to get that done. If they aren't, they can turn around and buy that on the open market somewhere, the means to deliver, from places like North Korea, which has demonstrated a propensity for marketing off their nuclear capability.

But I think we are not many years away from Iran having a nuclear capability. And a cash flush Iran with a nuclear capability and a means to deliver it doesn't mean it just threatens Tel Aviv, Mr. Speaker. It isn't just that Ahmadinejad has declared that he wants to annihilate Israel. That is a big deal. They are the only democracy in the Middle East, aside from Iraq today. But Ahmadinejad has vowed to destroy Israel and the United States.

But those missiles and that nuclear capability that they would acquire if we withdraw from that area would give them also the ability to reach Western Europe, the ability one day not very far down the line to reach the United States, and it becomes a far more difficult equation for us to deal with.

This time, this place, right now, is the opportune time to resolve the issue of the conflict in the Middle East. We have invested blood and treasure, precious blood and valuable treasure, and we owe it to the memories of those who have committed their lives and given their lives to this cause to get the issue resolved in Iraq.

We are far from not being able to win there, and anyone who thinks that this is a difficult military situation hasn't read back through American history to see some of the circumstances that we have come out of in the past, Mr. Speaker.

But thinking of the concept of a cash-flush Iran with their hands on the valve that controls 42.6 percent of the

exportable world's oil supply, control of Straits of Hormuz, to be able to fill their coffers up with cash until they overflow, buy their nuclear capability and buy their missiles as a means to deliver it, and then look around the world and say, well, I am called upon by Allah to annihilate you infidels, and I want to start with the Israelis over here, so what I am going to do is maybe not fire off the missile right away, because it might start off a kind of a nuclear firestorm. I will just turn down the valve on the oil and starve the Americans out.

Think what happens Mr. Speaker, if as vulnerable as we are to imported Middle Eastern oil, if we let Ahmadinejad crank down that valve at the Straits of Hormuz and shut down or shut off 42.6 percent of the world's marketable oil supply. It wouldn't take anywhere near that amount to bring this economy in the United States to its knees, because we are too dependent.

If they did that, and our economy would shrink down into at least a recession, most likely a severe depression, and us going into a recession or depression immediately impacts China, China is dependent upon our economy because we are buying a lot of their goods, and China is also dependent upon foreign oil to provide energy for their growing demand that they have. They have a voracious appetite for oil and they are reaching out across the world to purchase more and more oil reserves and find ways to keep that oil flowing into their country.

But if Ahmadinejad gets his hands on that oil, that 70 to 80 percent of the Iraqi oil, and flush with cash cranks that valve down on the world's exportable oil supplies, the United States economy could be pushed into a collapse, Mr. Speaker. The Chinese economy could be pushed into a collapse, Mr. Speaker. And the winner would be Iran, who into have free sailing all over the Middle East, and the winner would also be Russia, who has a tremendous supply of oil. They would become more and more cash flush, more and more rich, more and more able to buy the things that strengthen them militarily.

This equation that I have described, Mr. Speaker, describes why Putin in Russia has been taking a more and more belligerent posture as the weeks and months unfold. He sees this chess game folding out on the world's chess board. I don't know why we can't see it here in the United States Congress, Mr. Speaker. But that is the reality we are faced with in that scenario.

So, we must put our cross hairs on the Iranian nuclear capability today. We must say to them, you will never be a nuclear powered country, you will never have a military means to have nuclear power and a means to deliver it, and we have made a decision that that won't happen here in the United States and we are going to go through every diplomatic channel possible, try

every kind of sanction, every kind of blockade, every kind of diplomacy that we can, to convince Iran they should stop, back off, dismantle their nuclear effort. But that would be the only option for them. The other option would be to eliminate their endeavor to become a military nuclear power.

□ 2130

That is where the negotiations need to start in Iraq. Iran has to back off. They need to understand that their involvement in the proxy war against the United States and Iraq accelerates the day when they will, with a thunderous response, lose their nuclear capability should they persist down this path they are heading down.

That is where the crisis is today. But the people in Iran have something to say about what kind of a country they are. And they have something to say about what kind of country they will become.

I am hopeful that the people in Iran will look at their leader, who appears to be an unstable and very much a vindictive, violent man, and come to the streets of Iran and find a way to replace him with someone who can bring Iran back into the 21st century so they can become a moderate, Islamic state that can deal with science and technology and education and use their oil wealth to help support the people in the country rather than the kind of violence being planned by Ahmadinejad.

That will help a lot, if Iran should become a free country. For example, Afghanistan today is a free country. Iraq today is a free country. Iran sits in the middle. They are a geographical link between the two. If Iran can be flipped over and become a regime-change free country, we will have the core of the Middle East, the center for the kind of Islamic jihadists that are coming after us from around the world, after Western civilization itself. The center would become a free territory where there are far less odds that they would be raising the jihadists that they are in the environment that they have today.

There would still need to be some things done in the mountains of Pakistan and within Saudi Arabia. There needs to be things done in Great Britain, for that matter; but that would take us a long way towards a final victory in the global war on terror. And being able to eliminate real estate and places where they could train and foster terrorism would be an essential key in a final victory against these Islamic jihadists.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken to the issue of energy and why we have to do something about energy, and that is take the money out of the hands of our enemies and put it into the hands and the control of the American people. But at the same time, we must succeed in the Middle East. We have come this far. We are very, very close to being able to see an Iraq that can be an ally, a trading ally, a military ally, a partner that will see us as a friend to them in the Middle East.

It has been a precarious path that we have followed. I believe it has been the right path when you look back and ask the question: What did you know and when did you know it?

You can argue each side of everything, but where we are today is where we are. We must move forward and succeed. The military situation there is not a crisis. It is not precarious, but we do have a situation where there is far too much violence there; and a strategy which has been driven by our President, what is commonly called "the surge," has reduced the casualties in Baghdad and divided Baghdad into nine different sections to where it is far easier to control the smuggling of arms and devices between regions in the city.

If we can resolve that in Iraq, and I believe we will get there if we don't lose our resolve here, then we have taken a giant step forward. As we become less dependent on Middle East oil, the United States gets back on stable footing again.

Now, we have a situation also, though, where it is not just that we are purchasing foreign oil, and that is working against us in our balance of trade. In addition to that, we are importing more and more goods from foreign countries and our trade deficit has gone up from 2 years ago, \$617.7 billion in our trade deficit. Last year it was \$725 billion. This year, the number usually comes out in February, but the trend has been for our trade deficit to increase about 20 percent a year. I think we can look to expect that is going to happen, and we will see a trade deficit in the \$800 billion or more category, Mr. Speaker.

Now, there are those who are not concerned about the trade deficit. They say as long as we can buy cheap products built by cheap labor, we should not be concerned. And they will say because we are deficit spending, we shouldn't be concerned about borrowing money from the Chinese bank, for example.

Well, I would ask those people who are so confident as money shifts in this direction, what would be your ideal kind of economy? Why wouldn't you start with an ideal, lay out the metric for the ideal economy, and then try to achieve the ideal?

I would submit it this way. I would like to have a balance of trade. I would like to not be buying more than we are selling. Any business can think of it in those terms. If you are in business and you are producing \$100,000 worth of product a year and are selling that out on the open market, and you turn around and you are buying back \$110,000 worth of product, it is easy to see you are going in the red. That is how the trade deficit works. There are currencies that change that equation some, and there is credit that changes that, and the credit on our capital; but I would want to ideally start with a balance in trade, and then work to have an export surplus because the

wealth comes back to the United States and we would hold their collateral. That would be one thing.

I would want to have a balanced budget here in the United States. I would want to spend no more than I take in. I am different than the PAYGO argument that comes here because I think we have to keep taxes low so we have a vibrant economy that has an incentive.

We did that. In 2001 and 2003, we did two rounds of tax cuts. That saved our economy from an inevitable recession and perhaps a depression that came from the bursting of the dot-com bubble about the time President Bush took office, and it also came from the September 11 attacks, which we know about, the money we had to spend to set up homeland security and the billions of dollars to protect ourselves, and also the billions of dollars we had to spend militarily to take our fight to the enemy.

But this economy needs to be a strong economy. It needs to be healthy and vibrant. I am for balanced trade, perhaps with an export surplus; and I am for a balanced budget, and I am for paying off the national debt. I think we need to do all of that in the form of reducing the demand on discretionary spending in the United States, by setting up the long-term reform of Social Security and Medicare so that growing entitlement funds can be shrunk down, because as it grows, there is going to be nothing left in the budget except Medicare and Medicaid and the interest on our national debt.

It is always easier to fix the problem earlier than later before it becomes a crisis. We didn't have the political will to do that a couple of years ago when President Bush went across the country and gave speech after speech promoting the reform of Social Security. That needs to be done some time. It will happen when the young people start to come forward and start to have their voice heard, along with the senior citizens in America.

But this budget needs to be balanced. We need to end up with a surplus and collect more than we spend and use that to pay down our national debt. Some of that happened. It happened up until the September 11 attacks. That took us out of the balanced budget that was there.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to get back to it. One of the ways we can do that is not with a gimmick; it is with a total tax reform. The most aggressive organization we have for an agency in America, the one that goes out and really does their job is the Internal Revenue Service. They collect that money that they have due. They are effective and efficient at it.

We have a Tax Code that is more pages than I can remember, and more complicated than anybody can comprehend. And that Tax Code is the best Tax Code that money can buy. K Street here in Washington, D.C. and the lobby that is here has created this Tax Code

by getting their little exemption and their little tax deduction. As this adds up, it gets more complicated and convoluted, and it suppresses the growth in our economy, Mr. Speaker.

So what we need to do is look at this Tax Code that we have and say we can't fix this Tax Code. It is beyond anybody's comprehension how to do it, and it is beyond our ability to get it solved politically. The only thing you can do is take the Tax Code and throw it over the side. I would be happy to pitch it into the bay in Boston Harbor and eliminate the Tax Code and never let it grow back again. Also, eliminate the IRS because there is where it would grow, another type of a tax policy that we have today, and go to a national sales tax, a national consumption tax, a fair tax, Mr. Speaker.

If we do that, we have changed the entire dynamic of our taxation in America. It works like this: Ronald Reagan once said what you tax you get less of. If we stick with the tax side, what you tax you get less of. What we do here, in our lack of infinite wisdom, is Uncle Sam has a first lien on all productivity in America.

If you punch the time clock at 8 in the morning, Uncle Sam wants his money first. You will work there until April 14 or April 15 before he gets his due, and then you can start giving your money to the State and on down the line. After a while, you get to keep some of the fruits of your own labor.

But the Federal Government has the first lien on your labor starting the second you go to work anytime. If you pick up the phone and make those extra sales calls for that commission, he has the first lien on that commission.

If you invest your money and you collect the interest, maybe passbook savings, Uncle Sam has the first lien on the productivity of your investment.

If it is a pension income, if it is Social Security income, if it is capital gains, if it is any kind of productivity at all, your labor, your investment, Uncle Sam has the first lien on all of that productivity.

So people make decisions like, I don't think I want to work that extra overtime this week. It is not really worth it because too big of a piece comes out of my check and goes to the Federal Government. I think I'll take the day off. I am going to enjoy life a little bit. After all, I don't get to keep enough of the money I earn.

Or, I am not going to expand that extra line in my factory because, after all, I am in a tax bracket that says I can maintain a level of comfort here, so I am not going to take that risk because the reward is not great enough. That is part of the vision that is going on also.

I am not going to make the extra phone calls for the extra sales because I don't want to pay the tax. I want to be able to keep the money I earn.

That is the mind-set of anyone. The psychology has always been the reason



a controlled economy, a managed society, like, for example, flat out pure communism or European-style socialism, the reason the Soviet Union collapsed was because they did not let people have an incentive to be productive and let them earn and keep the money they made. They took that away from them, and human beings being not as rational as capital is, but human beings being rational, they make those decisions that I talked about, those decisions like, I am not going to put out this effort.

You have heard this: from each according to their ability, to each according to their need. That was the belief of Karl Marx and that was the belief of Lenin and that was the belief of Mao Tse-Tung.

But the equation that they miss is if you are going to take from a producer according to their ability, and maybe they have the ability to produce five or six times as much as somebody who has the need, why in world would they put out five or six times the productivity of the person who is going to be receiving the fruits of their labor?

The answer to that is of course they won't, and of course they don't, and that is why the economies in managed societies like the Soviet Union will collapse because they don't tap into the best instincts of human nature, which is we want to work hard, we want to produce, we want the fruits of our labor. And by the way, if we are allowed to keep the fruits of our labor, we will also contribute and donate and tithe better than any other people on Earth.

We do all of that, we need to go to a national sales tax, a consumption tax, so you decide when you pay your taxes.

I think there is a Texan here with something boiling up inside him, and I would be very happy to yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank my friend, the gentleman from Iowa, the Honorable Mr. KING. I have been hearing most of the hour you have been talking about the concepts that I know you and I hold so dear.

There was a group from my hometown, Mr. Speaker, Tyler, Texas, that had come to Washington. They are an inspirational group. They are from Grace Community School. I took them around the Capitol tonight. They know their history. It is great when you see education work.

□ 2145

You see the very things you have been talking about, the free market, at work, and that free enterprise works and that really get backs to our very founding, the Judeo-owe Christian values that were so often espoused as the Declaration of Independence was written.

I have had people say the Constitution itself, there is nothing at all like it. By the way, you cannot send out a letter with the letters addressed or dated as you date them because it says

like for today, March whatever day, all my letters, whatever day, "in the year of our Lord," now this year 2007. I was originally told by the franking people, we do not believe you can send that out with "in the year of our Lord" on there; that may be inappropriate. My comment was, if you are saying it is unconstitutional to date a letter the same way the Constitution is dated, then we have got a real problem here. He did not realize the Constitution is dated in that manner, "in the year of our Lord, 1787."

But anyway, there are groups there are schools where they still learn that kind of history, the very thing my friend Mr. KING has been talking about.

I just wanted to pay tribute to the speaker of this group. I know the rules are that we are not to recognize people in the gallery. So I will not violate the rules, but it is a wonderful group that understands the values, the very values the gentleman from Iowa has been discussing, and it just makes me proud to be an American to hear you talk about the values I grew up on, the values that I know are being instilled in the young people still today.

I thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), my good friend, and I would encourage you to keep up the good job.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for picking up on that. There is a reason why there is a strong affinity between this Western Iowan and this Texan and lot of the Texas delegations.

I know that today is the anniversary of the final battle of the Alamo, and I am very much aware of what that means in Texas and across this country. In fact, if you walk into my office, this Iowan's office, framed there is a letter from Colonel Travis. That level of freedom, the Texans reached out for freedom and they had to fight for it a number of times, number of different ways. I like that flag that hangs in Mr. HENSARLING's office that shows a picture of the cannon and says, "Come and take it." That is the right kind of attitude.

We have this freedom here in America, and there are people here that do not want our freedom, they detest our freedom. They just want to take our lives, and to understand an enemy like that goes beyond the scope of our religious foundation and our beliefs. So I think it is important for us to understand this enemy.

I would reflect upon a major from Kentucky whom I spent some time with in the Middle East in the early part of December who said: Thank you for all your prayers. Thank you for the support for our military. We have everything we need. We have the training, the technology. We have the weapons. For men that have to do this job, we have everything we need, but when you pray for us, pray for the American people. Pray that the American people will understand the threat that we are up against, and pray that they will not lose their resolve. We will not lose ours.

I think that might be an appropriate time, unless the gentleman from Texas has another remark to make in watching the clock, Mr. Speaker, I would like to close with that thought, that our military is not going to lose their resolve. They understand this enemy that we are against. This Congress needs to understand this enemy we are against. A majority of the American people understand the enemy we are against, and we have a historical time here.

We can close the door on the legacy of Vietnam, Lebanon, Mogadishu, and we can build upon the success in Afghanistan, and we can close the situation in Iraq and build upon that success. If we do that, we have a bright and free future. If we fail to do that, every enemy that wants to come after us will come after us.

I appreciate again Mr. GOHMERT coming down here, the way you engage with your constituents and the way that you bring these values, these American values out of the heartland to flow all the way through the middle part of the United States here. I am proud to serve with the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Speaker, and I am glad to have had the privilege to address you in this chamber.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. ABERCROMBIE (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and until 4:00 p.m. March 7.

Ms. DELAURO (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today after 4:00 p.m. and until 4:30 p.m. March 7 on account of a death in the family.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and the balance of the week on account of a family medical matter.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of official business in the district.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

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

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, March 8, 9, 12, and 13.

Mr. GOHMERT, for 5 minutes, today and March 7.