

RECOGNIZING THE ARMY'S 4TH BRIGADE—2ND INFANTRY DIVISION, THE "DRAGOON RAIDERS"

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Lewis.

By June 30 of this month, the last of the, roughly, 4,000 men and women of the 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division will have returned home to Fort Lewis after completing a 15-month deployment in Iraq. The Dragoon Raiders, as the Brigade is known, deployed in Iraq in April 2007, a month earlier than expected.

During their deployment, the 4-2 supported operations in Baghdad, Baghdad's Northern Security Belt, and the Diyala Province. The Brigade cleared 2,216 IEDs from more than 87,000 kilometers of routes, ensuring safe travel for civilians and security forces. Soldiers from the 4-2 also captured more than 1,700 detainees and 220 high-value targets during combat operations.

In tribute to their brave service, three members of the Brigade were awarded the Silver Star, the United States' third highest award for combat valor. Their valorous service was not without cost, however. In the course of their deployment, the Dragoon Raiders lost 54 of their comrades, with another 424 wounded.

I want to express my deep condolences to the 4-2 Brigade and to the families of those fallen soldiers. Their contributions and sacrifices will not be forgotten.

The men and women of the 4-2 have done everything their country has asked of them and more. We all should have the utmost respect and admiration for their service and sacrifice.

FAIR OR FREE

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, the speech police are at it again. This time they want to police and control the radio airwaves. I'm not talking about the former Soviet Union that controlled what Russians listened to on the radio, I'm talking about the American speech police.

Radio shows that air conservative ideas in the free enterprise market seem to be listened to by more Americans than those that listen to liberal ideas. I don't know why that is, but it happens. So some don't like that. They say it's just not fair. So they want to force the private radio stations, with the use of the government speech police, to air ideas that are liberal as well as conservative. They call this nonsense the "fairness doctrine."

It is actually totalitarian state control of speech. And what does "fair"

mean? Fair means different things to different folks. In some places in the country like Texas, fair is where you take your chickens to. That's why the word "fair" is not in the Constitution. The Constitution protects free speech, not fair speech. It says Congress—that's us, folks—shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech. And the Constitution applies to the thieves of free speech and the government's speech police whether they like it or not.

And that's just the way it is.

USE IT OR LOSE IT

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, Americans continue to suffer the pain at the pump due to 7 years of missed opportunities and outdated policies. President Bush's energy plan was literally written by the oil companies, giving more public resources and billions in subsidies to the same companies that are raking in record billions in profits while Americans are reeling. That was the plan then; that's the plan now.

Every day, we hear our friends on the other side of the aisle demanding that we need to drill more holes. What we don't hear is anyone demanding that they drill on the 68 million acres they have. Legislation on the floor today will force those companies to produce oil and gas diligently on the 68 million acres of the public land, your land, that they already have. Experts say there are 4.8 million barrels of oil which would nearly double total U.S. production.

Madam Speaker, drilling has been the Republican slogan for years, and it will be so today. Today is finally their chance to put that slogan to the test, to tell Big Oil to drill now and to use it, or lose it.

JOURNEY FOR 9/11

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to say "thank you" to the retired New York Giants' co-captain and Super Bowl champion, George Martin, for finishing his 3,200-mile trek across America to raise money and awareness for the sick men and women, heroes and heroines of 9/11 who are still suffering.

His cross-country journey started in New York just after the sixth anniversary of 9/11. It continued through Washington, DC, in early October where he met with Members of Congress about legislation that is pending here. We met, and he continued on his journey.

He finished in California last Saturday, and is now having a well-deserved rest. George is an inspiration to those of us in Congress who are working hard to pass H.R. 3543. We have over 115 co-

sponsors. It is the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, and it is for the heroes and heroines of 9/11. It would treat and monitor all of those who were exposed to the deadly toxins, and it would treat those who are sick. It is the least we can do for these heroes and heroines. We should pass it before the seventh anniversary of 9/11.

DOMESTIC EXPLORATION

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I got a call yesterday from a constituent in my district who said he saw me speaking on the floor about domestic energy, and he was relieved. He was relieved because someone in Congress understood the effects that high gas prices are having on real families all over this country, because he didn't think anybody was paying attention. Well, guess what? Some people are paying attention.

We need to be looking at resources here at home to solve our energy problems. The United States Minerals Management Service found out that, out of our 1.76-billion-acre Outer Continental Shelf, only 3 percent is leased to oil and gas exploration, and nearly 85 percent of the lower 48 OCS remains untapped.

Madam Speaker, we can explore our domestic resources safely and effectively so we will not harm our environment.

I and my Republican colleagues will continue to talk about domestic exploration because we do have solutions, and somebody is listening.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN VIETNAM

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss human rights in Vietnam and the Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung's visit to the United States.

I understand that, when President Bush and Prime Minister Dung met, they discussed the importance of promoting human rights in Vietnam and that Prime Minister Dung told President Bush that the Vietnamese Government has made efforts and is committed to further promoting and improving human rights in Vietnam.

Now, as a long-time advocate of human rights in Vietnam and as a representative of one of the largest Vietnamese-American communities, we know that human rights in Vietnam have only been getting worse. The Government of Vietnam has continued to harass, arrest and to sentence peaceful democracy advocates to prison—oh, and by the way, also United States citizens of Vietnamese descent.

If there is any evidence of Prime Minister Dung's claim that human

rights in Vietnam are improving, I urge him to show it to this Congress, but I doubt that he is telling the truth.

EXPANDING ENERGY HORIZON

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, recently, I took part in a House Natural Resources subcommittee hearing concerning hydropower and exploring its role as a continued source of clean, renewable energy for the future.

In Nebraska, we have benefited from clean, inexpensive and renewable hydropower. These projects in Nebraska's third district serve irrigation, flood control, and recreation activities. Demand for fuel and power continues to grow, giving all sources of domestic resources, including offshore oil fields and ANWR, solar, nuclear, wind, and hydropower, an increasingly important role for the future.

Unfortunately, so many special interest groups have said "no" to virtually every solution, including clean, renewable hydropower, non-emitting nuclear power, clean coal technology, wind power, and certainly responsible domestic exploration.

Madam Speaker, we can do better. We must do better.

NEW ENERGY SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, the Democratic-led Congress is working for consumers to lower gas prices and to launch a cleaner and more cost-effective energy future that creates new green jobs and that reduces global warming.

For 7 years, Washington Republicans allowed Big Oil to run our Nation's energy policy. The result, high gas prices and continued dependence on oil.

Democrats believe we must diversify our energy sources with bold investments in renewable energy and more efficient technology. Last year, for the first time in three decades, this Congress passed a landmark law that increases fuel efficiency to 35 miles per gallon and that will save American families at least \$700 a year when it takes effect.

We have also passed legislation that repeals billions of dollars in corporate welfare to big oil companies that are currently seeing record profits. Instead, we invest these funds in the renewable energy solutions of the future.

Madam Speaker, the energy policies of the past are not working. It is time that we look for new solutions.

DEVELOP AMERICAN ENERGY

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

Mr. AKIN. Madam Speaker, America has a problem because we have not been developing our American energy. The tip of the iceberg is particularly obvious now at \$4 a gallon, but there were warning signs—nuclear reactors, 1960s vintage technology, no new refineries sited in 30 years. That's going back to the Vietnam era. We have not been developing American energy. Why? It is not because we don't have American energy. We have plenty of varieties of American energy that we could be developing, and it is not because we don't have the technology or the innovation to be able to develop American energy.

No. Unfortunately, this is strictly a matter of will. It is a decision, and it is strictly a party-line decision.

Over the last 8 years, Democrats on all kinds of votes on energy have voted 90 percent of the time not to develop American energy. Republicans have voted 90 percent too. Whether it is recycling nuclear fuel, drilling in ANWR or in the Outer Continental Shelf, we need to agree that the time has come to develop American energy.

END OIL'S MONOPOLY

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, if I had a monopoly on apple pies because the law said that my backyard was the only place in town where you could grow apple trees, I would charge whatever I wanted for those apple pies. I would be even more excited when I would start jacking the price way, way up for those apple pies and would make huge, record apple pie profits.

If the government decided that the way to fix that problem would be to give me, and only me, permission to grow one more apple tree in my backyard 10 years from now, well, it would sound pretty ridiculous, right?

Unfortunately, even though the analogy is a little bit simple, that is basically the Republican's plan for high gas prices. Instead of actually creating competition for the oil industry by concentrating on growing renewable energy sources, they just call for a little bit more drilling, giving their friends in the oil industry even more profit.

Well, we shouldn't fall for it. With 2 percent of the world's oil reserves here in the United States, the only way to bring gas prices down is to end oil's monopoly and to start growing apple trees in other people's backyards.

CONGRATULATING FRESNO BULLDOGS

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

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, today, I rise to congratulate Fresno State University men's baseball team

as the national champions of the College World Series.

This is the first college baseball national championship win for Fresno State University, and it is, indeed, a Cinderella story for the Bulldogs. Their record was 47 wins and 31 losses. No other college baseball team in the Nation has had 31 losses in the season and has still been able to overcome the odds and win the college baseball national championship.

The outstanding leadership of coach Mike Batesole and the hard work and determination of all of the players, including the College World Series' Most Outstanding Player, Tommy Mendonca, led to this unlikely but well-deserved victory.

I urge my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Fresno State Bulldogs who went from underdogs to wonder dogs. Go Dogs.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 6052, SAVING ENERGY THROUGH PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2008

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1304 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1304

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 6052) to promote increased public transportation use, to promote increased use of alternative fuels in providing public transportation, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived except those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. The bill shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill are waived. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the bill shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived except