

new plan to lower energy prices, but consider this: The President's invasion of Iraq and tacit military threats to Iran have destabilized the Middle East and driven oil prices out of control.

Big Oil has leases, access, and decades to drill on millions of acres on the Continental Shelf, but they choose instead to drill down into the wallets of the American people. Oil companies are already exploring today. They're exploring the upper limits of their stock prices by using their billions in profits to buy back stock, not to reinvest in America.

We still don't know what the Vice President's secret meeting with the industry was when gas prices were \$1.50 a gallon, but it sure looks like it's working for the oil companies, but it isn't working for us.

We've got a plan, and we will propose it and bring it out here on the floor.

THE FUTURE OF AMERICA IS AT STAKE

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, to help families dealing with the high price of gas, the White House ended the ban on deep ocean energy exploration. Now it's up to the Congress to give this commonsense move the final green light.

We must pursue increasing production of American-made energy in an environmentally conscious manner off the coast of the Atlantic, the Gulf, and the Pacific. We have the technology to access fuels right here in America while still protecting our natural resources for future generations.

We should and must develop our own oil and natural gas resources in the deep waters offshore, on Federal lands, and in oil shale if we want to revive America's independence. It's past time Congress got off the dime and approved deep ocean energy exploration today.

Americans, the future of America is at stake.

MOVING TOWARDS A NEW DIRECTION

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, the American economy has lost nearly half a million jobs this year with six consecutive months of negative job growth. In fact, under this administration our economy has the slowest record of job growth since the Hoover administration, has added \$3.5 trillion dollars to the national debt and seen the value of the dollar plummet. Gasoline is \$4.10 a gallon, the stock market has flatlined, the financial industry is in crisis, and the housing industry teeters on the brink.

We simply cannot afford to continue the same failed policies of the past 8

years. And while Senator McCain's chief economist says that it's all in our heads, that the Americans are just whining about the economy, Democrats recognize the problem and are working to provide some relief. And though we lack cooperation from a President who doesn't share our values, we have shown leadership by overriding his vetoes four times now and counting.

Democrats in Congress are leading the way and moving towards a new direction for our economy.

ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I spoke at a rally highlighting how America's energy crisis is impacting the working men and women in our Nation. The average working person in my district works at a hotel or a restaurant meeting the needs of the tourism industry.

That average person also drives to work. There is no light rail or subways taking them from rural homes to their place of work near the coast. The folks they serve probably drove hundreds of miles with their families for a well-deserved vacation, but few families are coming to the beach this year because of high gasoline prices. It also means that few folks will be working at the hotels and restaurants.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrat-led House's lack of action on energy policy is affecting every segment of our society, so much so that I am receiving drill bits in the mail demanding that we take action to lower energy prices in America. Those drill bits aren't coming as part of some well-financed campaign; they're coming because we can no longer hope that the problem will go away.

Like many other countries, the United States is blessed with many types of natural resources. I agree with the vast majority of Americans by viewing our natural resources as one of our greatest assets, not as an environmental liability.

We must take action now and vote on legislation immediately that would allow for more domestic energy to be produced by Americans for Americans.

LIHEAP

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

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, to significantly lower gas prices at the pump, Congress must end rampant speculation in crude oil futures, yet our Republican colleagues in both branches have consistently opposed such legislation. Meanwhile, a whole new crisis looms as families face a price approaching \$5 per gallon for heating oil for their homes. That's twice last winter's price.

Last winter in Massachusetts and New England alone, 350,000 low-income families used the LIHEAP program to get by, yet only one in four of the families eligible by income use the program. Many of those already eligible families will be in desperate need of help this winter, and many more middle-income families' budgets will be severely stressed by the doubled price of home heating oil.

Heat for a home or an apartment is not optional for any family, and Congress must act on an historic investment in LIHEAP before we finish our session.

DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE ON IRAN IS WORKING

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, no one wants war with Iran, but America and our allies in Europe have been exerting increased diplomatic and economic pressure to move the nation of Iran and its government away from developing a nuclear program.

In May, Congressman GARY ACKERMAN and I introduced bipartisan legislation, H. Con. Res. 362, urging this administration to impose expanded economic sanctions on key sectors of the Iranian economy. It appears as though it's having its good effect. In what's being reported today as what will be the "closest contact between the two countries since the Iranian revolution of 1979," this weekend, U.S. Ambassador William Burns will meet with top arms negotiators from Tehran. It will be more of a listening session and should not be overstated.

However, I would offer that this glimmer of hope in these negotiations is precisely because of the resolve of the United States and the European community to economically and diplomatically isolate Iran over its nuclear ambitions. But now is not the time for us to shrink from renewed diplomatic pressure.

I urge all of my colleagues to join Congressman GARY ACKERMAN and me and cosponsor H. Con. Res. 362 before this weekend. Let's send a deafening message to the negotiators in Iran that the American people stand for diplomatic and economic isolation until they abandon their nuclear ambition.

THE ANSWER TO OUR OIL PROBLEM: PRODUCE, PUNISH, AND PROMOTE

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Good morning. My friends on the Republican side of the aisle are complaining about gas prices, but with two oil men in the White House, is it any wonder that the price per barrel has gone from \$30 at the beginning of the Bush administration to \$150 or thereabouts.

The Republicans have taken the tack that we should drill, drill, drill. That's not the answer. We're not going to drill our way out of this problem. I would say it's the three P's: produce from the 68 million acres that we have under lease and are permitted today, punish the people who have been hoarding, gouging, and speculating in oil futures, and the third is promote efficiency and alternative forms of energy.

We've learned this lesson too many times. We need to come up with a new way to power this nation. If we do these three P's, produce from what we've got, punish those people who are gouging us, and third, promote energy efficiency and alternative energy, we will change the direction of this nation. And we need to do it right now.

OFFSHORE OIL EXPLORATION

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, until this week, there were two prohibitions on offshore drilling, two prohibitions from keeping us from accessing billions of barrels of American oil. One was imposed by Congress; another by executive order in 1990. But now President Bush has lifted the executive ban.

Standing in the Rose Garden he said, "The only thing now standing between the American people and these vast oil resources is action from the U.S. Congress. Now the ball is squarely in Congress' court."

There can be no mistake. Congress must answer to the American people why we are not allowing the production of American-made energy right here at home, why Congress prefers the money to be sent to dictators and unsavory regimes around the world.

Speaker PELOSI and the Democratic leadership in this House should bring legislation to the floor to vote on opening the deep waters off our coast to allow us to access billions of barrels of American-made energy immediately. Otherwise, the price of gasoline and home heating oil will continue to rise.

THE TIME FOR ACTION IS NOW

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, it is hot in Tennessee this summer, and in my district, a lot of us are moving the thermostat up, the house is a little bit warmer, we're sitting on the front porch, and we're asking ourselves a question: Are we better off or worse off today than we were in the summer of 2006? I will tell you what my constituents are saying: They were better off in 2006, and they're asking what has happened since that time.

Well, the Democrats took control of both chambers of this House. And you know what? They are not doing one

thing to turn the heat down on the American consumer. As long as the energy crisis is not addressed, the price of oil is going to affect everything else: transportation, food, home cooling, home heating this fall. TVA, which provides electricity for most Tennesseans as well as six other States and over 8.8 million people, recently had to increase its wholesale fuel cost. Of course, the price gets passed on to the consumer and the consumer pays the bill.

We have legislation that would address this issue, Mr. Speaker. It is time for action.

□ 1030

WELCOMING FATHER JOHN GARRETT, PAROCHIAL VICAR OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS-ST. ANTHONY'S CHURCH

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct honor to welcome our guest chaplain, Father John Garrett, the parochial vicar of Our Lady of Sorrows-St. Anthony's Church, located in my hometown of Hamilton, New Jersey.

I have known, respected, and admired Father Garrett all of his life. Even as a young man, I was deeply impressed by his innate goodness, generosity, enthusiasm, motivation, tenacity, and above all, deep faith. It was a privilege for me to nominate Father Garrett, then known as J.C., as my first page, way back in the 1981-1982 school year. That's how far back we go.

Throughout his life, Father Garrett has always applied his enormous talents in ways that benefit others. In addition to living and preaching the gospel, he is also a board certified psychologist. His expertise includes helping those with depression, anxiety, panic disorders, PTSD, personality disorders, and the chronically mentally ill.

Along with his doctorate in psychology, Father Garrett has two master's degrees and has served as director of the graduate program at Columbia College in Missouri.

A man of deep faith, Father Garrett has and continues to make enormous contributions in promoting and securing the mental and spiritual health and well-being of others.

I welcome him back to the House of Representatives and thank him for his extraordinary commitment to serving others and for so effectively and faithfully radiating the love, the mercy, and the compassion of Christ.

Welcome, Father Garrett.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5959, INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Com-

mittee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 1343 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1343

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. 5959) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2009 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, 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 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 Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute 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 those arising under clause 9 or 10 of rule XXI. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

SEC. 2. During consideration in the House of H.R. 5959 pursuant to this resolution, notwithstanding the operation of the previous question, the Chair may postpone further consideration of the bill to such time as may be designated by the Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS). All time yielded during consideration of the rule is for debate only.