

Refugees find themselves in the immensely difficult position of being unable to return to their homeland, yet stuck without any place else to turn. They are often the targets of persecution due to their race, religion, political associations, or other traits that should be worthy of respect rather than a threat on one's life. The theme of this year's World Refugee Day is "protection," with a particular focus on shining a bright light on the plight of refugees around the world, so that the world community takes action to ensure their safety.

While refugees deserving of our attention exist in many places around the world, one area of significant concern is the refugee situation in Iraq. The U.N. estimates that over 4 million Iraqis have been displaced by violence, with 1.5 million living in Syria and over 1 million in Jordan, Iran, Egypt, Lebanon, Yemen and Turkey. It is a staggering humanitarian crisis. As part of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008, Congress adopted the Iraqi Refugee Crisis Act, which I sponsored along with a number of my colleagues. This legislation creates a process for Iraqis who have offered assistance to our forces in Iraq to apply directly to the United States for refugee status. It is clear that the United States has a special obligation to help this population. The largest community of Iraqi Christians in the world outside of Iraq is in Michigan, which makes this issue particularly significant for me and my constituents.

The stark reality is that Iraq is just one small part of the tragic refugee situation around the world. Thon Chol, who was one of the "Lost Boys of Sudan," is currently serving as an intern in my Washington, DC, office. He recently graduated with a master's degree in social work from Western Michigan University. His success is hard earned, but his story underscores the point that refugees deserve our attention as well as our aid and protection.

Thon was forced to flee his hometown at age 6. While attempting to reach Ethiopia he was one of thousands who faced dehydration, famine, and attacks from wild animals and Government soldiers alike. He lost most of his family, witnessing many deaths himself. He reached a refugee camp in 1987, was forced back to Sudan due to the civil war in Ethiopia in 1991, and then eventually traveled to live in a refugee camp in Kenya for 8 years before being one of less than 4,000 Lost Boys permitted to settle in the United States and moving to Grand Rapids, MI.

Many are now American citizens. Thon's remarkable educational achievements are in line with others who were in his situation; many have sought degrees beyond high school, ranging from community college to one student who is pursuing a master's degree at Yale University. Thon and others have committed themselves to returning to Sudan to teach democratic values and religious freedom.

There are many challenges even for those very few refugees who have been granted asylum or citizenship in welcoming countries, including cultural adjustments, difficulties in uniting separated families, obtaining work skills, and adapting to an unfamiliar climate. In Michigan, numerous volunteers, community organizations, churches, and businesses have come together to assist refugees who come to our state. On this World Refugee Day, I offer my praise and appreciation for the organizations and individuals—both those local to Michigan and those international in scope—who are committed to helping refugees find some stability and normalcy, and I urge my colleagues to consider what we can do to help the millions who are suffering right now. Individuals who wish to help can begin by visiting the U.N. Refugee Agency website at <http://www.unhcr.org>.

#### GASPEE DAY

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, every student of American history knows the story of the Boston Tea Party, the men who crept onto British ships moored in Boston Harbor on December 16, 1773, to destroy shipments of tea that the English sought to tax. They were patriots who yearned for liberty, for "no taxation without representation," and who stepped into history.

Only a few miles south and more than a year earlier, however, another group of men had engaged in another act of patriotism—yet these men are largely forgotten outside my home State of Rhode Island. Every year, in their memory, Rhode Islanders celebrate Gaspee Day. This is their story.

During the buildup to the Revolutionary War, as tensions between England and its American colonies grew increasingly strained, King George III stationed the HMS *Gaspee*, under the command of LT William Dudingston, in the waters off Rhode Island. Its mission was to search incoming ships for smuggled goods and enforce the payment of taxes.

On June 9, 1772—16 months before the tea party in Boston—the sailing vessel *Hannah* was traveling from Newport to Providence when it was intercepted by the *Gaspee* and ordered to stop to allow a search. On board the *Hannah*, Captain Benjamin Lindsey refused and continued on his course, despite warning shots fired by the *Gaspee*. The smaller and more maneuverable *Hannah* then raced up Narragansett Bay and into the safety of Pawtuxet Cove. The hulking *Gaspee* tried to chase the *Hannah* but ran aground in the shallow waters of Namquid Point. The *Gaspee* was stuck, awaiting the higher tides of the following day.

Meanwhile, Captain Lindsey proceeded on his course, and upon arriving in Providence he met with John Brown, a community leader who later founded Brown University. The two men ar-

ranged for a meeting of local patriots at Sabin's Tavern, in what is now Providence's East Side, later that day. At the meeting, the assembled group of Rhode Islanders decided that action must be taken. *Gaspee* was a symbol of their oppression, and she was helplessly stranded in Pawtuxet Cove. In short, the opportunity was too good to pass up.

As night fell on June 9, 1772, there was no moonlight on the waters of Pawtuxet Cove. The *Gaspee* lay silent on the sand bar at Namquid Point. But just a few miles away in Providence, a team of about 60 men led by John Brown and Abraham Whipple was preparing for an assault that would soon break that silence. They armed themselves, boarded longboats, and set course for the *Gaspee*.

After paddling the longboats 6 miles down the dark waters of Narragansett Bay, the men reached the *Gaspee* and surrounded it. Brown called out and demanded that Lieutenant Dudingston surrender his vessel. Dudingston refused and instead ordered his men to fire upon anyone who attempted to board the *Gaspee*.

True to form, these brave Rhode Islanders seized the challenge. They forced their way aboard the *Gaspee*, and a struggle ensued. In the melee Lieutenant Dudingston was shot in the arm by a musket ball. Rhode Islanders had drawn the first blood of the American Revolution, right there in Pawtuxet Cove.

Brown and Whipple's men took control of the ship from the British crew and transported the captive Englishmen safely to shore. They then returned to the abandoned *Gaspee* for one final act of defiance to the crown. The men set fire to the *Gaspee* and watched as its powder magazine exploded, leaving the whole ship burning down to the water line. The place was eventually renamed Gaspee Point.

If that is not an act that defines the American struggle for independence, then I don't know what does.

Since that night in June when the *Gaspee* burned, Rhode Islanders have marked the event with celebration. This year, as I do every year, I had the good fortune to march in the annual Gaspee Days parade in Warwick, RI.

And every year, I think about what it must have felt like to be among the 60 men hauling on those longboat oars, as they paddled toward destiny.

While it is doubtful that many of those patriots could fully grasp the place they were about to take in history, there must have been a feeling of deep satisfaction known only to those who, in the face of tyranny, have stood up for home, for family, and for country. It is the same feeling that must have accompanied the soldiers of General Washington as they crossed the Delaware, the delegates of the Continental Congress as they signed the Declaration of Independence, and indeed those men in Boston who emptied a shipment of tea into the ocean. I

hope that the brave Rhode Islanders that gave us Gaspee Day will be remembered with those other giants of the Revolution, and given their due place in our Nation's history.

#### IDAHOANS SPEAK OUT ON HIGH ENERGY PRICES

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, earlier this week, I asked Idahoans to share with me how high energy prices are affecting their lives, and they responded by the hundreds. The stories, numbering over 1,000, are heartbreaking and touching. To respect their efforts, I am submitting every e-mail sent to me through [energy\\_prices@crapo.senate.gov](mailto:energy_prices@crapo.senate.gov) to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. This is not an issue that will be easily resolved, but it is one that deserves immediate and serious attention, and Idahoans deserve to be heard. Their stories not only detail their struggles to meet everyday expenses, but also have suggestions and recommendations as to what Congress can do now to tackle this problem and find solutions that last beyond today. I ask unanimous consent to have today's letters printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The rising cost of fuel and food are a big concern for us that live in Northern Idaho. We live in a lightly populated area and the trips to "town" are right at 100 miles round trip. We are on Social Security and Social Security doesn't allow a lot of flexibility in what a person can spend. Basic items like home heating and food prices have made huge changes in the way we live.

Recently we had a death in the family in another state (Arizona). After figuring the cost of both driving and flying we determined it would be too much of an expense for us to go. We sent our love and regards—but that doesn't take the place of a hug. The cost of heating our home with heating oil has gone from under a dollar a gallon to 3.97 at the last tank fill up. That is a huge increase for a basic need. Many are worse off than we are and have to choose between being warm and eating. *Something must be done.*

Every day we see our government reaching out with aid to other countries. . . . what about those right here in America? I expect the stimulus payment most people received went to catch up on a couple of bills—no one could afford the luxury of just frivolously spending it. We need everyday, down-to-earth practical help so basic needs can be met.

Please stop this ever-increasing price on fuel and food.

Thank you. . . .sincerely,

MR. AND MRS. RAY, Priest River.

I normally drive our 1999 Chevy Suburban. It gets 14 MPG on average. With gas prices over \$4.00 a gallon I just use this simple rule of thumb to calculate how much a trip on the interstate costs me. It's simple. At normal interstate speed of 65 MPH, it costs me \$20.00 an hour to drive. 65 divided by 14 = 4.65 x \$4.10 a gallon = \$19.00 not including wear and tear. So \$20.00 an hour is my rule of thumb.

Now if I lived 1 hour from work and I made \$12.50 an hour, I would have to work 3.2 hours more to get my 8 hours pay.

Do the math yourself. This has to be fixed. A few things that bother me the most:

Hearing that the gas companies have made "record profits" again while I'm paying for it; the price of a barrel of oil goes up in the morning then by noon the same day the price of gas goes up even though that gas has been in the underground tank for days; the price of a barrel of oil goes down in the morning but the gas prices stay the same until they can go up again later; relying on foreign oil. That is relying on a foreign people who are not necessarily our friends or care about us; we have oil under our own ground but can't get it? Why?

Here's a question. Since when is not having oil not a national security issue?

AARON, Caldwell.

SENATOR: Nightly, I listen to a number of pundits and politicians debate the "solutions" to our energy problems. One of the more ridiculous ones is mandating people switch to higher fuel efficiency automobiles (i.e., buy a new car). As a small business owner, our health insurance premiums have just gone up (again), the minimum wage has risen, grocery costs are rising and our 401k is diminishing. The very thought of anyone in Congress telling me I have to replace my "paid for" cars, and take out a loan to buy a new (more energy efficient) car is ludicrous!! Gasoline would have to be over \$10 a gallon to make economic sense to my family, in lieu of absorbing a car payment.

I support drilling offshore and in ANWAR, as well as shale oil extraction. I think it's time that the world's most technologically-advanced nation illustrate to the world the most technologically advanced means of extracting energy. I'm deeply offended that the United States government, who can't profitably manage Amtrak, the US Postal Service, or even its own Senate cafeteria, has the audacity to pretend to convince me that they know more about "safe & sound" energy extraction than the companies that are professionals in this endeavor. I hear people crying about how drilling in the US might "spoil natural resources"! I'd be willing to wager that if we weren't dependent upon Middle Eastern oil, we could have, most likely, saved about 4,000 US Servicemen and women's lives. That cost of natural resource is infinitely greater than a handful of caribou!

Respectfully,

DANIEL, Boise.

My mother-in-law (80 years old) had emergency surgery in Grand Junction, Colorado. With increased fuel prices, the air fare to fly my wife to Grand Junction ONE WAY was almost \$900. I drove separately to Grand Junction so our car would be available for our use. The total mileage over a week's time was in excess of 1,500 miles and, at over \$4.00/gal, our fuel bill (23 miles/gal) exceeded \$260.00. I'd like to buy a more fuel-efficient car, but my down payment was significantly reduced!

In eastern Idaho, the cost to go camping, fishing, or hunting will average from 50 miles to 150 miles or more round trip. A weekend outing has increased in cost from \$5.00 to \$16.00 for someone with a small SUV to \$7.50-\$22.50 when using the standard pickup and pulling a boat or trailer. This is based on \$4.00/gal fuel compared to \$2.50/gal a year ago. Summertime costs can easily be \$100 per month more for fuel in this area just for simple recreation (long distances and not much else to do). Add a few trips to the store for supplies and the costs can be 50% higher. We can't afford these extra costs.

Some think the answer is E-85 Ethanol from corn, but that does NOT save significant petroleum products and creates additional water pollution in corn-growing

states. Additionally, my cost for food for my family has gone up significantly because of the increase in the price of corn. So why, oh why, do you in the government PAY the Midwest ethanol producers \$0.51/gal to pollute the water and drive up the cost of food throughout the country, while still using as much oil for tractors in the fields, fuel trucks to transport the ethanol (it can't go in pipelines), fertilizer, fuel the ethanol plants, and other energy costs for something that only has about 68% of the energy content of gasoline? You in the government should get out of the way of the energy industry. They were doing fine before government got involved. Please let the energy sector drill for oil, develop coal and oil shale gasification technologies, mine the off-shore methane deposits, and set as a goal that nuclear power plants will be licensed as fast as they can be built. Government reviews should be minimal and should help instead of hinder our progress. Wind power should be developed in areas which have minimal impact (look at the INL site—huge area where the Idaho wind blows all the time). Small solar installations could easily be developed as the solar energy industry grows. The very best thing that government could do is to GET OUT OF THE WAY!! Maybe a few insects and frogs will die as a result, but it is better than running out of energy and then trying to figure out what to do in the dark

DARYL.

SENATOR CRAPO: I wanted to briefly share some of the impacts the high fuel prices are having on my family. I drive 32 miles one way to work. My car gets about 25 miles per gallon. So it is costing me almost \$10 a day just to go to work. My husband is a farmer. We normally purchase 500 gallons of fuel at a time for the farm. We have not been financially able to buy it this spring/summer. He has cut back on the water of the crop because the power bills are so high, which will most likely affect the yield. Fertilizer is skyrocketing. Diesel is ridiculous. Our entire food supply is going to be affected as other farmers face these same problems. We are not buying any extras anymore. Groceries have increased, so non-essentials like chips, candy, boxed cereals, etc. are out. We are not eating out like we used to either. We normally ate out once or twice a week. For the past 18 years, I have planted beautiful potted flowers for the entrance of our home, usually spending around \$300. I will not be planting flowers like that this year. We are not buying any new clothes for summer. We'll have to make do.

We live in an area where several years ago BP Petroleum came through and indicated that studies show fuel resources are available, however, nothing that we know of is being done to proceed with any exploration or development.

You would think that a country as great as ours with as many resources as we have would not allow themselves to be held hostage to foreign fuel resources!!!! We would appreciate any help you can send our way.

Sincerely,

MARIE.

#### PROPOSITION FUEL REFUND AND REFORM

Item 1: There shall be a \$4.0 billion one-time charge imposed against each Refinery listed in Item 1 that shall be refunded to all California drivers with a valid California drivers license and age 18 and over. This Charge shall be apply to Exxon Mobil, BP (includes ARCO), Texaco, Chevron, Conoco Phillips, Shell, and Citgo. Each Refinery Charged the refund shall pay their amount to the California State Treasury for disbursement within 60 days of the passage of