

contributions has already been delivered.

What we do with the OCE at this point is very much beside the point. It's little more than a sideshow. We need to concern ourselves with the dignity of the House. That is our collective responsibility. It does not fall outside of our jurisdiction.

As I have said many times before, Mr. Speaker, the PMA cloud that hangs over this body rains on Democrats and Republicans alike. We are in this swamp together, but we can't grab a shovel while we are covering our eyes and plugging our ears.

IMMEDIATE NEEDS FUNDING FOR FEMA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring the voices of my constituents in Jefferson County, Wisconsin, to the floor of the people's House.

In 2008, homes along the northern shore of Lake Koshkonong and within the surrounding community were absolutely devastated by a record-setting flood. This was a 500-year flood event. It is the same one that ravaged much of the upper Midwest and, in particular, Wisconsin and Iowa.

During that storm, I knew that the damage was going to be devastating and that many of the houses in our community would be beyond repair. What I didn't know was that, almost 2 years after the floods, the agency upon which they relied would be leaving these hardworking Americans behind. You see, in February of this year, FEMA instituted what it calls "immediate needs funding." Basically, they are freezing already approved funds to folks in Wisconsin and in other disaster areas across the country.

A couple of weekends ago, I had the chance to visit with property owners from my district, of whom I have the privilege of representing, who have been affected. They are survivors of the 2008 floods. I wanted to hear their stories. Many brought photos and letters. They brought their own unique stories. They brought their anger and their frustrations.

I met with Gene and Marie Harris at their home on Lamp Road, one of the most extensively damaged neighborhoods in this flood. The damage was so extensive that their house was absolutely uninhabitable and has been since the flood. They showed me photos of before, during, and after, and we talked about the tangle of bureaucratic red tape that they waded through in order to get approved for the FEMA dollars. They were approved for the FEMA money, but they haven't received a penny because of the funding freeze. When I asked Marie to recall what they had gone through back in June of 2008, not surprisingly, she welled up with tears.

Mr. Speaker, our hearts go out to the victims of the recent floods and of natural disasters. Yet I fear we suffer from that old adage, "Out of sight, out of mind." Once the cameras are packed away and the news crews leave for the next breaking story, what happens to the victims and survivors of these natural disasters? Will the families in Tennessee or in Arkansas suffer the same fate as Wisconsinites and Iowans? Will they see their funding from FEMA freeze even after it has been approved?

One would hope that the system of emergency response would keep on plugging away, assisting the families in need across this country, but we have seen that system completely break down. This is unacceptable.

It has been 2 years since their homes were devastated, and my neighbors are still living in temporary housing, and they are enduring financial chaos. One man is homeless. Another family is on the verge of bankruptcy because of the situation that FEMA has left them in.

I know this is wrong. My constituents know this is wrong. The Federal Government has to do better.

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

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, this Nation has sent millions of good jobs to other countries over the last 30 or 40 years because of environmental rules, regulations, and red tape. This has hurt millions of poor and lower-income and working people by destroying jobs and driving up prices on everything.

The BP oil spill in the Gulf is a terrible thing, and we need to do all we reasonably can to see that something like this does not happen again. However, some extremists want us to stop offshore oil production entirely. Talk about wrecking our economy. Talk about killing countless numbers of jobs. And all this at a time when our unemployment is far too high and underemployment is even higher.

John Engler, the former Governor of Michigan, wrote a column 5 days ago in the Washington Times under the headline, "Drilling Moratorium is a Jobs Moratorium." Governor Engler wrote, "Our country cannot afford to use this accident as an excuse for an overbroad moratorium that stops progress to the detriment of our economic and national security. We do not need to choose between energy security and environmental safety. We need to continue to strive for both."

Charles Krauthammer, the TV commentator and columnist, is respected even by people with whom he disagrees as one of the smartest men in this city. He recently wrote a column asking why we were drilling in 5,000 feet of water in the first place. He wrote, "Environmental chic has driven us out there. Environmentalists have succeeded in rendering the Pacific and nearly all the Atlantic Coast off limits to oil production. And, of course, in the safest of all places, on land, we've had a 30-year ban on drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge."

Mr. Krauthammer is right. For many years, we have tried to allow drilling on about 2,000 or 3,000 acres of the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. ANWR is 19.8 million acres, some 35 times the size of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. The Smokies get over 9 million visitors a year, and people think it is huge. They cannot humanly comprehend how big ANWR is, yet it is home to only a couple hundred people in the village of Kaktovik and gets a couple of hundred visitors each year. Yet radical environmentalists, who almost always come from very wealthy or upper-income families, oppose oil production almost everywhere. They want gas to double or triple in cost so people will drive less. They can't relate to people who cannot afford gas that costs \$7 or \$8 or \$10 a gallon like it does in some other countries.

Not only would shooting the cost of gas way up cause the loss of huge numbers of jobs, it would put the final nail in the coffins of many small towns and rural areas. People in rural areas generally have to drive longer distances to get to their jobs. Already, two-thirds of the counties in the U.S. are losing population. Yet, once again, radical environmentalists see nothing wrong with this. Most of them are city people, anyway. They probably think it would be good if everyone was forced to live in 25 or 30 urban areas, with the rest of the country left totally empty and people could be bused to a national park or wilderness area every couple of months, under government supervision, of course, so they would not harm the land.

Everyone pays lip service to energy independence, but we already had 84 percent of our U.S. oil off limits even before the President imposed this latest moratorium. Environmental radicals will say they, too, want energy independence. But, then, environmental groups oppose drilling for oil, cutting any trees, digging for any coal, or producing any natural gas because of the pipelines and the refineries. And, heaven forbid, they certainly don't want more nuclear power.

The opposition varies from group to group and geographic location, but the environmentalists are always there to fight any kind of energy production except for solar and wind. But then some oppose the windmills, too. And solar energy, despite mega billions in government subsidies over the last 30

years, only produces one-seventh of 1 percent of our energy, and adding wind power only brings it up about 1 percent more.

If we limit this Nation to wind and solar, we might as well just shut the country down economically. And all these young people with degrees who are working as waiters and waitresses or in other low-paying jobs can thank the environmentalists. I told my wife as we were eating out last Saturday night, the American people used to work in factories and eat out just occasionally. Now, most of the factories have gone to other countries and restaurants have replaced the factories as our biggest employers other than government.

Now, a slight majority of our people get most of their income from Federal, State, or local government. When a country passes that threshold, it is on the way down. We need to wake up and realize that the worst polluters in the world have been the socialist and communist countries. And we need to realize that only a free market, free enterprise system can generate the money to do the good things for the environment that everybody wants done.

Charles Krauthammer wrote in another column a few months ago that, "socialism having failed so spectacularly, the left was adrift until it struck on a brilliant gambit: metamorphosis from red to green. The cultural elites went straight from the memorial service for socialism to the altar of the environment. The objective is the same: highly centralized power."

Once again, Mr. Krauthammer is right.

We certainly need to clean up the BP oil spill, but we should not let misguided radicals shut down our economy and hurt many lower- and middle-income people in the process.

PROSPECTS FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. I was going to speak on a subject, and I will, but after listening to the previous speaker, I think a few comments are in order.

I think it was that great socialist, Richard Nixon, that happened to sign the Environmental Protection Act and the Clean Air Act. So maybe that's what you're talking about.

But to make the argument that somehow the environmental movement is responsible for the demise of American industries is just fallacious. It's a stretch of the imagination. In fact, there are many, many things involved, including free trade acts and international competition that's coming our way.

And if my colleague on the Republican side was so interested in this, he would have voted on the bill last week

that would have brought back foreign earnings and closed the tax loopholes on those American corporations that have gone offshore—instead, bringing those back. I think, if I recall correctly, we didn't get one Republican vote on closing those loopholes that have allowed American corporations to offshore jobs. But I really wanted to take up another issue, and I will do so now.

I rise today to express my support for the right that all nations have to secure their borders in self-defense. Our close ally, Israel, shares a border with Gaza, a region controlled by the terrorist organization Hamas. Since 2001, thousands of rockets have been launched from Gaza into Israel, killing more than a dozen Israelis and wounding hundreds and terrifying that nation. We also know that Hamas receives material support from Iran, an international pariah that oppresses its own citizens while funding terrorist organizations throughout the region. For all these reasons, Israel has chosen to restrict imports to the Gaza Strip, insisting that all deliveries must be inspected to make sure that weapons are not smuggled into the territory.

Today, I call on Hamas leadership to reject their past support for terrorism, renounce violence, and embrace the two-state solution so that Israelis and Palestinians can live their lives freely, in peace, and security.

I also call on all powers in the Middle East to value human life and to do everything to avoid bloodshed. The loss of life in the flotilla incident was tragic, and I look forward to the findings of the recently formed Independent Public Commission, which will examine such issues as the naval blockade of Gaza, actions taken by the commandos during the flotilla incident, and the identities and conduct of the organizers and participants in the flotilla.

In the meantime, we must focus on avoiding escalation, preventing more violence, and continuing the peace process. The greatest tragedy would be to allow the flotilla incident to end the region's prospects for peace.

SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

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

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, in Genesis, chapter 12, verses 1 through 3, God tells Abraham that he will bless the nation that blesses his people, and curse the nation who curses his people.

God says in that verse, starting at verse 1, The Lord had said to Abraham, "Leave your country, your people, and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you. I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you, I will curse. And all people's on Earth will be blessed through you."

Mr. Speaker, God gave the land in Israel to the Israelites, to the Jewish people. They're a sovereign nation. They have a sovereign right to protect their borders, to protect their lives, to protect their country, to protect their valid claim to the land that God gave them.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation has supported Israel since it was reestablished in 1947 by an act of the United Nations. This country has supported Israel ever since then. We've been blessed as a Nation since then. But I'm very fearful that this administration is turning its back upon Israel. I'm very fearful that God's blessing that has been on this land, as promised in Genesis, chapter 12, verses 1 through 3, will cease if we cease supporting the nation of Israel.

Israel is a sovereign nation that's protecting itself. It has an absolute right to do so. Mr. Speaker, if we turn our back upon Israel, as I'm fearful that we're doing as a Nation through this administration, not only will we cease to have God's blessings, but we will also start receiving the curses from God that he promised in Genesis, chapter 12.

Mr. Speaker, if we don't support Israel, and just by being silent, just by turning our back upon Israel, then we're supporting Hamas. We're supporting Hezbollah. We're supporting Iran. President Ahmadinejad has stressed over and over again that he wants to annihilate Israel from the face of the Earth. We have to support Israel, Mr. Speaker. The consequences for our Nation are too dire not to.

God has put his blessings upon this country. And I think a big part of that is because this country was founded on the Judeo-Christian principles that have made this country so powerful, so rich, and so successful as a political experiment. But that blessing will cease if we ever turn our back upon Israel. We must not. We cannot. America must support Israel. Our administration must support Israel. And I call upon our country to continue to do so.

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

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A TRIBUTE TO GOOD BREAD AND A FAMILY OF ENTREPRENEURS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SABLAN. The people of the Northern Mariana Islands love rice. Pre-contact with the West, the Marianas were the easternmost extent of the cultivation of rice. For us, a meal without rice is no meal.

Yet, ironically, one of our most cherished local businesses processes that