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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

UNDER DISCUSSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

There are three different issues that I am compelled to bring up and to discuss.

One, first of all, is with what is going on in the Gulf of Mexico. Being from Texas, we are particularly sensitive to what happens there. There have been so many days on the Gulf of Mexico coast, on the Texas coast—Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida—in all of those areas, and to see what is happening is heartbreaking.

Two things need to be done. One is to immediately do everything we can to stop additional oil from flowing into the area. At the same time, we must clean up the area before we do any more devastation. Then the other thing is we need to find out what caused the spill and what could have been done better to prevent this kind of thing from ever happening.

You know, we find out that British Petroleum had been cited 750 times, apparently, on rigs for safety violations. Compare that to others. I believe Exxon and Shell may have had one during the same period. So I mean there were indicators that perhaps BP was hurrying, that perhaps there was a test that didn't work out. Well, we've heard those rumors. Yet they still continued. There is the rumor of someone's yelling on the phone after the explosion: I told you, I told you. Are you happy? I told you. It's something to that effect. There are indications that perhaps people at BP knew that they were moving too fast and got careless. There was no reason for this. There was no reason for this. Proper measures had been taken.

One of the problems we find in America is when the government decides to get involved and to do everything itself rather than to have the supervisory, the regulatory role, that it is supposed to have. In other words, what the Federal Government is supposed to do is to make sure that everybody plays fair and to then let them play. If you have a company that is playing in Federal ocean areas, you've got to make sure they're not breaking the rules and jeopardizing your homeland.

When asking Director Birnbaum of the Minerals Management Service why the testing had not been disclosed, she said, Well, it's under investigation. So those reports are being utilized in the investigation. I publicly asked in our hearing for a copy of the reports because we know experts as well who can look at the reports and say, Well, it says right here that the test didn't work, that there were problems that arose. We don't need to wait months. Let's find out what the problem was so that we can see if we need to fix that on other BP rigs.

In the meantime, because of the problems there, thousands and thousands of American workers are being punished by this administration with the overreaction. We're not just stopping BP and double checking their work. We're going after everybody. The President said there would be a 6-month moratorium. He's going to hurt everybody because of what BP may have done or not done. That's no way to act. In the middle of a crisis, in the middle of a recession, you put other people out of work?

You know, we heard from the families here on Capitol Hill. Bless their hearts. They've been through so much with the loss of life out there on that rig. It's my understanding that, even since the hearing, they're not demanding that drilling stop. They've got too many friends who will be out of work. We need to find those who are responsible. Yet, in the meantime, what could be done?

We have heard the President very nobly say, I'm in control. The administration says they've been in control from day one.

Yet we see this week, according to this article by Loren Steffy, in the Houston Chronicle, posted on June 8, at 10:13 p.m.: ''Three days after the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon in the Gulf of Mexico, the Dutch Government offered to help. It was willing to provide ships outfitted with oil-skimming booms, and it proposed a plan for building sand barriers to protect sensitive marshlands.

''The response from the Obama administration and British Petroleum, BP, which are coordinating the clean-up, is, 'The Embassy got a nice letter from the administration that said, ''Thanks, but no thanks,'' said Geert Visser, consul general for the Netherlands in Houston.'' '

Well, wasn't that nice. The administration has been in control, we are told, from day one. We heard that before a lot of the people covering the event even noticed that this administration was down there in charge.

Apparently, within 3 days, their answer was to say we don't want help. These people are from the Netherlands. What do they know about dikes and sand barriers and dealing with ocean water? Oh, yeah. Their country has been reclaimed from the ocean, a good deal of it. Why would we want their help? These guys are experts on dealing with ocean water problems. They've been turned away. They were turned away. What sense does that make? Oh, we're in charge. We're in control. We're running things. Yet, in the response to the Dutch, who had the capability to come in and to immediately take action to protect the wildlife, the estuaries, these important marshlands, the beaches—and 3 days after the oil began gushing into the gulf—this administration basically put British Petroleum in charge. It said you take care of it. You know, we don't have your expertise. You take care of it.

We heard from Mr. Gibbs, who nicely said—or I believe it was, maybe, Secretary Salazar, but the administration was pointing out that we have our boot on their throat. In a hearing in our Natural Resources Committee, I asked, What does that mean? The Deputy Secretary of the Interior under Salazar and others there, I didn't really feel, gave appropriate answers. I don't know. I still don't know what that means. We've got our boot on their throat. You know, I'd rather you boot me down there to Louisiana and to Florida and make sure that the oil is not getting to the shore, but when in our hearing they were asked about Louisiana's wanting to set up little barrier islands out there so the oil wouldn't get into the sensitive areas and kill the wildlife and kill off the livings of so many thousands of people, we were told in that hearing, We have that under discussion. Oil was gushing and still is, and this administration has those things under discussion.

He went on to elaborate and explain.

You see, we think it's possible that, if they build these sand islands out there, it may actually draw more oil into the areas they are trying to protect. So we're still talking about it.

Good grief. How about checking with the Dutch? They offered to help 3 days after the explosion.

Well, this article goes on. It says: ''Now, almost 7 weeks later, as the oil spewing from the battered well spreads across the gulf and soils pristine beaches and coastline, BP and our government have reconsidered. U.S. ships are being outfitted this week with four pairs of skimming booms airlifted from the Netherlands and should be deployed

within days. Each pair can process 5 million gallons of water a day, removing 20,000 tons of oil and sludge. At that rate, how much more oil could have been removed from the gulf during the past month?''

But we know who is in charge. They've made it clear from day one. They didn't want the Dutch help for 7 weeks, and now the administration says, You know what? Maybe we'll outfit our own ships and do what you offered to do when this first started.

The article says: ''The uncoordinated response to an offer of assistance has become characteristic of this disaster's response. Too often, BP and the government don't seem to know what the other is doing, and the response has seemed too slow and too confused. Federal law has also hampered the assistance. The Jones Act, the maritime law that requires all goods be carried in U.S. waters by U.S.-flagged ships, has prevented Dutch ships with spill-fighting equipment from entering U.S. coastal areas.

''What's wrong with accepting outside help?' Visser asked.'' Again, Visser is the consul general for the Netherlands, who offered the assistance.

Visser said, '''If there's a country that's experienced with building dikes and managing water, it's the Netherlands.'

''Even if, 3 days after the rig exploded, it seemed as if the Dutch equipment and expertise wasn't needed, wouldn't it have been better to accept it, to err on the side of having too many resources available rather than not enough?

''BP has been inundated with well-intentioned cleanup suggestions, but the Dutch offer was different. It came through official channels from a government offering to share its demonstrated expertise.

''Many in the U.S., including the President, have expressed frustration with the handling of the cleanup. In the Netherlands, the response would have been different, Visser said.

''There, the government owns the cleanup equipment, including the skimmers now being deployed in the gulf.

''If there's a spill in the Netherlands, we give the oil companies 12 hours to react, he said.

''If the response is inadequate or the companies are unprepared, the government takes over and sends the companies the bill.

''While the skimmers should soon be in use, the plan for building sand barriers remains more uncertain.''

That is as was mentioned in our hearing. We were told in our hearing that weeks after the explosion and the oil started gushing forward, Well, we have that under discussion. We're concerned that, if we build these little barrier islands that prevent the oil from getting into these sensitive areas, they could actually cause more oil to come into the sensitive areas. So we are still having it under discussion.

Excuse me? You've got people losing their livelihoods probably for the rest of their lives, and you want to come in and say, You know, we're discussing it.

Well, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal supports the idea, and the Coast Guard has tentatively approved the project. One of the proposals being considered was developed by the Dutch marine contractor Van Oord and Deltares, a Dutch research institute that specializes in environmental issues in deltas, coastal areas and rivers.

□ 1615

They have a strategy to begin building 60-mile-long sand dikes within 3 weeks. That proposal, like the offer for skimmers, was rebuffed but then later accepted by the government. BP has begun paying about $360 million to cover the cost. Once again, though, the Jones Act may be getting in the way.

American dredging companies, which lack the dike building expertise of the Dutch want to do the work themselves, Visser said. We don't want to take over, but we have the equipment, he said. The Dutch have the equipment. They've offered it. While he battles the bureaucracy, the people of Louisiana suffer, their livelihoods in jeopardy from the onslaught of oil. Let's forget about politics. Let's get it done, was Visser's last comment in the article.

It makes no sense if somebody's going to be in charge and vote ''present.'' You can't vote ''present.'' We'll think about it. We'll talk about it. We don't want to commit, in an emergency. Err on the side of additional help. But, here again, we've got the Jones Act from the 1920s that stands in the way.

It's interesting, another posting on June 8. This is apparently in American Leadership. It mentions within days of the oil spill, several European nations and 13 countries in total apparently offered the Obama administration ships to assist in the cleanup of the gulf. When asked about this, a State Department press spokesman refused to identify any offers of assistance. Wouldn't want to identify who's offering to assist because some reporter might actually go ask them, What were you suggesting? What were you wanting to do? Then that might put pressure on the administration and might bring to light the fact that the administration had turned down help that would have saved the livelihoods and jobs for thousands and thousands of Americans. Because we've heard over and over, this administration wants to save jobs. Not doing much to create them other than, as we heard, 411,000 of the 431,000 last month were created as temporary census workers. We can create new government jobs, but this would have saved jobs, and yet the response was dilatory.

According to one newspaper, European firms could complete the task in 4 months rather than an estimated 9 months if done by the United States. Working with the U.S., the cleanup could be accomplished in 3 months. The Belgium firm DEME contends it can clean up the oil with accuracy at a depth of 2,000 meters. Another European firm with capabilities is the Dutch firm Jan De Nul Group. Pardon me if I mispronounce it. The Dutch and Belgians are long-time NATO allies and, as such, partners in international security cooperation. To close the door on them while they're offering a helping hand in a time of national emergency simply makes no sense.

According to the article, no U.S. companies had the ships which can accomplish the task, because those ships would cost twice as much to build in the U.S. as they do outside the country. This is one adverse impact of the Jones Act which Congress passed in the 1920s. This piece of protectionism has only hampered an anemic American maritime industry. It also has prevented a quicker response to the oil spill.

European firms do have the expertise to clean up the spill. And again, this is from the posting in American Leadership on June 8 by James Dean. If other nations have the technologies to address this oil spill, then the administration does have the ability to accept their help.

The point's made in this article that in response to Hurricane Katrina, for example, Department of Homeland Security, Michael Chertoff, temporarily waived the Jones Act in order to facilitate much needed transport of oil throughout the country. The Jones Act, which is supposedly about protecting jobs, is actually killing jobs.

The jobs of fishermen, people working in tourism, and others who live along the gulf coast and earn a living there are being severely impacted. Those are also additional private-sector jobs which are not being created in the United States since the Jones Act effectively prices U.S.-based companies out of the ability to be competitive in the competitive global market.

The article says, as we strive to develop new technologies for a cleaner environment at sea, the Jones Act continues to hobble our own capabilities, sometimes with devastating results. The Jones Act needs to be waived now, in light of this catastrophe, and permit those whom we have helped and cooperated with in the past to assist us in our need. After waiving the Jones Act for the gulf cleanup effort, Congress and the administration should repeal it altogether.

And that was coauthored by Claude Berube, and I was reading directly from that posting.

It sure makes sense. We say we want to help folks. Why not let people wanting to help us help us clean the mess up? It would not be that difficult.

But one of the other things we noticed in questioning Director Birnbaum, we find out, well, we're going to fix the problem of the Minerals Management Service. We're going to divide it into three parts. When I

asked if she was aware that the only entity within MMS that was unionized was the offshore inspectors, she seemed surprised, wasn't sure if that was true.

When I asked if the union contract for offshore inspectors did as many union contracts do and limited travel, limited hours that someone could work, she didn't know. Nobody there at the hearing could help me, nobody could tell me whether our offshore inspectors that stand between our homeland and disaster by making people producing energy to help us play by the rules so we don't have an oil spill like this. They play by the rules. We do right. We make sure the testing's done accurately. We don't have a problem. That's why we hadn't had one like that in that area. That's why most of the oil spills are by tankers bringing in foreign oil, because, in the past, we made people like British Petroleum play by the rules, make sure things were working properly. But that didn't happen here.

But we couldn't get the information from the MMS. But it seems to me that allowing offshore inspectors that stand between disaster in our homeland to have a unionized contract, if it limits travel or limits the hours worked, would be like—and I guess this is where we're going next, based on what he saw a couple of weeks ago. The next move will be, That's right. We want the military to unionize as well. It makes as much sense.

You've got people standing between disaster in our homeland. Why not let the military unionize, and then we can have a limit on their travel and their hours. And so they'll be able to say, Well, Sergeant, I'd like to attack that hill, I'd like to take that bunker out for you, but I've already worked all the hours I can work today. You're going to have to go find somebody else. I can't do it.

Now, the reason the military has never been unionized is that it would be disastrous to our national security. The reason that offshore inspectors should not be unionized is because it has been disastrous to our national security. When we lose oil, cut off drilling that will produce oil at the same time that oil wells are playing out across the country and there's still the moratorium on so many areas to drill, and we had Secretary Salazar, when he took office, return the checks for leases in other areas where drilling could commence in that 500-square mile area, as I understand it, including some of Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming, Secretary Salazar, if you recall, a year and a half ago, said, Well, these leases were let at the midnight hour. We've returned the checks. We're not going to let something the Bush administration did at the midnight hour take place.

So this administration has already hurt us dramatically and our ability to become energy free of countries that don't care for us.

And when you get behind Secretary Salazar's position that this was a midnight-hour lease, well, that's when the checks were accepted. It turns out it was a 7-year process; 7 years the oil companies have been working on examining the possibility, the potential for production so they could make their bids. You don't just come and make a bid at the midnight hour without having a chance to examine what it is you're bidding on. You don't write a check for something you've never examined, I guess, unless you're the government. But it was a 7-year process. It's a bit disingenuous to say that it was a midnight-hour lease. So we hurt the country there.

And now we've got a moratorium because of two things, apparently:

British Petroleum didn't do their job. They should have had their feet held to the fire where they played by the rules and we wouldn't have had the problem. And then second, we had a government whose feet were so busy being on the neck of British Petroleum, it didn't paddle its feet on down to the gulf and deal with the issue and let countries like the Netherlands help us that had the expertise to do it.

Now, I've got an entity, a fellow in my district, he's one of many that have offered help, offered solutions. And in east Texas, we have skimmers that are able to take in water, process the oil out here, process the freshwater out the other side. So you separate the oil from the water, but it's on such a small scale, it's not something that would be helpful in the gulf unless you do as this gentleman apparently did. He sent a friend to talk to me, to tell me about the problems he's run into with this administration since they've given British Petroleum and somehow, vaguely, their own selves control. This guy has basically built a barge that will do, on a big scale, what the small-scale skimmers, separators do in east Texas.

However, he sent word, wanted me to know he's got this barge ready to process thousands of gallons of oil, separate out thousands of gallons of oil a day. It's not as much as the Netherlands had offered. But from the message he sent to me, apparently the Coast Guard has indicated they want to be sure that his barge is actually worthy to be out on the seas, because they're concerned, you know, that even though there are people losing their jobs, losing their livelihoods, birds, animals, water life is being killed off, just like the gentleman from the administration testifying before our committee is under discussions about whether or not to build barrier islands, apparently they're trying to decide if this barge should be allowed out on the water so that it can suck up and take out of the water thousands of gallons of oil a day.

□ 1630

It's just a mind-boggling thing. As Bo Pilgrim used to say, it's a mind-boggling thing to see what is being called an emergency effort.

Now, if this were some Internet game, well, it would be interesting, and we would see clearly which group was not very good at emergency management. But it's not a game. Eleven lives were lost. Aquatic life, waterfowl, life in these estuaries is being destroyed as I speak.

Now, it would be easy to say, ''Well, you guys are just talking about it.'' But the thing is, and as I have talked about with my wife, should we continue to sacrifice from a personal family standpoint for me to stay in Congress? She said, ''You know, it may be that one of the last places where there really is freedom of speech, other than calling somebody a liar, is on the House floor. You have got to stay there because you keep hammering the truth day after day, and eventually you may see something done about it.'' And that's why I'm here.

Some people wonder, why does anybody go to the trouble of talking on the House floor, Mr. Speaker? But the truth is, it is a way of getting a message out from here so that eventually people begin to notice.

Well, one other thing about the MMS splitting into three entities. I asked, well, are these three entities of the MMS, that MMS will be divided into, are they going to unionize? Apparently, they are talking about it. Well, if you let the most critical part of MMS, the offshore inspectors, unionize, then why not?

We heard 2 weeks ago people exulting and applauding because we were told we are actually providing civil rights to our military. Well, if you haven't been in the military, I am sure that makes sense, to some anyway. But if you have been in the military, you know the military doesn't have the civil rights that every other American does.

You don't have freedom of speech; you can't. When your sergeant, your superior commissioned officer gives you an order, you don't have the freedom to speak your mind.

And, in fact, when I was at Fort Benning, there were a lot of us that were very upset with our Commander in Chief at the time, a man named President Carter. But if any of us said anything derogatory about President Carter, it was a crime for which we could be jailed, could have pay taken away, could be given extra duty, restrictions. You could not badmouth your Commander in Chief; you don't have that freedom of speech.

And as much as I have wanted to badmouth people, and especially when I was in the Army and had a commander that didn't seem to know what he should, you have got to have that discipline for the good order of the military. Because the military is not supposed to be a socially engineered experiment. It can't be. It is about protecting our homeland against all enemies, foreign and domestic. Of course, domestic, you got to make sure you don't violate Posse Comitatus, but that is another issue.

The fact is, the military is whom we owe so much for having the liberties

protected we do. Yes, the Declaration of Independence says we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights. The question comes, if we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights, then why doesn't everybody have them? It's because everywhere people have not accepted the inheritance from our Creator, our Heavenly Father, from whom we inherited these inalienable rights.

When you do accept your inheritance, as this Nation did back in the 1770s—and, for many, it was an ongoing process through the 1800s and even up through the valiant work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a Christian minister. But this country has claimed those inherited rights.

But that is not enough. As any parent knows, if you leave an inheritance to your children and they don't accept it, then they won't have it. If they accept it and they are not willing to fight for it, to keep that inheritance with which they have been endowed, they won't keep it. Because there are evil people in this world that are glad to take away anything you have.

And as I pointed out 2 nights ago here on the floor, you know, we have the administration—for the first time in the modern history of Israel, this Nation has now turned on Israel and said, we want you to disclose all of the weaponry you have because of the nuclear proliferation thing we are pushing.

Well, if you go back to when King Hezekiah was king in the same location, same area Israel is now, because they did pre-date Mohammed by several centuries, but Hezekiah thought it would be a nice gesture to show all that he had to the Babylonians.

It's stupid to show enemies all of your armaments, all of your armory, and to show them the treasury they could get if they successfully attack you. It is a stupid thing to do. And this country has done some of that. In the effort to be gracious and kind to people that hate us and want to see us wiped off the map and have said so, we show them what we have.

With a big superpower, you can get away with it for a while. But when you are a small country like Israel, your closest and strongest ally should never force you to show the defenses that you have, because then your enemies know how they can overcome you.

And just as Hezekiah was told by Isaiah—I mean, Isaiah knew he was a fool for doing it. And after Hezekiah admitted to Isaiah—Isaiah already knew; God had told him. But once Isaiah had it admitted from Hezekiah, ''I showed him all our treasury, I showed him all of our armory, our armaments,'' and he said, ''Everything you have shown them will be carried away.'' And it was. That's what happens.

The old saying is, those who refuse to learn from history are destined to repeat it. It's very true. Of course, there is a corollary that says, those that do learn from history will find new ways to screw up. I think that's true, too. But why repeat the same mistakes for thousands of years that have been committed when you can learn from their mistakes and not commit them?

And one of the other great dangers that we are creating in turning on our friend Israel—and, you know, basically, this country is still Israel's strongest ally. A family has disagreements within itself, but it gets very protective if attacked from the outside.

But the problem is, when you get outside Chicago and you are playing in the international arena and you want to get cute and kind of snub your close friends, their enemies are watching. They see that. And the message to them is, if we are ever going to attack, now is the time, when there is a strain and a problem between Israel and their strongest ally; let's go now.

That is the way it appeared to North Korea after Secretary Acheson said, you know, basically, Korea is outside our sphere of influence. They had already been massing soldiers to the border. And, obviously, it seems like a good time to attack your enemy when their closest, strongest ally says, we won't protect them.

You can't send those messages out there. You can't vote ''present'' when it comes to international dilemmas and the existence of an entire nation and all the people that have known genocide before and are fearful of having it repeat itself. Massive mistake.

I will come back to Israel again, but one of the issues that has arisen, as I understand it, Neil Armstrong, first man to put his foot on the moon, has said that if we abandon our manned space program it will be devastating to national security.

Wouldn't it be a good idea to listen to people who have more experience in some areas than we do? Neil Armstrong can see the national security implications of us basically giving up what has taken us 50 years to develop: supremacy in space.

It has been very confusing to hear this administration, with the assistance of people in Congress, in saying, in this time of monetary problems, financial crises, this is a time to start cutting budgets, so we really can't afford to keep pursuing these ideas with NASA that have brought us more advancements not just in space—I mean, I take Sudafed.

It is the only thing that clears me up when I get clogged up, not that ridiculous Sudafed PE. It was developed by the space program. They were going to give it to astronauts. And when my doctor, when I was a kid, said, ''There has been this wonderful decongestant developed called Sudafed; give it a try,'' it worked. Velcro—I mean, those are just tiny little things.

The advancement that has brought this country and kept this country to the forefront in technology has been from the space-type ventures. The Internet, it was a Department of Defense effort. And, lo and behold, look at where it has taken us in the private sector now.

But we cannot afford to give up the advances made through our space exploration to the rest of the world and let them take control. Those are the mistakes of a country on its way to the dustbin of history.

The thing is, when you know they are mistakes and you see they are mistakes and you see through history the things that have been done to avoid becoming an asterisk in international history, then why wouldn't you do them? Why wouldn't you take the steps to preserve your nation? Instead, what we get is more cronyism. How could that be? How could that be?

We were told that in this time of financial crisis NASA needs its budget cut. And yet, if you look at the appropriations, the budget increases. More money will be spent for space, but we are not going to give it to NASA.

Well, if we are not giving it to NASA, then why wouldn't the NASA budget reflect that it is being cut, as the administration said? Well, apparently it's because billions of dollars are intended for a private company that has never done this kind of space exploration. Nobody in our country has, because it's been the Federal Government and NASA.

I understand in meetings that it has been disclosed that, of course, we are giving all these billions of dollars to SpaceX to, kind of, take over the space program for us, a private company. And I feel sure it has nothing to do with how much money they donate to Democrats over Republicans. I am sure it has no relationship to the fact that they do.

But, nonetheless, SpaceX—and apparently they have been critical of Senator KAY BAILEY HUTCHISON down the hall, who has pointed out the problems to our country and our national security by gutting NASA and giving their jobs over to a private company that has never done these jobs. It will make some people very, very wealthy who give heavily to Democrats. But that is not the point.

Senator HUTCHISON was criticized by SpaceX, apparently back in Texas, saying, you know, ''Somebody needs to let the Senator know she is criticizing a Texas company.'' Well, on further checking, it turns out they have about 100 jobs in Texas, and they have already committed to someone else that they are going to move those jobs from Texas to where it is more politically convenient.

We are going to turn jobs over to them that are a matter, as Neil Armstrong said, of national security? Not a good idea.

□ 1645

Not a good idea. As someone mentioned in private meetings, let's face it, though, if SpaceX ends up having problems in being able to effectuate space flight, there's no question it will be so devastating that we'll have to bail

them out. We're already setting up private companies that don't—have never done what they are going to take away from a government entity that's been the most successful in all of mankind, NASA, this effort, give it to this private company and already know that if they have a problem and they can't get the space flight going, they'll go broke and we'll have to bail them out. We know that going in. Is that smart? My goodness, the things we're doing at the worst possible time make no sense. It just makes no sense.

But as time runs out as allocated, I want to finish with one other thing going back to Israel.

The world needs to know, make no mistake about it, Israel is a close ally. They believe in the same type of human rights that we do in this country. And so why wouldn't you be an ally with a country that believes in the rights of women, believes in the rights that we hold dear here, believes that there's no such thing as an honor-killing of women who've been raped, that has the same kind of beliefs, Judeo-Christian beliefs, and the value of mankind that this country has always held so dear.

For that reason and because there's been snubs by the administration overtly that are being misread around the world, we are not going to abandon our friend, Israel. There are too many people on both sides of the aisle that will not stand for that.

And I've been working privately behind the scenes. I've been told by people that I respect, the most knowledgeable people, I think, on Israeli affairs, that it's time to start pushing this publicly so people will publicly get on board.

So I've got a letter now, and it will be going out to all of my colleagues. And it will ask them to get on board because I would like them to sign on to a letter to Leader REID down the Hall—because both the House and Senate have to do this—and the letter simply says, Mr. Speaker, this letter is to simply state the obvious need for the Prime Minister of our dear friend Israel to address a joint session of Congress. He's been here in Washington on numerous occasions but has not addressed a joint session of Congress since 1996.

In our Nation's history, we have invited over a hundred leaders of 50 different countries to speak before joint sessions of Congress. At this time with the enemies of America and Israel looking for weaknesses in our close relationship, we can show them that Israel is our friend and will be our friend and that we want to hear from its leader, Prime Minister Netanyahu. With the magnitude of international events and the tensions swirling in recent years and the threat of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East, it is desperately important that we show the world the importance of our relationship with Israel by inviting Prime Minister Netanyahu to come address this body. The sooner we extend such an invitation, the more stabilizing it will be. And then signature lines from Members of Congress. I've got over 40. But we need most of this body to sign on. We need to send that message.

The letter to colleagues basically highlights the same things.

And with regard to the flotilla, it points out in this letter that we'll send the ''dear colleague'' letter asking them to sign on the letter requesting Majority Leader REID and Speaker PELOSI invite Prime Minister Netanyahu, this letter says—and let me preface this by saying it was entirely predictable that there would be an effort to test our commitment to our ally Israel. It was entirely predictable. When you show that separation between your strongest ally to your enemies, then your enemies are going to think about testing to see if this may be a good time to attack. And that's what the flotillas were doing. They were a test.

And what they saw was the United States, through this administration, being reluctant to jump out there and make it clear how inappropriate it was to send people to intentionally run the blockade when all Israel was trying to do was protect themselves.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm hoping that people will encourage their Members of Congress to sign on so we can get the Prime Minister here as quickly as possible so that the world will see both sides of the aisle standing and applauding this great leader of this great nation.

And then there is a resolution. People keep talking sanctions, and it is beyond time to talk about sanctions. According to IAEA, Iran already has enough enriched uranium for two nuclear weapons. How many do you think it would take to wipe out the small nation of Israel?

And they made clear, Ahmadinejad's made clear, we're not going to stop with wiping out Israel. We want to wipe out the little Satan, Israel, and then the big Satan, the United States. And we saw on 9/11 how vulnerable we can be, and you begin to realize, man, you set off a nuclear weapon in New York, Houston, L.A., Chicago, other points that are critical to our protection, and with a handful of nuclear weapons, you could debilitate this country to an enormous extent.

And then we're told a greater risk is if you can get an EMP, electromagnetic pulse, generated from a nuclear weapon a few hundred miles above the middle of the United States, it would fry every computer chip in the country. The power would go out indefinitely. Wal*Mart says they wouldn't be able to function if all of their computers are fried.

It's time to act. We cannot wait. And this resolution goes through, points out quotes from Ahmadinejad, quotes from our great President in saying that as he said that bond is much more than a strategic alliance between us and Israel.

We have got to act, and I hope people will sign on this resolution when we come back next week because we've got to get this done. We need to show our support for Israel. We need to quit playing games with this critical ally in such a difficult area.

You want to talk about peace? Like Patrick Henry said, People talk peace, but there is no peace. And I can tell you there will not be peace in the Middle East of any nature until people know that this Nation, America, will go to war against anyone that breaches the peace or attempts to breach the peace as this flotilla did.

So, Mr. Speaker, I see the indication my time is expiring. And I appreciate the opportunity to be here and discuss these important issues.

And with that, I yield back my time.

GET A BUDGET

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

Mr. DJOU. Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I'm rising to speak very briefly on the fiscal situation facing our Nation today.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I have the privilege of having won a special election in the State of Hawaii just a couple weeks ago. I'm the junior-most Member, of course, right now in the U.S. House of Representatives. But I ran on a very simple platform: that we need to put our fiscal house in order, that our government is spending far too much money, and the mentality here in Congress today is that of spend, spend, and spend some more and if that doesn't fix the problem, throw more money at it. That is, I believe, a recipe for a fiscal disaster.

I pledged to my constituents in the State of Hawaii that I will never ever forget that every single dollar the government spends comes from a family like yours. And right now, we're spending far too much of that money.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, I want to highlight what transpired yesterday in the Budget Committee in the hearing by Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke.

In that hearing, during which I had the privilege of questioning the Federal Reserve chair, I thought he highlighted some very important measures that our Nation should take note of and this Congress must take note of.

The Federal Reserve chairman pointed out that currently our budget deficit here in the U.S. Congress, in his words, is not sustainable. The Federal Reserve chairman clearly articulated that we need more fiscal restraint, and right now unless the Federal Government gets a control of its enormous budget deficit, major problems and consequences will occur to our national economy.

The Federal Reserve chair pointed out to all of us right now that although a Federal budget deficit of hundreds of