they are grown by men and women who take the risks, who work long days and in some cases long nights, who fight against Mother Nature's freezing temperatures and yes, droughts, and now our government who says they cannot have water.

And then they go up against some radical environmentalists. We had one that testified, who actually I have worked with and worked out some solutions with, but I was really disturbed by his comments to the committee because he said ''Locally, potatoes are being raised more for the government subsidies than the market.'' Totally erroneous. Factually in error. Sure, there are some potato growers here that probably have crop insurance, just like you and I have auto insurance, to protect us against the unexpected. It is a prudent business practice. But growing for subsidies? The Baleys do not grow for subsidies, they grow for Frito Lay. There are no subsidies for these crops.

This person also said, first it is marginal farmland. You put water on this land like they have since 1905 and it produces some of the best yields in America. I do not know many crops in the garden at my house if I fail to water it, if I do not go home this weekend and the water system does not work, they are not going to look very good on a summer weekend. Without water, we do not grow things in this country. I grew up on a cherry orchard. We did not water often, but the trees would not have survived if we did not water at all. That is what we have happening. We are getting dust bowl where we used to have a Basin that was so very productive and farmers who were successful.

Mr. Speaker, I want to close with just two other comments. This is from one of the outstanding commissioners, county commissioners; and we have some really great county commissioners in these counties. I am most familiar, of course, with the Klamath County commissioners, Steve West, John Elliott, and Al Switzer, who have worked day and night with me on trying to do everything we can to get help. But I think Commissioner West who was asked to testify said it well. He said, ''In passing the Endangered Species Act legislation, the people's elected Federal representatives said that these species were important enough to the people of the United States to pass a powerful law.

The Endangered Species Act is the Federal law for all of the people of the United States. Therefore, all of the people of the United States should have to shoulder the cost of implementing this law, not just those that make the upper Klamath Basin their home. The people of Klamath County and the upper Klamath Basin cannot be asked to pay the entire costs of the Endangered Species Act for the entire Klamath River watershed. All of the problems of water quality, quantity and endangered species in the Klamath River system cannot be solved on the backs of the upper Klamath irrigation project, the people of Klamath county and the people of the upper Klamath Basin alone.''

These people want to work together with environmentalists, they want to respect the tribal rights of the Yuroks and the Klamath and others who have legitimate claims here that we need to respect and not trample their rights, but we do not need to trample the rights of the other people in this Basin.

So in closing, I want to thank the gentleman from Utah (Mr. HANSEN) for his willingness to allow us to have this full Committee on Resources hearing in my district. I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. HERGER) who has been tireless at my side and I at his as we work to find solutions. Sue Ellen Waldbridge over at the Department of Interior for agreeing to come out and testify but, moreover, for spending 82 hours on the ground out there trying to learn about every angle of this problem and look and work with us for solutions.

□ 1945

I want to thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS), the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. GIBBONS), the gentleman from Idaho (Mr. SIMPSON), and especially the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO), who joined me on the dais, and who participated for 5½ hours on Father's Day weekend to take testimony and hear about the problem. He pledged to work with me as we tried to find solutions so we do not have a dust bowl, so we do not have farmers going to food banks, so we have an Endangered Species Act that works for the species that does not pit one against the other, bald eagles against suckerfish, but one which works for all.

This reform is definitely needed.

ISSUES AFFECTING SOUTH DAKOTA AND THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REHBERG). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) is recognized for 14 minutes, the remainder of the leadership hour, as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to visit about some of the issues that are impacting not only my State of South Dakota but the entire country.

As most Members know, I represent the entire State of South Dakota, a State that consists of 77,000 square miles and about 750,000 people, which means there is a lot of real estate out there, and which makes us as a State very dependent upon energy.

Our number one industry is agriculture, a very energy-intensive sector of the economy. We rely heavily upon travel in our State during the summer months. People come to the Black Hills and Mt. Rushmore and many other sites in South Dakota. In order to make sure that that tourism industry thrives and prospers, we have to have an affordable supply of gasoline.

Of course, since people live in small towns, just to get back and forth to the doctor, to take advantage of many of the services that are provided in the more populated areas of my State, it requires sometimes driving great distances. So this energy crisis is a very real one.

Mr. Speaker, I would simply say, as well, that as I have looked at the farm economy in the last few years, and we have seen how we have had this chronic cycle of depressed agricultural commodity prices, and we see now increasing energy costs and input costs going up, the bridge, the gap between what it takes to run an operation and what a farmer or rancher can derive from income in that farm or ranch operation, the gap continues to grow or widen. It is increasingly difficult for our producers to make a living on the land.

This energy crisis, Mr. Speaker, I would argue has particular ramifications for areas like South Dakota and other rural areas across the country. In fact, last week at the elevator in South Dakota, one of the elevators I was looking at, the price for a bushel of corn was $1.45 a bushel. The price for gasoline in that same town was $1.59 a gallon, actually down about 20 cents from a couple of weeks previous. So they cannot even, as a farmer today, get for a bushel of corn what it costs to purchase a gallon of gasoline. There is something seriously wrong with that picture.

Mr. Speaker, we are in the process right now of writing a new farm bill in the Committee on Agriculture in hopes that we will be able to have that on the floor sometime before the end of this year, so we can put in place a new program that will enable our producers to make decisions about their future, hopefully with a bill that provides more stability, more predictability, more certainty about what the incomes and the costs and everything else are going to be associated with agriculture as we move into the future.

The one thing they cannot control is the cost of energy. Mr. Speaker, it is important that this Congress begin to focus and to zero in like a laser beam on this issue. It is our responsibility.

We can argue, and we have, about who is at fault for this. Frankly, we have not had an energy policy in this country for the past 8 years. That is one of the things we have all talked about. Republicans blame Democrats and Democrats blame Republicans, but the fact of the matter is, this is not a Republican or a Democrat problem, this is an an American problem, an American challenge. We need to work together across political aisles to find a solution.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we have a good starting point. The President and his Commission on Energy came out with a report about a month ago. It is 170 pages or thereabouts long. It has 105

specific recommendations, many of which can be implemented by executive order, many of which are directives to agencies, and many of which require legislation by this Congress.

I think this Congress has a responsibility, Mr. Speaker, to take this report, to take those recommendations for legislation, and to act upon them, because we do not have any alternative.

The farmers and ranchers in South Dakota and the farmers and ranchers in Montana and North Dakota and all across the country, and the people who rely day in and day out upon energy, they do not have any choice or any alternative. They have to pay what they have to pay when they go get a gallon of gas. They have to pay whatever the utility company says it is going to cost them for electricity. There are people who are hurt and hurt deeply if we fail to act.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope, as we begin to debate this issue over the course of the next several weeks and months, that we will focus on a couple of key issues. One of the things that has been said is that the President's proposal is short or lacks somehow in the area of conservation and emphasis on alternative sources of energy.

If we read this carefully, nothing could be further from the truth. There are extensive incentives for alternative sources of energy. There is a great discussion on conservation, things we can all do to decrease the demand for energy in this country. Really, Mr. Speaker, we ought to be looking at one or two things. That is, what can we do that, one, will increase supply of energy, or two, decrease demand? The rest is conversation.

But I believe we ought to be looking at what we can do in terms of legislative action, administrative action, that will increase supply or decrease demand for energy in this country so we can close the gap and lessen our dependence upon foreign sources of energy. We cannot afford as a nation to have Saddam Hussein dictating energy policy in America.

The fact of the matter is that today we are even more dependent upon foreign sources of energy than we were 25, 30 years ago. Back in the early 1970s, at the time of the Arab oil embargo, the big discussion was that America is 35 percent dependent upon energy sources outside the United States. We talked about what a travesty that was and how something had to be done.

Yet today, we are more than 50 percent dependent upon energy sources that come from outside the United States of America, primarily the OPEC nations. That trend will only continue. Twenty years from now, the expectation is that two-thirds of our entire oil supply will come from outside the United States.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford to be in a situation where we are held hostage to countries around the world who have unstable political regimes and are very unreliable in terms of the supply that is coming into this country.

I believe we have to look at what we can do to generate more supply. That means environmentally-friendly supply, looking for new sources of oil, doing it in a way with technology that will allow us to capture and get at those oil reserves in a way that protects the environment, that minimizes any disruption. I believe that technology exists, Mr. Speaker. It is our responsibility to take the steps that are necessary to access the domestic oil reserves that we have here in America.

I also believe profoundly that we have to support alternative sources of energy. We have one in my State of South Dakota. It is corn. It is used to produce ethanol. We have an industry that is beginning to flourish, and with the President's recent action with respect to the California waiver, the Midwest has an opportunity to ramp up the supply of ethanol to meet the increasing and growing demand in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think it is just California, but we ought to have an energy strategy that puts in place a demand for ethanol all across this country, because it helps clean up the environment. It helps lessen our dependence upon foreign sources of energy. It helps support American agriculture.

We have an economic crisis in agriculture today. We have an energy crisis in America. We can use renewable sources of energy to help meet the demand for energy. Mr. Speaker, I believe we need to put incentives in place through legislation that would encourage and stimulate more and more development of renewable sources of energy.

How about wind? How about nuclear, things that we have not perhaps talked about in the past becoming more economical in the present? Technology continues to advance. We have opportunities that we did not fathom possible a few years ago. But we need to be looking at alternative sources of energy, and supporting and encouraging and providing incentives for their development and expansion.

We need to be looking at what we can do to access the supplies of oil in this country and natural gas, doing it in an environmentally friendly way. Then, Mr. Speaker, of course we need to look at what we can do to lessen and to decrease the demand that we have for energy.

All of us in our daily lives can make decisions that will help preserve those sources of energy and lessen and decrease the demand for them in this country. There is not a family, I daresay, across America who could not do a better job of becoming more efficient.

We now have appliances that are more efficient and less energy-intensive. We have opportunities to turn the lights off when we leave the room, or to turn the computer off. We are much more reliant and dependent upon energy today than we were 20 years ago.

Look at the appliances in our very homes: microwaves, VCRs, DVDs, computers, all those things that perhaps 20, 25 years ago did not exist. Yet, we do not do a very good job of teaching the next generation about the importance of conservation of many of our natural resources.

So as we begin this debate, Mr. Speaker, I hope we can take some of the partisan vitriol out of that debate, some of the political attacks and accusations that occur oftentimes here on the floor of this House, and have an honest dialogue about what we can do as a country to increase the supply of energy, to decrease the demand, and to diversify our energy mix so that we are less reliant upon fossil fuels, on hydrocarbons, and more dependent upon alternative sources of energy that come from wind, from some of our renewable sources like corn and biomass.

Mr. Speaker, this is a crisis for America. It is something that becomes progressively worse over time if we do not act now. Yes, we need a short-term solution, but we need to put in place a long-term energy policy for America's future that recognizes the importance in a growing and expanding economy of having an affordable source of energy that powers our homes, powers our businesses, allows this economy to expand and grow and enhance and improve the quality of life for all Americans.

I am anxious to engage in that debate. It matters profoundly to the future of American agriculture, to the people that I represent, in the great State of South Dakota and all across the country.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues, as we begin this debate, to not engage in partisan blasting and bashing, but to take what I think is a very thoughtful and meaningful starting point, which is the President's energy proposal, and work from this to develop an energy policy, an energy strategy that will serve this country well, not only in the immediate future but in the long term future.

It is critical to our children and to our grandchildren that we not deprive them of the opportunities that many of us have enjoyed because we do not have and have not put in place a coherent energy strategy and energy policy for America's future.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to that debate. I encourage my colleagues to work together in a bipartisan and cooperative way to put in place many of the incentives that are going to be necessary to see that we have alternative sources of energy into the future, and to talk honestly, not in emotion but in a science-based, factual way, about getting at those sources, those resources we have here domestically here in this country in a technologically and environmentally friendly way for America's future.

LIVABILITY IN AMERICA'S COMMUNITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure this evening to address this Chamber dealing with issues, as I have often done on this floor, of livability: what the Federal government can do to be a better partner helping American families to be safe, healthy, and more economically secure.

□ 2000

And as we approach the notion of how to structure that partnership, there are those that suggest that there are areas of new rules or regulations, tax, fees, new government programs, and they all have their place, I suppose, in the toolkit towards enhancing liveability.

Mr. Speaker, I am of the opinion that the single most important factor that enters into the Federal Government being a better partner with our local communities is simply to lead by example. For the Federal Government to model the behavior that we expect of other entities, corporations, individuals, and governments, for the Federal Government to walk the talk, there is nothing that is more powerful, more compelling, that is going to cost less and be more effective.

For instance, I have worked with many in this Chamber on a simple piece of legislation that would require the United States Post Office to obey local land-use laws, zoning codes, environmental regulations, to engage the American public in a constructive fashion on decisions that affect communities large and small in over 40,000 locations around the country.

It is not particularly revolutionary. It is not going to cost the taxpayer any money. It is not going to be in the long term more difficult for the post office. There is no real difference than their competitors like UPS, for instance, or FedEx. It will help change, however, the relationship that we have with the post office and local communities.

Mr. Speaker, as we reflect on ways that the Federal Government can lead by example, I am struck by how key the decisions that we make regarding the United States Department of Defense for our military which is the largest manager of infrastructure in the world, over $500 billion worth of roads, bridges, hospitals, docks, classrooms and apartments.

The military, however, is stuck in this struggle in terms of how it is going to promote liveability for enlisted personnel and for the communities in which we are surrounded. In fact, there is all the discussion we have in the United States about the consequences of unplanned growth, the consequences of sprawl; but I think we can make the argument that it is the United States military that is affected the most by the consequences of sprawl and unplanned growth.

Think for a moment about the controversies that are facing the military from Hawaii to Puerto Rico, where there is growing resistance to the areas in which the military is conducting its training exercises, people are trying to stop the use of live ammunition and equipment in Hawaii. And as we have seen, the Bush administration has recently announced that in 3 years we are going to stop these activities in Puerto Rico.

Mr. Speaker, the question arises where is the military, in fact, going to undertake these activities that are still essential to maintaining military readiness for the men and women who serve in the Armed Forces?

We are facing a question with this administration, as we did with the Clinton administration before us, what are we going to do with the inventory of military bases and other facilities that are in excess of what are necessary to maintain our fighting forces? Indeed, we have an inventory of military bases that basically reflects a tremendous overhang from World War I and World War II.

We have more inventory than we need for today's military bases. But as is well known to Members of this Chamber that when you try attempting to close them, there is a great storm of controversy.

There are some communities that are, frankly, very apprehensive about the consequences of losing the employment base in their community, but there are others who frankly are more concerned about what is going to be left once you shut down this base of operation. After you have recycled the jobs elsewhere, will there be an opportunity to use this land for productive purposes?

We look at Fort Ord 10 years after the BRAC process closed that base, we have yet to be able to fully transition all of that land to productive private sector uses. As we approach a new round of BRAC decisions, uncertainty about what is going to happen to communities and an unwillingness of the Federal Government to act in a prompt and thoughtful fashion, to clean it up and turn it over adds to the uncertainty.

It is going to make it more difficult for this administration politically, economically, and environmentally to do what is right for right-sizing the scale of American military operations.

It is going to end up costing us more money, and it is going to delay the use of these lands for more productive uses. There is another serious problem that is associated with it. Today we have an all-volunteer Army; and increasingly, we find that the skill level that is required for the men and women who are in uniform is rising ever higher, retaining these highly qualified men and women, the best and brightest of whom can transition into the private sector, have more certainty in their life, higher quality of life, earn more money, and have more career advancement.

In order for the military to retain the highly qualified, technically proficient men and women who make the modern military work we give to them a high quality of life.

If we are facing a situation where military housing is substandard, and I have seen reports that suggest half or more of a third of a million military housing units is substandard, it is very difficult to retain the men and women in uniform and their family members, because increasingly, these people are, in fact, more mature. They have their own families, and they care about quality of life.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I would reference the difficulty the military faces with the exposure to liability for not having cleaned up after itself. Dealing with the environmental problems that are the legacy of military operations for over a century has the consequence, not only of denying productive use of this land to the community, but it is a distinct liability that the United States Government and the Department of Defense cannot escape. Ultimately, we are responsible for cleaning up after ourselves.

The bill is going to come due for the Department of Defense. The longer we evade, the longer we delay in cleaning it up in a forthright fashion, the more expensive it is going to be for the taxpayer, the more damage to the environment.

We are looking at what is happening in the State of Massachusetts with the Massachusetts military reservation where there is a toxic plume that is poisoning the aquifer on Martha's Vineyard, the source of drinking water for some of the exclusive properties in this pristine and valuable land. It has historic significance. It is very significant to some of the best and brightest around the country.

That is slowly being poisoned because we have not been able to move quickly with the Department of Defense to clean up after itself. The liability in Massachusetts on Martha's Vineyard is not going to get smaller over time; indeed, it is going to escalate. More environmental damage, a larger bill for the taxpayer.

One of the areas that I am most concerned about deals with the legacy of unexploded ordnance. We have across the country in over 1,000 sites with potential contamination of 20, 30, 40, maybe 50 million acres or more where we have the legacy of unexploded ordnance from past military activities.

We have had this visited upon people, burst on the scene in unexpected ways. My colleague, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. KELLY), had this occur in her district where on Storm King Mountain State Park, overlooking the Hudson River, the park actually was not a military range, but it was near West Point, and as effective and well trained and talented as the men and