

in the other body that will deal with this problem. But we have to make absolutely sure that the legislation does open up the process so that these parents will have an opportunity to participate in the Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund, which has \$1.8 billion in it right now.

Now, every night I am going to be coming down here reading letters from these parents who have had damaged children. I have thousands of them. It is extremely important that my colleagues and people across this country know what has been going on.

Here is a letter from a lady named Mary Cutler from Brick, New Jersey. She said, "Shortly after my son received his second and third rounds of DTP/Hib at 5 months and 7 months of age and then hepatitis B at 9 months of age, he began to be continually sick with ear infections and diarrhea and was late on meeting his milestones. After he received his first MMR shot at age 15 months, he began to head bang and wake up during the night.

"It was not until 2000 when I came across a report on thimerosal in vaccines and the comparison of the symptoms of mercury poisoning and autism did I find a true answer. My son has been tested. Mercury was found in his body and he has been undergoing chelation treatment for mercury poisoning. We test his urine often and after 2 years of chelation, there is still mercury coming out of his body."

Mercury that in all probability was put in by these shots that children get before they go to school.

"He has since made and continues to make steady improvements," but there is still mercury in him and it is coming out. "He became more and more verbal," and so and so forth.

She ends up by saying, "All of this has come at a great cost, both financially," and they have heavy credit debt and they have had to take out second and third mortgages on their home, "and emotionally to our family. My husband and I have not had a night out or a vacation in years or even been able to get a babysitter.

"Since we did not find out about the vaccine thimerosal ingredient until 2000, the 3-year limitation rule has put us outside the statute of limitations for the current Vaccine Injury Compensation Act. We hope someday our son may live a normal life, but it is a constant worry as to what will happen to him as we age and/or die and we are no longer able to take care of him. The money that autism costs to families and society at large in terms of special education, Social Security, disability, et cetera cannot be ignored or hidden from the general public. Thimerosal/mercury is a known neurotoxin and that the vaccine manufacturers could use it at all and that they still use it especially without looking at the cumulative effects on babies is unconscionable and must be addressed so it does not happen again."

Mr. Speaker, we need to reopen the Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund

with a look-back provision for at least 1 year or 18 months so these families will have some recourse. They are losing their homes, they are going bankrupt, there are divorces being caused because they have no recourse and there is nothing they can do about their child's damaged brain. Our society and the pharmaceutical companies that had thimerosal in these vaccines should bear a responsibility, and that is why the Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund, which was designed to protect the pharmaceutical companies as well as to provide a nonadversarial procedure so parents could get financial assistance for their damaged children who were damaged by vaccines, that we need to make sure that it is open to these people who have damaged children, who have been damaged through the mercury that is in the childhood vaccines.

□ 1845

Children get 26 vaccines before they go to school, vaccinations. Many of them, many of them become autistic. It has gone, as I said before, from 1 in 10,000 to 1 in 200.

This is something our government and our society can no longer ignore. We must hold the pharmaceutical companies accountable. We can do that with the kind of legislation we have been talking about; that is, to open up the Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund for those families who missed that 3-year window of opportunity.

This is something we cannot forget. We must get on with it. Here are a few pictures of some of these kids that have been damaged.

DESPITE PENDING WAR WITH IRAQ, BUSINESS AS USUAL IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, some would say that the United States House of Representatives has walked away from its constitutional duties under Article I, Section 8, wherein Congress and only Congress, the House and Senate, have the sole authority to declare war; and then, on the eve of the first ever preemptive war in our Nation's history, that the House of Representatives, under the Republican leadership, has slipped into irrelevance, silent and compliant.

Just this evening we have just finished our regular business, three non-controversial bills, and the Republicans have fled downtown for what they expect to be the largest ever fundraiser in their history, business as usual, while 300,000 of our young men and women sit in the desert wondering what tomorrow or the day after will bring.

They have not been, I must admit, totally irrelevant over the last few weeks. Just last week, tremendous ac-

tions were taken here by House Republican leaders. They launched an attack against French fries. After a flurry of activity, hand-wringing, planning, and massing an assault, they wiped out the dread French fries from Capitol Hill. It is rumored that this week they are planning an assault on Russian dressing, and even tomorrow's turkey menu is a potential target. Meanwhile, 300,000 of our young men and women and a few allies sit in the desert wondering what their elected leaders are doing and thinking.

Have we done everything we could for those young men and women? Did we examine and push toward options short of war, war, which should always be only used in an extreme circumstance and a last case? I do not think so. We voted on October 14 on this issue, under pressure of the coming election, and gave the President a blank check. Since then, not one official act by this body has dealt with the issue of the looming war in Iraq.

Have we given all our young men and women everything they need? We spend a lot of time on the defense contractors, their profits and exotic weaponry, but I hear from dads and moms and from some of the troops themselves that they do not have all the things they need. Some of them were sent over there with the wrong camouflage. They got the forest camouflage. Others are worried about the huge number of defective chemical/biological suits which have slipped into the inventory due to the fraud and criminal acts of some of our defense contractors.

Have we served them well in terms of a plan? Have we had discussions here about how the U.S. will conduct this war? Those are scant. Those are all being kept downtown, or at the Pentagon.

Do we have and have we discussed and pushed to hear about an exit strategy? General Shinseki, in a candid moment which Secretary Rumsfeld tried to squash, and Assistant Secretary Wolfowitz demeaned, says he expects we will have to leave 250,000 to 300,000 of our young men and women in that country as an occupying force for quite some time. He said that. They said, oh, no, he is mistaken. He is only the head of the Army. He does not know anything. Then he came up to Capitol Hill again last week, and he repeated that statement. They did not want to hear it. They do not want the American people to hear it.

They do not have an exit strategy; they have a plan, when I cannot get unemployment benefits extended for the people in my State, to pay 2 million members of the Iraqi military and bureaucracy salaries out of the United States Treasury, and to rebuild the country quickly with U.S. defense contractors when I have bridges crumbling in my State.

If we paid half as much attention to the needs of the American people in our States, or the needs of our young men and women, I do not believe that

this war would have been such an inevitable result and foregone conclusion.

But the clock ticks towards zero, and the President's ultimatum has 25 hours and 12 minutes yet to run. The Republican leadership has adjourned downtown for a big fundraiser, and the House is going dark.

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 837, FUELS SECURITY ACT OF 2003

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

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening in support of H.R. 837, the renewable fuels agreement.

Mr. Speaker, at the present time U.S. fuel prices are at an all-time high, \$3 per gallon in parts of the country, and \$2 per gallon in most other parts. We are nearly 60 percent dependent on foreign oil. We currently import 13 million barrels of petroleum a day, and we produce only 6 million barrels per day domestically, so there is a tremendous imbalance there.

The Mideast crisis points up the uncertainty of our fuel supply. The renewable fuels agreement would increase ethanol production to nearly that of Iraq by 2012. Right now, we see by this chart that this is our current ethanol production. This is the amount of fuel that we import from Iraq, and by 2002 we would have ethanol production ramped up to somewhere near what we currently import from Iraq.

The way the ethanol industry is going, I would predict that we will far surpass by 2012 the 7 billion gallons or 7 billion barrels that we are currently importing from Iraq.

Many times agriculture and environmental groups are at odds. This is one case where I hope we are all on the same page, because ethanol production certainly benefits the environment. First of all, it decreases carbon monoxide emissions, which lead to ozone pollution; secondly, it decreases carbon dioxide and methane emissions by as much as 35 percent, which causes global warming.

In 2002, the ethanol industry reduced greenhouse emissions by 4.3 million tons in 1 year, 2002. Then, of course, ethanol does replace MTBE, which has been proven to pollute groundwater, so we think it is a win-win, in many cases.

Another common myth people do not correctly understand is that ethanol somehow is a negative use of energy. In actual fact, we find that ethanol production results in a positive use of energy. For every Btu of energy of fossil fuels used to produce ethanol, we get 1.389 Btus in return, a gain of almost four-tenths of a Btu. By contrast, gasoline, for 1 Btu of energy to produce, yields only eight-tenths of a Btu. MTBE produces roughly 6.75. So this is one area where we actually are increasing the amount of energy that we have available to us.

Implementation of the renewable fuels agreement will result in lower prices at the pump. This, again, is something most people understand; but this legislation, H.R. 837, will create much more flexibility within the refinery industry, which will allow ethanol to be produced at certain places at certain times when it is most cost-effective. Therefore, there will be a reduction in price at the pump.

Renewable fuels legislation will boost the United States' economy. I think this, again, is something people are not aware of. This legislation will reduce crude oil imports by 1.6 billion barrels while cutting the trade deficit by \$34 billion over the next 9 years.

Currently the greatest part of our trade deficit has to do with petroleum imports. This will substantially reduce that. Also, this legislation will reduce government payments to farmers by \$5.9 billion while adding \$51 billion to the farm economy through 2012. So again, we feel this is a win-win situation.

H.R. 837 will result in roughly 5 percent of our fuel supply coming from ethanol. Actually, there is much greater potential than this 5 percent. In Brazil, for instance, 22 percent of the fuel supply comes from ethanol. We have many automobiles, and fleets of automobiles and trucks in our country that currently use a formulation 85 percent ethanol, so the opportunity is practically limitless here.

Also, we would like to mention biodiesel, which uses soybeans. This has expanded very rapidly.

I urge, Mr. Speaker, passage of H.R. 837. This is part of the energy bill at the present time. If it does not go in the energy bill, we will introduce it and have introduced it as stand-alone legislation. I urge passage of H.R. 837.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 975, BANKRUPTCY ABUSE PREVENTION AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT OF 2003

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-42) on the resolution (H. Res. 147) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 975) to amend title 11 of the United States Code, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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

(Ms. CARSON of Indiana addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the 5 min-

utes of the gentlewoman from Indiana (Ms. CARSON).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

ERRONEOUS JUSTIFICATIONS FOR WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I listened to the President's speech last night. I have no doubt that the President loves this country as much as I do, and he wants to do what is right. My problem with what he said is this: Many of the facts he cites and the things he believes about Iraq and about international law, and I hate to say this, are just plain wrong.

There is a very good article in today's Washington Post buried on page 13 which is entitled "Bush Clings to Dubious Allegations About Iraq," which I will submit for the RECORD. It reminds us of some things we have forgotten.

For instance, does Iraq have nuclear weapons? Is it trying to make them? The President has said that Iraq tried to buy high-strength aluminum tubes to use in machinery to enrich uranium. The International Atomic Energy Commission determined the tubes were for conventional weapons.

The administration has pointed to 30 pounds of fissile material that was being smuggled into Iraq in a taxi from Turkey. It turned out to be less than 3 ounces of nonradioactive metal.

In his State of the Union Address, the President relied on a report that Iraq tried to buy uranium in Niger, in Africa. That turned out to be a forgery, and it was a forgery that the CIA had warned the administration about.

Last week the Vice President said Iraq has "reconstituted nuclear weapons." Later in the same interview, he said that Iraq would get nuclear weapons, and it was only a matter of time. But the International Atomic Energy Commission, which has people on the ground in Iraq, or did until we told them to get out, says that there is no indication of resumed nuclear activities.

Does Iraq have ballistic missiles that can strike Saudi Arabia, Israel, and Turkey, as the President said? U.N. arms inspectors found the missiles, determined they could not fly as far as those three countries, but they ordered them destroyed anyway. The Iraqis destroyed them, but the President said Hussein has ordered continued production, apparently based on nothing more than an electronic intercept where someone said they could build missiles in the future.

Does Iraq have an extensive ongoing weapons program? Well, a graduate student 12 years ago wrote a paper that