

this hurricane hit. In places where people are on fixed income, the cost of energy, not just gasoline but all energy, was becoming such a burden, and now it is compounded because of this incident.

When crisis sets in, character is born, leaders emerge. We must in the short run use every bit of influence to increase the capacity for oil for our country. OPEC is just 11 countries, many of which get significant funding annually from our country. We need oil. If they cannot release more oil, we should hold back the contributions we make to their country until we get a satisfactory flow of crude oil into this country, from OPEC countries as well as non-OPEC countries. But OPEC countries have much more oil than non-OPEC countries, but non-OPEC countries are actually producing much more oil than OPEC countries today.

Pressure needs to be placed from the executive branch, but also the legislative branch, which has the power of the purse. We need to say this is a time of crisis in America. Following this hurricane and following incredibly accelerating gas prices, we need relief. We need refinery capacity as well. We need cooperation at every level. We need response to the short term. And in the long term, we need to bring about changes in our country's policy to get ourselves off of oil.

So let us unite and solve these problems and help America at this critical time.

#### HURRICANE KATRINA SUPPLEMENTAL

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the supplemental appropriation to help the people devastated by this hurricane. As Members can probably tell, I have laryngitis. I may lose my voice again during the course of my remarks, but I feel compelled to speak today at the outset to express my sincere condolence to all those families that have lost loved ones or still wonder where their loved ones are in the wake of this terrifying and terrible hurricane.

My heart goes out to all of those that have been impacted. The effects of this hurricane have been devastating. We have seen its physical force, extraordinary winds, the water, the flooding, the wrath of nature in Hurricane Katrina.

It has been awesome and terrible in its destruction, but sadness has given way to anger and disbelief as we have seen people stranded on roof tops, as we have seen mothers worry about whether their babies will have enough to eat, as we have seen children worry about their parents' medical conditions and the lack of medicine, as we have wondered how this could happen in the United States of America.

National disasters afflict every part of the globe, but it seems that this national disaster has been compounded by our response and in cases by our lack of response. The images we have seen have been horrifying. We have all wondered how it was that so many people came to be left behind, how it was that we could have assumed that when 20 percent of the population of New Orleans lives under the level of poverty, that everyone would have a means of getting out of New Orleans before the storm. How it is that there are not buses running around the clock to take people away from this terrible place with no food, no water, giving way to lawlessness?

I heard today that the District of Columbia is sending 10 buses, and I applaud the District of Columbia, but it will take days for those buses to get there. Why are there not buses around the clock? Why is it that these news crews can go and take this devastating footage and find these survivors, and the relief effort cannot?

I, like a great many Americans, do not understand how this is possible in the United States of America. My constituents demand that we move both earth and heaven to bring relief as fast as possible to the people of the Gulf Coast, and we have been bitterly disappointed to see how this tragedy has been prolonged, and we have the most profound questions about how in the richest Nation on earth it can take so long to simply get people out of that disaster zone to higher ground, drier ground, to food, medicine. I do not understand the government's response. I really do not.

And yes, there will be plenty of time to ask these questions and we will ask them. But the rest of the country is asking them now. We demand a better response than we are getting. I hope that as some of the officials from FEMA and the National Guard are saying, the calvary is on the way, the calvary is truly on the way. And I hope that effort only accelerates and mushrooms and does not stop until every last person has been evacuated.

This has been a devastating week for the United States. We have seen bodies floating through the streets. We have heard the voices of Americans question how their government could leave them in such a place in such a time with such developed mass transportation, without airlifts of food and medicine, without rapid evacuation. This country can do better. This country must do better. I hope and pray we are doing a lot better right this moment.

I am proud of this Congress for coming into this session and rapidly approving this aid, and it is incumbent upon this Congress to ensure this aid is delivered ASAP and not another moment goes by with another victim waiting to be rescued.

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

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

#### EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

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

There was no objection.

#### DESPERATELY NEEDED SUPPORT

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Payne wrote in 1776 that "now is the time that try men's souls." This is also one of those times in the life of our country, as we witness the destruction of a major U.S. city and the pain of our fellow Americans on the Gulf Coast.

In our Constitution, the Federal Government is charged with the mission to provide for the common defense. That defense is not just against threats coming from other countries, but also from natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina.

I have heard recriminations against the mayor of New Orleans, against the governor of Louisiana, and against the President of the United States, but now is not the time to divide Americans in political fighting. The mayor, the governor and the President must pull together at this time for search and rescue, for humanitarian relief and for reconstruction of the Gulf Coast.

Catastrophes like this illustrate the kindness and generosity of the American spirit. With hundreds of thousands unable to return to their homes, communities have opened their doors and welcomed victims. In my district we have seen five major high schools and scores of other schools begin fund raising drives for hurricane relief.

Major Illinois employers have already donated \$7.2 million in cash. Abbott Laboratories, Medline, Astella, and Cardinal Health all have donated major supplies, and thanks to their generosity, truckloads of baby formula and nutritional supplements and electrical generators are on their way from Illinois to the scene. To help police and emergency officials regain control of the situation, Motorola has sent 2,500 portable radios to New Orleans.

Today in Congress we approved a \$10.5 billion supplemental emergency appropriation to ensure the continuation of the rescue and recovery effort. Today's bill, enacted by Congress in just 22 hours, is the third largest disaster supplemental in our history, and