

to address America's energy needs. I just wish the legislation considered today was up to the task.

□ 1845

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOX. Madam Speaker, you know, Americans are beginning to pressure the Democrats to face up to the basic law of economics: supply and demand. They understand that, despite all the rhetoric on the part of the Democrats, what we need is more supply to meet the demand for petroleum products.

The Democrats refuse to respond in the appropriate manner. What they continue to do is bring up sham bills, avoid the issue, and try to take away people's attention from the real issue.

So what they did today was bring up a bill under suspension of the rules, H.R. 6251, which they called use-it-or-lose-it. This has been their mantra for the past few days, trying to say again that the oil companies—and they love to beat up on the oil companies—have all the means at their disposal to meet the supply needs in this country.

However, the American people understand that's not true. Even 19 Democrats understood that that's not true, and thankfully, the bill did not pass because it required a two-thirds majority vote, and it didn't get that.

What H.R. 6251 would have done was threaten increased American energy production. It would do nothing to lower the price at the pump, and it would breach existing oil and gas contracts. But of course, what we've seen from this Democratically controlled Congress, they don't care much about the law. They don't care much about contracts, the basic part of our law in this country.

I want to share with you some editorials that have been written about this harebrained scheme on the part of the Democrats, but it's not just the Republicans who feel this way, and as I've said, 19 Democrats voted against the bill today. I'm very proud of them for standing up to their despotic leadership and voting "no" on this bill.

But here's some of the editorials that have come out about this legislation. The Charleston, West Virginia, Daily Mail, the hometown paper of Congressman NICK RAHALL, one of the main sponsors of the bill: "Now comes a new wrinkle, another attempt to dodge sensible policy—this one from West Virginia's Representative NICK RAHALL. He proposes to give big oil companies an ultimatum: Unless they drill on the 68 million acres of inactive land they now lease from the Federal Government—or give up those leases—they would be barred from getting new leases.

"Oh, for pity's sake. It may not be possible to produce from some reserves

at the current price. Huffing and puffing around that American companies shouldn't have access to any new reserves until they have made full use of the reserves they have would unnecessarily delay the identification of new domestic sources, and production from those sources.

"Rahall's bill is yet another pitiful attempt to avoid doing what clearly needs to be done—make more U.S. reserves available to U.S. companies." That's in the Charleston Daily Mail editorial, 6/18/08.

The New Hampshire Union Leader: "Of all the dumb ideas to come out of Washington in recent memory, last week Representative CAROL SHEA-PORTER embraced what might be the dumbest of them all. SHEA-PORTER has cosponsored legislation to force oil companies that hold leases on Federal land to commence developing that land or lose the lease. Simply put, SHEA-PORTER hasn't the slightest idea what she's talking about."

Another one. "Furthermore, AAPG's Nation says, current leases already require oil companies to take certain steps to use the land. The premise behind the bill Representative CAROL SHEA-PORTER is cosponsoring—that oil companies have huge reserves of untapped oil wells sitting beneath already leased Federal land, which they can tap right away if only Congress orders it—is unsupported by the facts. Nation called it 'laughable.'"

It is a great day when the American people can prevail, when they will convince the Democratic leadership—and it's important that we say over and over and over and over again that it's the Democrats who are in charge of the Congress. They are the ones in charge of bringing bills to a vote. Republicans have common sense answers to this. We will increase American-produced energy sources, and it's time to bring those bills for a vote.

IRANIAN CONFERENCE IN PARIS: 2ND ANNUAL WORLD DEMOCRACY CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support for those who promote democracy in Iran and stability in Iraq. In Paris, thousands of Iranians have gathered to celebrate a big victory today. It is a great day for the Iranian people and their resistance.

On Monday, the government of the United Kingdom formally removed the Iranian opposition from the U.K.'s Terror list. This happened after many years of campaign by the organization. Legislators approved the decision of the Proscribed Organization Court of Appeal, which ruled in May that the People's Mujahadeen of Iran (MEK) should no longer be listed as a proscribed group.

It is a great day for the Iranian people, for all freedom loving people of Iran who have been forced to leave Iran, and for their just re-

sistance. It was great to hear that the British government formally removed an Iranian opposition group from the U.K.'s Black list on Monday, after many years of campaign by the organization.

As a Representative of the 18th Congressional District of Texas, I have had the pleasure, of working with a strong and vibrant Iranian population in Houston. They have contributed immensely to the cultural diversity, economic and political dynamic of Houston. As a Member of Congress, I find Iran's support of terrorist organizations, pursuit of nuclear weapons, and dismal human rights record to be extremely worrisome. However, I am also concerned by what appears to be precipitous movement by this Administration toward yet another war in the Gulf region, without having first exhausted diplomatic means of addressing any conflicts.

I have long been an advocate of a free, independent, and democratic Iran. I believe in an Iran that holds free elections, follows the rule of law, and is home to a vibrant civil society; an Iran that is a responsible member of the region and the international community, particularly with respect to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. An Iran that, unfortunately, we do not see today.

Today, the Bush Administration announced a set of new sanctions against Iran. The Administration labeled the elite Quds division of the Revolutionary Guard Corps as supporters of terrorism, and stated that the entire Revolutionary Guard Corps was engaged in proliferating weapons of mass destruction. These designations trigger unilateral sanctions designed to impede the Revolutionary Guard, and any who might do business with it. These new sanctions mark the first time that the United States has taken such a step against the armed forces of any sovereign government.

The only effective way to achieve lasting peace and prosperity in the region, along with bringing about reforms in Iran's policy, is to assist the Iranian people in their quest to achieve political, social, and religious liberty. Every government can be judged by the way in which it treats its ethnic and religious minorities, and the current Iranian government gets a failing grade for its treatment of its many and diverse minorities.

Given the government's poor record for transparency and accountability, the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) inability, despite intensified inspections since 2002, to verify that Iran's nuclear program is not designed to develop a nuclear weapon is cause for great concern. While Iran states that the intention of its nuclear program is for electricity generation which it feels is vital to its energy security, U.S. officials challenge this justification by stating that "Iran's vast gas resources make nuclear energy programs unnecessary."

The controversy surrounding Iran's procurement of nuclear energy is cause for great concern, however, the Administration's avoidance of any and all diplomatic relations with Iran are cause for greater alarm. Moreover, the current rhetoric from the Bush Administration regarding war with Iran is both counter productive and highly inflammatory. While full diplomatic, political, and economic relations between the U.S. and Iran cannot be normalized unless and until enforceable safeguards are put in place to prevent the weaponization of Iran's

nuclear program, these policy objectives should not constitute pre-conditions for any diplomatic dialogue.

Establishing a diplomatic dialogue with the Government of Iran and deepening relationships with the Iranian people would help foster greater understanding between the people of Iran and the people of the United States and would enhance the stability the security of the Persian Gulf region. Doing so would reduce the threat of the proliferation or use of nuclear weapons in the region while advancing other U.S. foreign policy objectives in the region. The significance of establishing and sustaining diplomatic relations with Iran cannot be over-emphasized. Avoidance and military intervention cannot be the means through which we resolve this looming crisis.

I am planning to introduce important legislation that will call for human rights and religious freedom in Iran. The Iranian people have continued to ask for democracy to reign free in their country and I intend to support the Iranian people in that endeavor. As you know, over the past few months, the people of Iran have been standing up to Iranian government. I am aware that at least 5000 acts of protest took place last year. I applaud your efforts to encourage those who have raised their voices against the extremists in Iran.

The United Nations has condemned Iran 54 times for its atrocious human rights record. Inhumane treatment of youths, women and workers by the government of Iran is further evidence of the regime's intolerance. Iranian women have shown they play a pivotal role in establishing democracy and ensuring human rights in Iran.

We all must work together for a stable and democratic Iraq. Today, there is undisputable evidence that Iran is the main contributor to the violence in Iraq which causes American casualties. The extremist government in Iran has acted to ensure the failure of Iraqi reconciliation. Iran is part of the problem in Iraq and does not wish to be part of the solution. But Iraq's tribal leaders are standing up to the Islamic extremism coming from Iran. I know that over 3 million Iraqi Shiites have signed a declaration this month rejecting Iran's meddling. They have also shown support for the Iranian opposition MEK living in Ashraf. I support their invaluable efforts for peace and stability in Iraq.

Although many disagree with the current status of this war in Iraq, all agree that we must collectively work to stop Iranian-style fundamentalism from taking root in Iraq. Let me here recognize your actions in support of democracy in Iraq as well as in Iran. With many continuing to suggest that military action in Iran is the best way to deal with our political discrepancies, it is now time to renew our efforts in strengthening our diplomatic policies in the Middle East. The same people who called for attacking Iraq now are raising the drumbeat for military action against Iran.

Despite the November 2007 U.S. National Intelligence Estimate concluding that Iran had halted its nuclear weapons program, the Bush administration is bolstering its case for war by labeling Iran one of the greatest threats to American security. Bombing Iran would bring disastrous consequences. The entire Middle East likely would descend into further violence putting the well-being of innumerable civilians at risk. U.S. standing in the world would plummet and oil prices would soar. A U.S. attack would only strengthen hardliners in Iran.

Supporting the efforts of the Iranian people who want democracy is especially important now that the UK government confirmed on June 24, that the MEK was no longer "Concerned in terrorism", and officially took the name of the organization off their black list. This is a great victory for the cause of democracy in Iran. In light of the recent developments, the United States must seriously consider the court's findings and also remove the limitations it has placed on the MEK.

The world community must strengthen the sanctions on the clerical regime. It must also immediately recognize and support the Iranian resistance as the democratic alternative to the regime in Iran.

Today, the mullahs are increasingly using oppression inside and terrorism outside of Iran as a foreign policy tool. The solution to the current crisis is often perceived to only have two solutions—war or appeasement. I disagree. There is a third option. The Third Option introduced by Mrs. Maryam Rajavi relies on the strength of the Iranian people and their organized resistance. This is the best and least costly alternative. Let us not continue to make the mistake of appeasing Iran. As a viable alternative, we must move to support the Iranian people and their resistance. Only you can bring about democratic change in Iran.

I have come to know the people of Iran and appreciate their thirst for freedom. My message to them is this: rest assured that it is attainable. I wish you the best in your struggle for peace, freedom and democracy.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA V. HELLER

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. Madam Speaker, today the Supreme Court made a strong move in support of individual gun rights in their decision in District of Columbia v. Heller.

Since 1975, the residents of Washington, D.C., have had their second amendment rights to bear arms stolen from them by the D.C. government. The second amendment to the U.S. Constitution declares that: "A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed."

Our Founding Fathers knew that without the second amendment, an oppressive government would eventually try to tear away our rights. They could not trust the government to always protect our rights, and so they wrote the second amendment. As James Madison later wrote: "Who are the best keepers of the people's liberties? The people themselves. The sacred trust can be nowhere so safe as in the hands most interested in preserving it."

The second amendment protects the fundamental, individual right of law-abiding citizens to own firearms for any lawful purpose. Further, any law infringing on this freedom, including a ban on self-defense and handgun ownership, is blatantly unconstitutional. Every study has shown that gun con-

trol is not effective in curbing crime. Rather, these types of restrictions only leave law-abiding citizens more susceptible to criminal attack. Other than law enforcement, only criminals have had handguns in the District of Columbia.

The Supreme Court took a strong step forward today to protect the individual gun rights of Americans, and I applaud them for doing so. As Justice Scalia stated, "The Second Amendment protects an individual right to possess a firearm unconnected with service in a militia, and to use that arm for traditionally lawful purposes, such as self-defense within the home."

Though the Supreme Court's decision does champion the individual right to bear arms, it also allows restrictions based on type, manner of carrying, purpose, sensitive location, and commercial sale of handguns.

Most alarmingly, the Court irrationally envisioned that their holding may completely detach the second amendment right from its purpose. Regarding the purpose of the right, United States General George Washington Stated, "A free people ought not only be armed and disciplined, but they should have sufficient arms and ammunition to maintain a status of independence from any who might attempt to abuse them, which would include their own government."

Recognizing an evolving standard that limits the right to weapons to only those "in common use at the time" and accepting prohibitions of "dangerous and unusual" weapons, the Court gives short shrift to the fact that modern laws, of the very sort it strikes down today, have prevented the common use of "sufficient arms and ammunition to maintain a status of independence from any who might attempt to abuse them, which would include their own government," as George Washington envisioned.

The ruling outrageously claims that, "the fact that modern developments have limited the degree of fit between the purpose and the protected right cannot change our interpretation of the right." The truth is that our second amendment right must fit the purpose, and this Court has separated the two. This Court wrongly leaves loopholes for prohibition of weapons that would be necessary for today's militia duty. Militia, at the time of our findings, included every male 18 years of age or older.

I am an avid hunter and outdoorsman and proud owner of numerous firearms. The National Rifle Association, Safari Club International, and Gun Owners of America are just some of the numerous sporting associations that I am a life Member of. A full-body-mounted African lion and Kodiak grizzly bear are just a few of my prized trophies that visitors see when they come to my D.C. office.

I strongly support the Constitution's second amendment right to bear arms and will defend the rights of law-abiding citizens to purchase, use, carry,