to propose such legislation. Instead of representing the best interests of the victims, the Madoff trustee is representing SIPC against the victims. Let's do the right thing for the average American who works hard, saves money, invests in the stock market with the hope of ultimately retiring on his savings.

I now want to address the need to provide such victims with tax relief. Tens of thousands of Americans have lost their life savings because of the incompetence of the SEC and its failure to close down the operations of Bernard Madoff, Allen Stanford, and so many others. Congress cannot ignore the fact that the biggest beneficiary of Madoff's and Stanford's crimes is the Federal Government. Every year, even if investors did not take money out of Madoff or Stanford, they paid taxes on the supposed income from those investments.

With respect to Madoff, the reported income was short-term capital gains, which is subject to the highest income tax rate under the Internal Revenue Code.

Congressman BILL PASCRELL has proposed legislation, H.R. 5058, providing some tax relief to the victims of these Ponzi schemes. I strongly support the bill, and I urge the House to pass this bill as quickly as possible. Senator SCHUMER, along with 17 cosponsors, has proposed a similar bill in the Senate, S. 3166, which I also support. However, these bills need certain changes to strengthen them.

With respect to the House bill, there is a 10-year carryback for theft losses. Under existing law, taxpayers can utilize the theft laws for 20 years going forward. However, elderly investors who have lost all of their savings and don't work have no ability to utilize a theft loss going forward. Thus, giving these people a 10-year carryback is only fair.

The Senate bill proposes a 6-year carryback, which is insufficient.

Both the House and the Senate bills give a theft loss for IRA investors. However, the House bill is more generous than the Senate bill, providing for a theft loss of up to $2 million; whereas, the Senate bill limits the loss to $1.5 million.

We have been infinitely generous to Wall Street, so it is long overdue to be fair to Main Street.

Finally, both bills are deficient because they preclude a theft loss for investors whose retirement savings were in 401(k) plans or defined benefit pension plans or deferred profit-sharing plans. Congress should not discriminate against some investors based on the form of their retirement investments, all approved by Federal tax laws. Therefore, the bills in both Houses must be amended to provide the same theft loss relief for all retirement plans no matter how they are structured.

Congress has shown extraordinary generosity to the financial service industry in the past years. Despite the fact that these companies that make up this sector caused the global financial collapse, Congress provided $400 billion of funding to them with no strings attached.

Let us not nickel-and-dime Wall Street's victims, the taxpayers who lost their life savings because of the greed of Wall Street and the incompetence of the SEC. We are not seeking to make them whole. We are simply disgorging some of the fictitious profits that the government received in tax payments from the victims of these crimes.

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

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

NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Madam Speaker, I rise to express my concern over two critical national security issues: Iran and the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

As far as Iran, the extremist mullah leaders in that country continue to oppress and murder their own people. They, by providing armor-piercing weapons to terrorists, are also responsible for the death of hundreds, if not thousands, of American soldiers in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Yet the Iranian regime is being treated as a legitimate, if not democratic, government. Well, they are not legitimate nor are they democratic. They are a radical Islamic anti-Western dictatorship.

We have long since passed the time when America should have been backing, verbally and otherwise, the Iranian people's struggle to overthrow their radical Islamic oppressors. Let the Iranian people, with our blessings, rid themselves of this pariah regime. That would be the best option.

But when it comes to the mullah regime obtaining nuclear weapons, doing nothing to prevent it is not an option. If we won't do what is necessary ourselves, we should not get in the way of Israel doing it. Obviously, Israel will be the first nation threatened with devastation and destruction by a nuclear-armed Iranian mullah dictatorship. Thus, if Israel is willing to act and does so, it should not be viewed as an outrage but it should be viewed with understanding and perhaps with a sense of relief. If other options fail, intelligence, logistical and political support for an Israeli operation aimed at preventing the construction of a mullah A-bomb is in our interest, is in the interest of peace and safety in that region, and it is in the interest of all of the people of the world.

Then there is, of course, the Palestinian-Iranian quagmire. But let us recognize when we are looking at that issue, there has been major progress over the last decade. Israel has demonstrably reached out to offer an olive branch to the Palestinian people.

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They have embraced a two-state solution, which they didn't do over 10 years ago. They have, in fact, withdrew their troops from Lebanon. And importantly, Israel has actually given up control of Gaza and substantial territory in the West Bank. And what did they get for it? Thousands of missiles launched into Israel itself. And when retaliating, they, of course, were condemned for a fight that they didn't even start.

It's time for the Palestinian missile attacks to stop and for the Palestinians to reciprocate for Israel's tangible concessions in Gaza and on the West Bank. They should step up to the plate with a meaningful change of position.

The Palestinians need to recognize Israel's right to exist. And to make it real, the Palestinians must renounce what they call the right of return. The Israelis have taken major steps. Now it's time for the Palestinians to move. And until the Palestinians make recognizable steps forward, as Israel has done, as I just pointed out, our government should not be urging Israel to give up even more territory or condemning them for prodding the Palestinians.

For example, if the Israeli renovation of apartment complexes in Jerusalem gets the Palestinians to realize that they can't wait forever because Israel is just going to move on unless the Palestinians come out and try to reach an agreement, well, if it's got the Palestinians to understand that, and that they're going to have to act and step forward, then the widely condemned renovation of those apartment complexes in Jerusalem was actually something that furthered the cause of peace.

To conclude, I urge the Obama administration to change course before it's too late, to stand up to the Iranian Islamic dictatorship, and to be realistic about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Peace can't come by trying to prove how sincere we are or by holding hands with thugs hoping they will be impressed with our sincerity, or by condemning a nation that is attacked for retaliating. It's time, as we say in California, to get real.

Unfortunately, when it comes to these two important foreign policy challenges, it seems that wishful thinking and irrational optimism are what's guiding America's foreign policy.

HOW'S THAT SWAMP DRAINING COMING ALONG?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas