

that is already producing talented and enthusiastic North Carolina students.

WALL STREET SPECULATORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Today, every American who fills up their gas tank is going to pay an extra 70 cents per gallon as a tribute to speculators on Wall Street. That's right. Seventy cents a gallon is due to hedge fund speculation, derivatives and commodity speculation on Wall Street.

It didn't used to be this way. Before Enron, we prohibited this sort of speculation on Wall Street. There was a special law passed for Enron. "Ken Boy." Remember that? George Bush's favorite guy. Enron, bankrupt. Ken "Boy" Lay, who knows where he is now. But the law still lives on.

It was changed in Dodd-Frank to give new opportunities for the Commodities Future Trading Commission to begin to regulate speculation on Wall Street. But the Republicans are fighting tooth and nail against the regulation of speculation on Wall Street. Today, we'll consider a bill that would deprive the Commodities Future Trading Commission, the watchdogs, of new computers. Republicans say, We can't afford \$60 million for computers at the Commodities Future Trading Commission to track a \$400 trillion market; to track speculators that spent \$25 billion on supercomputers last year so they could drive up the price of gasoline and manipulate markets without detection. No, we can't afford that. They've got your back, speculators. The Republicans are with you all the way.

Every American who buys an airplane ticket today, who can still afford it—some—to take their family on vacation, you'll see a little surtax on fuel. That's another tribute to the speculators on Wall Street who have unnecessarily driven up the price of oil and gas. There is at this point a surplus of oil and gas in the world—more than we've seen for years. Production is up. Demand is down. Stockpiles are up. And the price is up. Guess what? The profits at the oil companies are up phenomenally and the profits on Wall Street are obscene.

Do the Republicans want to do anything about that? No. They would like to distract you. They don't want you to look at who's profiting from your pain and from destroying our economy—their generous friends on Wall Street. They are oh-so generous at election time to the Republican side of the aisle. The Republicans' friends in Big Oil, who are oh-so generous to the Republicans at election time. It's not them. Price is driven by supply and demand. If we drill more, drill here, drill now, that will solve the problem. It won't solve the problem because the speculators are controlling the markets. If we could double U.S. oil supply tomorrow, they'd still be charging us

70 cents or more a gallon through unbridled speculation.

We have an opportunity to rein that in. If we reject the Republicans' proposal today to take away computers and staff from the regulators, to prevent the reform from going into place to finally begin to close the Enron loophole created by Republicans for Republicans and for Wall Street, we could almost immediately drive down the price of gasoline 70 a gallon. Nothing they're proposing will do that. What we're proposing will benefit Americans family today, the economy, put people back to work. And yes, unfortunately, it will rein in some of the obscene profits at ExxonMobil and some of the obscene profits at Goldman Sachs and that other speculators on Wall Street are making today. They might have to go out and make honest loans and earn an honest living instead of gambling.

So it's a pretty clear choice. Who are you with? Are you with the speculators or are you with the American people?

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AFGHAN STRATEGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, national syndicated columnist Eugene Robinson recently wrote a piece titled, "Afghan Strategy: Let's Go." It appeared in the June 11 Raleigh News and Observer. I would like to share some of Mr. Robinson's thoughts with the House.

He began his column with this: "Slender threads of hope are nice but do not constitute a plan. Nor do they justify continuing to pour American lives and resources into the bottomless pit of Afghanistan."

And he closed this column with these words: "We wanted to kill or capture Osama bin Laden, and we did. Even so, say the hawks, we have to stay in Afghanistan because of the dangerous instability across the border in nuclear-armed Pakistan. But does anyone believe the war in Afghanistan has made Pakistan more stable?"

Mr. Speaker, these are not my words, again. These are the words of Eugene Robinson who's nationally known and respected, and he is a liberal. He's not a conservative. But the point he's making is exactly right. How many more young men and women have to give their life for a corrupt leader?

I would like to ask my colleagues on both sides to join JIM MCGOVERN of Massachusetts—I am a cosponsor of this bill. It's H.R. 1735, the Afghan Exit and Accountability Act. It gives a parameter to the President as to how we need to start bringing our troops out of Afghanistan before 2014 or 2015.

I look at this young man's face, Mr. Speaker. His name is Tyler Jordan. His father was killed in Iraq. I look at him and he represents all the children in

America who are crying because their moms and dads are coming back dead. Many are coming back without arms and legs. So Tyler represents children in America who have their family, loved ones over in Afghanistan. It's time to bring them home, Mr. Speaker.

And then the other poster has the flag-draped coffin—they call it a transfer case—coming into Dover Air Force Base. How many more families in this country have to look at the flag-draped coffin of their loved one?

Mr. Speaker, that's why I hope both sides will join Mr. MCGOVERN and myself in H.R. 1735 because Mr. Gates has already said we will be in Afghanistan until 2014 and 2015. That's what Eugene Robinson is saying: How many more have to die in the next 3 or 4 years for a corrupt leader named Karzai that we're paying \$8 billion a month to and we're cutting programs in America for children and senior citizens?

Mr. Speaker, again, I want to make reference to Tyler Jordan and his pain. I want to remember the flag-draped coffin and think how many moms and dads are having to be at the funeral home receiving the flag-draped coffin and, in many cases, cannot even look at their loved ones because they were killed in a horrendous way.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope the American people will get behind H.R. 1735 and call their Members of Congress and ask them to join us in bringing our troops home before 2014.

Mr. Speaker, before I close, as I do all the time in my district and on the floor of the House, I will ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I will ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I will ask God in His loving arms to hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. And I will ask God to please bless the House and Senate that we will do what is right in the eyes of God for God's people here in America. And I will ask God to bless Mr. Obama, the President, that he will have the wisdom, the strength, and the courage to do what is right for the American people.

And I will close by asking three times: God please, God please, God please continue to bless America.

[From the News and Observer, Jun. 11, 2011]

AFGHAN STRATEGY: LET'S GO

(By Eugene Robinson)

WASHINGTON, DC.—Slender threads of hope are nice but do not constitute a plan. Nor do they justify continuing to pour American lives and resources into the bottomless pit of Afghanistan.

Ryan Crocker, the veteran diplomat nominated by President Barack Obama to be the next U.S. ambassador in Kabul, gave a realistic assessment of the war in testimony Wednesday before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Here I am using "realistic" as a synonym for "bleak."

Making progress is hard, Crocker said; but not hopeless.

Not hopeless. What on Earth are we doing? We have more than 100,000 troops in Afghanistan risking life and limb at a cost of \$10 billion a month, to pursue ill-defined goals