

have a final FAA directive that will protect every air traveler.

The cause of the Flight 800 catastrophe was determined years ago, and we know how to prevent similar disasters. We have the technology to protect against another tragedy like the one witnessed 10 years ago, but to date we still don't have the mandate for change.

Last year, I introduced H.R. 4174, the Transport Aircraft Fuel Tank Safety Act, which requires the FAA to retrofit all planes with new technology and to increase safety. In addition, I have recently petitioned the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee to hold hearings on the safety of fuel tanks on airplanes and get to the bottom of why we don't upgrade all planes with the necessary technology.

I am hopeful that my colleagues here in the Congress will work with me to bring an end to this delay. With the completion of the Flight 800 monument, we have taken significant steps towards maintaining the memory of Flight 800, but we should also ensure that we don't have another Flight 800.

I would like to offer my deepest condolences to the surviving families and friends of the victims of Flight 800, and to commend them on the grace and dignity with which they handled unspeakable pain.

TAKE IMMEDIATE ACTION TO WITHDRAW OUR TROOPS FROM IRAQ

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

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to address the House for 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, as a member of the Out of Iraq Caucus, I urge this administration to take immediate action on a plan to withdraw our troops from Iraq. The American people were misled into this war, and they want the leaders of this Nation to take responsibility and end this war now.

I was among those who opposed the tragic decision to launch this war. I warned that the invasion and occupation of Iraq would plunge us into a bloody quagmire of violence that would only intensify the instability in the Middle East and leave our own Nation less secure and less able to protect our national interest.

The sad truth is that all the grimmest predictions have now come true. Today, the Taliban are mounting a major comeback in Afghanistan. Iran is on the verge of producing a nuclear weapon. Somalia is dominated by an al Qaeda-inspired militia, and the Hezbollah has attacked Israel. In return, Israel has attacked Lebanon. Here at home, our Nation is at risk.

As fundamental recommendations of the 9/11 Commission remain unfulfilled,

those who still support the Iraq war often claim it has made this Nation a safer place, that it has kept away the terrorists and stopped another 9/11 tragedy.

Unfortunately, such wishful thinking is only an effort to justify the horrendous human suffering that we have caused by this misguided mission, an effort to justify a war that was never properly planned and executed, a war that has wounded thousands and cost the lives of 2,547 American soldiers.

The human toll of this war is still climbing, and throughout the world terrorism is on the rise. This administration talks a lot about national security, but without doing anything about it.

Those in Congress know the war in Iraq has made America a more vulnerable Nation. Congress is appropriating millions and millions of dollars on homeland security projects. The U.S. Capitol complex is saturated with security, and certainly no one in this body behaves as if the war in Iraq has made our Nation safe from terrorism.

In fact, the Iraq war has only inspired terrorism. Democracy is not flourishing in the Middle East, and the costs of the Iraq war and our global antiterrorist operations will top \$500 billion next year.

It is time to bring our troops home and to devote our resources to protecting the American people.

SUPPORT ISRAEL IN THE WAR ON TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. REICHERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, today I was proud to be one of the speakers outside the United Nations in New York at a huge rally in support of Israel. It was attended by tens of thousands of people and showed strong support for the people of Israel as they struggle against terrorism. I would hope that later on this week there will be a resolution on the House floor to once again show Congress' bipartisan support for Israel.

Mr. Speaker, Israel's fight against terrorism is our fight. The war on terrorism is our war. It is everybody's war. We need to support Israel in this time of struggle. It makes no difference whether terrorists drop bombs on Haifa or send planes into the World Trade Center or blow up innocent commuters on their way to work in India or London or Madrid, or blow up people in hotels in Bali and other places.

Terrorism is terrorism, and those of us who think that terrorism is only over there are certainly kidding themselves. Terrorism is everywhere, and the only way to stomp out terrorism is to show a resolve and to get the job

done by defeating terrorists. That is precisely what Israel is trying to do.

Let us remember who started this war. Israel pulled out of Lebanon 6 years ago, so there is no pretext of any occupation. There is no pretext of anything other than the fact that terrorists would like to destroy democratic societies such as Israel, and Israel remains the only democracy in the Middle East.

These terrorists want to destroy the democratic way of life, not only in Israel, but in America and all other democracies of the world. That is why Israel's fight is the fight of all decent nations, including the United States of America.

These terrorists want to destroy life. Israel is standing up to them and saying enough is enough. We should let Israel finish the job.

Israel wants to knock out the terrorist group Hezbollah for good, so they can never return to south Lebanon and threaten Israel's communities from the south of Lebanon on the northern border with Israel. We should let them do that because the status quo is not acceptable. We have already heard words from the naysayers telling Israel to use restraint.

Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that we can use restraint, or that Israel can use restraint, or that any country can use restraint towards terrorists that are out to kill them and us. We should let Israel finish the job.

Let us remember how this started. The terrorists came down from Lebanon, raided Israel, went on Israeli territory, killed Israeli soldiers, captured a couple of them, took them across the border. That is how it started.

Imagine if this had happened to us, if someone came from the Mexican border or the Canadian border, attacked U.S. soldiers on U.S. soil, killed some of them and then took them back over the border.

Mr. Speaker, we would be just as outraged, and we would have every right to go after those terrorists. That is what Israel is going to do.

Hezbollah is a terrorist organization. It is fighting a proxy war for Iran and Syria. Iran and Syria lurk behind this. Iran and Syria are the biggest supporters of terrorism.

A couple of years ago, this Congress passed and the President signed the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act. I wrote that act. I was the lead sponsor of that act, along with my good friend, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN. That act slapped sanctions on Syria for the first time in history.

President Bush has only implemented some of the sanctions in that act, and I call on the President to now implement all of the sanctions on the act. Now is the time. Now we have to show Syria and other countries that

support terrorists that we are resolved to defeat terrorism.

I was very happy when the United States vetoed the one-sided resolution at the United Nations, once again condemning Israel, once again discrediting the United Nations. The United States needs to be steadfast in support, and this Congress needs to do so as well.

So in conclusion, let me say I look forward to a resolution later on in this week. The United States needs to stand by its friend, Israel, and Israel needs to stand by its friend, the United States, and all peace-loving and democratic nations in the world ought to stand shoulder to shoulder firmly against terrorism. Because if terrorism is not contained in one area of the world, it surely will come to every other area of the world.

THE U.S.-OMAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ENGLISH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, tonight we rise at a time when people all over the world are watching the Middle East, are watching the bombs that have lit up both Israel and Lebanon, are watching the troop movements and are hoping earnestly for peace.

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Certainly the support of Israel is going to be loudly and consistently articulated in this Chamber this week, but we also have an opportunity to do something substantive, to improve our engagement with the Middle East in the coming week.

This week, we have an opportunity to vote on a substantive agreement which will bring one of the nations of the Middle East closer to the United States, promote economic opportunity and integration in the region, and lay the groundwork, in my view, for closer ties between the United States and some of our key partners in the Middle East and one in particular.

With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight as cochairman of the Middle East Economic Partnership Caucus, and I expect to be joined by a couple of my other cochairmen, to talk tonight about the benefits of the U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement, which we expect to be voted on in the House this week.

At a time when there is great instability in the Middle East, at a time when we are concerned on how the Middle East affects our homeland security, at a time when we want to do something positive to create economic opportunities in a region where the lack of them has spawned terrorism, this is a small, but important, opportunity.

The Middle East, we believe, is increasingly becoming economically integrated with the West, and if we want to fight the root causes of terrorism, we should be encouraging that. It is critical that now, more than ever, we encourage this integration to promote closer ties, democracy and social liberalization through a process of economic interaction and close cooperation.

In recent years, America's dialogue in the Middle East has been deepened by the addition of bilateral and, ultimately, strongly bipartisan free trade agreements, first with Israel, then with Jordan, then with Morocco and, most recently, with Bahrain.

The U.S.-Oman FTA, slated for a vote in the House Chamber this Thursday, largely builds off of the successful model that was set by the U.S.-Bahrain FTA, further supporting openness and stronger ties between the U.S. and the Middle East and the Maghreb regions.

Over the past year, Oman has clearly demonstrated a powerful commitment to this agreement and closer relations with the West, both in terms of its political will and institutional resources, making significant strides in improving its labor practices and opening its markets and being accountable for intellectual property issues and cracking down on intellectual property violations.

In numerous communications with our U.S. trade Representative, Omani leaders have promised to take a number of concrete steps by October 31, 2006, to build on the strong labor reforms already implemented, and in my view, as a member of the Trade Subcommittee who has closely followed this process, Oman has come further than virtually any other country we have ever engaged in this manner in dealing with core labor issues. Their commitment shows Oman's determination to address all concerns, while respecting the rule of law and its legislative processes.

In addition, all of these commitments are fully verifiable because Oman has agreed to have all of them reviewed under the FTA's labor consultation mechanism. The U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement provides one of the highest degrees of market access of any U.S. free trade agreement to date and accounts for a substantial market access across Oman's entire services regime.

This agreement will make 100 percent of U.S. imports and exports and consumer and industrial goods duty free on the day the agreement enters into force. It also provides duty free treatment to 87 percent of our agricultural exports from day one. In terms of being accountable for intellectual property rights violations, Oman has agreed to criminal standards for copyright infringement and stronger remedies and penalties. It will increase criminal and

civil protection against unlawful encoding of satellite TV signals and criminalize end-use piracy, providing strong deterrence against piracy and counterfeiting.

This is just a small sample of some of the benefits of the U.S.-Oman FTA, and this agreement is far more important than the small market that Oman would suggest.

We recognize that Oman is a small place. It is probably the equivalent, in terms of purchasing power comparability, of entering into a free trade agreement with our own North Dakota, but it is extremely significant because it is a part of a much larger Middle East puzzle. It is part of a region that we expect, in coming years, to build much closer ties with, and the Oman agreement, as it has been laid out and as their government has agreed to embrace, is a very strong model for going forward with future agreements in this region.

The U.S.-Oman FTA is, after all, a comprehensive and high-standard agreement. High standards are provided for including comprehensive protection for intellectual property rights, government procurement transparency, and trade facilitation. Developing a high-quality FTA with Oman will establish a high standard for all of the other Gulf Cooperation Council Members and set a very high standard for them to meet.

Consequently, the FTA represents a significant benefit to U.S. trade that extends well beyond those benefits that currently exist in Oman. The FTA establishes a secure, predictable, legal framework for U.S. investors in Oman and includes high-standard legal protection for their model on U.S. legal principles, such as substantive due process and the ability to comment on proposed laws and regulations.

Mr. Speaker, the FTA also creates and expands opportunities for U.S. goods and services. This FTA will broaden and strengthen the bilateral, commercial relationship between the United States and Oman beyond the approximately \$748 million generated in two-way trade during 2004. One hundred percent of this bilateral trade in consumer and industrial products will become duty free under this agreement.

The U.S.-Oman FTA will build upon the trade and investment framework agreement signed between our two countries on July 7, 2004, and will spur continued growth of U.S. direct investment which in 2003 was \$358 million, a substantial increase over the previous year. In addition, the FTA will increase the competitiveness of U.S. exporters and service providers in the Omani market, providing for an increased market share for U.S. manufacturers and service providers. In 2004, U.S. goods exports were \$330 million, up 2.3 percent from 2003.