

going to be able to make a living and to do what they do best, and that is produce the food that feeds our country, that feeds the world, we have to allow them to do it on a level playing field.

We are going to have a meeting tomorrow in the House Committee on Agriculture to discuss what we can do to respond, but one thing is clear, and that is before we adjourn this Congress, we need to respond to the crisis that is out there in a way that will allow our farmers and ranchers to get their legs under them and get back on their feet and make it through this year and on to a better year. And we need to do the job that we have to do, and that is to continue to expand exports and improve trade so they can compete on a level playing field.

□ 1815

#### VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS NATIONAL YOUTH ESSAY COMPETITION

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

Mr. REDMOND. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time to read the winning essay in the Veterans of Foreign Wars National Youth Essay Competition. It was written by Heather Hull of Los Alamos, New Mexico.

Heather writes about patriotism, and she says:

Patriotism, to me, is the spirit and soul of a country. It is what keeps a country together not only through war and hardships, but also through victory and triumph. What else could keep a soldier from losing hope in battle, a disheartened country from losing the burning desire to rebuild itself, a nation of divided citizens from dueling each other?

It is patriotism that keeps our love of freedom alive. It is not money or wealth; it is not social acceptance. It is the pure goodwill of every true American that keeps our Nation's dream alive.

Every day we show our patriotism in large and small ways: by proudly saluting the flag, by saying the Pledge of Allegiance, by celebrating the Fourth of July with its bursts of fireworks. Americans show their patriotism when soldiers give their lives serving our country and when citizens cast a vote in support of a candidate whose ideals represent their own.

Behind our many freedoms, including the freedoms of speech and religion, stand all the men and women who, through dedication to their dreams and perseverance, through their struggles, have made so many opportunities ours. Although we may only recognize their sacrifices and suffering on certain holidays such as Memorial Day and Veterans Day, their legacy is all around us every day. In every military cemetery, the gravestones there represent hundreds of other patriots who have served our country and who continue to do so.

To me, patriotism is a kind of heroism. When I saw my face reflected in the shiny granite of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, The Wall, in Washington D.C., I was reminded of the valor of those whose names are etched there and of the courage of their loved ones.

We Americans have always shown patriotism by honoring our values and by envisioning freedoms for all. To me, patriotism is the optimistic spirit and the deep-rooted soul of our country, the United States of America.

I would like to thank Heather Hull of Los Alamos, New Mexico, for allowing me the honor of reading her essay on patriotism in this time of need for our Nation. Thank you, Heather.

#### SEEKING SOLUTIONS ON BEHALF OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE

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

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the gentleman from South Dakota and the gentleman from Oklahoma to talk about what we heard in the farm belt during our August recess.

I used the 4 weeks of August and early September to travel the 66 counties of the First District of Kansas, holding 66 town hall meetings; and at every stop, the primary concern of the folks who came to see their Congressman was the price of farm commodities, the price of oil and gas. Everything that we produce and raise in our State has depressed prices; it has significant impact upon the people of our State, the people of this region, and now the people of the country.

The stories were sad. I can remember the past president of the State Future Farmers of America who has had every intention of returning to the family farm, but now cannot see how that can be done with the current state of agricultural economics. We need that next generation to be able to afford the ability to return to the family farm and to provide food and fiber to this country.

I can envision at the other end the senior citizen, the senior farmer, the wife, the spouse who comes with tears and a choked voice to say, "Congressman, what can my husband and I do to keep our family farm? We have fought this fight for over 30 years and we cannot afford to do so any longer."

And I think it is accurate to say that many farmers who have fought the fight in the past will decide that they no longer can afford to do so, and as a result, we will see more farms on the market, we will see larger farms, we will see fewer family farms, and we will see great difficulties in rural communities across the State of Kansas and across the country.

This has significant impact on not just farmers and ranchers, but on all Kansans and upon all Americans. In my State alone, revenue from the wheat crop and the tremendous harvest we have had 2 years in a row, this is not because of lack of production but this is because of a dramatic decline in the price of foreign commodities. In Kansas alone we see \$750 million less in revenue to farmers as a result of the price of wheat, \$190 million less in revenue to farmers in Kansas because of

the reduction in the price of corn, a \$290 million reduction in the State of Kansas to family farmers because of reduction in the grain sorghum price.

Soybeans reduce farm income another \$250 million in the State of Kansas. And cattle revenues are down over \$400 million this year alone.

And when we add that to the oil and gas economy of my State, another reduction of \$260 million, we are talking about a reduction in farm and rural income of more than \$2 billion in 1 year alone.

Mr. Speaker, these issues matter to the survival of not only the farmer but the small towns of the State of Kansas. It is a story to be told by the grocery store clerk, by the car dealer, by the implement dealer. All of us are impacted, and ultimately we pay a tremendous price as Americans in our food supplies.

So tonight I rise to ask for assistance from my urban colleagues, from my colleagues from other rural States, from Republicans and Democrats, to see if in the remaining days of the 1998 session of Congress, if we cannot come together to seek solutions, to preserve a way of life and to fight on behalf of the cattleman and the farmer across the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity of raising this issue and joining my colleagues in seeking solutions on behalf of American agriculture.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 4006

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name withdrawn as a cosponsor of H.R. 4006.

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

There was no objection.

#### FARM CRISIS IN AMERICA

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak also on this farm crisis.

I represent coastal Georgia, 18 southeast Georgia counties. But to the entire State of Georgia, the farm crisis has been devastating. The coastal area that I represent, Savannah, Brunswick, and Hinesville, often get hit by hurricanes. And when they get hit by hurricanes, it is easy to get FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Association, to come in, or GEMA, the Georgia Emergency Management Association, people to come in; because we have visual images, trees that have crashed through the roofs of houses, people who have lost their homes, businesses that are wiped out and then have power shortages for days at a time or refrigeration equipment that closes down and a product that goes rotten. They have boats that have been washed ashore and landed on Main Street.

We have that kind of visual image when a hurricane hits, and so it is a little bit easier to get help. People come