

School District is contemplating a move that portends great cost to the citizens of Los Angeles and portends a trend that should be fought by all means at the Federal level. I speak of project labor agreements. This is what is being proposed in Los Angeles. This comes to school construction. "The contractor recognizes the council and its affiliated unions as the exclusive bargaining representatives for the employees engaged in project work covered by this agreement."

Mr. Speaker, in the LA Daily News on the editorial page, it is noted that "even a school board member who often sides with the teachers union can't turn a blind eye to this outrage." What is outrageous? Well, quite simply this fact, Mr. Speaker: The estimates are that this plan could increase construction costs by 10 to 15 percent in the district.

Now, lest you think this is only something that Los Angelenos should be concerned about, Mr. Speaker, I would commend to your attention something this House once saw in April of 1998, the Vice President of the United States, he who last week claimed that he was the father of the Internet, he who infamously claimed 2 years ago that there was no controlling legal authority given the outrage of alleged campaign donations to the Clinton-Gore team from foreign governments including the People's Republic of China, well, this selfsame Vice President announced that the Clinton-Gore team would aggressively pursue linking Federal projects to union construction firms.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I believe that everyone should have the right to apply to do work and if a union shop is the bidder that is accepted based on its quality of work, that is well and good. But here is the problem with union-only agreements as the Vice President promised to Boss Sweeney and others: Not only is the blatant payoff, Mr. Speaker, but in fact it will end up costing the American taxpayer across the width and breadth of our annual budget an additional \$5 billion a year.

Now, mindful of the florid rhetoric and the feel-good attitude that the President brings when he steps to this podium annually to offer his State of the Union message and mindful that sadly his rhetoric does not always square to reality, I would invite the President and the Vice President and others who claim that project work, or union-only agreements, would somehow be beneficial to step up and defend spending an additional \$5 billion of taxpayers money. Because, you see, Mr. Speaker, there is a better way, indeed to use the President's term, there is a third way, but that would involve truth and merit rewards.

And again I say, lest there are those who misunderstand, if it is a union shop that steps forward with the best ability to do the work, well, then God bless them and they should be awarded a contract on their merits. But to re-

strict or to claim that this government or indeed any other governmental entity will deal only with union shops is to circumvent freedom of choice, freedom of association and fiscal responsibility. For to paraphrase Goldwater and perhaps change his phraseology, I believe that union firms have a right to bid on a contract but I also believe that open shop firms should have that same right. And if an open shop can do the work better, then they should be selected.

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

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

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

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

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

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

FOREIGN OIL REVERSAL ACT OF 1999

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, it was a year ago today that I rose on this House floor to raise a concern with my colleagues with what is happening in the oil patch in our country. We are in the process of losing our domestic oil industry, which I believe is to our great detriment down the road and in fact today. The domestic oil industry, those small producers, those wells that are producing 2.2 barrels per day on the average, are currently being shut down and closed in. Since 1997, a little more than a year ago, we have lost over 41,000 jobs in the United States with more than 136,000 oil wells shut down. In my State of Kansas alone, the job loss is someplace between 5 and 8,000, with a loss of revenue this year of \$955 million.

If the problem we face with our economy is not great enough, it is perhaps superseded by the problems we will face strategically in the future. The U.S. dependence on foreign oil continues to rise. We had problems, those of us who are old enough to remember the early 1970s, with long lines at the gas station and the oil embargo. At that time our foreign oil imports were

only 36 percent of our U.S. consumption, while today 57 percent of the oil consumed in the United States is derived outside the United States. That estimate is expected to rise to 70 percent in about 10 years. We have set the stage for significant and serious problems in defending our country and in our strategic reserves.

Mr. Speaker, this issue needs the attention of the administration, of the Department of Energy and of the President of the United States. It also could use the attention of Members of Congress. Yesterday, I introduced legislation along with several other Members of Congress, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. PICKERING), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SESSIONS), and the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATKINS), and this legislation mirrors legislation introduced last week by the distinguished Mr. DOMENICI.

This bill attacks the issue of foreign dependence upon energy, and by suggesting that when 60 percent of our consumption is derived from foreign sources that the administration, the President of the United States, must begin a process to determine the extent of the problems created by our foreign dependency on oil, must report to Congress those difficulties, his assessment, and must make recommendations to Congress to what we can do to minimize our dependence on foreign oil, issues such as tax reduction, regulatory relief and conservation measures. We have also included in this bill many proposals to react to the days in which the oil and gas industry was considered highly profitable and Congress and the administration then decided to, in a sense, gouge that industry, to take away its profits. And today when western Kansas crude is priced at \$8 or \$9 a barrel and the costs of breaking even for that production is \$16, it is time to reduce, eliminate the tax policy in this country that discourages marginal well production and discourages this industry from remaining alive and solvent.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that over the course of the next few days and over the course of the next few weeks, Congress will begin to focus on the fact that we are losing an important industry in our country but perhaps more importantly focus on the fact that we are selling short our future, our children's future, our grandchildren's future by our reliance upon oil from other countries. It is clear that we spend billions of dollars protecting our foreign supplies but next to nothing in protecting domestic production.

Perhaps as troublesome to me as anything is the idea that the so-called surplus that results in this price of oil is derived from the fact that we are importing oil from Iraq. So on one hand we are trying to contain Saddam Hussein's activities and on the other hand we are providing the financial resources for him to pursue those activities, and at the same time we are hurting our own men and women employed

in the oil and gas industry in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I urge support of H.R. 1117.

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

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

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

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California addressed the House. His remarks appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1615

MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEASE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the veterans in my district, Congressional District 1 in the State of Nevada. I represent Las Vegas, Nevada. Let me tell my colleagues a little bit about it. I have got the fastest growing district in the United States. I have the fastest growing veterans population in the United States. There are only three States that have an increasing veterans population in this country: Florida, Arizona and the State of Nevada. A preponderance of those veterans that are moving to those three States are coming to the State of Nevada. Let me tell my colleagues what the problems are.

First, I will tell my colleagues during my campaign the veterans took me under their wing and educated me about the problems that they are facing. We developed a relationship that transcends politics, and we become very close family, we become friends, and I have come here to be an advocate on their behalf.

In the State of Nevada, in southern Nevada, we have a wonderful new veterans' clinic, we have a wonderful new hospital, we have wonderful state-of-the-art equipment, and we have a brand new cemetery.

Let me tell my colleagues what we do not have. We do not have enough doctors, and there is not enough funding to hire doctors. I have got incidents after incidents of older veterans who come to the clinic because they have medical problems and they cannot get in to see a doctor. I have one incident of a veteran that has a lump, and when he went to the veterans' clinic to have a biopsy, he was told that he could not see a doctor, he could not get that biopsy for 5 months. Nobody, nobody,

should have to go through the pain and anguish of not knowing what their medical condition is, particularly a veteran who has given so much and sacrificed so much on behalf of this country.

We do not have enough nurses in Nevada. I do not have enough technicians to work that wonderful new equipment. So the medical equipment that would help these veterans sits idle because there is no one that knows how to work the equipment.

I have a wonderful new cemetery, as I stated, but let me tell my colleagues I do not have enough equipment and there is not enough personnel to bury those veterans that are dying in southern Nevada, and as our veterans population ages, as those veterans keep coming to retire in southern Nevada, what am I to tell those families that are suffering because they have just lost a loved one? Do I tell that family during their most horrible time of need that we cannot bury their loved one because we do not have enough personnel at the cemetery? We do not have enough equipment to do this last act of honor for this great veteran? I cannot in good conscience do that.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have enough money for counselors, so when I have veterans that are coming to southern Nevada that need counseling because they have got a drug abuse problem, because they are suffering from alcoholism or they are roaming the streets of southern Nevada, downtown Las Vegas, because they are homeless that we do not have enough caring in this country, we do not have enough concern for these veterans to make sure that we do not have adequate counseling and help in their time of need?

The President's flat line budget that he submitted to Congress was wholly inadequate to serve the needs of the veterans in this country. I am opposed to it, but I fear that the meager increase that we have proposed here in Congress is also inadequate to meet the needs of our veterans in this country. The \$1.9 billion that has been passed by the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, a committee that I sit on and am honored to serve on, will not begin to make a dent in the problems that we are suffering and we are facing in southern Nevada.

I ask all of my colleagues to join with me to vote in favor of the alternative proposal, one that is supported by all of the veterans groups across our great country, to add \$3.2 billion to the President's budget so that we can finally provide the services that our veterans justly deserve, that we have a responsibility to provide and one that all Americans who owe these great veterans our lives, our liberties and our American way of life. Let us unite together and help our veterans in their hour of need.

KOSOVA KILLINGS CALLED A MASSACRE

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday the House very wisely passed a resolution giving the President the authority to send U.S. troops to Kosova as a part of NATO, and at the time many of us arguing in favor of the resolution said that it was necessary for the United States to be a leader of NATO and to show that we are the leader and to have 4000 of our troops, if necessary, participate in the NATO peacekeeping force which would only be 15 percent of the total and which would in essence be a poster child for burden sharing. When I got up to the floor, as did many of my colleagues, we talked about genocide and ethnic cleansing and said that it was important for NATO to have a presence in Kosova in order to prevent ethnic cleansing.

Today in the front page of the Washington Post there is unfortunately an article which says "Kosovo Killings Called a Massacre," and I just wanted to read some of the article and then ask to have the entire article put into the RECORD, but the article starts off by saying:

An independent forensic report into the killings of 40 ethnic Albanians in the Kosovo village of Racak in January has found that the victims were unarmed civilians executed in an organized massacre, some of them forced to kneel before being sprayed with bullets according to western sources familiar with the report. The findings by Finnish forensic experts set to be released Wednesday in Pristina, the Kosovo capital, contradicts claims by officials of the Serb led Yugoslav government that the dead were armed ethnic Albanian separatists or civilians accidentally caught in a cross-fire between government security forces and separatist rebels. Western officials have blamed the killings on government police.

It has been apparent for many years now, but especially during the past several months, that ethnic cleansing and genocide has been going on in Kosova, and by the way I say "Kosova" because that is the way 92 percent of the people who live there who are ethnic Albanians pronounce it. They pronounce it "Kosova" and in my estimation, if that is what the people who live there call their land, that is what I call it. We have said that ethnic cleansing and genocide has been going on, and that is why it is just so important for NATO to be there. People who say that it is not in our vital interests, I would argue that it is in our vital interests to stop genocide and also in the U.S. vital interest to prevent a larger outbreak of the war which would surely, if given a chance, suck in many neighboring countries, including the potential to suck in NATO allies of Turkey and