

percent dependent on foreign countries for our main energy needs.

In contrast, during the crippling 1973 oil embargo, the United States was only 36 percent dependent on foreign oil. And to add insult to injury, Iraq has now become the fastest growing oil supplier to the United States.

Another fact that I found troubling is that the Strategic Petroleum Reserve is made up of predominantly foreign oil. For crude oil received up to 1995 for the SPR, only 8 percent came from domestic producers.

I find it ironic that we developed the SPR so as to never again be at the whim of foreign nations in terms of oil supply and yet we fill our reserve with foreign oil.

I would also like to point out that Americans also use a large amount of natural gas for home heating. However, I have heard of no cry from the Clinton-Gore administration to help these Americans.

The demand in price of natural gas is skyrocketing, while natural gas production has been virtually flat over the past few years, primarily because domestic exploration has been hindered by this administration's severe environmental policies.

At last week's hearings, witnesses testified that we do in fact have a type of natural gas reserve, but because of the lengthy permit process and access restrictions enforced by this administration, we are unable to adequately tap these reserves.

Mr. Speaker, our country's demand for both oil and natural gas will increase dramatically over the next 10 to 20 years. It is time for a real energy policy and not a Band-Aid policy.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE URBAN LEAGUE ON ITS 89TH BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to give special recognition to a premier social service and civil rights organization that has fought the relentless fight for African Americans in the achievement of social and economic equality.

Historically, this organization has built bridges over the obstructions that impede the social freedom of citizens. Time and time again, this organization has been in the vanguard, providing guidance and instruction to millions.

As a principal shepherd, this organization has been a conduit that has negotiated on behalf of the voiceless and neglected. But most of all, this organization has contributed enormously towards inoculating the disease of institutionalized racism which continues to negatively impact many in America.

The organization of which I speak is the National Urban League as it prepares to celebrate its 89th birthday.

From the moment of its inception in 1911, the National Urban League has

been in the forefront of promoting social change, promoting black conscientiousness and racial pride.

Furthermore, the National Urban League has been contributing to the transformation of American social, cultural, and political life.

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The National Urban League consistently has been on the front line to gauge pressure, temper ills and provide solutions over adverse forces that permeate all sectors in our society.

During the Great Migration, the National Urban League created successful social action programs aimed towards improving employment opportunities for African Americans who migrated northward to escape the endless cycle of poverty that held their lives hostage. The National Urban League successfully helped these citizens by working through local affiliates to help them adjust to urban life. These affiliates taught citizens the basic skills necessary to secure employment. In addition, the National Urban League sponsored community centers, clinics, kindergartens, day care, summer camps, as well as a host of other programs tailored to meet the specific needs of black newcomers. In essence, these social programs provided a comprehensive social support system that enabled African Americans to thrive and compete in mainstream society. Thus, the National Urban League firmly established itself as a lead organization for reform in America.

Under Lester B. Granger's mentorship, the National Urban League reached unprecedented new levels during the Great Depression. By focusing its reform efforts on coercing the Federal Government to develop equitable policies dedicated towards inclusion for blacks, the National Urban League lobbied government to end discrimination and open its doors of opportunity. As a result of direct pressure, President Franklin Roosevelt issued an executive order ending discrimination in defense industries and Federal agencies.

While the face of America was transforming in the turbulent 1960s, the National Urban League stood strong and helped organize extensively to help African Americans take an active role in the political process. Under the direction of Whitney Young, Jr., the National Urban League launched vigorous voter registration drives. Mr. Young's vision of political empowerment for blacks did not end there. To complement efforts to increase blacks' access to the polling booth, the National Urban League sponsored leadership development and voter registration projects. As a result of these and other initiatives, African Americans as a unit began to wield their newly developed, fine-tuned political prowess far more effectively in the political process.

Today, the National Urban League continues to promote social, economic,

and political empowerment. By using tools of advocacy, research, and program service as its main approach, the National Urban League has expanded its programs to help African Americans meet anticipated challenges in the new century.

Under the direction of Hugh Price, the National Urban League has worked to provide information and technical assistance to thousands of small businesses as they compete in the technological and global economy. In addition, the National Urban League is helping to tackle the sprouting problems that seize our Nation's failed schools. Mr. Price is committed to closing the digital divide that has a crippling effect on our Nation's youth.

Furthermore, the National Urban League continues to lead African Americans to new opportunities that will help them attain economic self-sufficiency and is helping to fight racial profiling and police brutality. Through its various programs, the National Urban League is helping to move America into a new era with vigor and vitality.

I could not mention the work of the Urban League without mentioning the tremendous work done by the Chicago Urban League under the leadership of its president and chief executive officer, James Compton, who is noted as one of Chicago's most outstanding leaders. Prior to the advent of Jim Compton, the Chicago League was led by William "Bill" Berry who was voted as one of the most effective leaders of his day. His wit, charm, and personality helped to move many situations.

#### IN OPPOSITION TO INTERIOR APPROPRIATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT

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

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to oppose the Interior appropriations bill that is likely to come upon us, at least in the form that we have been hearing about. It is pumping millions of dollars into the appropriations process but guts CARA, the Conservation and Reinvestment Act, that three-quarters of this House voted to support. CARA has a trust fund. When we talk about the Medicare and Social Security trust funds being restored, we also have an obligation to put the money into other trust funds before we engage in disbursing it into various appropriations accounts. We have a number of smaller trust funds but they are nonetheless trust funds where we take fees from people and tell them they are going to be used for an intended purpose and then divert it, here in the case of many people who hunt or fish or pay different fees and have had their fund diverted into the general budget.

Secondly, by gutting CARA, this will hurt our efforts to increase oil drilling