going to be relying on coal, among other sources, because both of those countries have coal.

We are developing in this country clean coal technology, clean coal technology that if this is transferred to China and India, if we help them with the development of their electrical infrastructure will have far less impact on the environment than otherwise.

It is not just carbon dioxide. It is also mercury. I mean, mercury is one of those pollutants that does not go away; and we are having substantial problems in the Northeast, as the gentleman knows, with mercury pollution.

Frankly, we have to figure out how to take some of this mercury out of the air, and the best way to do it is changing how we deal with these old coal-fired and oil-fired power plants.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman again for yielding.

Mr. PALLONE. The other thing the gentleman mentioned about coastal States. My district is a coastal district. In fact, there are certain parts of it that are no more than a few blocks wide from the ocean.

I will tell the gentleman that my constituents are very concerned about the impact that global climate changes are going to have on the rising sea level.

We have to put in place these beach replenishment projects every year that costs us millions of dollars, and that is not going to work any more if the sea level continues to rise. This is not pie in the sky. This is real.

ADDRESSING IMPORTANT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for the balance of the time allocated to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues, and I think we have some interesting context that has been established here.

I would just take a moment to reference what my other colleague from Portland, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN), talked about, that it is going to be 100 years or more before the full impact of actions that we take today will be felt, that we have set in motion a pattern of environmental destruction that will take decades and perhaps centuries to correct.

There is no time to waste, and it is not appropriate for us to continue pretending to do something about it by just reiterating the studies that have already been done. Most Americans agree with the scientific evidence that global warming is real and that we must, in fact, do something about it.

It is in this context that I must confess a certain surprise by the administration's proposal to meet the current energy crisis with a proposal to drill for oil in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge.

This issue beyond question, let us just put for a moment aside the notion that whether or not it is going to be destructive for the environment, whether the environmental costs, whether the problems that would deal with the native indigenous culture, treaty problems and environmental problems with our friends in Canada, put all of those aside for a moment, assume that it is either they could be moderated or it would be worth it.

There is a fundamental question whether or not it is actually worth it to go ahead and pursue this approach for the energy security of the United States.

I was pleased recently to read the latest newsletters from the Rocky Mountain Institute where Amory and Hunter Levins asked that fundamental question, can you, in fact, make a profit over the course of the next 20 years by invading the Arctic Wildlife Refuge?

It is interesting that the State of Alaska itself has done its recent price forecasting that suggests that what the State of Alaska envisions as being the long-term price of oil over the course of the next 10 years, that it would not generate enough revenue to be profitable.

If we use our time and our resources to recover this expensive oil in some of the most environmentally sensitive areas in the world, it would actually end up resulting in a waste of money, and we would have to be importing more oil sooner, as opposed to dealing with less expensive energy alternatives.

Many would argue that another fundamental issue, and it is one that I agree, is whether this country can continue to use the current energy patterns that we have using six times as much energy per capita as the rest of the world, twice as much as developed countries like Japan and Germany.

The irony is that conservation and energy efficiency does in fact work. It works better than an effort to exploit the Arctic Wildlife Refuge. It is estimated that a mere 3 miles per gallon improvement in the performance of SUVs would offset the oil production from the Arctic.

If, for some reason, we cannot change those huge and inefficient vehicles, just one half mile per gallon efficiency overall for the fleet would more than equal the production of the arctic wilderness.

This is not beyond our power. Last year, the average fleet efficiency of 24 miles per gallon was tied for a 20-year low. We can and we should do better.

In the Pacific Northwest, we are sending energy that we really do not have to spare to the State of California. Yet we find that there could be a 30 percent energy savings for reducing air conditioning just by changing the color of the roofs in southern California to a white reflective surface.

It would be far more effective for us to make that investment in conservation. When I started in this business 25 years ago, we were in the midst of an energy crisis. Even though many of those initiatives were reversed by the Reagan administration, conservation has nonetheless saved a quantity of energy that is four times the entire domestic oil industries production.

In the West, this is our only immediate solution. Given droughts and limited generating capacity, the only way this year that we will be able to make a difference is by changing our patterns of consumption. When we conserve, there is no threat from terrorists. There is no risk of environmental damage. It keeps producing year after year.

I must point out, perhaps most significantly when I hear on the floor of this Chamber people talking about protecting our strategic oil reserves, that if we place all of our bets on the Arctic Wildlife Refuge, we are, in fact, dooming the United States to a very insecure posture. If we are going to place our bets on an aging 800-mile long facility, a pipeline through the Arctic that is increasingly unreliable, that is wearing out, that is impossible to defend from disruption, from terrorists or rogue states or deranged people, it is not a very smart way for us to make those investments. Far better to deal with how we use energy in a more cost effective and efficient manner.

I have more comments to make on this, but I want to yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for yielding to me and for taking this special order; and I also want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE).

Clearly, the President has disappointed the Nation when he did an about-face and broke his promise to regulate CO_2 emissions, especially among the older power plants, oil and gas burning power plants in this Nation.

The suggestion has been made by some that it was okay to break this campaign promise because it was only one sentence in a long speech, it came late in the speech. I do not remember when any of us were running that our supporters told us it would be okay to break our promises if it was not the first thing we said in the speech or if it was not the fifth thing we said in the speech, that they would not take it that seriously.

As my colleagues have pointed out here, the President made this statement about these controls in CO_2 because he wanted to appear to the country to be concerned about the Nation's environment, and he wanted to appear to be more concerned than the Vice President Al Gore. That is why he made this promise. But the public thought he meant it. Now he has broken it.

Tragically, he has broken it because he is buying in to a very old idea that

somehow America cannot clean up its environment and meet its energy needs, a false dichotomy, a fact that does not exist, that we know time and again is proven in everyday business life in this country, that companies all over the United States are doing exactly that. They are saving energy. They are increasing their efficiency. They are reducing their greenhouse emissions, and the country and the world are better off for that.

□ 1400

But this President apparently has a very old energy policy. It begins by dragging these old, old power plants, these dinosaurs from a past age, dragging them into the future and saying this is America's energy policy.

It begins by trying to convince the public that somehow we can have oil independence, which is far different than what we should be doing. We can develop energy sufficiency, and we can sustain energy in this country, and we can meet this Nation's need. But that policy is very different than oil independence.

The first policy of energy sustainability and sufficiency for the needs of this country is achievable and in the national interest. The other one is not.

If we are really seeking to strengthen America's hand with respect to energy and our economy, we should do all that is possible to develop a national sustainable energy policy that would minimize our dependence on foreign oil.

Very similar to the cocaine trade, if we are serious, we would make every effort to diminish the demand in the American market. If we are very serious about being independent from foreign oil supplies, then we must make every effort to diminish the demand in the American market.

Rather than placing so much of our emphasis on new oil supplies, we would build a national energy policy that is based on the strengths of our country rather than its weakness. These strengths are the marketplace, innovation, technology, and the allocation of capital.

If these economic forces were truly unleashed to provide a national energy policy, the role of coal and oil would be greatly diminished, still very important, but diminished.

America's energy policy would evolve to one where business decisions, capital allocations, research commitments, and environmental policy would coincide to make business more efficient and productive, development of new products and services would expand, and the environment would be easier and less expensive to clean up. Such a policy demands a synergy that, for the most part, national energy policy to date is treated as a stepchild.

To do so, the Congress must stop thinking of the energy policy as an extension of the past. Rather, the Congress and the President must set the tools of the future free to create this new energy vision and reality.

Technology, science and the Internet have the ability to almost immediately and dramatically change the demand and the cost of America's energy futures needs.

New materials, demand-side energy reductions, contracting out energy management, dramatically improved renewable energy sources, inventory management, business-to-business networks, transportation shipping efficiencies, more development of oil and gas, conservation opportunities in the three big sectors of transportation, lighting and heating and cooling, all will allow for us to develop a national energy policy that in fact provides for an enhanced economic and national security.

This is far different than a policy that only concerns itself with the production of oil and continuing to believe in an economy that is as large and dynamic as America that we can simply produce our way to energy independence.

No longer would our citizens have to worry every time that another leader in OPEC gets into domestic problems and seeks to solve his problems on the back of the American consumers and the economy.

No longer would this generation of Americans pass its energy and environmental failures on to the next generation where they become more difficult and expensive to solve.

That would be an energy policy. But the President has turned his back on that policy when he began with breaking his campaign promise to regulate CO_2 emissions from older coal plants.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the leadership of the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) dating back to the last time we were in a major energy crisis.

We are privileged to have join us the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY). I thank him for his concern and interest in issues that relate to the environment and the leadership he has provided individually and on the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oregon for yielding me this time. I thank him and the gentleman from New Jersey for organizing this time so we could address an issue that is perhaps the most important that faces the economy of our country and the welfare of the American people over the course of the next decade.

We are increasingly alarmed about the statements that have been coming from the administration with regard to American energy policy and the steps that need to be taken to develop a coherent, comprehensive, safe energy policy that is going to maintain the strength of our economy and the welfare of our people.

For example, on Monday, Bush said that he saw ''no short-term fixes to the country's energy problem.'' He also said ''it is clear from first analysis that the demand for energy in the United States is increasing much more so than its production. With the result, we are finding in certain parts of the country that we are short on energy, and this administration is concerned about it.''

Well, the administration may be concerned, but the two predicate statements before that are both incorrect. The current situation has no correlation whatsoever to demand outstripping supply and arises instead from what we have seen recently, and that is generators withholding energy and price gouging of consumers.

In other words, those few people in our country who maintain control over the energy supply system and the generation system have been gouging consumers and withholding capacity from the marketplace in order to drive prices up.

Instead of a responsible energy policy that addresses these artificial shortages, the only plan the administration has come up with is to open up Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and other federally protected lands to oil and natural gas drilling.

So what we have here in effect is a very convenient conflict of interests. What the President wants to do, in alliance with his oil production friends, is to open up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. At the same time, he is using the alleged shortage of energy to try to develop public support and public opinion in that direction. While he is doing that, he is allowing his friends in the oil industry to gouge consumers by dramatically increasing prices and withholding energy capacity from the market.

It is a very shocking circumstance, indeed. Let me just talk for another minute about the need to reduce the demand for oil and how that is key. Any serious energy plan must focus our efforts on reducing our demand for oil rather than on increasing our supplies, as the present administration seems determined to do.

The centerpiece of the administration's energy plan is to drill for oil in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. This move would simply be a gift to the oil companies that would do little, if anything, to affect our energy prices or our security.

The U.S. Geological Survey has estimated recently that the amount of oil that could be recovered from the Arctic Refuge would amount to less than a 6-month supply for American consumers. It will take 7 to 10 years for any oil from the Arctic Refuge to make its way to the market, and it would not even help many parts of our country.

For example, none of it would be shipped east of the Rocky Mountains; and no Alaska oil would ever be refined into home heating oil, which many people depend upon to heat their homes and businesses. At no time would oil from the refuge be expected to meet any more than at most 2 percent of U.S. demand.

The Arctic Refuge is one of our national treasures. It deserves to be protected as wilderness, of course, not to spoil for a few months' worth of oil. Oil, as we know, is a global commodity; and its price will always be driven by world markets that are for the most part beyond our control.

The United States has only 2 percent of the world's oil reserves but generates about 25 percent of world demand while gulf state OPEC members control about two-thirds of proven reserves. We currently depend upon imports for over half of our oil supplies. By 2015, this dependence is expected to increase to more than 68 percent.

It is quite clear that we are not going to meet our energy needs by drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. What we need is a policy of energy conservation, of renewable energy based upon solar or wind or other renewable sources, and we need to conserve.

We can produce much more energy in our country through conservation than we can by opening up the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge or any other portion of the country that is not currently exploited. That is where our efforts needs to go, in conservation.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) very much for giving us the opportunity to make these points.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's argument and continued leadership.

It is my privilege in our remaining 2 minutes to turn to two final leaders that we have here. First, I yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), a gentleman who has been active in providing leadership on energy issues as a local official, as a mayor, as a legislator, and now as a Member of Congress.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, a few years ago, I was privileged to be one of the representatives to the talks, the conference of parties, discussions, concerning the effect of global climate change. The talks took place in Buenos Aires, and I was one of the few Members of Congress who was privileged to attend and present views consistent with the discussion that is occurring on this floor.

There is concern all over the world about changes taking place in the global climate. I spoke with individuals from some of the islands in the South Pacific who talk about how the sea level is starting to rise and it is affecting the properties on those islands.

We know that there are 2,500 scientists who have done studies in connection with the United Nations which have demonstrated that global climate change is a reality. I mean, any citizen of this country is aware that, in the last few years, we have seen extreme changes in our climate.

We have seen 100-year floods occur every few decades, if not every few years. We have seen tremendous heat waves which buckle freeways with their great heat intensity. We have seen unusual storms take place in areas which have been unaccustomed, hurricanes with much more intensity; tornadoes the same.

I mean, sooner or later, we come to an understanding that it is human activity which is beginning to create an overall change in the Earth's environment; and sooner or later, we have to come to an understanding that our responsibility here is, not only in the present, it is not simply to keep certain interest groups moving forward, but our responsibility is to many generations forward so that people have a place to work out their own destiny on this planet.

So the survival of the planet is at stake here and the survival of the democratic tradition, because we have an obligation as citizens of democracy to address this issue in a forthright way and to do it with others who are concerned from around the world.

We have a moral responsibility to reduce emissions. Now, as of late, we are seeing assertions that somehow carbon dioxide is not a problem. The truth is, since the Industrial Revolution, the concentration of carbon dioxide has risen about 30 percent and is now higher than it has been in the last 400,000 years.

Humans have created this level of carbon dioxide that the Earth can no longer naturally absorb. So we are driving the rate of global warming, and we must take steps to reduce CO_2 pollution. The United States is the greatest polluter.

Now, in spite of strong consensus around the scientific evidence, it seems that special interests are more influential. The recent pattern of environmental decisions are an ironic backdrop to the debate occurring right now on campaign finance reform. Before the interest groups have made their lobbying effort to prevent carbon dioxide regulations, we could all see the science as justifying greater efforts to control carbon dioxide.

We know that Secretary O'Neill 3 years ago spoke of global warming significance as second only to nuclear conflagration. He even criticized the Kyoto Protocol as being too weak. We know that Administrator Christine Todd Whitman has spoken out strongly about putting limits on carbon dioxide emissions as part of a multi-pollutant strategy to curb emissions. Unfortunately, we are seeing another direction taken.

I would like to conclude by also, not only by pointing out how we are going the wrong way on carbon dioxide emissions and dealing with that, but, also, yesterday, a statement was made that the administration pulled arsenic regulations out of concerns about drinking water.

Now, this industry that is driving this was apparently more influential than studies from the National Academy of Science. And before the EPA was even created, arsenic was regulated. So we need to be very concerned.

I urge my colleagues and this administration to pay heed to the scientific evidence. Whether the issue is carbon dioxide or arsenic, there is a consensus around the issue; and that consensus is that scientific proof ought to be carefully regarded.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) for his leadership and for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield the remainder of my time to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), who has been leading on this for years.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate very much the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) having this Special Order today.

Of course we have had a stunning set of decisions which have been made by this administration just in the past week highlighted by the decision not to impose new standards on CO_2 emissions, that is, the emissions that go into the atmosphere that are causing the greenhouse effect.

□ 1415

Eighty-eight percent of those come from coal-fired plants. If we do not put the controls on, we are going to lose our ability to deal with that issue.

Moreover, there is also this drive by the administration to go to the Arctic pristine wilderness and drill for oil. Now that oil, of course, would go in a pipeline down to California so that the oil could be put into SUVs that average 14 miles a gallon. We should first figure out how to make SUVs go 20 or 25 miles per gallon before we go into the pristine wilderness and destroy it forever. Is not that our responsibility as the technological generation, to ensure that two-thirds of the oil that we put into automobiles, into SUVs, and that is where two-thirds of all oil in our country goes to, is first made more efficient, that is those vehicles, before we destroy God's beautiful creation.

Now the administration likes to say that we will only create tiny footprints like Carl Sandburg's little cat's feet, you can see the image, but the reality is in Prudhoe Bay already where we do allow for drilling, it has done something quite different. There is over 1,000 square miles of development permanently scarring the environment. They have twice the NOX emissions as Washington, D.C. up there in Prudhoe Bay and tons of greenhouse gases. You have pipelines crisscrossing the landscape.

There is a black and white debate here. We can have this or this debate. Here is what goes on in Prudhoe Bay right now every day: 1,000 square miles of development; 500 miles of roads; 3,893 wells drilled; 170 drill pads; 55 contaminated waste sites; one toxic spill every day; two refineries; twice the nitrogen oxide pollution as Washington, D.C.; 114,000 metric tons of methane and 11 million metric tons of carbon emissions every year; and $22 million in civil and criminal fines; 25 production

and treatment facilities; 60 million cubic yards of gravel mined.

The other side, you have no development which is what we are saying. First, let us look at SUVs. First, let us look at buildings. First, let us make ourselves more efficient. First, let us use technology to cut OPEC down to size. They know that we are addicted to these vehicles that get 12 to 14 miles a gallon. We should not go to the Arctic wilderness first, we should go to where we consume the energy.

36-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARCH ACROSS EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KENNEDY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I take a Special Order today with my colleague, my friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON). We co-chair an organization, a group called Faith and Politics. It is truly a group that is bipartisan in nature. For the past few years, we have been engaging in what we call a dialogue on race. We have been taking Members of Congress, Republicans and Democrats, back on a journey, a journey of reconciliation, back to places in Alabama: Birmingham, Montgomery, and Selma.

Just a few days ago, to be exact, on March 2, 3 and 4, we had an opportunity as a group to travel again, a learning experience for many of us, so I thought it would be fitting to come to the House floor this afternoon and talk for a few moments about what we saw, what we felt and what we came away with from this trip to Birmingham, to Montgomery, to Selma.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is fitting and appropriate for us to have this dialogue today, this discussion, for today, exactly 36 years ago today, March 21, 1965, 2 weeks after Bloody Sunday, 700 of us, men and women, young children, elected officials, ministers, priests, rabbis, nuns, American citizens from all over the country, walked across the Edmund Pettus Bridge on our way from Selma to Montgomery to dramatize to the Nation and to the world that people of color wanted to register to vote.

Just think, just a few short years ago in Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, it was almost impossible for people of color to register to vote. You had to pass a so-called literacy test in the States of Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. On one occasion a black man was asked to give the number of bubbles in a bar of soap. If you failed to cross a ''t'' or dot an ''i,'' maybe you misspelled a word, you flunked the so-called literacy test.

Well, because of the action of the Congress and the leadership of a President, 36 years ago, and the involvement of hundreds and millions of our citizens, we have come the distance. And so tonight we want to talk about what has happened and the progress.

Mr. Speaker, I want to yield to my friend and my colleague, the co-chair of the board of Faith and Politics, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON).

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, it is always an honor to be with the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) whether we are on the House floor or in Selma or any place. I had a wonderful experience with the gentleman from Georgia; Ambassador Sheila Sisulu; and Douglas Tanner, who is the president of the Faith and Politics organization in my part of the country, upstate New York; and it was fascinating talking about the gentleman's reminisces and experiences in Alabama, and also comparing those to Ambassador Sisulu's experiences in South Africa. It was absolutely great.

I have a couple of comments I would like to make and then also, Mr. Speaker, of my friend, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), I would like to ask a question at the end of this. Let me make a comment or two if I could.

We had an extraordinary experience in Alabama. I had children and grandchildren, and it was a family affair because I wanted them to have the same sense that I did the first time I was down there of the enormity of this. We celebrate Washington's birthday and Lincoln's birthday and Labor Day, but this is something that we should put a fine point on because it did something to break us over a tidewater in this country which many of us did not feel at the time because we were not there.

I was down there with the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), and he is all dressed up as he is today and he is handsome and he has a nice suit on and he speaks well and he is a very dignified individual. And yet I think back to that time 36, 37 years ago when the gentleman was on the pavement having been beaten and bloodied and representing all of the aspirations that we have for fairness and decency in our society, and we were not there. We wanted to be there, but we were not there; but the gentleman from Georgia was there.

I am a member of the World War II generation, and we are dying pretty rapidly. And someone said at the end of 2008 we will all be gone, but not so of the people of the gentleman from Georgia's generation and the people who fought those battles in Selma, Birmingham, and Montgomery. You cannot listen, as you have heard me say so many times to this lovely lady, Betty Fikes, singing without understanding something about our country that one does not sense unless you sing the Star Spangled Banner or America the Beautiful. This is an extraordinary experience, and this is the lady who was singing at the time of the marching and the beatings and the death and the tragedy down there. These people are all alive. And so to be able to go down there and experience that, be with them, knowing that they are alive and still giving their message, their testament, is always an extraordinary experience.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask a question, if I could. Those of us who have seen the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS) in action and were with Betty Fikes and with Bernard Lafayette and with so many others, look back and see something which was an enormous change in our whole philosophy. But as we know now, it was only one moment in time, it was only one incident and it did not cure our sense of discrimination in this country, it only opened it up. So the question I ask of the gentleman from Georgia, what do we do next? What are those things that we must continue to do not only to honor this legacy but to fulfill our pioneering spirit and try to make this a better place.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his kind words, and let me try to respond to his kind question.

I notice several of my colleagues are here, and I want to give them an opportunity to say something. But any time we see racism, bigotry, see people discriminated against because of the color of their skin, because of their race or national origin, because of their sex or sexual orientation, for whatever reason people are kept down or kept out, we have an obligation, all of us as citizens of America, as human beings, to speak out and say something, to get in the way, to not be quiet.

When I was growing up, my mother used to tell me do not get in trouble. But as a young person I got in trouble, and I saw many young people getting in trouble by sitting down. President Kennedy once said back in 1960, by sitting down on those lunch counter stools, we were really standing up. So by marching for the right to vote 36 years ago, we were helping to make America something better. So from time to time, we all have to get in the way.

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Speaker, I would advise the gentleman from Georgia that I will yield to somebody on the gentleman's side, and then I know that the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. EMERSON) wants to say something.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, let me recognize the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN).

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month I was privileged to be one of 140 people of all walks of life, all ages, from all over the country and all over the world who joined the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), the gentleman from New York (Mr. HOUGHTON), and the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. HILLIARD) in the Faith and Politics Institute on the fourth annual pilgrimage to Alabama.

I blocked out that weekend early in the year because I wanted to go, but I did not anticipate the depth of feelings and emotion that pilgrimage would evoke. Revisiting the history of the