brings back old ones that had been killed and even creates new ones. Remember the mohair subsidy, which became famous because one of its recipients was newsman Sam Donaldson of ABC? It was eliminated in the Freedom to Farm Act of 1996, which was supposed to wean farmers off subsidies altogether, but didn't. Well, the mohair subsidy is back, along with the previously killed wool subsidy, thanks to the chairman (Larry Combest) and ranking Democratic member (Charles Stenholm) of the House Agricultural Committee, both from Texas. And thanks to the efforts of Democratic senator Kent Conrad of North Dakota, the honey subsidy has also risen from the dead.

Is it crucial to America for these products to be federally subsidized? Of course not. Yet what's alarming is how easily these subsidies were revived. The standard wasn't whether they are necessary. Obviously they aren't. It was whether the subsidies could be slipped into the farm bill, one way or another, while everyone is distracted by the war on terrorism. This is the old way of doing business in Washington: Feather your own nest—that is, your district or state—with as much of the taxpayers' money as you can get your hands on. This practice, dormant for a spell, is now back in full flower.

Republicans are almost as guilty as Democrats. For instance, they used the farm bill to present a gift to Ben Gilman, former chairman of the House International Relations Committee, who's retiring. Onion growers in his upstate New York district have been clamoring for federal aid for years, and so has Gilman. The farm bill provides a subsidy. Gilman was duly appreciative. ''This measure enables us to finally deliver the needed $10 million in federal assistance to our Orange County onion farmers, who have suffered year after year,'' he said. Gilman is a capable congressman and a nice man. But should the farm bill be a vehicle for gifts?

The onion program is not the only new one. Conrad was the key player in bringing about a subsidy for ''pulse'' crops—you know, chickpeas, lentils, and dry peas. A subsidy for those is designed to encourage farmers to rotate their crops. Crop rotation is a good agricultural practice. But hasn't it been done for eons without a subsidy from Washington? Must farmers really be prodded at taxpayers' expense?

To no one's shock, the farm bill is blatantly political. As Richard E. Cohen and Corine Hegland noted in the National Journal, Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle made sure Democratic senators up for reelection this year were helped. Max Cleland of Georgia got a bigger-than-ever peanut subsidy. Tim Johnson of South Dakota wanted something called ''country-of-origin'' labeling on products—and got it. Tom Harkin, chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee, got a big, fat farm bill to brag about back in Iowa.

What about President Bush? He could have kept the farm bill from becoming egregiously larded. Citing new economic circumstances, he could have called for a little belt-tightening. It was back in spring 2001 when Congress authorized the $73 billion increase in farm spending. At the time, the budget surplus was $5 trillion and no annual deficits were in sight. The economic slump changed things. By late 2001, the surplus had shrunk dramatically and deficits were foreseen. True, the White House complained about House and Senate farm bills as they were being drafted, saying they cost too much and didn't meet the White House's free-market standards. But Bush could have insisted Congress trim the $73 billion hike and not add programs.

Against a good bit of evidence, Bush and his aides assert the Freedom to Farm bill with its market-oriented approach has not been reversed by the new farm bill. At last week's signing ceremony, Bush said supplemental farm bills won't have to be enacted every year, as was the case after 1996. The new bill, he said, ''is generous enough to eliminate the need for supplemental support later this year and in the future.'' We'll see. The question is whether farmers and their allies in Washington have merely been whetted. The answer, more likely than not, is whetted.

HOLOCAUST RESTITUTION TAX FAIRNESS ACT OF 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 2002

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Holocaust Restitution Tax Fairness Act of 2002 to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001. This bill which allows the continued exemption of Holocaust related payments from federal income tax is an important and symbolic gesture on behalf of eligible individuals who were persecuted on the basis of religion, physical and mental disability, sexual orientation by Nazi Germany.

A reparation fund established by Germany makes approximately 60,000 payments to individuals living in the United States. Payments also come from countries and industries that benefited from slave labor or property confiscation during the Nazi era.

Payments to Holocaust survivors should not be subject to U.S. income tax. The Exclusion From Federal Income Tax For Restitution Received by Victims of the Nazi Regime was enacted as a thoughtful way to bring closure to a painful period in history.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation on behalf of victims of the Nazi regime.

MARITIME TRANSPORTATION ANTITERRORISM ACT OF 2002

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 4, 2002

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam Speaker, I come today to address the critical issue of American seaport security. I am acutely aware of the dangerous possibilities for terrorist acts against our seaports since I represent the third largest and the busiest seaport on the East Coast of the United States—the Port of New York/New Jersey, which creates over 229,000 jobs and generates more than $25 billion in commerce.

As we are all sadly aware, a terrorist's intent is not only to kill innocent people and destroy valuable property, but also to destroy our livelihoods and our way of life. Any terrorist action against our strategic seaports would have disastrous effects nationally and internationally. Any attempt on our part to grapple with the complex issues and details of developing and implementing a maritime security system must take into consideration the fact that we will need international cooperation and equal security capabilities.

We need to ensure the safety of cargo originating overseas, which then must pass through the global chain of custody, before it reaches our domestic ports. To fully understand the scope of dealing with maritime security, simply imagine that every single container bound for entry into the United States or simply passing through the United States is a potential weapon of mass destruction. Every ship could be a delivery system of doom and every port a potential target. Now realize that the equivalent of six million containers entered the United States last year aboard 7,500 commercial vessels making 51,000 port calls.

H.R. 3983, the Maritime Transportation Anti-Terrorism Act of 2002, as amended, is an important step in ensuring the safety of cargo originating overseas. Together with the manager's amendment adding the Coast Guard reauthorization bill and the Custom's reauthorization act passed by the House shortly before the Memorial Day Work Period, the Congress is finally taking a comprehensive approach to port security.

Perhaps most critical to a timely global implementation of a port security system is the fact that H.R. 3983 incorporates the need to work effectively with foreign governments in order to ensure national security. This bill calls for the Department of Transportation to identify foreign ports that pose a security risk to the United States. If the Department finds a foreign port's security measures to be inadequate, it will make recommendations to improve these security measures. But if the foreign port fails to take corrective actions within 90 days, the Department can prescribe additional security conditions for ships and cargo entering the United States from these ports.

The bill also requires development of a cargo identification, tracking, and screening system, as well as performance standards to enhance the physical security of shipping containers. Also important is H.R. 3983's inclusion of a deadline (June 30, 2003) for the deployment of this cargo security system. We all know that such a time schedule is crucial to the protection of our people, seaports and national and international commerce. There is no time to waste on this endeavor. We must start and complete this strategy against terrorism before we are subject to another attack. Implementing preventive measures will greatly reduce the degree of vulnerability of our ports.

Finally, it codifies an emergency Coast Guard rule put in place immediately after the attacks of September 11th. Under this rule, shipping companies must electronically transmit passenger and crew manifests to the Department of Transportation prior to the vessel entering the United States.

Unfortunately, H.R. 3983 is vague or does not address many issues important to port security and I hope that my colleagues will address these issues in conference. For example, the bill creates a single, national transportation security card to be issued to port workers, merchant mariners, and truck drivers who work in ''secure'' areas based on the successful completion of a background check. Background checks and a single security card are something we have been doing at the Port of New York-New Jersey for many years. However, it remains to be seen how this single, national transportation security card is going to work in an actual seaport setting and I urge