

their objectives clearly. Number one, they want to defeat the coalition in Iraq. The second step is that they want to destabilize the moderate Muslim regimes in the Middle East. The third step is they want to eliminate the State of Israel. The fourth step is they want to establish the caliphate, northern Africa, southern Europe and Middle East reaching down into Asia. And then they want to establish Sharia law in these areas.

In another part of this recent communication, they indicated that they believe the world is made up of two primary areas: a core, Western Europe and the United States and outlying region, outlying areas; and the Middle East, northern Africa, the parts that make up the caliphate. And what they clearly say is that in today's world, because we have been on the offense, the violence has been in the outlying areas, Afghanistan, Pakistan, northern Africa and Iraq. And what they say is they want to move this violence from the outlying regions to the core. What does that mean? They want to move the violence to Europe and to our homeland.

Today, as we face this critical test, today we received a letter from Mike McConnell who is the Director of National Intelligence, building on testimony that the intelligence community provided us in September in 2006, building on information that they gave to us in April, building on a public statement that Mr. McConnell made on May 21 in an op-ed piece in the Washington Post. What does it all say?

Our Nation faces an intelligence gap. Think of it. As we face greater risk and a higher security threat than we've faced perhaps in a long time, we have an intelligence gap, a situation in which our intelligence community every day is missing a significant portion of what we should be getting in order to protect the American people. Not only should we be getting it, but we could be getting it, but we have this intelligence gap because we have a 1970s law called the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act that Members on the other side of the aisle refuse, refuse to update and to modify.

The letter goes on, If we are to stay a step ahead of the terrorists and protect the American people, I firmly believe that we need to be able to use our capabilities to collect, now listen to this, to collect foreign intelligence about foreign targets overseas, without requirements imposed by an out-of-the-State, out-of-date FISA statute.

Today, for instance, the statute requires that in a number of important situations that we obtain court orders. We need to obtain court orders to most effectively obtain foreign terrorist communications, and remember, this is about foreign intelligence, about foreign terrorists, who are overseas, and we need to get court orders to intercept those communications.

The letter goes on, Simply put, in a significant number of cases we are in the unfortunate position of having to

obtain court orders to effectively collect foreign intelligence about foreign targets located overseas.

Then some say, well, let's just take some of our resources and apply it; we can expedite. Number one, it doesn't solve the problem to prepare these court orders by just putting more people, but to get the right kind of information, to prepare these court orders and get them done in the right way, it would take important analysts and put them in the position of preparing court orders for foreign terrorists and get court orders.

We need to fix this intelligence gap, and we need to do it before we go on recess next week.

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

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

THE FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, it's a pleasure to be able to address my colleagues, and thank you for your leadership as well.

Madam Speaker, I wanted to speak this evening on the legislation that is before this House that takes a completely new turn in farming and the agricultural agenda for this Nation, and there are certain elements that I would like to highlight.

When you think of an agricultural bill, you think immediately of farms and ranches, particularly of large size, almost a large conglomerate of a series of farms that provide the food engine for America. But this bill draws my attention and support because of the number of other elements and turns and new directions that this legislation takes.

It's important to note that this bill has a new definition, one of nutrition. This bill reauthorizes nutrition programs, accounting for two-thirds of the bill's funding to help low-income families in need, including the food stamp program that keeps many Americans from going hungry. The bill increases the minimum benefit under the food stamp program for the first time in 30 years.

Just this past week, Madam Speaker, we announced the increase in the minimum wage, the first time in 10 years. One of the greatest tragedies here in this most powerful Nation and powerfully economic Nation is the number of people in America that go to bed hungry. The greatest disaster of that is that a huge percentage happen to be children.

This bill eliminates the current gap on child care costs to help the working

poor meet rising costs. In addition, it nearly doubles the fund for emergency food assistance programs and expands the fresh fruit and vegetable snack program to all 50 States.

This bill focuses on an expanded view of nutrition and, in fact, increases the spending for nutrition by billions of dollars and expands the feeding of children by millions of dollars, but yet, it focuses on the family farmer and provides them with a resource base in order for those family farmers to survive.

I also applaud the fact that struggling, socially disadvantaged, and African American families who have farmed over the years and were abused under the United States Department of Agriculture and suffered, in fact, in a lineage of discrimination now will have a remedy, now will have recourse to a number of sections in this legislation that addresses the inequity of the treatment of black farmers, a number of extensions and protections that will make them whole after years of devastating, if you will, treatment by the United States Department of Agriculture.

I want to acknowledge the Agriculture Committee, the bipartisan work that they did, the chairman and the ranking member, Chairman PETERSON and Ranking Member GOODLATTE, on recognizing the work of the members of the Congressional Black Caucus that worked so very hard and the members of the committee that included DAVID SCOTT and included the task force, BENNY THOMPSON and G.K. BUTTERFIELD and a number of others that continued to work on this issue.

I had an amendment that I hoped to continue to address and that was to address the question environmentally of increasing the conservation fund for African American socially disadvantaged farmers. We still need to move in a direction of increasing the ability to, if you will, draw out of a dry arid land farming land or ranching land a survivable farm or ranch. I will continue to work on that issue. Even though that amendment was not made in order, I believe it's an issue that is crucial to continue the support and build a family farming system here in America that is still valuable and worth saving.

I do have an amendment that focuses on school lunches and school breakfasts, an issue in my district. Large corporations are now serving the Nation's schools for children who sometimes get no other meal other than school breakfast and school lunch. We're going to stand on the floor of the House and debate the question that it is the sense of this Congress to ensure that these lunches are nutritional, that they don't increase juvenile obesity, for we see a number of our children being overweight because of the food or lack of food that they have.

One other point as I close is simply to say the importance of alternative fuel is also counted in this legislation.

Overall, this legislation takes a new direction for America, an agricultural