

words. He was on an inappropriate topic. And Mitt Romney certainly didn't rise to the occasion when he said they weren't the words he would have used. It wasn't an area that anybody should have brought up or even thought about.

Limbaugh said that the woman wanted to be paid for sex because she, in his thoughts, wanted contraception so she could have sex without the fear of pregnancy. It's funny, Rush Limbaugh never questioned anybody getting a vasectomy, for what's the use of a vasectomy, that's covered by insurance, but to have sex without the fear or possibility of pregnancy. He said because she wanted sex paid for by the taxpayers that he ought to be able to watch it. Well, I wonder if he wants to watch all the men who had vasectomies have their sex.

There's something wrong in the country, and the advertisers and the radio stations are responsible, and they need to take appropriate moral and ethical action and not continue to be accessories to the fact and support such trash.

CONTINUING IRANIAN THREAT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. ADAMS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. ADAMS. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today to speak about the continuing Iranian threat to the United States and Israel.

Just as the President of Iran continues to spew his vile poison into the civil discourse of the United Nations, the regime of the Ayatollah issued a threat of violent aggression 2 weeks ago against Israel through the deputy head of the armed forces.

Through its actions, Iran has proven that it will never work with the peaceful nations of the world community. In fact, in yet another affront to diplomacy, Iran recently offered to allow inspectors from the IAEA into the country only to refuse them entry into the most important facilities to examine those nuclear sites in dispute.

The threat of a nuclear-armed Iran is not only a threat to Israel; it is also a direct threat to the United States and to the entire world community. Just this week, the chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency said there were unspecified activities at an Iranian military site which inspectors wanted to visit.

The Iranian regime has publicly threatened to close the Strait of Hormuz, a major shipping route for Middle Eastern nations to export oil and supply the world's energy needs. This threat by Iran amounts to economic warfare, as the closure of the Strait of Hormuz would trigger spikes in crude oil, gasoline bottlenecks in the supply chain, increased prices for all manufactured goods, and would likely lead to massive increases for gas here in the United States.

At a time when our domestic economy is struggling to recover, the last

thing hardworking Americans need is for gas prices to soar even higher.

While drastic reductions in the supply of crude oil would be devastating to the world economy, the threat of a theocratic, unstable Iranian regime bent on the destruction of Israel and its allies is even worse. A nuclear Iran will not care about economic sanctions. A nuclear Iran will not care about diplomacy. A nuclear Iran will not negotiate in good faith. And a nuclear Iran will not be a friend of the United States.

Perhaps the greatest threat to peace and security in the world is the refusal to heed the warnings of the most violent and dangerous regimes when they tell us what their exact intentions are. My hope is that it will not be a mistake of this Nation, one that this Nation makes with this regime in Tehran. Again, my hope is that it will not be our mistake not to pay attention to the signals from the regime in Tehran.

□ 1030

THE AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY DRAFT REPORT ON VIEQUES, PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Madam Speaker, I rise to discuss a subject of great importance to me, to the people I represent, and to many of our fellow citizens around the country, and that is the health of nearly 10,000 residents of Vieques, Puerto Rico.

The people of Vieques sacrificed as much as, if not more than, any other U.S. civilian population to advance our military readiness. In the 1940s, the Federal Government expropriated lands on Vieques for use by the Navy. For over 60 years, the Navy conducted training operations on eastern Vieques, including ship-to-shore bombing, aerial bombing, and ground-based exercises. The Navy has reported that it dropped between 3 and 4 million pounds of ordnance on Vieques each year between 1983 and 1998.

Training operations on Vieques ceased in 2003, in part due to concerns about the risks to safety, health, and the environment posed by decades of weapons use. The Navy is now administering the cleanup of Vieques with support from other Federal and local agencies. In 2005, the EPA listed Vieques as one of the most hazardous sites in the U.S. To date, over 35,000 munitions on Vieques have been recovered and destroyed, including at least 19,000 live munitions.

Unfortunately, numerous studies have shown that residents of Vieques have higher rates of cancer and other chronic illnesses than residents of mainland Puerto Rico, raising serious questions about whether there may be a link between those health problems

and the island's long use as a military training range.

In December, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, an agency within HHS, released a draft report that addresses whether there is evidence of a causal relationship between the identified health problems and the Navy's activities. ATSDR examined five "pathways" through which residents of Vieques might have been exposed to harmful contaminants: air, soil, fish, local produce and livestock, and drinking water. The conclusion reached by ATSDR in its draft report is generally the same as the conclusion reached by the agency in a series of controversial public health assessments it conducted on Vieques about a decade ago, specifically, that the available data does not establish that the contaminants in these pathways, some of which can be linked to military activities, were at levels expected to cause the reported health problems.

Because the draft report leaves many crucial questions unanswered, today I'm filing extensive comments that I urge ATSDR to address before its report is finalized. My comments are intended to be constructive, because my constituents deserve a meticulous evaluation of the draft report aimed at producing concrete action by the Federal Government.

In my comments, I note that ATSDR repeatedly acknowledges that its conclusions are not definitive, or even close to it, because the available data upon which the agency relies is incomplete in many respects. While ATSDR recommends that further studies be conducted to fill certain data gaps, the agency does not go far enough.

In 2009, ATSDR stated that it expected to recommend biomonitoring to determine whether, and to what extent, residents have been exposed to harmful chemicals. Yet, in a startling reversal, the agency has now stated that "it is not recommending a comprehensive, systematic biomonitoring effort at this time."

Given the health problems on Vieques and the potential link between those problems and military activities, such an action is misplaced. Therefore, I have urged ATSDR to recommend a comprehensive biomonitoring investigation. More generally, I have encouraged ATSDR and other Federal agencies, working in partnership with independent researchers, to take a more active and assertive role in designing, implementing, and especially funding the additional studies that are still needed to determine the nature and potential causes of the health problems being experienced by residents of Vieques.

It is unacceptable that more than a decade after ATSDR completed its first public health assessments on Vieques, fundamental questions about the safety of the island's environment and the health of its residents remain unanswered. My constituents deserve better.