

took down the power lines along this road on one side, clipping them off about two feet or so above, taking the entire lines and the power poles across into the woods on the other side.

□ 1815

Then as it crossed that street, just immediately across almost an idyllic setting that I described where the rodeo took place and the ballpark is, here was this recreational vehicle park where people come with their RVs, these big RVs, and they were shredded, they were torn apart, just like many mobile home communities in the area were. People say things looked like match boxes. That is not an adequate description. Trees were shredded like a shredder shreds them at the top. Destruction of these vehicles as well as many of the homes in the area were terribly devastated, indescribable, even though one may see pictures of them, to see what has actually happened in this setting.

The bad news was that 10 people or so were killed in that recreational vehicle park. Over in a neighborhood a short distance away from that of regular single-family homes, there was the same type of destruction I had seen from the air after Hurricane Andrew, a narrower swath but very similar where the homes were literally destroyed. These were well-built, modern homes and people lost everything. Some people lost their lives. Not far from there, there was a strip mall shopping center with a grocery store, with a McDonald's, with a lot of other things in it totally wiped out.

Fortunately, the tornado occurred at night and so the devastation of all of this block and concrete that came down did not kill anyone in that mall other than I understand two people in a pub that was still open that night in the area. A mobile home park wiped out with a lot more people killed. In Orange County, I talked to a couple in a mobile home park where the devastation was terrible, another park near Winter Garden. They had been very fortunate. Nothing had happened to their mobile home. The inside had not been damaged, nothing had fallen off the shelves. But you walked right outside to their carport and the cars under that carport, which was no longer there, had been crushed, a large Ford vehicle whose axle and frame just bent over like some giant block had been set on top of it and immediately next door to them, which was in a mobile home park only a very short distance of a few feet, was another mobile home that had been shredded apart, just totally destroyed and a body had been flung in there from a mobile home 5 or 6 homes down from them where this horrible wrecking had come through but God for whatever reason had spared them and their mobile home but not someone else.

I just want to say that all of the people who have helped in that, all the compassionate workers need to be

thanked, all the people whose outpouring of sympathy and concern have been given and the hours and hours of work that were put in in the aftermath of that storm deserve a lot of thanks and praise. Thank God more people were not killed.

#### EDUCATION, TAXES AND RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. Northup). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, I wanted to tonight touch base on 3 issues very quickly, but first I want to say, representing the Third Infantry Division in Hinesville, Georgia, Fort Stewart-Hunter, I had the opportunity on Friday to go say good-bye to many of the troops who were leaving to go to Kuwait. They were on the tarmac, they had already said good-bye to their families, they had already gotten their paperwork in order. They had guns in hand, canteens loaded, rucksacks on their back, they were sitting in their fuel trucks, in their communication trucks and Jeeps and so forth, getting ready to get on a C-5 and go to Germany or to Spain, then on to Kuwait. The men and women who were about to go in harm's way on behalf of not only the United States of America but the entire world were standing tall. They were confident but not cocky, they were proud but not arrogant and to a person brave and sure of themselves. They are well-trained.

I told them that the American people are behind them. I was excited as everybody else was when I read about the potential peace agreement. I hope that it stands. However, I do think that this administration needs to clearly outline to Congress, this week, exactly what that agreement means to our foreign policy in Iraq and the Middle East. What will be the long-term ramifications? Do we have a lasting peace, what will be involved, and can our troops come home? Can we bring down the 25,000 troops that we have? I am very interested to hear from the administration on that. I, like many Members of Congress, again would ask this administration to tell us exactly what is going on.

To touch base on a couple of issues, real quickly. Education. This year we need to do everything we can to decentralize education and put it back in the hands of the local people. I was talking to a woman in Brunswick, Georgia whose mother was a teacher in Gray, Georgia, one of the great teachers that introduces all the kids to all the wonderful subjects and has taught most of the kids in the small town of Gray. She said that not long ago, a Harvard federally funded education consultant went down to Gray, Georgia and told this 30-year veteran of teaching that she needed to start pointing to the other side of the chalkboard because kids learn cog-

nitively better on one side of the brain than the other and if the teacher would only start pointing to the other side of the chalkboard, these kids would learn a lot more. That kind of absurd busyboddiness out of Washington, we do not need.

The second issue, taxes. We need to continue to be mindful that the average American family pays 38 percent in taxes. That means every Monday, you are working for the government and most of Tuesday you are working for the government. We need to reduce our tax burden to the 25 percent range. We need to simplify our Tax Code. If we go to a sales tax or a flat tax, whichever, it is better than the Tax Code that we have now. Then we need to change the attitude of the IRS. They work for us, the American people. We do not work for them. You should be considered innocent until proven guilty.

Finally, we need to have a mature dialogue on retirement. We really do not have a zero balanced budget. We have a Social Security surplus that we are applying to the general fund. If we want to protect Social Security and put it first, we have to say absolutely no new spending programs.

Madam Speaker, the President has committed to over \$100 billion in new spending programs for this year in his budget. That money comes right out of the surplus in Social Security. We need to personalize Social Security, but we need to protect it. The first step is not spending the money. In these things, education, taxes and retirement, I hope that this Congress makes them the top priority.

#### 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NAGORNO KARABAGH MOVEMENT

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I have come to the floor of the House tonight to pay tribute to a very important milestone for the Armenian people and for people everywhere who care about the values of freedom, human rights and self-determination.

Last Friday, February 20, marked the 10th anniversary of the liberation struggle of Nagorno Karabagh. Nagorno Karabagh, or Artsakh as it is known to the Armenian people, is an independent Nation populated primarily by ethnic Armenians and located between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin consigned Nagorno Karabagh to Azerbaijan despite the fact that this land has been continuously inhabited by Armenians for centuries. Armenia was the first Nation to embrace Christianity, and Karabagh was an integral part of the ancient land of Armenia. Under the Soviet system Nagorno Karabagh was recognized as an autonomous region because of its distinct Armenian identity.