

by labor because of an increase in fuel prices. You see that General Motors has had a huge drop-off in the purchase of their lucrative SUVs and other larger vehicles that consume more gas, Ford similarly.

We find this in small businesses across America; it has been embedded in everything. And now we are beginning to hear that there are stirrings of inflation beyond the price of oil and gas. This is a serious problem; and, unfortunately, this body, the House of Representatives, to its discredit did not adopt a serious or effective proposal to begin to address this problem in either the short or the long term.

Short term, American consumers need relief from high gas prices. They are being gouged at the pump by Big Oil and the OPEC cartel.

Now, I have asked President Bush numerous times, written to him and asked him, he is a big fan of rule of law, international trade agreements, the WTO, all of those things. I am not a big fan. But he says he believes in rules-based trade.

Well, the OPEC cartel is violating the rules of the World Trade Organization. Seven of the OPEC nations are members. They are clearly colluding to restrict production and drive up the price of oil to make a profit. That is clearly prohibited by the WTO. But the President and his trade representative have failed to take any action against the OPEC companies.

Then we have price gouging by Big Oil. Last quarter saw record profits for most of the industry, \$8 billion in one quarter for Exxon Mobile. Their cash reserves have doubled to over \$20 billion in 1 year, money extracted from Americans 5 cents a gallon at a time or more at the pump by piggybacking on the cartel activities of OPEC, and Big Oil is getting away with it.

This administration is not doing anything to rein in Big Oil. They merge, close refineries, and then blame a shortage of refineries on environmental laws when they have been closed because of mergers to drive up the profits of the oil industry.

We should reinstate a windfall profit tax on the industry. We should break up a number of these huge companies and begin to get some true competition again in that industry.

□ 1715

We cannot continue to bleed this much money. Every day, Americans are bleeding money at the pump, which is ultimately going to spill over into a tremendous problem for our economy, especially if we look at the failing trade policies of this administration.

Then there is energy efficiency, new technologies, energy independence. These are things that seem very foreign to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and to the old oil men who are running this country down at the White House and at an undisclosed location.

Energy efficiency, this bill makes sort of a passing chuckle and nod at en-

ergy efficiency. It spends 20 times as much money subsidizing the oil, coal and gas industry. Wait a minute, were we not just talking about the fact they had record profits last quarter? Yes, they do have record profits and they are extracting that from American consumers, but they want their hands in both pockets. They do not want to just take money out of your wallet, they want to take money from taxpayers, too.

So there is \$8 billion in this bill, supposedly to help with energy problems. Unfortunately, 95 percent of it is subsidies to the wildly profitable oil, coal and gas industry, which will provide no help to American consumers; and a mere 5 percent is a nod toward the idea perhaps America could develop new sources of energy, perhaps America could become more efficient, perhaps America could become energy independent, but that is only worth 5 percent of what they are putting into the bill.

Just think what it would be like to have an energy-independent America relying upon homegrown sources of energy and new technologies and new efficiencies, and how that would insulate us from these problems around the world. But that is not a vision that is shared by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle. They have delivered us today something that would not have been a very enlightened energy policy in 1955, but is just pathetic in the 21st century, considering the threats to our economy and to our national security.

Unfortunately, they prevailed today, but hopefully, in the future, we can do better by the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

COMMEMORATING THE BATTLE OF SAN JACINTO

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate an historical event in the Lone Star State's grand, glorious heritage. On March 2, 1836, Texas declared independence from the dictatorship of Mexico. On March 6, the Alamo fell with the loss of 187 defenders, all volunteers, William Barrett Travis, Davy Crockett, and Jim Bowie.

Now, I am going to tell my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, the rest of the story and why this day is so important to Texas.

Less than 60 days after the fall of the Alamo, on this day years ago, an 18-minute battle took place on the murky banks of the San Jacinto River where it meets Buffalo Bayou in southeast Texas. History forever changed. Texas' independence from Mexico was secured, and Texas became a country for 9 years.

After the Alamo fell, the Texas army moved rapidly east, being chased by three invading armies from Mexico. The Texans had been joined by settlers fleeing the advance of the tyrant Santa Anna, who was burning Texas settlements. The armies reached a marshy lowland where General Sam Houston decided it was time to turn and fight the enemy.

In a letter Sam Houston wrote to a friend on the morning of April 19, he said, "The odds are greatly against us, but the troops are in fine spirits and now is the time for action. We go to conquer" for Texas and they did.

Most battles, Mr. Speaker, in our history start at sunrise, but the Texans were not waiting for another day. So General Sam's army of frontiersmen, shopkeepers, lawyers, ranchers and former slaves, all volunteers, in various types of odd attire, began mustering at high noon. They did not look like an army, but they all had the boldness and bravery and brazen courage to fight for Texas and for freedom.

The Battle of San Jacinto started at 4 o'clock on the afternoon of April 21, 1836. The Texan army consisted of approximately 800 volunteers under the command of General Sam Houston. The Mexican army consisted of approximately 2,000 professional, experienced soldiers under the command of Mexican President and General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. Santa Anna's army of hardened veterans had not yet been defeated in battle and even a few years before had defeated the French invasion of Mexico.

The battle began when the Texans, advancing in a single column, attacked the Mexican camp. They were fatigued, they were filthy, famished and fuming, but Houston was mounted on his white stallion leading the army. Armed with tomahawks, Bowie knives and long rifles, they went forward across the open marshy plain of southeast Texas. A Georgian Huguenot, a Kentucky colonel, and a Scotch-Irishman from Tennessee led the march across the tall grass and down upon a Mexican camp engaged in their afternoon siestas.

The pace was set by two unlikely characters that played field music as they marched. There was a German named Frederick Lemsky on the fife and a free black that, by all accounts, his name was Dick the Drummer. Two other musicians volunteered, but none of the foursome knew any marching music. They were only familiar with the popular music of the day. Therefore, Sam Houston, with a smile, had

the foursome play "Come to the Bower," a bawdy-house love song regarded as quite risqué at the time. As the soldiers marched on to victory, they carried their banner, a flag of Miss Liberty consisting of a partially clad female proclaiming freedom.

The enemy was caught by a stunning surprise. The battle lasted 18 minutes, but the Mexican defeat was devastating. Only nine Texans were killed or mortally wounded. Six hundred thirty Mexican soldiers were killed, and the number of Mexican soldiers taken prisoner exceeded the entire number of the Texas army.

The battle cries of "Remember the Alamo" and "Remember Goliad" were the soldiers' calls for vengeance. This was a soldiers' battle, and they had scores to settle because they had lost brothers and friends at the Alamo and Goliad.

The heroes of the battle of San Jacinto were a diverse mix. The youngest soldier at San Jacinto was Elijah Votaw, a 15-year-old that had been in Texas for about a year. The oldest was Asa Mitchell, a 60-year-old who had been in Texas for about 14 years.

Captain Juan Seguin headed a unit of about two dozen Tejanos, people of Hispanic descent born in Texas, who fought in Houston's army and wore pieces of cardboard in their hatbands so fellow soldiers would not mistake them for the enemy.

If we want to credit the most unlikely of heroes, we have to acknowledge the Yellow Rose of Texas, Emily Morgan. Legend has it that Emily Morgan, the young, beautiful, racially mixed housekeeper who had been captured earlier by Mexican forces, is said to have been lingering with Santa Anna in his tent, causing him to be unprepared for the Texans' attack. Later Santa Anna, when he was captured, was found hiding in a well.

The battle of San Jacinto avenged the massacre of Texan soldiers at the Alamo and the murder of hundreds of Texans taken prisoner at Goliad and gave Texas its independence from Mexico.

Texas claimed the entire area from the Gulf of Mexico all the way to Canada, including not only the State of Texas, but New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado and Wyoming.

So General Sam Houston, his boys took the day, and they defeated the invaders and proclaimed to all, "Don't mess with Texas."

Mr. Speaker, every year a local radio station, KILT, with its morning crew of Hudson and Harrigan and top newsmen in America, Robert McEntire, honor this day by playing a recording of a bunch of third graders from Tomball, Texas, singing the State song, "Texas, our Texas," with an old, out-of-tune piano. It is because of the Battle of San Jacinto, Mr. Speaker, all Texans can sing along with pride, "God bless you, Texas, and keep you brave and strong, that you may grow in power and worth throughout the ages long."

When Sam Houston died some years later, his last words were "Texas, Texas." And Mr. Speaker, the rest, they say, is Texas history.

JASON KAMRAS, NATIONAL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House for a joyful moment.

On the front page of the Washington Post today is a very large picture of children of the District of Columbia and one of their teachers, who was entertained yesterday by President Bush at the White House to celebrate the fact that he has been named Teacher of the Year, the oldest and most prestigious award for teachers in our country.

This is a young man who teaches at Sousa Junior High School in Washington, D.C. Jason Kamras is his name. He is a math teacher who graduated from Princeton University. What does he think to do with his life? Come to the District of Columbia to teach disadvantaged children in our elementary and middle schools.

He began teaching in 1996. He took 2 years out because he thought he ought to go and get an education degree, and he went and got a master's degree in education, but came right back to the District of Columbia to teach math at Sousa.

Typical of the way this young man approached his job is the student he first met when he was in middle school at Sousa. His name was Wendell Jefferson. He said, Wendell, you keep trying; you will do well. Wendell Jefferson went on to high school. When he got to high school, no longer under the care of Mr. Kamras, Mr. Kamras tutored him in math. Wendell Jefferson is now studying electrical engineering at Morehouse College.

This story is perhaps emblematic of the way this young man approaches teaching. He lobbied his principal for double the time for students in math, with two teachers for each student. He redesigned the curriculum using technologies so as to adjust the curriculum to all learning styles. He took to heart this notion that every child can learn, those words which have become such a cliché, a cliché because we all know them to be true, but we do not know always how to unlock what makes them true.

In his first year, using his new curriculum, these children went from 80 percent below basic to 40 percent below basic. Something happened to almost 40 percent of them when they got a teacher who homed in on their individual needs. Now, we are talking about a school where all but 40 of about 380 students qualify for the reduced price lunch. It tells us something of the poverty level of the students.

Actually, the District of Columbia public schools look a lot like every big public school, except the Members of Congress see this one up close. We are very pleased to have a new superintendent, Mr. Janey, who is in the process of restructuring our public schools, but of course, the most basic restructuring of schools has to do, first, with the children in those schools, how the schools are restructured so that they are child-oriented and how are they restructured so as to understand the most important adult in each child's life during the school day is the teacher. Somehow or the other this young man, fresh out of college, understood that.

He works from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. according to his principal. My mother was a schoolteacher, so I want to say that those long hours are fairly typical of how teachers operate. They do not do it at school. They are working that hard because of the hours they put in at home in preparing to teach.

But for Mr. Kamras, teaching in a big city school system was much more difficult than it was for my mother when she taught when I was a child because of the concentration of poverty in big cities today. This city was a much larger city, 200,000 people more than it has today, and it was far more mixed economically. Then, of course, people began to move to larger quarters in the suburbs leaving concentrations of poverty here. We have lots of middle-class people in the District, I am pleased to say, but we have large concentrations of poverty, and this is reflected in the scores.

The fact that Jason Kamras was able not only to reach the children, but to reach the measurement, which I think is the right measurement; there is no way to get around the fact that test scores are the only way to know for sure that children are progressing. I wish there were a better way. I wish there were a more objective way, but that is it.

□ 1730

This teacher has somehow made these test scores go up.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to quote something that he said, because it tells something of his world view. He said, "My intense desire to see my school excel comes not only from an unwavering belief that all students deserve an excellent education, but also the unique role Sousa played in the civil rights movement."

This young man's world view gives him a sense that justice in the classroom must be done because he believes in justice in our country for African Americans, and he has brought it to bear right here in the public schools of the District of Columbia.

I know you would want to, Mr. Speaker, congratulate him; I know this House would want to congratulate him. We take great pride in his achievement today, and we thank the President of the United States for honoring him.