

in America for his courage and dedication to democracy.

I believe that if Turkey wants to further explore the opportunities that she wishes to do within the present European Union, she must address the issue of article 301. I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring the memory of Hrant Dink and continue to urge the repeal of article 301.

□ 1500

#### ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE

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

Mr. MICHAUD. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the workers at NewPage Corporation in Rumford, Maine, and Fraser Timber Limited in Ashland, Maine. These workers received some devastating news this week about job losses and layoffs. Fraser Timber Limited will lay off 70 workers on February 8, 2008 to June 1, 2008. NewPage Corporation announced a shutdown of a paper machine in Rumford as of February 25, 2008. This decision could impact approximately 60 to 70 jobs in Maine.

In Maine, we are all too familiar with an economic and trade policy that has devastated our manufacturing sector. As a mill worker for nearly 30 years at Great Northern Paper Company, I know how devastating this news is for these workers and their families. When this happens in small rural communities in Maine, it ripples through the economy and throughout the region.

When the House considers a potential economic stimulus package in the next few weeks, I'll keep the workers of NewPage and Fraser at the forefront of my mind. Any economic stimulus package the House considers must consider what's good for our workers and their industry. We must get back to fiscal discipline, yet provide the relief so many people in Maine need.

But if we are truly trying to reform our economy, we must also address the serious trade imbalance that's creating this job loss. It's no secret that trade has gotten the better of Maine's manufacturing industry. Since passage of NAFTA, Maine has lost 23 percent of our manufacturing base.

Today the USTR Trade Representative Susan Schwab said that moving forward on these trade agreements will actually help our economy. Well, I can tell you this, she obviously hasn't talked to the men and women of NewPage and Fraser. She hasn't talked to other workers in Maine and across this country that have been devastated by these NAFTA-style trade deals. These workers don't want more TAA. They want their jobs back.

I've been in touch with the Maine Department of Labor Rapid Response Team, the workers at the mills, to discuss the implication of this, the paper machine shutting down on these work-

ers. In the days and weeks ahead, my office will be working to provide whatever assistance is necessary to help these workers get back to work. But they want their jobs.

Mainers have rallied for each other during difficult times in the past and will do so again. I'll continue to be involved in meeting the needs of our workers affected by this announcement, and I'll stay in close contact with plant officials and workers in the days ahead.

But this Congress has to look at the fundamental problem with our flawed trade models and trade deals that we've been passing in this Congress. And this Congress is no different than the previous Congress. We continue to use the same flawed trade model, and that's going to continue to hurt workers and manufacturing businesses here in this country.

This Congress has to wake up to what's actually happening out there. We will not need any economic stimulus package if we make sure that we pass fair trade deals that are good for our workers here, that are good for our businesses here in this country.

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

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

#### THE ELON PEACE PLAN

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I rise to bring to the attention of the House an important new plan that seeks to bridge the longstanding divide between the Israelis and the Palestinians. The plan is titled "The Right Road to Peace," and it is a comprehensive proposal for finding an avenue to peace, as well as addressing the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people.

As we know, the Palestinian people have, for nearly three generations, languished in U.N.-run refugee camps in Lebanon, Jordan, Gaza and the West Bank. The author of the proposal, Mr. Binyamin Elon, a highly respected member of Israel's Knesset, he, at the heart of this plan, has offered an innovative approach for providing opportunity, housing and education to a population which, for a long time, has lived as a ward of the international community. Mr. Elon's proposal would end the cycle of dependence that long has shackled Palestinian development.

Madam Speaker, I will include a summary of the document entitled "The Right Road to Peace" into the RECORD after my remarks.

Today, there are approximately 1.3 million registered Palestinians being

cared for in 59 camps run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, or the U-N-R-W-A, sometimes referred to as UNRWA.

Nearly 60 years after the first of these camps were established, virtually nothing has been done to return this population to a settled existence. The 1.3 million Palestinians living in these camps live in a world of poverty, their day-to-day existence solely reliant on international handouts.

The history of Palestinian refugee problems clarifies why the Elon peace plan is so needed at this time:

Following the Israeli War of Independence in 1948, hundreds of thousands of Palestinians were displaced. At the time, hundreds of thousands of Jews fled also or were ousted from their homes in Arab lands. The U.N. established the U.N. Relief and Works Agency in 1949 to care for the Arab/Palestinian refugees. The U.N. has never created an agency solely to serve the interests of one displaced group of people.

Many of the refugees do not even have historical roots in the territory now known as Palestine. Many of those residing in the West Bank are descendants of those who came from Syria and the Trans-Jordan area.

While the displaced Jews of the region settled in Israel and were integrated into the Israeli society, the Palestinians remain sequestered in these refugee camps. Why the Arab community that perpetually talks about the welfare of the Palestinians does nothing to relocate these people out of these camps is strange and, for many, it's considered no mystery. Many of these regimes fought against Israel in 1948, seeking to destroy Israel, and their desire is to perpetuate the camps and to perpetuate the terrorism the camps breed.

This, in my opinion, is unfortunate, and UNRWA is a U.N. agency established purportedly for the benefit of the refugees. However, in my opinion, it serves to perpetuate the terrorism problem.

While UNRWA lets camp residents run their own activities, under its own oversight, the camps have become centers of terrorism, lawlessness, and crime. This further victimizes the Palestinians in the refugee camps who have no involvement in these criminal activities. Palestinian terrorists operate freely in many of these camps, coordinating attacks against innocent Israeli civilians and Palestinians who oppose their terror agenda.

In 2004, the UNRWA commissioner, Peter Hansen, admitted in an interview with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation that the agency employs individuals who are members of groups like Hamas, a group the U.S. Government considers to be a terrorist organization.

Madam Speaker, it is high time that the truth be told and that the UNRWA mandate come to an end. In its place, a proposal should be adopted that would

truly resolve the Palestinian refugee question, regardless of whether there is ever a formal resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

There is no reason why generations of Palestinians must continue to subsist in squalor and deprivation just so regimes in the Arab world have a diplomatic foil with which to attack Israel.

The Elon plan is simple. Working cooperatively with nations around the world, Israel and the international community will assist the Palestinian refugees to find new homes outside the camps.

Why should Palestinians continue to languish? Support the Elon plan.

THE ISRAELI INITIATIVE: THE RIGHT ROAD TO PEACE

PRINCIPLES OF THE ISRAELI INITIATIVE

(1) Rehabilitation of the refugees and dismantling of the camps. Israel, the US, and the international community will formulate it multi-year program for full and rapid rehabilitation of the Palestinian refugees, while absorbing them as citizens in various countries. During the rehabilitation process, UNRWA, an organization that perpetuates the status of the refugees, will be dismantled, and all residents of refugee camps will be offered permanent places of residence, citizenship, and a generous rehabilitation grant. The refugee camps will also be dismantled following this process.

(2) Strategic cooperation with the Kingdom of Jordan, Israel, the U.S., and the international community will recognize the Kingdom of Jordan as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians, and Jordan will again grant citizenship status to the residents of Judea and Samaria. The Palestinian Authority in Judea, Samaria and Gaza will no longer be recognized as a representative body, and all weapons will be collected from armed organizations.

Israel, the US, and the international community will invest in the long-term development of the Kingdom of Jordan to restore and strengthen its economy.

Israel and Jordan, together with Egypt, Turkey, and the US, will create a strategic organization to halt the Islamic axis based in Teheran, and to promote overall peace between Israel and the Arab countries.

(3) Israeli sovereignty in Judea and Samaria. In coordination with Jordan, Israel will extend its sovereignty over Judea and Samaria. Arab residents of these areas will become citizens of Jordan (Palestine). Their status, their relationship to the two countries, and the nature of the administration in the populated areas will be formulated and set forth in an agreement between the governments of Israel and Jordan.

THE CONFLICT IN IRAQ IS STILL GOING ON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to make an important and urgent announcement to the House: the conflict in Iraq is still going on, and we are still occupying that country.

I have to make this announcement because apparently some people have forgotten all about Iraq or don't think it's an important issue anymore. That's because it doesn't dominate the

TV news like it used to. As an example of that, a recent story on CNN began with the words, "Whatever Happened to the War?"

Well, I hate to spoil everyone's day, but I have to report, with great regret, that the occupation is still going. As proof of that, nearly 300 American and Iraqi soldiers and Iraqi civilians have been killed or wounded so far this month alone. Yes, the bloodshed continues.

And after nearly 5 years of occupation, our leaders still have no exit strategy. They have even stopped pretending that they have one. Last year they told us we couldn't get out of Iraq because things on the ground were going badly. This year they're telling us we can't get out because things are going well; and if we get out, they'll go badly again.

So if you follow the administration's argument to its logical conclusion, this is what you get: we can't leave when things are good; we can't leave when things are bad. Which means we can never leave. The result is permanent occupation, which is precisely what the administration appears to want.

Forgetting about the bloodshed in Iraq is bad enough. But it's dangerous for many, many other reasons. It gives the administration a free hand to ratchet up the threats against Iran. It takes the pressure off the Iraqi Government to make progress toward national political reconciliation. It means our military will continue to be overstretched and less capable of meeting real challenges to our national security that may and will arise elsewhere. It continues to make America appear to be a lawless and arrogant Western occupier of the Middle East. And it allows our budget to be plundered at a time when our economy is more than shaky. People are in danger of losing their jobs here at home; but thanks to the administration's policies, the boys at Blackwater will always have their high-paying military contractor jobs in Iraq where they can continue to terrify the Iraqi people.

We are spending over \$300 million every day in Iraq, Madam Speaker. We couldn't afford that when the economy was good, and we certainly can't afford it as the economy goes into recession.

But thankfully, thankfully, the American people are too smart to fall into the trap of believing that everything is just swell. According to a recent CBS News poll, nearly 60 percent of Americans continue to believe the occupation is going badly, and 58 percent believe the U.S. should never have gotten into Iraq in the first place.

Madam Speaker, we cannot stick our heads in the sand and pretend that Iraq isn't a problem anymore. The only way to change course is to hold the administration accountable, and the only way to do that is to keep the pressure on the administration every single day. That's why I'll continue to raise my voice against the madness of this occupation, and why I will continue to urge

the House to use its power of the purse to end it.

Iraq is not a television show that got canceled because of the writers' strike. Iraq is a real place where real people continue to die. We must redeploy our troops. We must give the Iraqi people back their sovereignty, and we must give them their hope for a brighter future.

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

(Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania 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 Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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FREE TRADE AGREEMENT WITH INDIA

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

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, today my very good friend Mr. CROWLEY of New York, in a bipartisan way, and I joined together, and we now have, I'm happy to say, our good friend from north Dallas, a great Member of the Rules Committee, PETE SESSIONS as a cosponsor of legislation, a resolution actually calling for free trade negotiations to begin between the United States and India. We introduced this resolution to highlight the tremendous benefits of deeper economic engagement between the world's two largest democracies.

While bilateral trade has spurred growth in both of our countries, we have not yet come close to realizing the full benefits of complete access to each other's markets and full liberalization of the Indian economy.

Madam Speaker, the American people are very focused on the economy right now, understandably. While growth remains strong and unemployment remains low, and we just this morning got the report of the drop in unemployment claims, the prevailing economic stories, however, in the news stir up a great deal of fear and concern among working families. The subprime mortgage crisis has dominated the headlines for months. The housing slump in many communities makes homeowners feel like their financial security is threatened. And as always, Madam Speaker, there is the natural anxiety that comes from the highly dynamic and fast-paced environment of the global economy.