

country. It will benefit working Americans struggling to start their own small businesses and enterprises. It will benefit every single American. As President John F. Kennedy said so memorably so long ago of the capital gains tax reduction he advocated, a rising tide lifts all boats.

By reducing the rate at which we tax capital, we will unleash an energy in this country that will raise the tide of economic prosperity, and I am proud to author this American Dream Tax Relief Act of 2003.

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

(Mr. DEMINT 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 gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. ROHRBACHER 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 Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO 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 Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FLAKE 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 Illinois (Mr. RUSH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

IRAQ AND THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the America I envision seeks world unity instead of unilateralism. It gains its power through being the first to help, not the first to strike. It extends itself to the peoples of the world to lift their

burden. It is an America which, when asked for help, dispenses bread instead of bombs, medical assistance instead of missiles, and food instead of fissile materials.

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There is a role for America in the world. It is in working with the community of nations to achieve the security of all nations. It is in restoring the promise of the nonproliferation treaty to lead the way to get rid of all nuclear weapons. It is through strengthening and abiding by international treaties. It is in assuring control and eventual elimination of chemical and biological weapons and land mines. It is in protecting our global climate.

America can help protect the world. America can help save the world. But America cannot control the world, nor should we want to do so.

Yet our administration would project American power for the purpose of domination. Their national security doctrines call for America to strike anywhere it pleases and to be the first to use nuclear weapons.

Our Nation is now poised to go to all-out war against Iraq. Iraq has not committed any act of aggression against the United States. Iraq was not responsible for 9/11. No credible evidence exists linking Iraq to Al Qaeda's role in 9/11. Iraq is not responsible for the anthrax attack on our Nation. The United Nations has yet to establish that Iraq has usable weapons of mass destruction. There is no intelligence that Iraq has the ability to strike at the United States. According to the CIA, Iraq has no intention to attack America, but will defend itself if attacked.

Why then is our Nation prepared to send 300,000 of our young men and women into house-to-house combat in the streets of Baghdad? Why is our Nation prepared to spend \$200 billion or more of our hard-earned tax dollars for the destruction of Iraq?

Why is our Nation preparing to use the most powerful military machine in history to wage an assault on the people of Iraq, to destroy their houses and buildings, to wipe out their water and electrical systems, and to block their access to food and medical supplies? There is no answer that can separate itself from oil economics, profit requirements of arms trade, or distorted notions of empire building.

War with Iraq is wrong. But if war is prosecuted further in Iraq, we must be prepared to advance the cause of peace in this country. We must be prepared to stand up, to speak out, to organize, to march, to demand an end to the war, or to demand an end to an administration which insists on war.

It is urgent we oppose this war. It will dominate our Nation's priorities. It will threaten Social Security and Medicare and block a prescription drug benefit for the elderly. It will stop America from providing jobs for all, health care for all, education for all.

There are some who believe that it is unpatriotic to challenge the adminis-

tration on the war. They believe it is politically wiser to debate the economy. But how can one reasonably separate war from the budget, war from the economy, war from America's ability to meet the needs of the people of this Nation?

The administration's own top economic adviser said the war would cost up to \$200 billion. Our Federal budget is already close to huge tax cuts for the wealthy. Remember when we had a budget surplus?

Each time the administration talks about war, fear is created and when fear goes up, the market goes down. War will mean a sharp increase in oil prices, which will hurt jobs in manufacturing and transportation. One economic study with a worst-case scenario puts the cost of an all-out war plus long-term occupation of Iraq at \$1.6 trillion.

We cannot separate war from the economy. We cannot separate war from America's ability to meet the needs of her own people here at home.

We need to ask the questions: Why does America have hundreds of billions to ruin the health and take the lives of innocent people in Iraq but no money to provide health care for all Americans? Would why America spend hundreds of billions to retire Saddam Hussein, but no money to protect the retirement security of its own people? Why does America have money to blow up bridges over the Euphrates River in Iraq, but no money to build bridges over the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland, Ohio?

The path America must take is one of peace that leads to prosperity. It is one which understands that creating a structure of peace ensures that economic structures can be sound, affirmative of human needs and restorative of human values.

This is the dream of a Department of Peace to making nonviolence an organizing principle in our society, making the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a reality, and working to make war itself a thing of the past. It is the ethic of peace building which will cause us to take down weapons from the heavens and work to create a heaven on Earth.

Peace and prosperity shall be as two pillars in a newly rebuilt America which provides for the economic and Social Security of its own people as a cause of nationhood and for the economic and social progress of people of other lands as a cause of brotherhood.

This confirmation of the purpose of Nation was the dream of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal, Lyndon Johnson and the Great Society, and John F. Kennedy and the New Frontier. This shall continue to be our dream in the days ahead, that no matter the darkness, we shall hold up the light of America's higher purpose which calls to us across the ages from Washington, Jefferson and Adams, through Lincoln to the present day. Our Nation has a higher calling.

[Ceremonial Swearing-In Jan. 5, 2003,
Cleveland, Ohio]

IRAQ AND THE ECONOMY

(By Rep. Dennis J. Kucinich)

The America I envision seeks world unity instead of unilateralism. It gains its power through being the first to help, not the first to strike. It extends itself to the peoples of the world to life their burden. It is an America, which when asked for help, dispenses bread instead of bombs, medical assistance instead of missiles, and food instead of fissile materials.

There is a role for America in the world. It is in working with the community of nations to achieve the security of all nations. It is in restoring the promise of the Non Proliferation Treaty to lead the way to get rid of all nuclear weapons. It is through strengthening and abiding by international treaties. It is in assuring control and eventual elimination of biological and chemical weapons, and landmines. It is in protecting our global climate.

America can help protect the world. America can help save the world. But America cannot control the world, nor should we want to do so.

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Our nation is now poised to go to all-out war against Iraq. Iraq has not committed any act of aggression against the United States. Iraq was not responsible for 911. No credible evidence exists linking Iraq to Al Qaeda's role in 911. Iraq was not responsible for the anthrax attack on our nation. The United Nations has yet to establish that Iraq has usable weapons of mass destruction. There is no intelligence that Iraq has the ability to strike at the United States. According to the CIA, Iraq has no intention to attack America, but will defend itself if attacked.

Why then, is our nation prepared to send three hundred thousand of our young men and women into house to house combat in the streets of Baghdad. Why is our nation prepared to spend \$200 billion or more of our hard-earned tax dollars for destruction of Iraq?

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There is no answer which can separate itself from oil economics, profit requirements of arms trade, or distorted notions of empire-building.

War with Iraq is wrong. But if war is prosecuted further in Iraq, we must be prepared to advance the cause of peace in this country. We must be prepared to stand up, to speak out, to organize, to march, to demand an end to the war, or to demand an end to an administration which insists on war.

It is urgent we oppose this war. It will dominate our nation's priorities. It will threaten Social Security. It will threaten Medicare. It will block a prescription drug benefit for the elderly. It will stop America from providing jobs for all, health care for all, education for all.

There are some who believe that it is unpatriotic to challenge the Administration on the war. They believe it is politically wiser to debate the economy. But how can one reasonably separate war from the budget, war from the economy, war from America's ability to meet the needs of the people of this nation?

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The path America must take is one of peace which leads to prosperity. It is one which understands that creating a structure of peace ensures that economic structures can be sound, affirmative of human needs and restorative of human values.

This is the dream of a Department of Peace making nonviolence an organizing principle in our society—making the work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. a reality—working to make war itself a thing of the past. It is this ethic of peace building which will cause us to take down weapons from the heavens and work to create a heaven on earth.

Peace and prosperity shall be as two pillars in a newly rebuilt America which provides for the economic and social security of its own people as a cause of nationhood and for the economic and social progress of peoples of other lands as a cause of brotherhood.

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Our nation has always had a higher calling, despite the darkness of 911 and the official response to it. It is a calling to maintain the quest for democracy, for freedom and liberty at times of peril as well as in times of peace. That higher calling is our heritage. The words of Francis Scott Key still echo:

"Oh say does that Star Spangled Banner yet wave, o'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?" he celebrated the link between freedom and bravery: it takes courage to live in a democracy. It takes courage to stand up to terrorists and maintain basic liberties. It takes courage to lead the way toward global disarmament while some are bent on destruction.

It takes patience to face dictators around the world and not be tempted to bomb them into submission. It takes wisdom to have great power and to make gentle its presence in the world.

And it takes compassion to understand the plight of peoples world wide who themselves are trying to survive, to live out their own humble lives despite having conditions which are challenging or governments which are oppressive.

My friends. This is still your government. You have a right to have a say in how its

destiny is being charted. That right derives from our very Declaration of Independence, which claimed self-governance as a basic right. Government does not just happen in Washington, DC. It is the result of a process that takes place in thousands of cities, villages and townships. It is also a process which also takes place in our hearts, which is brought to life by our love of country, and our love of each other.

VETERANS BEING DENIED HEALTH BENEFITS

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

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, at a time of pending war, the President has submitted a program to this House referred to as the stimulus package that will direct about \$300 billion to the richest 5 percent of America's citizens, and I would like to place that against further decisions made by this administration which affect America's veterans.

At a time of possible war, at a time when we talk about our admiration for our military and at a time when we verbalize our appreciation for those who have served our country in military service, we are treating our veterans in the most shabby manner.

A case in point, last February the Veterans Administration increased the copayment that veterans must pay for prescription medications by a whopping 350 percent. Now at a time when we find money to give billions to the richest among us, we are nickel and diming America's veterans. Perhaps the most egregious example of how we are shortchanging our veterans is found in a memo that was written on July 19, 2002, a memo that was sent out by the Deputy Under-Secretary for Operations and Management of the Veterans Administration. I would like to read a few comments from that memo. It was sent to all of the health care providers across the country.

It says, "As you are aware, the Veterans Health Administration is currently facing a growing crisis related to the continuing demand for health care services that exceeds our resources. Moreover, actuarial projections indicate a widening gap in the demand versus resource availability." And then the shameful conclusion of this memo, "Therefore, I am directing each network director to ensure that no marketing activities to enroll new veterans occur within your networks." Let me read that sentence again. "I am directing each network director to ensure that no marketing activities to enroll new veterans occur within your networks."

Even though some sites may have local capacity as a national system, all facilities are expected to abide by this policy. Marketing activities may include generalized mailings to veterans, prohibited. Local newspaper or newspaper articles encouraging veterans to