

have full health care, whether they remain in the service or they come out as veterans. In addition, I think it is important to add a \$1,000 bonus to combat veterans on returning, as they move into either their new lives or remain in the United States military.

I can truly say, Madam Speaker, that whether or not we agreed with the policies of the war in Iraq, as Members of the United States Congress and as Americans there was not one divide relating to our support for the United States military.

Even today, as we begin to analyze the aftermath of Iraq, in my meetings with Arab nations just a month or so ago, leaders of Arab nations, many of them offering to work with the United States in the rebuilding of Iraq, just a few days ago I had submitted into the defense authorization bill an amendment to ensure that small and medium-sized minority- and women-owned businesses are engaged in the opportunity of rebuilding Iraq. We realize that we have a responsibility to that nation, as well as to the troops on the ground.

We can also see that the war is really not over inasmuch as we are seeing the loss of our troops on a daily basis. There is much work to do to rebuild hospitals, roads, bridges, and neighborhoods in Baghdad and other places. We believe it is important to do it together.

But I think we have another challenge, Madam Speaker, that is extremely important. Madam Speaker, I recall the debate on the floor of the House. I stand by my vote. I believe that war should have been the last option and the U.N. inspectors should have been allowed to do their job.

But I know my colleagues who voted for the effort to go into Iraq did it out of conviction and the belief that this Nation was under imminent attack. Again, I say that we did not vote in the constitutional way because this Congress did not vote under article 1 to declare war. I maintain that we still had that hurdle to overcome. But the basis of the vote, the overwhelming vote to go forward was on the intelligence that was given by the intelligence community, not only to this Congress but, I assume, to the administration.

I believe it is imperative, Madam Speaker, that we have a special investigation, a special prosecutor to investigate what the intelligence community and officials knew, what information they gave to Congress, what information they withheld. We need to know for sure what information they had, definitive information, about the weapons of mass destruction. The American people need to know, first of all; the United States military needs to know; the United States Congress needs to know; and certainly all of the families of the loved ones of those who we mourn who lost their lives need to know.

Madam Speaker, I am unsure of what the intelligence community knew.

They stand now to say that they have documentation; but 2 months now have gone by, and we have found no weapons of mass destruction.

Many would say we as Members stand on the floor of the House and put ourselves in jeopardy because tomorrow we could find the weapons of mass destruction. I am not in an argument with my government. I hope my government is a government of truth, and whatever they find, it will be in conjunction with the work that they are doing on behalf of the American people.

But it was represented to us that because of the weapons of mass destruction that Saddam Hussein had, this Nation was under imminent threat.

□ 2000

And so the President used his powers to go forward. Without the declaration of war of this Congress, Members of this Congress cried on the floor of the House because they were so conflicted with the idea that they must do what is right for the American people and go forward with war, because they believed in the information that was given.

In order for this Nation to be a true democracy, for the Constitution to prevail, for us to be a shining example of transparency in this Nation, it is important that we find out the truth. I do not believe we have the truth today. And I think it is imperative that even if Congress investigates this, because we have a one-party government, I think it is imperative that we have a special prosecutor to investigate and/or commission to investigate the tragedy of the war and as well the information that has been given to us.

Madam Speaker, I believe we can do no less to unveil the truth as our troops are fighting for us in Afghanistan and fighting for us in Iraq, as they are offering their lives for the ultimate principles of freedom and justice. It is imperative, again, must I say, that we have the truth. I hope that the administration listens, a special prosecutor, a special independent commission to investigate the existence of weapons of mass destruction and what the intelligence community knew.

ERASED CHILD TAX CREDITS HURT MILITARY FAMILIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, it is shameful enough that the Republican leadership in Congress has chosen to gamble our children's future on a risky and unsustainable tax scheme such as the one signed into law just a few weeks ago; but what is even more shameful is that Republicans sold out the very men and women who recently fought for our country in Iraq by cutting many of them out of the tax cut.

That is right, only hours before Congress was set to vote on President Bush's big tax giveaway, Republicans cut out provisions to expand the child tax credit for working families in order to give the President's wealthy friends a bigger tax cut.

The child tax credit provisions Republicans erased would have benefited millions of working families, including many families of American soldiers, sailors, and airmen just as they returned from war.

Just this weekend we had POW Shoshana Johnson in the Los Angeles area. During the time she was a prisoner of war, her family who lives in my district held a vigil. They tied those beautiful pink ribbons around the trees in the neighborhood so no one would forget that Americans were held hostage and were captives in Iraq.

So it is outrageous, and my outrage grows when I hear members of the Republican leadership suggesting that we are formulating a new welfare program. I am talking about and referring to working families. I am referring to those who have served their country in a land so far away many cannot even find on a map, in a land that did not have any concrete connection to 9-11, in a land that was headed up by a dictator who was not friendly with Osama bin Laden and we supposedly were going to have terrorism. But still, our troops went over under the command of the Commander in Chief, and they did an exemplary job.

This is the reason why we have set up an institute in Los Angeles that will work with the school district and will work with the community and it is an institute named after Shoshana Johnson, called the Institute for Heroism, Endurance and Patriotism. She had a daughter. Should she have been killed, as was rumored, that daughter would be in the care of someone else or maybe a part of the welfare system. I do not know, but she has a strong family. So in the name of the POWs, in the name of our veterans, we must vote to restore the deleted provisions that have helped millions of Americans and their children and our people who are still in Iraq and they have families back home.

Believe me, their incomes currently make them eligible for Federal programs. We must be sure that they too can take advantage of the child tax credit because, indeed, they are working people. We owe it to them. They deserve it.

AMERICA'S REPUTATION AS PEACEMAKER IS DOUBTED

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, to win the war on terrorism ultimately America must be able to make more friendships and reduce the number of enemies that face us. In places very far from home, friendship is a matter of

the heart, and it is a matter of the mind. And thus it was with some dismay that I read a poll last week, the results of which I wish to place in the RECORD tonight, done by the Pew Research Center going and interviewing over 16,000 people across the globe, largely in the Muslim world, but also in Europe and other places, asking them whether they had a favorable opinion of the United States or not. And in the very places where we need to make friends, the numbers are not good.

Take Morocco, a country of 31 million people, where there have been, unfortunately, some terrorist attacks, 73 percent of the people have an unfavorable opinion of the United States. In Lebanon, so key to regional peace, 73 percent of the people have an unfavorable opinion of the United States. In Turkey, where the future remains uncertain, one of our staunchest allies from a military standpoint, but 85 percent of the people with an unfavorable opinion of the United States. That is a country of 67 million people. In Pakistan, where we know there are al Qaeda cells, where we know we have madrasas operating, spewing hate every day and instilling young children that they should give their lives in the cause of terrorism, a country of 147 million people, 87 percent, 87 percent have an unfavorable opinion of the United States. In Jordan, right next door to Iraq, a country of 5 million people, over 5 million people, 99 percent of the people have an unfavorable view of this country. And in the Palestinian Authority, where we continue to see such great violence, there really is not any support for the United States. In fact, the number shows zero percent favorable rating for the United States.

I must ask the question, how does one make peace in these circumstances, lasting peace? In that regard, I wish to place in the RECORD a really beautiful article written by David Ignatius in The Washington Post last Friday. I will not quote all of it here, but I will just read it to you in part. It was written from the steps of the American University of Beirut, a place I have personally visited, the university in that region that has produced the leaders, the leaders that have tried to make ties to the West.

The writer says he found himself sitting on the steps talking to some of the students whose generation will have to transform our hope for peace into reality. And the most hopeful thing he could say after visiting with them was that they had an understanding of how powerful America is. But the question seems to be in his mind after speaking with the students that we have a long way to go to restore America's credible role as a peacemaker. The students, to put it bluntly, he says, do not believe that America is serious about its values. Suggest to them, for example, that America really wants to advance democracy and freedom in Iraq rather than grab the country's oil and you get

smirks and guffaws from the students. For these students, America has come to stand for jobs and income, not human rights. It is a way to get paid, they say. That is why these kids are happy to be going to an American university because it is the best way to get on the global gravy train.

For them, America is a good market, one of the students he talked to said, rather than a place with admirable values. In fact, one of the students told him, might makes right in America, does it not?

We were talking under the main gate, he says, of the American University of Beirut, which is inscribed with the words of its founders: "That they may have life and have it more abundantly." But this is the generous spirit that educated generations of Arab leaders, and for decades the United States has been living off the good will that that helped to create, and it is beginning to wane.

He talks about how former presidents of the American University of Beirut have been killed, have been kidnapped and always live under threat. And yet, students are saying to him today, freedom in America has been abolished. One of the young girls said, Look at civil liberties. They do not exist any more in the United States. He says the degree of cynicism among these students is frightening.

Madam Speaker, as I close my remarks tonight, the writer encourages us to look at our basic values of human rights, of freedom and democracy, and give those precedence in all of our efforts towards peace, not just making money in the marketplace.

[From the Washington Post, June 6, 2003]

AMERICA'S DOUBTERS IN BEIRUT

(By David Ignatius)

BEIRUT.—As President Bush was proclaiming America's role as a peacemaker between Arabs and Israelis this week, I found myself sitting on the steps of the American University of Beirut, talking to some of the students whose generation will have to transform this vision into reality.

The most hopeful thing I can say is that the students seem to understand how powerful America is. And while Bush is far from popular here, there seems to be growing respect for his orneriness—for that laconic manner that just possibly might be a match for the stubbornness of the Israelis and the Palestinians.

But judging by the students' comments, Bush has a long way to go in restoring America's status as a credible peacemaker. These students, to put it bluntly, don't believe that America is serious about its values. Suggest to them, for example, that America really wants to advance democracy and freedom in Iraq, rather than grab the country's oil, and you get smirks and guffaws.

For these Arab students, America stands for jobs and income, not human rights. It's a way to get paid. That's why these kids are happy to be going to an American university—because it's the best way to get on the global gravy train.

"We still feel proud to be here. We're getting the best degree in the best university in our region," says Maurice Haddad, a bright 24-year-old majoring in information systems. Like almost all the students I met, he wants

to go to graduate school in the States. But for him, America "is a good market," rather than a place with admirable values. In America, "might makes right," said one student bluntly.

We were talking under the main gate of AUB, which is inscribed with the words its founders used in 1866 to describe its mission: "That they may have life and have it more abundantly." The generous spirit educated generations of Arab leaders, and for decades the United States has been living off the goodwill it helped create.

I am a shameless fan of AUB. I sat here more than 20 years ago with AUB President Malcolm Kerr shortly before he was assassinated; I talked with AUB President David Dodge before he was kidnapped; I began debating Arab bureaucracy with the current AUB president, John Waterbury, in 1981. I deeply admire these men and the university they have bravely struggled to maintain.

But I had the sense this week that for the students, the tank is beginning to run dry. "Freedom in America has been abolished," said a 21-year-old medical student named Lamia. She offered a summary of court cases to buttress her argument that civil liberties in America have been compromised in Bush's jihad against terrorism.

The degree of cynicism among students is frightening. We began talking about the 9/11 terrorist attacks, for example, and nearly every student expressed doubt that Osama bin Laden's suicide bombers had really toppled the twin towers. "It was a play to make it look like the Arabs did it," said a young woman named Natalia.

When I asked the students how they could believe such conspiratorial nonsense even though they had seen the buildings collapse on television, they shouted our alternative theories. "The tape was altered," said one. "Technically those two buildings couldn't have collapsed unless there were bombs set at the bottom," insisted another. "How could someone in a cave in Afghanistan have done all that?" Asked a third.

"It's your fault!" argued one young woman in a ponytail. "Your movies have taught us that any image can be manipulated."

Students can be forgiven for saying crazy things. But I worry that their comments reflect a deeper problem. Sociologists distinguish between the "normative" and "instrumental" attributes of an institution or nation. For past AUB students, America appeared to stand for normative values. For this more cynical generation, America is instead an instrumental machine for getting jobs and making money.

Waterbury took a laudable step this week in trying to reconnect the Arab world with America and its values. Thanks to a \$5.2 million gift from Saudi Prince Alwaleed bin Talal, AUB will soon found a new center for American studies. Maybe that will help.

AUB is an example of what people mean when they say "soft power." All the armor in America's awesome hard-power military will end up rusting in the sand if Arabs don't come to believe that those tanks represent a culture that promotes freedom and democracy—and that America lives by those values.

FAVORABLE OF USA

(Population in millions)

Nation	Favorable rating (percent)	Population
Israel	79	6.1
Great Britain	70	59.7
Canada	63	31.9
Australia	60	19.5
Italy	60	57.7
S. Korea	46	48.3
Germany	45	83.2
France	43	59.7

FAVORABLE OF USA—Continued
(Population in millions)

Nation	Favorable rating (percent)	Population
Spain	38	40.1
Russia	36	144.9
Brazil	34	176.0
Kuwait	63	2.1
Nigeria	61	129.9
Morocco	27	31.1
Lebanon	27	3.6
Turkey	15	67.3
Indonesia	15	231.3
Pakistan	13	147.6
Jordan	1	5.3
Palestinian Authority	0	2.1

TAX PLAN EXCLUDES POOR FAMILIES FROM CHILD TAX CREDIT

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

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, approximately 2 weeks ago the administration signed into law one of the largest tax cut breaks ever for the wealthiest Americans. He did so at a time when the unemployment is on the rise. Since President Bush took office, approximately 2 million jobs have been lost, and the Hispanic community is being hit hard; and the minorities throughout this country are being hit hard. Those hardworking Americans are now at 7.5 percent unemployment, a lot more in proportion than the rest of the population.

People want to work, but the jobs are simply not there. But instead of pursuing policies to stimulate the economy, instead of looking at creating jobs such as providing resources to improve our infrastructure in this country, when we have the decaying bridges, when we have decaying infrastructure, when most of our dams are 50 to 60 years old, instead of investing in our country and in the next generation, the administration has chose to push through a plan that includes a tax cut that does nothing to address the financial problems and worries that are facing millions of Americans.

While making false promises that the tax cut will create jobs and stimulate our economy, these tax cuts are targeted primarily at the large corporations; and the wealthiest of Americans, such as those that earn \$1 million a year, will see a tax cut of nearly \$100,000. We understand that people who pay taxes deserve a break, but we have gone from record surpluses to skyrocketing deficits.

We get elected to come up here to respond to the problems that confront Americans, those problems that our senior citizens continue to have difficulty with, such as prescription drug coverage. Our seniors are still having difficulties in not being able to buy prescription drugs. Our seniors are still having difficulties not being able to have access to affordable health care. In a country that has the most, the best health care in the world, our seniors are having, and Americans throughout are having, difficulties hav-

ing affordable and accessible health care.

We need to make sure that we address the problems that our seniors continue to confront in prescription drug coverage. We need to make sure that we continue those efforts on Social Security to ensure that the next generations will not be left without and left in poverty. We cannot meet our obligations to support critical health and education programs with a tax cut this size, as it does, because we all recognize how irresponsible it is.

Now, we find that in addition to favoring the wealthiest of this country, the administration's tax cut plan excludes those that need the assistance the most, the low- and moderate-income families. Families that make in between \$10,500 to \$26,625 a year are now, under law, excluded from collecting the \$400 child tax credit.

□ 2015

Those who could benefit the most from the tax credit have been left out and find themselves unable to qualify.

In my district the median income is approximately \$23,000, and so more than half would fall under this category. The child tax credit has long been crucial for working families who deeply are affected by tax burden. They also are entitled to this child tax credit.

While more than 85 percent of Hispanic males are in the workforce, which is the largest percentage for any ethnic group or anyone, many Hispanics work in low-wage temporary and seasonal jobs. Latinos are out there working hard, making things happen; yet those are the ones that are being left out from being able to participate in a child tax credit. How can the administration argue that this plan helps working men and women when working families are the ones that are left out?

The hardworking Americans may not be one of the wealthiest, but they are the future of this country. They are the ones that make the economy go. They are the workforce of this country. Our communities deserve the gratitude and respect from the leaders that represent them, and they deserve a fair share of any proposed tax relief plan, not just the crumbs left over after the Nation's wealthiest few.

We need to make sure that the tax plans are plans that are appropriate. They need to be responsive. We also need to make sure that we address the issues that confront us, such as the need for health care and other things.

MCI WORLDCOM

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

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Madam Speaker, MCI WorldCom represents the largest corporate fraud in United

States history, costing shareholders more than \$180 billion and still counting. So far, more than 22,000 jobs have been lost, and the company just received a tax refund from the Federal Government totaling \$300 million for the so-called overpayments on the fraud MCI WorldCom committed.

Meanwhile, the impact in New York has been devastating. MCI WorldCom has laid off 30 percent of its workforce in New York, with most of the cuts coming in Long Island. New York State's pension fund, the second largest in the Nation, has lost about \$306 million on MCI WorldCom, the worst single loss in the firm's history. Not to be excluded, New York City's five pension funds reported that they lost \$160 million on WorldCom stock.

Why should we care? Because these pension funds represent a portion, possibly a significant portion, of New York State's public sector employees, policemen, firefighters, teachers, et cetera, who became victims of MCI WorldCom's fraud. Just the State pension fund alone represents more than 950,000 active and retired public employees and their beneficiaries.

There is so much more that can be said of this case; however, since time is brief, I will focus my remarks on what I believe are the most egregious items of this case.

First, the proposed settlement with the Securities and Exchange Commission. I am extremely disappointed with the SEC's decision to settle with MCI WorldCom for a mere \$500 million, and I know that sounds like a lot, but the original \$1.5 billion fine represented less than 1 percent of the losses amassed by shareholders because of the company's fraud. This eye-popping ruling brings the SEC's credibility into question. Such ostrich-like attitudes by the SEC will only increase cynicism from investors on the SEC's legitimacy.

As MCI begins to rebrand its corporate image and seeks to distance itself from its criminal stigma, it is incumbent upon the SEC to act in a decisive manner that adequately punishes MCI WorldCom for its massive crimes. Their clever attempts to return to corporate normalcy cannot be realized until MCI WorldCom makes complete restitution for its criminal acts. As the regulatory agency tasked with overseeing corporate behavior, the SEC should serve as a strong enforcer and not a willing accomplice that rewards criminal activity.

Last week, I filed a petition with the U.S. district court requesting that Judge Rakoff delay any decision in the MCI WorldCom-SEC settlement until adequate information is available publicly to enable the thorough evaluation of the company's fraud, the proposed settlement, and MCI WorldCom's current and future plans for compliance with applicable law. I also urged the court to hold a hearing on the findings set forth in the upcoming reports of the examiner in bankruptcy and the