

the Bush administration's words and actions. Their rhetoric says one thing, and their actions say something else.

This Friday, prior to the international diplomatic team traveling to Haiti, members of the Congressional Black Caucus asked the administration to act immediately and prevent the rebels from taking over more cities in Haiti. We are awaiting a response to both of these letters.

We are working to protect democracy in Haiti day and night, but unfortunately people in Haiti are still dying as a result of rebel attacks, hunger and the like. The ongoing negotiations to broker a peace plan are failing, and it is not at all a result of President Aristide. President Aristide has shown good faith by accepting the Catholic bishops' plan, the CARICOM plan and now this peace plan.

Haiti is embroiled in violence. Armed rebels are burning down jails and pillaging villages, toting M-16s and M-50s. Haiti only has 3,500 police for over 8 million people. It is only common sense that disarming thugs and murderers and forging a cease-fire go hand in hand.

□ 2045

The United States cannot sit back and watch a country especially in our own hemisphere spiral further down into a state of turmoil. Bush must show some leadership and speak out against the violence and the disregard for the rule of law in Haiti. President Bush should speak out in support of the democratically elected President of Haiti and provide President Aristide the assistance that he needs to promote peace on the ground, allow free and fair elections to take place, and to uphold the Haitian constitution.

How can we sit back and witness a violent attempt to overthrow a government? Is this part of the Bush administration's regime change policy?

Democracy in Haiti is in grave danger. Turmoil rages on the ground, in the streets, at the university, through the halls of government, and in the homes of Haitians. Haitians are dying, and it is apparent that the hope for peace is diminishing.

If we believe, if we truly believe in the power of democracy and the potential for global peace, we must not turn a blind eye to our neighbor and longtime ally. This is an urgent cry to our administration, specifically President Bush, to formally request a meeting of the United States Security Council with the hope of bringing the world community's resources to bear in support of the government of Haiti.

The United States must stop dragging its feet and answer the call President Aristide made again yesterday. He said, "Should those killers come to Port-au-Prince, you may have thousands of people who may be killed." We need the presence of the international community as soon as possible.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 20, 2004.

President GEORGE BUSH,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for your Administration's new initiative to resolve the current political crisis in Haiti. The Congressional Black Caucus agrees that we cannot allow "thugs" and "murderers" to overthrow the democratically-elected government of President Jean Bertrand Aristide, as Secretary Powell stated on February 17, 2004. Additionally, we are pleased that the United States, France, Canada, CARICOM, and the OAS will meet with the Government of Haiti to discuss how we can work together to secure the country, stop the escalating violence, restore the rule of law, and take steps forward to implement the CARICOM proposal.

There must be an immediate cease-fire, and as these talks move forward, we hope that the United States insists that all parties lay down their arms and stop the violence. Haitians are dying every day, and the United States must do its part to guarantee a cease-fire, uphold democracy, and promote stability in a sovereign nation in our own hemisphere. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus agree that these emergency talks will be critical to ending the current violence.

We respectfully encourage you to invite experienced, independent observers to travel to Haiti to monitor and observe the meeting. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. We look forward to working with you to help resolve this crisis.

Sincerely,

Barbara Lee; John Conyers, Jr.; Donald M. Payne; Bobby L. Rush; Sheila Jackson-Lee; Elijah E. Cummings; Maxine Waters; —; Diane E. Watson; Gregory W. Meeks.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 12, 2004.

Hon. COLIN POWELL,
Secretary of State,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: Thank you for coming to the House International Resources Committee today. While we ran out of time before I could raise my questions in committee, I enjoyed speaking to you afterwards.

As you know, conditions in Haiti are rapidly deteriorating. People are dying, and our own commitment to democracy is under siege. We have a moral and regional obligation to help one of our closest neighbors. Furthermore, Article 17 of the OAS Inter-American Democratic Chapter requires that all OAS nations come to the aid of a democratic government under siege.

I must say, Mr. Secretary, that our failure to support the democratic process and help restore order looks like a covert effort to overthrow a government. There is a violent coup d'etat in the making, and it appears that the United States is aiding and abetting the attempt to violently topple the Aristide Government. With all due respect, this looks like "regime change."

This situation demands sustained U.S. engagement to promote democracy, yet disturbing reports indicate our actions—or inaction—may be making things worse. The opposition is well-funded and well-armed, even though President Aristide's pleas for resources to better train police forces have fallen on deaf ears. Yet, State Department officials have implied that President Aristide's departure could be an option in solving the current crisis. How can we call

for democracy in Iraq and not say very clearly that we support democratic elections as the only option in Haiti?

Since I did not have the opportunity to raise the following questions in committee, I would appreciate it if you could provide a written reply so that I might have a better understanding of Administration policy toward Haiti:

1. Does the State Department support the democratically-elected government of Haiti? What practical steps is our government taking to support the democratic process?

2. Is our country supporting and sanctioning an overthrow of the Aristide Government by giving a wink and a nod to the opposition? There are also reports that we are covertly funding the opposition.

3. Does the United States support the CARICOM proposal, and will we work through the OAS to broker a peaceful solution, not an overthrow of the Aristide Government?

4. Is it true that Haitian opposition parties and leaders have received USAID funding?

5. We understand the Haitian government made several requests over the last two years for equipment and training of Haiti's police force. Why were these requests never responded to?

Thank you for your attention,

BARBARA LEE,
Member of Congress.

THE BUSH ECONOMIC PICTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we have much serious business to attend to on Capitol Hill these days. Many of us on our side of the aisle are deeply concerned about the Bush economic picture, how sad it is for most of America, including my State, which has struggled with very high unemployment for most of the Bush administration. The administration has fallen 1.8 million jobs short of the promises that were made to the Americans and to this Congress to justify the first two massive tax cuts from the Bush administration. There are significant issues to deal with the national government's fiscal health, the guarantees of an extra trillion dollars that was going to be available when the tax cuts were brought forward that the President repeated here in Washington, D.C., and out in the hustings.

Now the administration wants to spend another trillion dollars in the face of hemorrhaging red ink to make these tax cuts that benefit a tiny number of Americans, those who need help the least, make their tax cuts permanent. This is something we could debate here in Washington, D.C.

There appears to be no concern for the millions of Americans who are being caught in the payment of the millionaires tax, the alternative minimum tax, that was inspired because there were a handful of people who were earning \$1 million or more in today's dollars that escaped taxation altogether. Congress in its wisdom passed the alternative minimum tax.

Now it has turned into a voracious revenue machine for the Federal Government that is taxing 2.4 million American families, and that number is due to quadruple to over 12 million families in just a year; and if nothing is done, it is going to put the tax bite, extra taxes, on 41 million American families who will be subjected to the millionaires tax. But the Bush administration is more concerned about making permanent tax cuts for those who need it the least, as opposed to dealing with the alternative minimum tax. We do not hear any outrage. That is something we should debate on this floor.

Or remember the lockbox where the two candidates for President, was it just 2000, Al Gore and then Governor Bush, were going to lock up the Social Security trust fund to make sure it was available for future generations? Now under the fiscal policies of this administration and his allies in Congress, we are borrowing every cent of the Medicare prescription drug benefit from the Medicare trust fund. That is something that is worth debating.

The tax cut that is being pressed would fund the Social Security deficit three times over and avoid a disaster as the baby boom generation approaches retirement.

This administration has refused to join us in the battle against the Republican leadership to extend unemployment benefits for workers who have had them expire. That is worth debating.

Or the loss of manufacturing jobs across this country. It is fascinating to hear the administration's one concrete proposal to increase the number of manufacturing jobs that I have heard in the last 3 years, and that is to reclassify the people who work at McDonald's, providing the service at those restaurants, that they are somehow going to be manufacturing jobs. They are going to change the definition. That is worth debating too.

But what is it that the administration wants to talk about? Not the false choices in Iraq that have put us in a disastrous situation on the ground and putting young men and women in harm's way, not the deeply flawed policy where we are not following through in Afghanistan. They want to talk about gay marriage.

I would strongly recommend that instead of pursuing something that was brought to us by Republican judges in Massachusetts, we let the States alone debate the real issues and not deal with a Federal constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage.

HONORING JOHN REDDEN,
PASCACK VALLEY'S CITIZEN OF
THE YEAR

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

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a distin-

guished citizen from the Fifth Congressional District from New Jersey, which I represent. Mr. John Redden has been named Pascack Valley's Citizen of the Year.

John is deserving of such acclamation for his many contributions to his community. He serves on the board of the Pascack Community Services. He has owned a Westwood-based business for over 20 years. And John, who has a wife and three children, has generously given of his time and money to donate to many community organizations. He has used his passion of sports to encourage athletic involvement in the community for having coached both basketball and baseball.

I might add that John is a worthwhile recipient of this award not only for the many contributions but in the way that he undertakes them. He supports his community silently, asking no credit whatsoever for his charity to his community. He supports his hometown organizations simply because he loves his neighbors and the community means so much to him.

I commend John for his dedication to his community, and I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating him on receiving this prestigious award.

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

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois 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 New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HAITI

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I just returned from Haiti this past weekend. It was the third time I have been there since January 1. And I am on this floor tonight because I want to share in the most straightforward way that I possibly can that it is clear to me that a bloodbath in that country is imminent in spite of the fact that President Jean-Bertrand Aristide has agreed to the peace plan worked out by the international community.

I went down to Haiti this past Saturday to be an observer as the international community, made up of United States, Canada, France, the OAS, CARICOM, and the United Nations, presented a peace plan; and it was a tough peace plan. The plan called for three persons from the international community, these organiza-

tions, to select a council of wise persons, of seven wise persons, who would then choose what would end up being a prime minister. First in the plan they offered the President, they said they would give him a name and he would either accept it or reject it. He asked them to give him more than one name. They ended up agreeing to give him two names that he could choose from, and the President accepted the plan. I was there. He accepted the plan.

But the opposition has rejected the peace plan. They have refused to negotiate. They also have sent a signal to groups of thugs and a newly formed army of exiled criminals that they will support the violent overthrow of the democratically elected government of Haiti. These thugs and the newly formed army, made up of exiled former military officers and criminals known as The Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti, commonly referred to as FRAPH, have murdered many people in Cap Haitien, and they now control several cities.

For the last couple of days, these crooks, criminals, former military officers have been on television warning that they are on their way to Port-au-Prince. They are now on their way to Port-au-Prince; and if in fact these thugs who are armed with very sophisticated weapons, M-16s, go to that capital and they try to take the palace, there will be a bloodbath. Lavalos, the millions of people who support the President will be there to protect the capital, and this confrontation will end in the loss of many lives.

It is time for the international community to come to the aid of Haiti. It is time for us to understand that we can avoid this bloodbath in Haiti; and it makes good sense to say to the opposition who refuses to come to the table that the game is up; that, in fact, if they want to be obstructionists, we are going to insist that they get out of the way so that we can move with stabilizing Haiti.

We simply cannot stand by and watch this situation unfold and not recognize that a coup d'etat is in progress in Haiti. Immediate international assistance is essential to stop the escalation of violence. The United States should work with the Organization of American States, the nations of the Caribbean community referred to as CARICOM, and other countries to provide assistance to Haiti to stop the violence, disarm the thugs and death squads and protect the Haitian people.

I have been in conversation with the State Department trying to urge them to take some action. I have talked with representation, the ambassadors from Canada, and have on call the ambassador from France. I have talked with the OAS representative, saying to them somebody must take the lead in putting together the assistance to stop this carnage. It is quite unfortunate; and if there is a bloodbath, this country is going to have to take some responsibility in it.