

workers living standards under past trade agreements simply have not risen.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that we need a different CAFTA, and we have a different CAFTA when the world's poorest people can buy American goods, not just make them, we will know our trade policies are finally working. We should defeat this CAFTA and renegotiate a better Central American Free Trade Agreement.

CHANCE TO KEEP FAITH WITH AMERICAN TAXPAYERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, this week, Members of the House of Representatives will have a chance to keep faith with the American taxpayers and the interests of our each and every district. The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) and I will offer an amendment to assure that the most expensive project in the history of the Corps of Engineers, the Upper Mississippi River Navigation expansion, is in fact justified.

This \$1.8 billion project will take up 10 to 15 percent of the entire Corps construction budget for years, perhaps decades to come, impacting projects in every congressional district. That is because the Corps' current backlog of construction is about \$58 billion and the construction budget is less than \$2 billion a year. We need to make sure that we are using our limited funding for worthwhile projects.

Now, while I have deep reservations about this project, I respect the hard work of our chairman, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN), of the ranking member, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), and particularly of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO), who, for years has worked hard in the committee and behind the scenes to make this a better project.

Out of respect for their hard work, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) and I have come up with a compromise, not to eliminate the project, but simply to make sure that we are preserving the integrity of the Corps' project and the fiscal responsibility of Congress.

The amendment we will offer will authorize the project to proceed if the minimum economic justification that has been offered for the project is met. The planning is such that this project is going to be in a planning stage for the next 5 years. So our amendment will not in any way interfere with the planning process itself. It will simply require that over the course of the next 3 years that the projections for barge traffic at the minimum level are met.

Now, this is the key justification because barge traffic is cited in scenarios put forward by the Corps to show the

need for this massive project because they claim that barge traffic on the Mississippi River system is going up. But according to the Corps' own data, barge traffic has declined 23 percent from 1992 to 2003. Last year it dropped by 19 percent.

While it seems the Corps' traffic scenarios are wildly overoptimistic, and that barge traffic is likely to continue its decline, our amendment will allow the Corps to go forward with its planning project if, over the next 3 years, they meet the lowest scenario that makes this project economically justified.

Why is this special attention so important? Well, I have already pointed out it is the largest project in the history of the Corps and is going to impact projects all across the country that are worthy and much more important. But we ought to consider the troubled history of this project, for this project is, for many people, the project that launched the Corps Reform movement. In 2000, the Corps economist, Donald Sweeney, claimed that the Corps officials ordered him to cook the books in order to economically justify this project. After a whistle blower investigation, the Army Inspector General agreed, and two generals and a colonel lost their jobs.

This project epitomizes the need for reform and modernization of the Corps of Engineers. It is an example of how the Corps' planning system has a bias towards large structural projects. The National Association of Science has concluded that the Corps has ignored nonstructural alternatives such as congestion fees, scheduling and switch boats, that will enable the system to work better. And we do not yet have a good system of independent review, which, if it had been required of this project, we would not be arguing about it today.

Several National Academy of Science reports have examined the project. In 2001, the panel concluded the Corps had relied on over optimistic projections. In December of 2003 a second panel renewed their objections, concluding it was not possible to evaluate the benefits of lock expansion until an efficient system for managing the waterway was implemented. Last year an additional report concluded that despite the Corps' efforts, "the study contains flaws serious enough to limit its credibility and value in the policymaking program."

While I believe we have gone a long way in modernizing many of the Corps activities, I salute my colleague, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DUNCAN) and the committee for the work that WRDA has done. It is a step in the right direction. I urge my colleagues to look at this amendment, and I urge its approval.

KARL ROVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Janu-

ary 4, 2005, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, it is time President Bush's Deputy White House Chief of Staff Karl Rove level with the American people and explain exactly what his role was in the leak of a covert CIA agent.

Mr. Speaker, this is serious business. But from the way the White House has been handling it, you would think it is no big deal. Valerie Plame was a covert CIA agent stationed in many hot spots around the world. When someone in the White House decided to leak her name to reporters they were jeopardizing any undercover operations that Plame had worked with in the past.

You would think that President Bush would take this issue very seriously, since it was his father who said in a presidential address at the CIA headquarters back in 1999, and I am going to quote that, "that I have nothing but contempt and anger for those who betray the trust by exposing the name of our sources. They are, in my view the most insidious of traitors."

Now those are some tough words from the first President Bush who knew the CIA well from his days as director of that agency. But when Valerie Plame's name was first leaked, this president, the current President Bush, also had some tough comments for whoever was responsible. In September 2003 he said in response to a question regarding the leak of Plame's name, and again I am quoting, "if there is a leak out of my administration, I want to know who it is, and if the person has violated the law, the person will be taken care of."

Well now, Mr. Speaker, it appears that we know who one of those people is. And now the question is, will President Bush hold Karl Rove accountable for his actions?

Karl Rove has also repeatedly denied any involvement. When he was first asked if he had any knowledge or involvement in the identification of the CIA agent, Rove simply said no. Then earlier this month, when interviewed by CNN, Rove amended that statement slightly and said, and again I am quoting, "I will repeat what I said to ABC News when this whole thing broke some number of months ago. I do not know her name and I did not leak her name."

Well, we now know that he may not have necessarily given the reporter Valerie Plame's name. But he certainly told the reporter that Joseph Wilson's wife was a covert CIA agent.

Now how difficult would it be for a reporter to find out the name of Wilson's wife? Not that difficult, obviously.

Mr. Speaker, it is troubling that neither Karl Rove nor the Bush administration have leveled with the American people about Rove's real involvement. Shortly after the leak became news, White House Press Secretary Scott

McClellan went before White House reporters and told the world he talked with Karl Rove, Elliot Abrams and Lewis Libby, and that each of three had assured him that they were not involved.

And so now the question is, was Karl Rove withholding information from his colleagues at the White House about his involvement in the Valerie Plame scandal? Or did the White House know, and did they send out erroneous and false statements to the media?

It would be nice if the White House would answer these questions, but now the White House refuses to comment on any issue regarding the ongoing investigation. Yesterday reporters tried to ask Scott McClellan whether or not he would stand by the statement he made back in 2003 in which he stated that Karl Rove had told him he was not involved. And McClellan said he could no longer comment on the investigation. How convenient, Mr. Speaker, that McClellan was able to vouch for Rove back in 2003 but is silent today.

So today we are left are two possibilities really. 1, the White House has been bending the truth on this very serious issue since the beginning, or 2, Karl Rove has misrepresented his involvement to the White House. Either way, Karl Rove has a lot of explaining to do. And I believe, Mr. Speaker, that President Bush should stand behind his past statement and ask Karl Rove to either defend his actions or resign.

DRAWDOWN OF FORCES IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, this weekend many of us learned that the Bush Administration may have a plan for a phased drawdown of coalition forces in Iraq in the next 12 to 18 months.

Unfortunately, we did not learn about these plans from the Administration's legally mandated yet unfulfilled reporting requirements to Congress. We learned about it from news reports of a leaked memo circulating in the British government.

The memo outlines the Administration's plan to cut the size of our force in Iraq from 140,000 down to 66,000 by the middle of next year, and describes a "strong U.S. military desire" to hand over control to the Iraqi security forces in most of Iraq.

In January I released a white paper in which I proposed a timetable for a phased drawdown of the majority of American troops by the end of 2006. If the information in the British memo is true, then the Administration may be planning similar plans, despite its public claims to the contrary.

Ironically, the British memo, reportedly written at least a month ago, broke in the American press at exactly

the same moment that the Administration missed a very important deadline to share precisely this sort of information with this Congress.

There is something wrong when we are learning about the Administration's plans for our troops, not from the President, not from the Pentagon, but from leaked foreign memos. Yesterday the Pentagon should have released to Congress an essential report on the benchmarks and guidelines for measuring progress in Iraq.

The report for "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq" was a provision of the Supplemental Defense Appropriations Bill passed by this Congress and signed into law by President Bush on May 11, 2005. This law required the Administration to outline a comprehensive approach to Iraq by July 11, yesterday, with follow-up reports every 90 days thereafter.

This report presents an invaluable opportunity for the administration to explain to Congress and to the American people their plans and intentions in Iraq. Providing Congress with a more comprehensive set of performance indicators will undoubtedly lead to a more informed debate over U.S. policy in Iraq.

The congressionally mandated report calls on the Administration to outline key measures of stability and security in Iraq. This includes measurements of political stability, the training of Iraqi forces. Specifically, the report mandates that the Administration provide information on the operational readiness status of the Iraqi military forces, including the type, number, size and organizational structure of Iraqi battalions, as well as their ability to conduct counterinsurgency operations.

The report requirement also calls for estimates of the strength of the Iraqi insurgency and details on the training of the Iraqi police force.

I urge the Administration to take this responsibility seriously and to take this legal obligation seriously by providing this information to Congress as quickly and as comprehensively as possible.

The information contained in this report is a critical step towards bringing our troops home. To that end, I am a cosponsor of House Resolution 55, the Homeward Bound Act. This bipartisan legislation requires the President to announce a plan by December 31 of this year for the eventual return of all elements of the Armed Forces. This plan would be a natural extension of the report due to this body yesterday.

The bill also requires the President to begin a drawdown of our troops on or before October 1, 2006. Beyond that date, it provides the President with the flexibility for an orderly drawdown.

Finally, the legislation requires the President to accelerate the training of Iraqi forces and to ensure that they are adequate to take the leading role in fighting the insurgency.

Our troops have done everything we have asked of them in Iraq. They have

acted heroically. They have done their job. Now is the time for Washington to do its job.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 22 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY) at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

Rabbi David Greene, Chabad-Lubavitch, Rochester, Minnesota, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, Master of the Universe, according to the Jewish tradition, You instructed mankind to obey seven universal laws:

not to worship false Gods;
never to blaspheme Your Holy Name;
not to murder;
not to commit adultery, incest, or any sexual misdeeds;
not to steal, lie, or cheat;
not to be cruel to any living creature;

and that every society govern by just laws based on the recognition of You, O God, as a sovereign ruler of all men and all nations.

Today the Members of this House convene to fulfill one of these commandments, to govern by just laws. May it be Your will that those assembled here enact laws to govern this great country, be mindful of Your presence and conduct themselves in all their matters with justice, kindness, and peace.

Grant them success in making this country truly fit for Your presence. Bless them with good health, wisdom, compassion, good cheer, and fellowship. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GUTKNECHT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.