

we all are governed, but we are also uniquely acquainted with our own limitations. Polls may indeed show that a majority of our constituents today would simply like to see our current immigration laws enforced, but we are in a position to know that such is unreasonable.

Deciding whether our role is to lead or to follow is not a new conundrum. During the Constitutional Convention in 1787, George Washington counseled: “If to please the people we do what we ourselves disprove, how can we afterwards defend our work?” It might be comfortable in an election year to warm ourselves by the populist fire that we ourselves have stoked, but it is not leadership.

Leaders appeal to the better angels of our nature rather than bow to the manifestations of our baser instincts. The standard bearer of the modern conservative movement, Ronald Reagan, understood this very well when he talked about the shining city on the hill. In his farewell address he described this, “a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity, and if there had to be city walls,” he said, “the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will to enter.”

I hope that that is how we see it today.

DEMOCRATS UNVEIL PLAN FOR REAL SECURITY

(Mr. NADLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Democrats in the House, the Senate and our Governors unveiled the Democratic plan for real security. This plan reveals the difference between the Democrats and the Republicans and the Bush administration in protecting our country.

Among the differences, the greatest danger we face is that al Qaeda gets nuclear weapons. The problem with getting nuclear weapons is how to find fissionable material. There is enough fissionable material lying around not properly guarded in the former Soviet Union for thousands of bombs. The Bush administration wants to get it out of there—in 30 years. Democrats say, Get it now, all of it, by 2010 before it is smuggled to al Qaeda to make nuclear weapons to use against American citizens.

We are rightly concerned about the Dubai Ports deal, who controls our ports, but more important is what comes into our ports. Eleven million shipping containers a year, 40-foot boxes, come into American ports. The Republicans, the Bush administration, inspects 5 percent of them. Democrats say, no shipping container, not one, should be put on a ship bound to an American port till it is electronically scanned and inspected by the United States in the foreign port so that no

atomic bomb gets put in there and we know about it before it gets on the ship, not after.

If we want to make our country safe, we better elect some Democrats.

CONGRATULATING OHIO GIRLS' STATE HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL CHAMPION MOUNT NOTRE DAME COUGARS

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, while I was at home last week in Ohio's First Congressional District, I had the honor of attending a pep rally at Mount Notre Dame High School. The school spirit in that gym was really something to behold. Of course there was cause for celebration, since the Cougars captured their second Ohio girls' State basketball championship in the last 3 years with an overall record of 25-3. The Cougars faced a difficult road to the championship, including a regional final victory over a tough Oak Hills Lady Scots team, which also happens to be in my congressional district.

Mount Notre Dame basketball has become synonymous with success throughout the State of Ohio. Not only have they appeared in the State finals 3 years in a row, but this victory made the Cougars the first Cincinnati girls' basketball program to capture two State titles. It is also important to note that Mount Notre Dame excels in academics.

It is a great honor for me to recognize the success and achievements of these outstanding young women, their head coach Scott Rogers, his staff and the entire student body. Their hard work and dedication makes all Cincinnatians proud.

Go Cougars.

LOBBYING REFORM

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, it is time for a spring clean at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue. In the wake of the Jack Abramoff scandal, public approval for this Congress is at an all-time low and voters are demanding new priorities for America. But rather than working to restore the public's trust, some are more interested in protecting the culture of business as usual. They are perfectly happy with their cozy relationships where highly paid lobbyists serve as their “back office,” writing legislation, providing jobs to Members and relatives, and lavishing them with expensive dinners and trips.

Yesterday, for instance, the Senate missed an opportunity for real reform when it rejected new restrictions on lobbyist-sponsored travel, presidential libraries, and, most importantly, an independent office of public integrity.

Think about it. You can't take a ham sandwich from a lobbyist but you can

get on their private plane with a ham sandwich. That is what they are allowed to do. You could drive a truck through those types of reforms. The House Ethics Committee hasn't even met in more than a year when one Member here has pled guilty and three others are under investigation.

Mr. Speaker, the American people won't accept the continuation of business as usual under the guise of real reform. When that gavel comes down, it is intended to open the people's House, not the auction house.

It is time for new priorities in America.

HIGHER EDUCATION REAUTHORIZATION

(Mr. KELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to give the American people some straight talk on higher education. The Higher Education Act before Congress today will strengthen the Pell Grant program, expand Perkins student loans, and increase access to college for millions of worthy American students.

The Democrat substitute is called, quote, reverse the raid on student aid. Don't believe the hype. Not one student in America will receive less financial aid under our bill. Not one.

The heart of our bill is the Pell Grant program. Let's look at this chart to show the history of Pell Grant funding over 20 years. The yellow represents when the Democrats were in control of Congress. The red represents when Republicans were in control of Congress. Does that look like we have raided student aid to you? The last 3 years Democrats were in control of Congress, they had a Democrat House and a Democrat President and they cut Pell Grants every single year in a row.

Mr. Speaker, the American people are sick and tired of partisan slogans and election-year double talk. This is a good bill. I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 609.

DEMOCRATIC REAL SECURITY PLAN: REAL SECURITY STARTS AT HOME

(Mr. PASCRELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, yesterday congressional Democrats unveiled our detailed agenda to fully secure our Nation. Since 9/11, we have worked to make America safer, and we have attempted to work in a nonpartisan way, the record will show. Immediately after 9/11, myself and some Democrats were given the assignment to structure ways of improving our intelligence, aiding our first responders, and securing our infrastructure.

And really it is unconscionable that some Republicans, some, have said that this party had to wait till yesterday to

provide an agenda. I don't know where they have been for the last 4 years. This is absolutely unacceptable. We pushed for a Homeland Security Department. We wanted a secretary to sit at the table and be part of the Cabinet. The independent 9/11 Commission gave President Bush failing grades on America's preparedness. Dirty bombs and other deadly materials are still able to enter the United States through unsecured ports and airports. The administration has failed to meet the basic needs.

Democrats have a plan. We will implement all of the 9/11 Commission recommendations. We will improve border security; invest in mass transit security; fully man, train and equip first responders; and we will screen 100 percent of the containers before they come into this country.

Mr. Speaker, we will make America safer.

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WAR PLANS LEAKED TO SADDAM

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, last week a disturbing report was released showing evidence of a security breach at U.S. Central Command in Doha, Qatar.

According to the report, Iraqi documents now in our possession show that Russian officials provided Saddam Hussein with intelligence on U.S. strategic planning during the lead-up to the war in Iraq. The documents say Russians provided the intelligence through "their sources inside the American Central Command in Doha," specific details 2 weeks before our troops entered Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a small matter. U.S. CENTCOM in Qatar is the nerve center of our operations in Iraq. That's why it is absolutely vital that we have full confidence in the security of our operations there. With troops on the ground and in harm's way, it is essential that we seek to find out how this information was leaked and whether or not such leaks could still be happening.

While military officials have been slow to investigate, Congress should not be. Getting to the bottom of this should be a top priority of the House and Senate Intelligence and Armed Services Committees. Nothing less than the security of our troops is at stake.

ATTACK ON STUDENT AID

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, student aid is under serious attack. As I look at the 100 amendments that were blocked from being considered later on

today, we saw amendments that would have extended the Pell Grant to qualifying prisoners. That is an attack on student aid; an amendment that would have provided forgiveness for teachers who go into rural communities, that is an attack on student aid; amendments that would have restored \$12 billion to the student aid pool.

If those are not attacks on student aid, then I need to be educated.

CONGRATULATING KRISTINA SLATER

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege for me to bring to the attention of the U.S. House a wonderful recognition of one of my constituents, Kristina Slater, and what she has just received. Just yesterday she was honored at the Pentagon with the Decoration for Exceptional Civilian Service Award at the Secretary of the Army's annual awards ceremony.

This award stands for more than a certificate or a pin. It stands for superior commitment to excellence. It stands for dedication. It stands for remarkable pride in doing one's job day in and day out.

Kristina Slater's work exemplifies this. She was instrumental in helping transition various information, technology functions, finances, and manpower to meet current and future needs of the Army. The results of this are being met with strong operational success, vital to everyone involved.

We are all extremely proud of Kristina Slater and congratulate her on this wonderful honor. As the highest honorary award bestowed upon a civilian employee by the Army, this worthy achievement is a testament to Ms. Slater's diligent and loyal service to our Nation.

I know the House joins me in thanking Kristina Slater on this award and her selfless service and dedication to our Nation.

DEMOCRATIC PLANS FOR ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

(Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Democrats rolled out a plan for emergency and energy independence by 2020.

Mr. Speaker, as the spring arrives, gas prices are once again on the rise. America's dependence on foreign oil is up to 60 percent. Dependence on foreign sources of energy compromises our national security and makes families and businesses less secure because of high energy costs.

To free America from dependence on foreign oil, Democrats pledge to achieve energy independence for America by 2020 by eliminating reliance on oil from the Middle East and other un-

stable regions of the world. We will increase production of alternative fuels from America's heartland, including bio-fuels, clean oil, geothermal and fuel cells. We will also promote hybrid technology and enhance efficiency and conservation incentives.

During consideration of an energy bill last year, the Republican majority rejected many of these proposals when they were offered by Democrats. Under a Democratic majority, energy independence would finally become a reality. That is what people want.

TIP FOR DEMOCRATS ON IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, after many months, the Democrats have managed to release their so-called national security agenda; and one of the things their agenda calls for is improving border security.

Last year, House Republicans passed the Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism and Illegal Immigration Control Act as well as the REAL ID Act. How do these bills protect our borders?

First, the Border Security Act increases penalties for illegal immigration and holds violators accountable to restore the integrity of our Nation's borders, reestablishes respect for our laws, and helps ensure that terrorists cannot enter the United States.

Second, the REAL ID Act federally standardizes the requirements for applying and issuing State identification cards because the 19 hijackers responsible for the 9/11 terrorist attacks carried between them 13 valid driver's licenses and 21 State-issued ID cards.

How did the Democrats vote on these issues? 164 of them opposed the Border Security Act and 152 opposed the REAL ID Act. So Democrats now want to improve border security? Here is a tip for them: start voting for legislation that does exactly that.

SEAL OUR BORDERS

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, the issue is not hard to understand. The American people understand this issue and we are getting lots of calls into our offices.

We have the immigration debate. As we talk about illegal immigration, as we discuss the problem of illegal entry into this country, we all know that you have to begin with the very first step. It has to be a priority and that priority is seal our borders.

We all learned in kindergarten that the beginning is a very good place to start. As we have this debate on illegal immigration and illegal entry into this country, let's begin at the very beginning by sealing the borders to this great Nation.