

Mr. Speaker, they have given the full measure of devotion to this Nation and they deserve our thanks. The invectives and political discourse need to focus on their sacrifice and not on our political ambitions.

URGING RESPECT FOR THE 9/11 WIDOWS

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, across the Potomac in Arlington today, we are breaking ground for the 9/11 Memorial at the Pentagon. Our Nation is rightfully honoring the victims of those heinous acts.

It has also been 1 week since I called upon my Republican colleagues to reject Ann Coulter's vicious attacks on the widows of 9/11.

Not a single Republican elected official has stepped forward to reject her hate. So I have to conclude they are comfortable with her as their spokesman. Your silence is deafening. Apparently it is okay to exploit 9/11 to shore up your own sagging poll numbers or make a quick buck.

So rather than see 9/11 as a moment to unite America, Ann Coulter and her followers have chosen to divide and demonize fellow Americans. I am always amazed that the one casualty the American people would accept on 9/11 would be partisanship, and that is the one casualty you are not willing to give.

Ms. Coulter is threatened by the 9/11 widows. They threaten her simplistic world by daring to ask questions. Mr. Speaker, the 9/11 widows have courageously stood up to demand that we never forget the horror of September 11.

All Americans who lost loved ones should be honored, as we are doing in Arlington today, not denigrated simply because they do not fit your simplistic world view.

NO NEED FOR FLIP-FLOPPING IN THE WAR ON TERROR

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the sound you hear on the other side of the aisle is the sound of flip-flopping. Democrats may have put off announcing their agenda, but they have managed to perfect the art of the flip-flop.

Just this week the minority leader stated that she voted against the war in Iraq because she had seen the intelligence and it did not support the threat being claimed by the Bush administration.

Strangely, the minority leader had a different opinion during the debate leading up to the vote authorizing the use of military force. Then she said that she was aware that Saddam Hussein was engaging in the development of weapons of mass destruction "which

is a threat to countries in the region," and that there was no question he had chemical and biological weapons.

Flash forward to this week, and the minority leader stated that there was never anything in the intelligence that Iraq posed an imminent threat. Mr. Speaker, which is it? As we begin this debate on Iraq and the war on terror, the American people need decisiveness, not flip-flopping. Republicans want to step up and meet the challenge. It is now time for the Democrats to do the same.

IRAQ WAR UNDERMINES FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, increasingly Americans are realizing there is a better way to support our troops than just sending more of them off to be killed. Would that more here in Washington had a little of our troops' courage to stand up to the myth-based policies of this Administration.

The good judgment of a strong majority of House Democrats, including the consistent position of our minority leader in opposing President Bush's original invasion of Iraq, was demonstrated again yesterday by a report from over 100 top foreign policy experts across the ideological spectrum.

Eighty-seven percent of them said that the war in Iraq has a negative impact on protecting the American people, that it is undermining the war on terrorism. But ignoring their advice, ignoring one retired general after another, and ignoring the good sense of ordinary Americans across this country, the Administration has consistently pursued a policy that endangers our families' security.

The price of the Administration's deaf ear, \$229 million per day, and a price paid in the blood of others every day.

LONE STAR VOICE—C.E. CUNNINGHAM

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, down on the Rio Grande where the sage brush and mesquite trees line the lawless border of the riverbank is the home of generations of Texas ranchers. Their homes, feet from the porous border, they wake up to human smugglers, drug runners and thieves that have trespassed on their soil.

On the border I met crusty rancher, C.E. Cunningham of Quemado, Texas. He has lived on the land for seven decades, and he now writes me about the southern border invasion into America: "We have had our livestock, wildlife killed, vehicles, tools, equipment stolen. I had to move my mother out of her own home when three illegals stole and robbed her. I have taken weapons

away from thieves. I have seen the Mexican Army camped out on the riverbank, and I have seen their tracks on our side. I have tried to get the Mexican Government to help with the thieves, but they told me it was best they stole over here instead of Mexico. It seems to me the Mexican government sanctions these crimes against us."

Mr. Speaker, Americans like C.E. Cunningham want their lives back, their land back, and their security back. We have to stop letting the Mexican Army and Generalissimo Fox invade the United States by encouraging illegal entry into our country.

And that's just the way it is.

DO NOT FOCUS TOO HEAVILY ON FEMA

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, all of the talk in the media these last few days has been about the fraud in the FEMA individual and housing assistance program.

Now, I am not saying that those who perpetrated the fraud should not be dealt with appropriately, or that FEMA and the Red Cross do not have to clean up their act.

But, folks, this is a disaster the likes of which we have never seen. What would you have had them do in such an emergency, apply miles and miles of red tape and risk not giving service to those who need it quickly?

Colleagues, do not let this be a smoke screen that would cause us to lose sight of the contracting and the purchasing waste, fraud and abuse that the big corporations have perpetrated on our government and all of us, while businesses in the Gulf Region went bust for lack of work.

It is always the little guy who bears the blame while the big ones get away. Our relevant committees in this Congress need to turn our focus to the Halliburtons of the world. When we look at the waste, the fraud, and abuse of these giants, that \$1 billion will look like chump change.

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ETHIOPIA BORDER DISPUTE

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

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to call attention to what may become the next tragedy in Africa, the border dispute between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

My constituents in Minnesota remember the destruction and death from the 1998 to 2000 war over the border that cost the lives of 70,000 people. I urge the President and the Secretary of State to leave no stone unturned to bring a peaceful resolution to this matter.

Additionally, I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring the Ethiopian Consolidation Act, which would advance human rights in the Horn of Africa and links U.S. foreign aid assistance to full compliance with the Algiers Agreement. We must see to it that the tragedy of the last decade is not repeated.

HOUSE TO VOTE ON INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, next week the House will have its first vote to increase the minimum wage in over 10 years. This is good news for the more than 7 million hardworking Americans who today only make \$5.15 an hour. It could also be good news for millions of middle class workers who could see their hourly wage increase as a result of the higher minimum wage.

Despite repeated efforts by the House Democrats to expand economic opportunity for millions of Americans over the last 9 years, the House Republican leadership has refused to allow the floor vote on increasing the minimum wage. Next week they have no choice, however. Thanks to action in the House Appropriations Committee on Wednesday, the committee voted to gradually increase the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25.

The American people should not be surprised that the out-of-touch House Republican leadership is also voicing strong opposition to the wage hike and vows to kill it next week. This would be shameful, and millions of Americans will be affected. They need to have a living wage.

I look forward to the vote next week and hope that the House will finally take action in a new direction to expand economic opportunity for all.

POLITICAL PROGRESS CONTINUES IN IRAQ

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, in only 3 years, the world has watched the nation of Iraq transform from a brutal dictatorship to a promising democracy. Saddam's torture chambers and mass graves have been replaced with democracy's voting booths and legislative referendums.

Today Iraqi citizens are working tirelessly to secure their freedoms. By participating in the election of the transitional assembly in January of 2005, the drafting of an approval of the Constitution by October and the national elections in December, they have demonstrated that they refuse to allow terrorists to determine the fate of their country. Last month, Iraqis achieved another historic victory when they announced their new unity government.

U.S. troops, coalition forces and Iraqi citizens continue to face challenges in establishing a civil society in Iraq, which protects American families by destroying terrorist training camps in the central front of the global war on terrorism.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY TO MILLIONS OF AMERICANS BY INCREASING THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, next week the House will finally have an opportunity to lift millions of hardworking Americans out of poverty. For the first time in a decade, we will have a vote on the House floor to increase the minimum wage so that 7 million Americans can finally make a living wage. I think most Americans, quite frankly, would be stunned to hear that the House Republican leadership has refused to allow a vote to increase the minimum wage for over 10 years now.

Republican inaction has led to the fact that the minimum wage is at its lowest level in 50 years. In fact, if the minimum wage had just kept up with inflation since 1968, it would have been \$8.88 in 2005. That is still, quite frankly, a pittance for what people need to live.

House Democrats are committed to expanding economic opportunity to millions of Americans who are just trying to make a living wage. They want to provide a better tomorrow for their families. A majority of the House Appropriations Committee defied Republican leadership earlier this week and supported an increase in the minimum wage to \$7.25. That is only fair.

Seven million Americans deserve a minimum wage, an increase in the minimum wage, so let us make sure they get it.

HONORING C.J. FOUTS

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in memory of C.J. Fouts, a businessman and community leader in the city of Smyrna, Georgia, in my district. Mr. Fouts passed away this week, leaving behind his wife, Betty, three children, eight grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, and a community full of grateful citizens.

Mr. Fouts captured the essence of the American dream, Mr. Speaker. He came to Smyrna at age 18 from rural Georgia in search of work. He started his own business, a service station that later grew into a sales shop for cars, trucks and equipment.

Mr. Fouts gave his time, energy and passion to the Smyrna business community. He has the distinction of pos-

sessing the longest active business license in the city of Smyrna, 54 years. Just a few weeks ago the city honored him with a plaque commemorating him as a founding member of the Downtown Development Authority. I am so thankful to have been in attendance.

Mr. Speaker, our communities are blessed with men like C.J. Fouts. Their work ethic boosts our economy, and their determination allows our towns and our cities to flourish. Smyrna, indeed, and the State of Georgia, lost a great man this week, but his work and vision live on throughout the city.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and my colleagues to join me in honoring Mr. Fouts' memory.

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DEBATE ON THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

(Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, today is an important day in the United States Congress. Beginning around noon this afternoon, the House will debate for 10 hours the Iraq war. The question will be should we continue on the course that President Bush and the administration has set or should we have a new plan? We will have 10 hours of debate.

Consider, over 2,500 young men and women killed, over 30,000 amputees, blinded and the like, hundreds of thousands who will have mental health deficiencies when they return. Retired generals have spoken. We need a new direction. The troops should be redeployed. They should be brought home at the most practical time with a plan that we don't now have under this administration.

So, America, listen and look. Should we stay the course, or should we have a plan of redeployment to protect our troops and to protect America?

DEBATING THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today we will hold discussion and a debate about the global war on terrorism and about the battles in Afghanistan and in Iraq. It is appropriate indeed that we do so.

This week, we are celebrating the Army's birthday. We are celebrating Flag Day, and we are continuing to honor the men and women who serve so brilliantly in the U.S. military.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I want to rise for a moment and honor the men and women of the Tennessee National Guard. They have had deployments in the past year, and they have served with distinction. Today many of the junior officers and the commanders of the Tennessee Guard are in town. They