

keys. Nearly every time this administration takes the U.S. for a drive out in the world, it crashes the car. Look at Iraq: no diplomacy, confrontation, attack, occupation. Iran: no diplomacy, confrontation. North Korea: no diplomacy, threats, confrontation, even when they are preparing a missile test.

Instead of a national missile defense system which doesn't work protecting us against a North Korea missile of dubious accuracy, we should look at talking with them. North Korea wants direct talks. Well, talk to them. Don't crash the car.

America must be able to negotiate in a complex world without confrontation and creating enemies. You are either with us or against us or bring it on? That is not a path towards successful diplomacy.

There is a basic flaw in America's world view and this administration's world view. This, then, is a call for a new diplomacy, policies where we look at potential adversaries as potential allies, and then acting upon that vision.

IMMIGRATION AND BORDER SECURITY

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

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, the more people learn about TED KENNEDY's immigration bill, the less they like it. Let me give you four examples.

First, before we build a border security fence on our own U.S. property, we must first consult with the Mexican Government to make sure it is okay with them.

Second, using a fake Social Security card is a felony in this country. If an American citizen does it, he goes to jail. If an illegal alien does it, he gets to collect Social Security benefits based on past illegal conduct, and even gets a chance at citizenship.

Third, when it comes to in-state college tuition, illegal aliens get it, but U.S. citizens from out of State pay higher tuition rates.

Fourth, illegals who become so-called guest workers would get the higher union-level prevailing wage on private construction contracts, something even U.S. citizens don't get.

Mr. Speaker, we should first secure our borders and enforce the law, not appease the liberal constituency of TED KENNEDY by accepting his pathetic bill.

DEMOCRATS REFUSE TO IGNORE THE NEEDS OF LOW-INCOME AMERICANS

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

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, this week was supposed to finally have a vote on increasing the minimum wage for more than 7 million Americans. Unfortunately, it appears the Republican leadership is willing to delay a vote on the must-pass Labor-HHS appropri-

tions bill rather than actually have a real floor debate and a vote on the minimum wage.

This is a real disservice to every American. An increase in the minimum wage does not only benefit the minimum-wage workers, it also helps millions of middle-class workers who would also see their hourly wages increase as a result of a higher minimum wage.

But this is also a question of fairness. It has been 9 years since the minimum-wage workers last received a pay raise. Does that sound fair? Today the minimum wage is its lowest level if you take into account inflation. Do my Republican colleagues really believe that we should continue to force more than 7 million Americans to live on less than \$11,000 a year? That may have been a liveable wage 10 years ago, but it surely isn't now. We should do the right thing and expand economic opportunity to millions of Americans who are just trying to make a living wage.

MS-13 AND IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, crime by illegal immigrant members of criminal street gangs is exploding. Immigration and Custom Enforcement has stated, "The victims of gang crime are not limited to rival gang members. Entire neighborhoods are held hostage by and subjected to the violence of street gangs."

Currently alien members of criminal street gangs are not deportable. Many of the U.S. members of one of the international criminal gangs are present here under temporary protective status. MS-13 originated in El Salvador, complicating detention and deportation. A 1988 Ninth Circuit Federal Court injunction prevents expedited removal of Salvadorans due to a vicious civil war in this country. That civil war ended in 1992, and the injunction still remains. As a result, captured El Salvadorans are immediately released. In 2005, 40,000 Salvadoran illegals were apprehended. However, we currently estimated that for each individual caught, five cross our borders successfully.

SLOGANS DO NOT REPLACE SOLUTIONS

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, if there is one thing we have learned from the Republican Congress in the last 6 years, it is that slogans do not replace solutions. On America's most pressing issues, they have failed to act, and on others they demonstrated an uncanny Midas touch.

Take the \$800 billion prescription drug benefit. Rather than reducing

costs for seniors, it is nothing more than an ATM machine for HMOs and drug companies. Two studies released yesterday show that the prices of medicines used by seniors are rising twice the rate of inflation. Consider the energy bill. In June 2005, a month before the bill passed, gas was \$2.07; today, it is more than \$3.

On immigration, the House Republicans have sent up a white flag, an issue which they have ignored for 6 years. They offer more talk, less action. They won't pass a bill. They want a single-issue election on something they haven't done a single thing on.

Even yesterday's conviction of the Bush administration chief procurement officer for influence peddling won't shame them into passing real lobbying or ethics reform. They deny an increase in the minimum wage and a vote on that legislation.

Mr. Speaker, one thing is clear: When it comes to addressing the issues important to American families, the Republican Congress is all hat and no cattle. It is time for a new direction. It is time for a change.

DEM AGENDA

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Doomsday. That is what the Democrats have to offer. But, actually, we have been waiting for weeks, months, actually over a year now for the Democrats to offer an agenda, and they did that last week, although agenda may be a little too strong of a word. It should be more appropriately called the Cliff Notes for Liberal Lunacy.

Case in point. They say they need to require fiscal discipline. Is this some kind of joke coming from the Dems? This is the same party that has proposed \$45 billion in new spending on this House floor to appropriations bills over and above what we as Republicans want to fund.

Where do Democrats propose eliminating the deficit, by cutting the size of growth? Do they do that? No. They actually just want to go back to raising your taxes for all hardworking Americans.

The Democrats are calling from the same old playbook: Promise, tax, spend. Promise, tax, spend. And what we have with their agenda is more of the same.

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LINE ITEM VETO IS NOTHING BUT DIVERSION

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans are going to try to demonstrate that they are serious about reversing the record deficits that they have created. What is their plan?

They want to give President Bush a line item veto. Incredible.

If the President was really interested in curbing Federal expenditures, he could have vetoed any number of appropriations bills over the last 5 years. To this date, Mr. Speaker, the President has not vetoed one bill that has come out of this Republican Congress, not one. President Bush is the longest sitting President since Thomas Jefferson not to exercise the veto.

So one might ask, why does the President need a line item veto when he refuses to use the veto? The fact is, Mr. Speaker, this is nothing more than a smokescreen invented by the Republicans to show that they are serious about deficit reduction.

They are trying to divert attention away from the fact that under their control record surpluses have turned into record deficits. If President Bush really wanted to exercise discipline, he would have vetoed other legislation.

IRAQ

(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 strong support of the impressive work our troops are doing to fight and win the global war on terror.

Last week, we debated a resolution pledging our commitment to victory in Iraq. I was troubled by some of the rhetoric I heard coming from other side of the aisle. Many Democrats are still advocating a withdrawal policy, and that is a policy that is sure to fail.

Mr. Speaker, we are making significant strides toward a secure Iraq and a more stable Middle East. At that critical moment, it would be a tremendous mistake for us to set a hard deadline for troop withdrawal. A deadline only serves to embolden the terrorists because they know they only have to hold out for a few more weeks or months, or 6 months.

Instead, the House last week sent a resounding message to al Qaeda that we will withdraw when the Iraqi security forces are ready and able to defeat the terrorists and their brutal tactics. This, and not some arbitrary deadline, is our true measure of success.

Mr. Speaker, once again, we have assured our troops that we will support them and will allow them to finish this critical mission.

REPUBLICANS STALL BILL THAT WOULD BOOST SALARIES

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, workers across this Nation are increasingly being asked to do more with less. As prices rise at the gas pump, at pharmacies, on college loans, the millions of Americans who work full-time and make minimum wage are slipping further and further into poverty.

The minimum wage in this country has not been raised since 1997 and is now at its lowest level in 50 years, when adjusted for inflation. Making only \$5.15 an hour, a full-time, minimum wage employee will earn only \$10,700 annually. This is far from enough to make ends meet, especially for the 75 percent or so who are responsible for at least half of their family's income. Raising children on a middle-class income is hard enough. Imagine trying to do it on less than a third of that.

Mr. Speaker, Democrats believe that the minimum wage should be a living wage. No American who works full-time, all year, should live in poverty, unable to support their family. Last week at the committee level, Democrats were successful in inserting a minimum wage increase into an appropriations bill. But now, the Republican leadership says they will not permit a vote on the minimum wage. They will not permit a vote in this full House.

It is time for real action to move hardworking Americans out of poverty. Seven million Americans deserve a raise today.

WHERE IS THE OUTRAGE?

(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, where is the outrage? We hear stories today of two of our soldiers having suffered unspeakable tortures and left in a nearly unrecognizable condition, yet where are the cries of outrage against this brutality?

Instead, we hear today of the EU leadership focused on closing Gitmo and Members of this body rushing to judgment on national TV before the facts are known about what our troops in the field have done.

Yes, we should hold our troops to the highest ethical standards, but we must be outraged by acts against our troops. Our troops deserve our full support, and we must recognize the intensity of evil that we face, the lengths they will go to harm America and undermine our values, and the need to make sure we win this war on terror to keep our families safe at home.

HONORING ALBERT HILL ODOM

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

Mr. BOYD. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor and pay tribute to Mr. Albert Hill Odom, a good friend and a loving husband and father, who passed away on June 6, 2006, at the age of 87.

Mr. Odom was a great man who positively impacted many young lives, including my own. Mr. Odom was a 4-H extension agent for 30 years in Jefferson County, Florida. He taught me and many others so much, not only about the principles of 4-H, but also how to

conduct ourselves in a respectful and professional way. We were all young farm boys whom he carried to places we had never been before.

I am often asked who the most influential people in my life have been, and my answer is always, first, my father, then Albert Odom, my 4-H agent. A lifelong mentor and role model, Albert Odom was a wonderful man who left the world a better place than he found it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Albert Odom for his many achievements in life and the legacy that he leaves. I extend my deepest sympathy to the Odom family, including his wife, Dot, and his children, Carol and Martha. He will be greatly missed by his family and all who knew him.

STATE CHAMPS—LASSITER AND BLESSED TRINITY

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I proudly rise to honor and congratulate some spectacular student athletes from Georgia's Sixth District. This month, two of our hometown high schools won a State baseball championship.

Marietta's Lassiter High School and Roswell's Blessed Trinity High both took home their respective class' State championship in dominating fashion. These skilled young men showed what is possible with hard work and unending determination.

Lassiter took home the school's second State title after beating another Sixth District team, Kell High School. The Trojans ended their season with 19 straight wins, sweeping every round of the playoffs.

Blessed Trinity amazed everyone with their ascendancy to the State title in only 6 years of existence. Similar to Lassiter, the Titans went through the playoffs losing only one game and sweeping four out of five series.

These student athletes will forever cherish the memory of this season. The players, their families, and their classmates who cheered them on will always look back at the 2006 season as a source of pride, accomplishment and satisfaction.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations to all from Lassiter and Blessed Trinity High Schools.

A PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT THAT PUTS SENIORS FIRST

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, House Democrats continue the fight for a real prescription drug benefit that puts America's seniors first. There is no doubt that the current prescription drug program could be improved.