

and took her to a remote area in the piney woods of East Texas. He pistol whipped her. He sexually assaulted her, and he left her for dead. In fact, when he was later arrested, he was mad that he hadn't killed her.

But she was a remarkable young lady. She survived that brutal attack. Three or four days later, she was found in the woods by a hunter that was out there. Medical needs were met for her. She recovered that brutal attack. Luke Johnson was later captured and charged with aggravated sexual assault.

I was fortunate to prosecute that case. Lisa came and testified before a jury of 12 citizens of Houston, Texas. Luke Johnson was convicted. He received the maximum sentence of 99 years in the Texas State Penitentiary.

And, Madam Speaker, we would hope that all would be well with victims after that, that the world would go on and things would work out well. But that's not the world that we have ever lived in.

Lisa couldn't quite cope with being the victim of a crime. She never went back to that campus at the University of Houston. You can understand why. She couldn't hold a job. In fact, she was fired from her job because she couldn't focus. She started abusing drugs, first alcohol and then probably everything else that she could get her hands on.

Her husband, the kind of guy that he was, no longer wanted her, sued her for divorce, and was able to convince a judge in Houston that he should obtain both of the twin boys, and he left the State of Texas for good, claiming that she was not mentally capable to raise those two children.

And soon after that occurrence, I received a phone call from Lisa's mother telling me that she had received a note from her daughter saying that she was going to take her life. And she did. And I have that note with me today. I've always had that ever since this crime occurred, all the years I was a judge, and I have it in my office here in Congress, saying that she was tired of running from Luke Johnson in her nightmares.

She paid the ultimate price for being a crime victim, Madam Speaker. And because of the fact in those days there was no victim advocate, there was no one that she could turn to, she felt alone. She was alone, Madam Speaker.

But the criminal justice system in this country has come a long way. We have victims' advocates, who take care of the needs of victims, all the way from the time the crime is committed, through the trial, and after the trial. And we have people in the medical profession that donate their time to help in the recovery of crime victims. And now we have in the United States Congress a Victims' Rights Caucus. I'm proud to be the founder of that, but it's a bipartisan caucus. Jim Costa from California, a Democrat, is the co-chairman of this caucus. We have over 44 members, of Members of both parties,

who seek and advocate rights of crime victims here in the United States House of Representatives.

Madam Speaker, we have come a long way. But we have a long way to go because crime victims are real people. Crime doesn't discriminate based on race, age, sex, or economic status. Crime affects so many people through this country. And we, as good neighbors, need to make sure that we keep up with people who have had that unfortunate experience of being a crime victim, especially of a violent crime. Because the same Constitution that protects the rights of criminal defendants protects the rights of crime victims. And we should always seek justice because justice is what we do in this country. And that means that we must always have justice for victims as well.

And that's just the way it is.

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IRAQ'S HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, as we enter the sixth year of the seemingly endless occupation of Iraq, the International Committee of the Red Cross published a worrying report about the State of the humanitarian crisis in Iraq.

In its entitled "Iraq: No Let-Up in the Humanitarian Crisis," the publication shows just how far we need to go to meet the most basic needs of the Iraqi people. Despite the rosy picture being painted by some in the administration, too many Iraqis are still without health care, clean water, and/or education.

And many families have been torn apart by the civil war wracking the country. Family members have gone missing or have been killed. Some have been shipped off to detention centers.

Estimates range on how many people, mostly men, have been locked up. According to the Red Cross, "Tens of thousands of Iraqis, almost all of them men, are currently in detention often far from their homes."

One camp is situated in the southern part of the country near Basra and is managed by the United States-led multinational forces in Iraq. At the same time, this is the largest detention facility in the country. And there are more than 20,000 inmates in that detention camp.

The situation means that many families have lost their breadwinner. The new heads of household, many women and many children, have to cope in a world that seems to be without home or promise for the future. And their day-to-day life is just as bleak.

Instead of improving, the supply of electricity has become even more unreliable. Because of this, water sanitation plants are breaking down and hos-

pitals find they cannot provide adequate care, even if they had the medical supplies to meet the demand, which they very seldom do.

Parents the world over, Madam Speaker, American, Iraqi, or anywhere else, only want the best for their children. They want their kids to be happy. They want them to be healthy. They want their kids to go to school, to grow up and to have a chance to achieve their dreams. That is why ongoing occupation is about more than statistics or numbers.

The Red Cross reports helps to put a human face on the administration's so-called foreign policy. One such story actually highlights the struggle faced by too many. Here is Ruba's story. She says, "My children and I left my home in Anbar province almost 2 years ago. My husband had been killed right in front of us." She continues, "I had to protect my children, so we fled the same night with nothing but some money. For me, today, there is no past, there is no future, only a horrible present. I only wish I had some photos of my husband, photos of my family. I can see it all in my mind, but I don't know for how long I will remember. There was a time when we always sat down together for lunch and laughed. Today, we are living with my cousin's family."

She goes on to say, "There are 12 of us in one room. I don't want my old life again, because I know it is impossible without my husband. All I want is for my children to go to school and lead a normal life."

The story of this mother, Madam Speaker, a woman just 38 years old, is heartbreaking. We have a solemn obligation to help the Iraqi people achieve a future that is both secure and stable.

In the 5 minutes we stand here to deliver our special order speeches, the administration spends over \$1 million to prolong the endless occupation. I think the people of America could find a better way to show our commitment to the Iraqi people.

The American people's generosity and commitment to humanitarian assistance is boundless. But our patience with this administration's foreign policy follies is actually not boundless. This Congress must stand up to the administration. We must say "no" to a blank check. Let us redirect our resources to where they are really needed, towards aid, not ammunition.

UNJUST PROSECUTION AND IMPRISONMENT OF U.S. BORDER PATROL AGENTS COMPEAN AND RAMOS

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

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, today is day 453 of a terrible injustice in America. Two U.S. border agents, Agents Compean and Ramos, have been languishing in Federal prison since January 17 of 2007.

These men did their job to protect our Nation from an illegal alien, a Mexican drug smuggler who brought \$1 million worth of marijuana across our border into Texas. Yet through a questionable prosecution, these two men were convicted for defending themselves and defending our border.

It is a sad day that such a travesty of justice could happen to two Hispanic Americans who loved America so much that they were willing to become law enforcement officers, and in this case Border Patrol agents, in order to protect America. Despite the efforts of the American people and Members of Congress, who have brought this to the attention of the White House, nothing, and I say nothing, has been done to reverse this injustice.

While outside groups and Members of Congress have filed court briefs to support these agents, we still anxiously await a decision in their appeal. The more time these men spend in prison and the longer it takes for a decision on their appeal, the more frustrated the American people become.

The American people have not forgotten agents Ramos and Compean. From time to time, I still hear from constituents who are frustrated that these men are still in prison. The only glimmer of hope for these agents and their families rests with the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans. During an oral argument on December 3, 2007, one of the judges considering the case, Judge E. Grady Jolly said, and I quote, Madam Speaker, and this is his quote, "It does seem to me that the government overreacted here. For some reason, this one got out of hand." That is a Federal judge that made that comment.

A ruling on their appeal is now expected any day, and millions of Americans are hopeful that the Court of Appeals will reverse this terrible injustice.

Madam Speaker, I still call on Chairman JOHN CONYERS to hold a hearing to review this unjust prosecution some time before the end of the year. Chairman CONYERS is a fair-minded person for whom I have great respect. Justice is crying out for his help.

And Madam Speaker, before I close, I want the Ramos and Compean family to know that there are those in both parties in this House of Representatives that are not going to sit back and wait until this injustice is corrected because these two border agents deserve nothing but praise for what they have done for this great Nation.

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

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

OIL EXPORTS FROM COLOMBIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, the papers back home tell the story: 25 firefighter jobs advertised, thousands of applicants. Bass Pro Sporting Goods building a new store, 300 jobs, 13,000 applicants, and the applications keep coming in. Yet the Bush administration last week sent Congress another job-killing NAFTA-like trade pact, this time for the South American nation of Colombia.

But why Colombia? And why now? The answer to both questions, in a word, is oil. Rather than paying attention to what is happening in this country, again, the Bush administration is focused to a new set of global oil deposits.

Why Colombia? In the big picture of global trade, Colombia is relatively insignificant to the United States. So why would the Bush administration make it a top priority in the final year of his presidency? Because oil represents more than half of Colombia's exports to the United States. And nothing drives Bush administration policy more than oil.

Ten years ago, Colombia wasn't even exporting oil. It was an oil-importing country. But with the Middle East in turmoil, the Bush administration, like the Clinton administration before it, is doing everything it can to make Colombia safe for oil exports to us. At a time when U.S. relations with Venezuela, South America's leading oil producer, have dropped to an all-time low, Colombia has emerged as the continent's fourth leading supplying supplier.

A decade ago, as I mentioned, Colombia was an oil-importing nation. Now, multinational oil companies have made huge investments because of tax favorability in the area of a giant, crescent-shaped, underocean oil field that stretches from Colombia to Peru. This trade agreement is not about cocoa. It is not about coal. It is not about cut flowers. This is an agreement about oil.

Buying oil from Colombia piles more oil trade deficit on top of the \$800 billion overall trade deficit our Nation has wracked up with nations all over the world. We continue to export jobs at an accelerating rate and import more and more and more from abroad with oil leading the way by far the number one category in the red.

As in Middle East, the United States government is pouring billions of dollars into Colombia in the form of military and foreign aid in order to protect the oil companies' investments.

Why now? Because the United States is being forced by political realities to relocate its sole defense base in Latin America out of Ecuador, whose president wants it removed from there. And by contrast, the Uribe government in Colombia has welcomed U.S. military involvement, seeing an opportunity to court favor with the Bush administration and the military protection that aid provides for oil exports. Only Israel

and Egypt receive more military assistance from the United States.

According to Amnesty International, which opposes military aid to Colombia until human rights concerns are addressed, the U.S. contributes approximately \$750 million, a quarter of \$1 billion, each year. It is estimated that our country has sent Colombia more than \$5 billion under the guise of Plan Colombia, with most of the assistance going to the military and police.

These parallels with the Middle East are troubling. In both regions, the United States risks its reputation with the "people on the street" by mixing economic designs on resources not belonging to us, and then moving defense assets to protect that interest.

Yes, average Americans are justifiably upset over rising prices at the pump. A gallon of gasoline now costs as much or more than a gallon of milk. Think about that. But surely the answer to this predicament is not to increase our oil dependence on Colombia. If our citizens saw how our America has dedicated its military assets to back up that oil flow owned by private interests, they would be really enraged. In Latin America, the United States is viewed as anything but the "Sweet Land of Liberty."

As in the Middle East, public opinion throughout Latin America has turned strongly negative toward the United States. People to our south view the Bush administration's policies as concerned only with the wealthiest segments of society or their American investment partners and essentially apathetic about democracy for the average person. To achieve the real Alliance For Progress envisioned by John F. Kennedy, our policies should promote democracy and cooperation, not resource exploitation.

Why would our government tether itself to a regime that has tolerated the murder of thousands of labor leaders, more than the rest of the countries of the world combined? Already this year, 17 more labor leaders have been assassinated in Colombia. The Bush administration's failure to cure America's oil addiction is no reason to overlook the crimes of impunity that are being committed regularly against organized labor in Colombia.

Once again, however, our foreign policy is being held hostage to the demands of an oil-based economy. Haven't we moved beyond the 20th century? The issue is not the U.S. trade relationship with Colombia, but the failure of the Bush administration to make our economy more stable at home by pursuing the important goal of energy independence.

Our national leaders should wake up and move us to freedom from imported petroleum. This is a national imperative as serious as our Nation has ever faced. We don't need Colombian oil now. We need energy independence here at home.