

communists and anarchists. And it was, like, 'This is what I need to be a part of.' I spent the next 10 years of my life working with a lot of those people I met in jail, trying to be a revolutionary."

Trevor Loudon, a communist researcher and administrator of the New Zeal Blog, identified several Bay Area communists who worked with STORM, including Elizabeth Martinez, who helped advise Jones' Ella Baker Human Rights Center, which Jones founded to advocate civil justice. Jones and Martinez also attended a "Challenging White Supremacy" workshop together challenging white supremacy.

Martinez was a long-time Maoist who went on to join the Communist Party USA breakaway organization Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism, the CCDS, in the early 1990s. According to Loudon, Martinez still serves on the CCDS council and is also a board member of the Movement for a Democratic Society, where she sits alongside former Weathermen radicals Bill Ayers and Bernadine Dorhn.

One of STORM's newsletters featured a tribute to Amilcar Cabral, the late Marxist revolutionary leader of Guinea-Bissau and the Cape Verde Islands. The tribute is noteworthy because Jones reportedly named his son after Cabral and repeatedly concludes every e-mail with a quote from the communist leader.

Jones then, of course, moved on to environmentalism, and that's the position that he took with the administration. But there is no question he is a radical and a member of the Communist Party and has been for a long time and supported their goals and approaches to government.

So I just would like to say, if I were talking to the President tonight, Mr. President, please be careful who you are appointing to these positions of leadership. It's important for the country; it's important for your administration and the image of the United States throughout the world as a beacon of freedom, justice and democracy.

MOST AMERICANS SAY WAR IN AFGHANISTAN IS NOT WORTH FIGHTING

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, I rise to express my deep concern about the recent developments in Afghanistan. Sadly, 51 American troops were killed in August, making it the deadliest month for the United States since the conflict began 8 years ago.

August also was the deadliest month of the war for the combined coalition force. Many innocent civilians were tragically killed in the air strikes during the month of August, and there is growing evidence that the recent elections may have been marred by fraud.

Madam Speaker, for over 8 years we have relied almost exclusively on the

military to stop violent extremism in Afghanistan. But these recent events show that this strategy isn't giving us a victory on the ground or political solutions to the problem. The American people are beginning to recognize that relying on the military option alone isn't the best way to go.

The latest Washington Post-ABC poll shows that 45 percent of the American people want to reduce our forces in Afghanistan, while only 24 percent want to increase our forces. This latest poll from the McClatchy Newspapers came up with similar results.

□ 2000

It is clearly time, Madam Speaker, to develop a new strategy and a new mission for America in Afghanistan. We must begin to use all of the tools of "smart power."

Smart power means improving police and intelligence work in the communities where extremists hide. Well-trained Afghan policemen, who are familiar with local people, with customs and conditions, can often do the best job of hunting down extremists. Smart power also includes regional diplomatic efforts, education, better governance, and a civilian surge of experts and workers to support economic development in Afghanistan. These are the things that will give the Afghan people real hope for their future and eliminate the root causes of violent extremism.

As National Security Advisor James L. Jones has said, This war will not be won by the military alone. We tried that for years. The piece of our strategy that has to work in the next year is economic development. If that is not done right, there are not enough troops in the world to succeed.

I know that President Obama and Secretary of State Clinton agree that improving the lives of the Afghan people is the key to victory. They have pledged to do everything they can to help rebuild Afghanistan and show the Afghan people that we offer them a better future than the Taliban.

Madam Speaker, I and other Members of the House who oppose our occupation of Iraq watched for years as Congress did nothing to prevent that disaster. But we still have time to get it right when it comes to Afghanistan. This time, let's use smart power. It will save lives, save money, and make our country safer.

PRESIDENT SHOULD HOST CONGRESSIONAL TOWNHALL

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, Congress will gladly welcome the President tomorrow night to speak to a joint session of Congress about health care. All of us here have been asked hundreds of questions by our constituents over the past month. The Presi-

dent is an innovator in communications. He tries new ideas and is a trendsetter when it comes to new ways to be in touch with the American people.

So as the President addresses Congress on his health care ideas tomorrow night, why doesn't he take some health care questions from Members of Congress, questions that have been asked by the people we represent? After all, we call this the People's House, so why not address questions the American people have?

The questions could be submitted before the President speaks and he can choose the ones he wants to address. This could be a congressional townhall hosted by the President.

Here are just some of the questions I have been asked by the people of Texas.

One: The health care bill seems to cost too much. How are we going to pay for it? This question brought much concern to the people in my district. The Congressional Budget Office says that the pending House bill will cost anywhere from billions to even \$1 trillion to just implement.

Tax increases are in the current plan to pay for this bill, more spending of what we don't have. I made a pledge to my constituents not to vote for a bill that will raise taxes, and I haven't. So how do we pay for this without a forced tax increase on the American people?

Two: Why is this bill so confusing? It is written in a way that even the most reasonable people from even the same political party can honestly disagree on its meaning. The 1,017-page bill, if it passes, will then allow the bureaucrats to determine the meaning of the bill. Also, Texans don't want unelected bureaucrats in this city making their medical decisions on what services they get and don't get. Can we get a clearly written bill that everyone can understand?

Three: Why shouldn't Congress, the czars and members of the Cabinet be required to sign up for the public option? If it is going to be so good for the American people, shouldn't everyone supporting this plan be required to be under the public option, like government officials?

Four: People on Medicare are scared and afraid they are not going to receive any medical treatment. What is in the plan to make sure there is no rationing of medical care for the elderly?

Five: Why not eliminate the hundreds of billions of dollars of fraud and waste in our current Medicare system before we tackle anything else?

Six: All of the amendments offered in committee that would specifically require proof of citizenship to sign up for this new government-run health care were defeated. Americans and legal residents should not be required to pay for the health care of illegals. The bill is confusing on this issue since it doesn't require proof of citizenship.

Seven: Small business owners are afraid they will have to lay off people or shut their doors altogether if they

are hit with more new taxes. What is the plan to protect small business from bearing the brunt of new taxes for this health care idea?

Madam Speaker, these are seven of the questions I have been asked by the people I represent, and I would hope the President could address some them and questions by other Members of Congress.

Madam Speaker, does anyone really believe that big government can do a better job of running health care? It is a glittering illusion to think our health care problems can be solved by more expensive, big-bureaucratic government. We do need reform, but a government takeover will only add to the problems we have now. We need to fix what is broken, not break what already works.

So, Madam Speaker, since our President is an innovator of new communication ideas, I respectfully submit that a townhall meeting between the President and Congress might just be the way to cut to the chase in this health care debate and allow the President time to answer the questions of the American people.

And that's just the way it is.

THE AMERICAN ECONOMY IS THE ISSUE

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, our economy is the issue. Today, the World Economic Forum released its annual Global Competitiveness Report. Switzerland has now replaced the United States as the most competitive economy in the world. The United States fell out of first place due to its weakened financial markets and macroeconomic instability.

This, Madam Speaker, is another wake-up call for our country, if anyone is listening. Due to the global economic crisis, precipitated by irresponsible U.S. financial institutions, nations throughout the world continue to struggle managing their financial futures.

Let's take note of an important fact: Switzerland maintains a positive trade balance, not a trade deficit. In 2008, Switzerland enjoyed a \$17 billion trade surplus, a third straight record year. And yet the nation is also now ranked as the most competitive in the world. We have almost a trillion-dollar trade deficit.

Now, think about this: Free trade fundamentalists here in the United States would say that it is not possible, that you can't be competitive while running an enormous trade surplus. Some of them even try to tell us that trade deficits are good.

Well, here in the United States, the free trade fundamentalists would have us believe we have to roll over for the Chinese or anyone else who wants to dominate our domestic market in order

to be competitive. But facts are facts. Switzerland is both the world's most economically competitive nation, according to the World Economic Forum, while enjoying an enormous trade surplus.

Madam Speaker, we have a lot of work to do here in our country and in this Congress to help our Nation regain its world-leading position in the competitiveness ranking. We now rank, shockingly, 108th in the world in the soundness of our banks. Switzerland fell in that category too, down to 44th, but not as far as the United States.

In regulation of securities exchanges, the United States ranked a dismal 47th in the world, compared to Switzerland's third-place ranking.

In property rights, Switzerland was first, and the United States 30th.

In infrastructure, that is, roads, bridges and so forth, Switzerland was first. The United States, 14th.

In math and science education, Switzerland was fifth and the United States 48th.

In infant mortality, the United States ranked 36th. Doesn't that speak to a decent health insurance program in this country?

In life expectancy, we were 30th. In the quality of primary education, 30th.

Madam Speaker, we have a lot of work to do. Our Nation is losing ground internationally. Second place overall isn't bad, but we have to make the necessary investments in our physical and social infrastructure or we will fall even further.

One the authors of the World Economic Report, Dr. Sala-i-Martin, a professor of economics at Columbia, put it this way: "Amid the present crisis, it is critical that policymakers not lose sight of long-term competitiveness fundamentals amid short-term urgencies. Competitive economies are those that have in place the factors driving productivity enhancements on which their present and future prosperity is built. A competitiveness-supporting economic environment can help national economies to weather business cycle downturns and ensure that the mechanisms enabling solid economic performance going into the future are in place."

We have a lot of work to do as a Congress. We need strong reform of the financial sector to restore strength to our banks, not cosmetic changes; we need investments in infrastructure and education; and we need health insurance reform. Our economic competitiveness as a nation and our ability to create jobs hang in the balance.

Madam Speaker, it is time for Congress to take the reins and stop this stampede of greed, to provide leadership that will help our Nation and help our people through these tough times. We want the United States to be a world leader again in job creation, innovation and economic competitiveness. We can do it, but not unless the financial industry is a part of the team, pulling in the same direction,

making our country stronger, not putting us further at risk, and not taking huge bonuses while 15 million Americans remain unemployed.

Madam Speaker, the economy is the issue. The American people know that. The President and Congress have our work cut out for us.

IMPLEMENTING A PROPER U.S. APPROACH TO HONDURAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my deep concern regarding the most recent strong-arm tactics of the U.S. Government to coerce the people of Honduras into accepting the return of former President Manuel Zelaya into power.

Have some U.S. officials forgotten what democracy really is? Democracy does not belong to nor is defined by one man nor one government. It cannot survive without respect for the rule of law. Yet this has been forgotten.

The U.S. and the international community failed the Honduran people and Honduran democracy as Zelaya violated the constitution and took unilateral actions to extend his hold on power. Our government said and did nothing as democracy came under attack in the months leading up to Zelaya's removal from office. Yet when the Honduran Supreme Court, the Attorney General, the National Congress and the human rights ombudsman took the necessary steps in accordance with the constitutional tenets, then the U.S. and the amorphous international community quickly sprung into action to defend Zelaya and punish Honduran democratic institutions and virtually all of Honduran civil society.

With no apparent regard for U.S. security or political or economic interests, the United States is doing all we can to ensure that Zelaya is put back in charge. The U.S. has terminated millions of dollars in U.S. assistance to the people of Honduras. We have stopped critical counternarcotics cooperation. We have suspended necessary visa services. Last week, the State Department declared that the presidential elections to be held in late November in Honduras will not be recognized unless Zelaya is returned to power.

As the U.S. has been employing its harshest tactics against the Honduran government and the Honduran people, the U.S. has also at the same time eased restrictions on the Cuban dictatorship, pushed for engagement and dialogue with the Cuban, Syrian and Iranian regimes, while failing to hold Chavez and Correa accountable for the blatant violations of freedom of expression and other fundamental rights of their citizens.

The U.S. has crossed a dangerous threshold by announcing, as I stated, that we will not acknowledge the upcoming Honduran elections unless the