

Mr. Speaker, these stories serve as a wakeup call for change, or we can continue the same policies that have led us to this direction and this place. America can do better. We need new priorities. In the spirit of Edward R. Murrow, "Good day, and good luck."

#### THE CROPS WERE IN THE FIELDS

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, when the relentless rain and howling winds of Hurricane Rita hit southeast Texas, the agriculture industry took a beating. Texas rice farmers were already having a tough year because of unpredictable weather, increased fuel and fertilizer costs, and the last thing they needed was a visit from the lady of the gulf. Rita's wrath ravaged rice fields and caused power outages in the mills where harvested rice was being dried. The crops in the field just weeks away from the second harvest took a beating.

Bill Dishman, Jr., a rice farmer in my district, owns a farm in the small town of China, Texas. He figures about one-fourth or more of his second crop, that is the one rice farmers count on to make a profit, was lost. Almost every southeast Texas rice farmer suffered damages from this storm.

Following the storm, I had the opportunity to travel to southeast Texas with Secretary of Agriculture Mike Johanns and assess the damage and speak to the local rice farmers. Their concerns were serious and their outlook was grim. Texas rice farmers like Bill Dishman and Ray Stoesser need to remain on their combines and the rice needs to grow more, and we need more markets like Cuba. These are tense and troubling times. The American rice farmer, Mr. Speaker, is becoming an endangered species.

#### REPUBLICAN CORRUPTION AND EXTREME BUDGET CUTS

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, this morning I note that Republicans in Congress have created a culture of corruption and cronyism at the expense of the American public. Instead of helping our senior citizens, students, veterans, and working families that are struggling every single day and see high prices at the gas station and high home heating costs, Republicans are demanding an additional \$15 billion in cuts for a budget reconciliation plan. Republicans I understand want to cut the Federal low income heating program known as LIHEAP at a time when families are expected to pay double and triple compared to last year's heating home costs.

Republicans also plan to cut Medicaid and Medicare at a time when the

number of people without health insurance has grown to 5 million people in 4 years. Republicans plan to cut higher education when we know that the cost of education and to send our kids to college is more than 20 percent higher than it was a few years ago. Republicans are demanding all these drastic cuts to help pay for the reconstruction of Katrina.

Why aren't we asking the wealthiest people in the country who have been given tax credits and giveaways and somehow make them accountable to help with this?

#### MORGAN MATLOCK

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the selection of former Lamesa resident Ms. Morgan Matlock as Miss Texas 2005. She will represent the State of Texas in the 2005 Miss America Pageant.

Although she currently resides in Fort Worth, Texas, Ms. Matlock was born in Lamesa and hails from a long line of Dawson County residents. Morgan is a talented and dedicated young woman and is active in public service. She is a National Task Force leader for the Words Can Heal organization, and she will use her opportunity as Miss Texas to promote putting an end to verbal abuse. She also founded the Hearts Across Texas, a motivational organization for students from kindergarten to 12th grade as a staff member and columnist for Teen Scene and Pageantry Magazine, and a member of the Colleyville Chamber of Commerce.

The Texas values that she has exhibited throughout her community service and career in pageantry are honorable. It is my great privilege to represent her here in Washington. She is a bright example of the difference that one can make when civically oriented. I would like to wish Morgan good luck in the Miss America Pageant and in all her future endeavors. She has made not only District 11 proud, but all of Texas.

#### REGARDING AMBASSADOR JOE WILSON

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, Mark Twain once observed that mankind is the only species that feels shame or needs to. That thought crossed my mind when I was reading about this corrupt effort to punish Ambassador Joe Wilson who told the truth and blew the whistle on the administration's misinformation about the Iraq war. Apparently in the grand jury testimony Judith Miller said, "She agreed to Libby's request to be cited in stories as a 'former Hill staffer,' a rather deceptive description for the Vice President's Chief of Staff."

Well, the Los Angeles Times got it right. It was deceptive, and there was a

reason. Anyone who would participate in any way to punish an American for blowing the whistle on the President's misstatements should feel shame. Obviously, Mr. Libby did feel shame and that is why he hid from the public, or attempted to, that he was actually part of the administration that attempted to punish an American for telling the truth.

We should not wait for the grand jury. This President should root out the corruption and discharge the people responsible for these misdeeds.

#### ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

(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, the SPDC rules Burma with an iron fist. It has prevented the democratically elected leader of the nation from taking power, and nearly 1 million people have been driven from their homes and now live in the jungles hunted like animals by the SPDC military. They are called IDPs, internally displaced people.

I say to the people of Burma: Other human rights issues may get the headlines, but you are not forgotten. We stand with you. We will continue to work with you for as long as it takes to ensure that the people of your nation are able to live in peace and freedom.

On September 21, Assistant Secretary of State Eric John said that the Bush administration led by Ambassador John Bolton will put Burma on the Security Council agenda this month.

This is an important step towards resolving the tragedy in Burma and calling on the SPDC to account for its atrocities. Seventeen years after the formation of the Burma's main opposition party, the NLD, the U.N. is waking up and taking notice of the plight of the Burmese people. I hope the U.N. will act.

#### CALLING FOR INDEPENDENT COMMISSION REGARDING HURRICANE KATRINA

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, Americans were shocked by our government's response to Hurricane Katrina. They watched as days passed before the people of the gulf coast communities were rescued. Americans rightly wondered, given this poor response to a natural disaster, is our government ready to respond to a terrorist attack?

Americans now deserve the answers, and I believe those answers can best come from an independent commission to both identify what went wrong but, more importantly, to find solutions so that this failed response never happens again.

Mr. Speaker, this Congress shares with the current administration a