

□ 1030

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of raising the minimum wage. Less than a month ago in this body I voted against raising the minimum wage. Now why would I vote against raising the minimum wage? There is no Member in this House that supports raising the minimum wage more than I do. I clearly understand that a person cannot live on \$10,700 a year. But it was a poison pill. As we said in the Florida House, it was the kiss of death because it was tied to an estate tax that would have taken trillions of dollars out of the budget and we would have had to cut education, health care and so many other programs that we care about.

The Bible says the poor will always be with us, but our job is to help raise the standard. Give us a clean bill on this floor and let's vote to help the American people.

IRAQ IS A DISTRACTION

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

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on Monday night, our President had an opportunity, after 5 years of 9/11, to again unify this Nation as he did in 2001. Instead, he chose to give a political speech that focused more on the war in Iraq than what he is doing now to secure this Nation against those really responsible for the attacks of 9/11.

Last month, the Republican cochair of the 9/11 Commission Tom Kean said, "We're not protecting our people in this country. The government is not doing its job." That is from a Republican.

When Commissioner Kean was asked whether Iraq is preventing us from protecting our Nation, Kean admitted Iraq has been a distraction.

Five years ago and 2 days after 9/11, Osama bin Laden remains at large and the Taliban is resurging in Afghanistan. Since the Bush administration turned its attention away from Afghanistan to go into Iraq, roadside bombs have increased by 30 percent and suicide bombings have doubled.

Mr. Speaker, President Bush had a chance on Monday to level with the American people. It is time we turn our attention back to Osama bin Laden, who really was the one who was responsible for the 9/11 attacks. Let's get Osama bin Laden.

AMERICA CANNOT AFFORD TO STAY THE COURSE

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

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed time for a change in Iraq. Our troops are currently caught in a deadly civil war between the Sunnis and Shias, a war that is resulting in the death of American soldiers every night, and hundreds of Iraqi civilians every day. If there was ever a time to change tactics, now is that time.

House Republicans and President Bush cling stubbornly to the mantra "stay the course," but slogans cannot substitute for strategy.

President Bush says American troops will still be on the ground in Iraq when he leaves office in 2009, and that would make the Iraq war longer than World War II. We cannot continue to be bogged down in Iraq's civil war. Conditions there are not getting better. According to the latest Pentagon report, things are actually getting worse and the war in Iraq has put an enormous strain on our military, resulting in military readiness levels at historic lows.

It is time we get back to fighting the real war on terror and not a civil war in Iraq.

REPUBLICANS PREFER TO PLAY POLITICS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this week Republicans have turned to their two favorite political tactics: Smear and fear. It is bad enough that President Bush chose to use a 9/11 anniversary speech on Monday night not to unite this Nation with facts but instead to once again divide us by using his bully pulpit to instill fear into Americans with misleading statements.

Just 2 weeks ago the President said Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11, but once again on Monday night he spent the majority of his speech in the Oval Office talking about Iraq.

Why would the President talk about Iraq if he knows it had nothing to do with 9/11?

Mr. Speaker, he is trying to blur the issue so Americans will continue to tolerate his failed stay-the-course strategy that a majority of Americans have already rejected.

Democrats want a new direction for Iraq, with the responsible redeployment of U.S. troops beginning this year, in order to strongly position America to confront the global challenge of terrorism. Unlike the administration's current plan, our real security plan is a strategy for taking the fight to the terrorists to better protect Americans.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2965, FEDERAL PRISON INDUSTRIES COMPETITION IN CONTRACTING ACT OF 2006

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I

call up House Resolution 997 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 997

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2965) to amend title 18, United States Code, to require Federal Prison Industries to compete for its contracts minimizing its unfair competition with private sector firms and their non-inmate workers and empowering Federal agencies to get the best value for taxpayers' dollars, to provide a five-year period during which Federal Prison Industries adjusts to obtaining inmate work opportunities through other than its mandatory source status, to enhance inmate access to remedial and vocational opportunities and other rehabilitative opportunities to better prepare inmates for a successful return to society, to authorize alternative inmate work opportunities in support of non-profit organizations and other public service programs, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no amendment to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.