

began its offensive on security issues. A USA Today-Gallup Poll published Tuesday reported that Mr. Bush's job approval rating had jumped to 44 percent from 39 percent. The questioning in that poll went through Sunday; The Times and CBS completed questioning Tuesday night. Presidential addresses often produce shifts in public opinion that tend to be transitory.

The nationwide poll was conducted by telephone Friday through Tuesday. It included 1,131 adults, of whom 1,007 said they were registered to vote, and had a margin of sampling error of plus or minus three percentage points.

As part of the Republican effort to gain advantage on the war in Iraq, Republicans have accused Democrats who want to set a timetable for leaving Iraq of wanting to "cut and run." But 52 percent of respondents said they would not think the United States had lost the war if it withdrew its troops from Iraq today.

The poll also found indications that voters were unusually intrigued by this midterm election: 43 percent said they were more enthusiastic than usual about voting. However, with turnout promising to be a critical factor in many of the closer Senate and House races, there was no sign that either party had an edge in terms of voter enthusiasm.

Evidence of the antipathy toward Congress in particular—and Washington in general—was abundant: 71 percent said they did not trust the government to do what is right.

"If they had new blood, then the people that influence them—the lobbyists—would maybe not be so influential," said Norma Scranton, a Republican from Thedford, Neb., in a follow-up interview after the poll. "They don't have our interest at heart because they're influenced by these lobbyists. If they were new, maybe they would try to please their constituents a little better."

Lois Thurber, a Republican from Axtell, Neb., said in a follow-up interview: "There's so much bickering, so much disagreement—they just can't get together on certain issues."

"They're kind of more worried about themselves than they are about the country."

Incumbents and challengers nationwide are trying to accommodate this sour mood. Democrats are presenting themselves as a fresh start—"Isn't it time for a change?" asked an advertisement by the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee directed against Senator Jim Talent, Republican of Missouri.

And Republican incumbents are seeking to distance themselves from fellow Republicans in Washington. "I've gone against the president and the Republican leadership when I think they are wrong," Representative Christopher Shays, a Connecticut Republican locked in a tough reelection battle, said in a television advertisement broadcast this week.

The Republicans continue to be seen as the better party to deal with terrorism, but by nowhere near the margin they once enjoyed: it is now 42 percent to 37 percent. When asked which party took the threat of terrorism more seriously, 69 percent said they both did; 22 percent named Republicans, compared with 6 percent who said Democrats.

Voters said Democrats were more likely to tell the truth than Republicans when discussing the war in Iraq and about the actual threat of terrorism. And 59 percent of respondents said Mr. Bush was hiding something when he talked about how things were going in Iraq; an additional 25 percent said he was mostly lying when talking about the war.

Not that Democrats should draw any solace from that: 71 percent of respondents said

Democrats in Congress were hiding something when they talked about how well things were going in Iraq, while 13 percent said they were mostly lying.

Robert Allen, a Democrat from Ventura, Calif., said: "We're in a stalemate right now. They're not getting hardly anything done." He added, "It's time to elect a whole new bunch so they can do something."

#### APPRECIATION FOR U.S. BORDER PATROL AGENTS

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. Mr. Speaker, I am on the floor today to express appreciation for the more than 12,000 U.S. Border Patrol agents who perform an invaluable service to our Nation.

Though support for the U.S. Border Patrol and other law enforcement officers often goes unspoken, the American people and Members of Congress owe our sincere appreciation for these courageous men and women for their dedication to keeping our Nation safe by protecting our borders.

While protecting the United States from an influx of illegal immigration, drugs, counterfeit goods, and terrorists, U.S. Border Patrol agents face high-risk situations and dangerous environments while working on our borders. Often working alone in some of the most remote and dangerous areas of the country, these agents routinely encounter heavily armed human and drug traffickers.

Despite these dangerous conditions, the men and women of the U.S. Border Patrol work tirelessly to protect our Nation's borders, and they deserve the utmost praise for their dedication and bravery.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, two U.S. Border Patrol agents who deserve our appreciation have instead become victims of a grave injustice.

Agents Ramos and Compean were found guilty in a Federal court for wounding a drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our southern border into Texas. These agents now face up to 20 years in Federal prison.

Agent Ramos served the Border Patrol for 9 years and was a former nominee for Border Patrol Agent of the Year. Agent Compean had 5 years of experience as a Border Patrol agent.

These agents never should have been prosecuted for their actions last year. By attempting to apprehend a Mexican drug smuggler, these agents were simply doing their job to protect the American people. These agents should have been commended for their actions, but instead the U.S. Attorney's Office prosecuted the agents and granted full immunity to the drug smuggler for his testimony against our agents.

The drug smuggler received full medical care in El Paso, Texas, was permitted to return to Mexico, and is now suing the Border Patrol for \$5 million

for violating his civil rights. He is not an American citizen. He is a criminal.

Mr. Speaker, I have spoken to numerous people inside Texas and outside of Texas regarding this outrage, including the attorney for one of these agents. I have written to the President of the United States, asking him to please look into this matter. I have written two letters to Attorney General Gonzales, asking him to reopen this case for a fuller investigation before these men are sentenced in October of this year. I hope that the American people will agree that this prosecution is an outrageous injustice and that the situation must be investigated.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will close by asking my colleagues on both sides of the political aisle to please join us in this and find out why these two agents were prosecuted and will be sent to a Federal prison on October 19.

Mr. Speaker, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform and their families.

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

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

#### U.S. CONGRESS MUST LEAD ON PEACE

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, today, September 21, 2006, the world celebrates International Peace Day. Unfortunately, as we look around the world, we see more unrest and more people living in poverty, and certainly not more genuine peace.

This administration has chosen the road of conflict and war, leaving diplomacy and discussion on the side of the road. The President's cowboy swagger and use of "You're either with us or you're against us" gets us absolutely nowhere.

Mr. Speaker, today, International Peace Day, is the appropriate time for a new direction for our foreign policy and for our country. That is why on Tuesday of next week I will be hosting a third congressional forum on the occupation of Iraq. I am doing this because until the Congress begins real oversight into the tragedies of our occupation in Iraq, forums like these serve as one of the only ways, the only ways to examine our actions.

I am organizing this forum on the cost of our actions in Iraq because President Bush's Iraq policy has been an absolute failure and our Nation will suffer. Our Nation will suffer its effects for years to come. Besides making us