

the global war on terrorism, and Bulgarian troops have bravely served in Iraq and Afghanistan. There are currently plans for three U.S. bases to be located within Bulgaria.

Bulgaria has one of the fastest growing economies, and membership in the EU will accelerate its pace. Economically and militarily, Bulgaria is secure.

Congratulations to Prime Minister Georgi Parvanov, Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev, Ambassador to Washington Elena Poptodorova, and my longtime friend Ambassador to Athens Stefan Stoyanov.

I am grateful to serve with Congresswoman ELLEN TAUSCHER as cochair of the Bulgarian Caucus, promoting the growing partnership between Bulgaria and America.

In conclusion, God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11th.

THE TIME TO IMPLEMENT THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 9/11 COMMISSION IS NOW

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, according to the majority leader, the House will adjourn 2 days from now and take a political vacation for 6 weeks. We will do this despite the fact that we will leave 300 million Americans less safe than if we stay here and implement the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission.

Continuing to do nothing in the face of continued threats to our people and our way of life is hardly what the American people elected us to do. The 9/11 Commission focused their recommendations into three broad areas: We need to attack terrorists and their organizations; we need to prevent the continued growth of Islamist terrorism; and we need to protect against and prepare for terrorist attacks.

It pains me to say, though the American people must know, this administration and this Congress have failed miserably on all three of these counts. Instead of going after terrorists, we invaded Iraq and have caused an all-out civil war there that costs American lives on a daily basis.

The war in Iraq has not prevented the growth of terrorism. We are learning now that it has actually enhanced the growth of terrorism. Instead of protecting and preparing for the next terrorist attack, we busy ourselves building partial "let's pretend" fences. I recommend and unanimously request that we consider the bipartisan recommendations of the 9/11 Commission, less jaw jacking and more action.

THE DEMOCRATS MAY NOT LIKE IT, BUT WE ARE WINNING THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, we have heard an awful lot in the last couple of days from the Democrats over the national intelligence estimate which partly says that our involvement in Iraq is creating a new generation of jihadist leaders.

What they fail to say is that the same NIE says that, I quote, "Should jihadists leaving Iraq perceive themselves or be perceived to have failed, we judge fewer fighters will be inspired to carry on the fight."

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind my colleagues that one of those new leaders cited in the report, Abu Musaab al Zarqawi, is now very much dead. Let's just say that he has failed.

The NIE says that the best way to kill the jihadist movement is to spread hope and democracy, which is exactly what we are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, national security is the first and foremost responsibility of the Federal Government and of every Member of Congress, and we always need to put national security ahead of politics. And yet, the Democratic minority leader just last week said that she thinks that national security should not be an issue in this campaign.

She actually said that, that national security should not be an issue. Think about that.

HOMELAND SECURITY

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

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Every day, Americans work hard to fulfill their obligations to their families, to pay their mortgage, to send their children to college, to save for retirement. Americans understand these priorities. At all times, but particularly at a time of war, Americans expect their leaders to understand that our priority should be securing our homeland. Yet this administration and the Republican Congress have no such plan.

The bipartisan 9/11 Commission noted, quote, "a lack of urgency" by this administration and the Republican Congress in addressing our homeland security vulnerabilities, and called their failures shocking.

Democrats have a plan to lead our Nation in a new direction. Democrats will immediately implement the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. Democrats will secure our borders. Democrats will ensure that our police and firefighters can communicate with each other during times of crisis. And Democrats would never approve the sale of port security to a foreign nation. It is time for a new direction.

Americans deserve to feel secure and to know that our government is working hard to ensure that safety and security every day. Democrats know that

government's paramount responsibility is to defend our citizens. Democrats will keep our country safe.

THE PRESIDENT AND GAS PRICES

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address gas prices and the Democrats selective agenda on talking about them.

Up until recently, over the last year, gas prices have risen, and the Democrats jumped on this issue and played the blame game. They condemned President Bush repeatedly saying it was the President's fault.

The Republican-led Congress and administration began to explore new options to increase domestic output to help lower the cost at the pump. The Republican Congress continued their battle to open ANWR. Seventy-five percent of Alaskans want ANWR opened for oil exploration and all of the elected officials at the Federal level want it open. The area that would be explored is roughly the size of a postage stamp on a football field, yet the Democrats continue to obstruct this effort.

The Democrat solution to rising gas problems was not a policy or a proposal; it was simply "no" to Republican and administration proposals and blaming the President.

What astounds me so is now that the gas prices are falling, where is the Democrats' praise for the President's efforts? Gas prices are falling, and all I hear from the other side of the aisle are crickets.

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FIRST TEE BENEFITS INNER CITY YOUTH

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

Mr. TANNER. Mr. Speaker, I come here this morning with the Congressional Roll Call Golf Cup here. We have Roll Call, a Capitol Hill newspaper here, which sponsors baseball games and football and basketball, and we have a Congressional Ryder Cup golf competition between the Democrats and Republicans every year. We recently had this for the First Tee organization. The First Tee organization and its president, Joe Louis Barrow, Jr., is an organization that brings golf and the skills and the character values that golf teaches people to inner city youth all across our country and to those who might otherwise not be exposed to the game.

May I announce that this is not a hard chore for me because the Democrats won this year for the first time ever.

I was privileged to serve as captain of the Democratic team, and Mike Oxley, who was tied up in conference and

asked me to go ahead with this this morning, was captain of the Republican team. The competition was fierce, but we did this for the children of our country who can be exposed to the principles of golf.

Golf is the only sport that doesn't have an umpire or referee. You play yourself, and the values that golf teaches is something that we think is worthwhile.

I want to congratulate the First Tee Roll Call, and the Republican team and the Democratic team who showed up for this very, very worthwhile project.

AMERICA'S STONEWALL

(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, Members of Congress are looking for border security answers, and the American people are demanding them. But it seems we are being stonewalled by our own Border Patrol hierarchy.

Get this, apparently our Border Patrol agents cannot talk or answer questions from Members of Congress without filing a lengthy detailed report, the same type of report they file when they arrest illegals, drug runners, or are even shot at by the Mexican military. This appears to intimidate our Border Patrol agents to not say a word about what is really going on.

When I have been on the border, the Border Patrol agents were very reluctant to say anything except scripted answers. Now I know why. What does the Border Patrol hierarchy have to hide? Apparently the truth because that is all we are after.

Why wouldn't homeland security want their agents talking to Members of Congress? Members of Congress are being forced to tear down the war of silence just to control our own border. The enemy is not Congress or the American people, it is the insurgents who infiltrate our border every day.

And that's just the way it is.

NO RECESS UNTIL ACTION ON ENERGY PRICES

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, the Bush administration and Republicans in this House enjoy a cozy relationship with big oil companies, one that is paying off for oil but is hurting American consumers.

For 5 years now, the President has stacked his administration with former energy executives, friends and former colleagues of his and the Vice President's. It is no wonder then that now the Nation's three largest oil companies have been posting record profits. They are benefiting from the Republican policies that allow them to price gouge and receive huge tax subsidies.

But when it comes to offering assistance or solutions to the American consumer, the Republicans in the Bush administration come up short. No money for home heating assistance, no money for consumer price relief, no money to invest in finding alternative fuels. Of course not, it is all going to the oil companies. There is just not enough left to help the average American.

Democrats demand action on this issue before Republicans take this House into yet another recess.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 4479, which repeals the oil company tax subsidies and allows us to find real solutions to the energy crisis.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN). Under the Speaker's announced guidelines, the Chair is constrained not to entertain such a request in the absence of express clearances by bipartisan committee and floor leadership.

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE AND WAR ON TERROR

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank President Bush for declassifying key judgments from the National Intelligence Estimate so the American people can understand the absolute critical importance of our war on terror, and why the bills we are debating this week, from defense appropriations to military commissions, are essential to keeping America safe and our homeland secure.

Mr. Speaker, despite what my colleagues on the other side of the aisle might claim, American is not responsible for the rise of terrorism. We did not bring this war on the terrorists. They brought this upon themselves when they attacked freedom and our way of life in Kenya, Tanzania, aboard the USS Cole, New York City, Pennsylvania, and right here in Washington, D.C. on September 11.

America has a winning strategy of relentlessly hunting down those who wish us harm, and working to defeat terrorism by encouraging democracy in the Middle East. If the terrorists are emboldened by the spread of this newfound freedom, it is because they know that free people will terminate the terrorist way of life.

Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely incumbent upon us and this body to give President Bush, our CIA, and our military the tools they need to prevent future attacks on our Nation.

I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will join me this week in voting to protect the American people.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California asked and was given permission to ad-

dress the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, for 10 years the Republicans have kept hardworking Americans away from an increase in the minimum wage. Over 7 million people who get up in the morning every day and go to work, all day long, all week long, all month long and all year long, and at the end of that year they end up in poverty. At the end of that year they end up with the inability to provide for their families.

For 10 years, the Republicans have fought an increase in the minimum wage. For 10 years the Republicans have made it official policy of this country that people who get up and go to work every day will end up in poverty. It is a poverty wage. And the Republicans are proud of it. The majority leader boasts that he has fought this his entire public life, and yet these people are stuck at 1950 wages.

But what is not stuck at 1950 is the price of groceries, the price of gasoline to go to work, the price of housing, and the price of health care. There is no relief for these hardworking Americans. There is no relief for their families because the Republicans refuse to entertain a clean vote on the minimum wage. A clean vote, so 7 million Americans could start to have an increase in their yearly take-home pay. That is what the Republicans refuse.

There is 72 hours left in this session. The Republicans can decide to do the decent thing, to provide a minimum wage increase for hardworking Americans. But the Republicans won't do that because they are not a party of decency. They have chosen to put these people into poverty and to keep them in poverty year after year after year. Yet they have chosen to have eight pay raises for Members of Congress at the same time they have chosen to keep hardworking Americans in poverty.

That's what the Republicans promise hardworking Americans, you end up in poverty.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take up H.R. 2429, the Fair Minimum Wage Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the guidelines consistently issued by successive Speakers, as recorded on page 734 of the House Rules Manual, the Chair is constrained not to entertain the gentleman's request until it has been cleared by the bipartisan floor and committee leaderships.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Once again, the Republicans block a vote on the minimum wage.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair must ask Members to heed the gavel. The gentleman from California far exceeded his allotted time.