

Does he understand the concept of "soft power," the idea that America can and must lead by example, by demonstrating compassion, by promoting our values, by maintaining global goodwill and credibility?

Does he understand that outside his window today at the National Mall, veterans and their families are launching Camp Democracy, a 16-day anti-war demonstration just like the one they held outside the President's Crawford ranch last August?

He must not understand that he has lost the confidence of the people of the United States of America; that in overwhelming numbers they believe he made a mistake in Iraq and want him to reverse course as soon as possible.

It is clear that he understands none of these things, and, as a result, our Nation is paying the price, all of us; all of us who want to live in a country that is admired around the world; all of us who want to be safe from terrorism; all of us who depend on public investment in education and health care, housing and more, investments that won't be possible because of the \$1 trillion cost of the Iraq occupation.

But, of course, no one has sacrificed more than young Americans like Christian Williams, Tracy Melvin, Jeremy Long, Colin Wolfe and Michael Deason, who lost their lives. There is nothing more we can do for them other than honor their memories and take care of their families. But we can save hundreds and perhaps thousands of their fellow soldiers from a similar fate if this ruinous policy continues.

Mr. President, bring our troops home.

#### GOVERNMENT FAILED TO ADDRESS 9/11 PROPERLY

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

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, next Monday, 5 days from now, it will be 5 years since we experienced the attack of September 11, 2001. That was one of the most tragic circumstances ever to confront this country. More than 3,000 Americans lost their lives.

But it has developed into an additionally tragic circumstance for our Nation as a whole, because the administration and the Congress, the entire government of our country, the legislative and executive branches, failed to address the issue properly.

The administration called upon the Congress to give it the authority to conduct itself in a way that was entirely inappropriate, and on October 16, the majority of the Members of this Congress voted to give the President that authority. As a result of that, we have now been bogged down as a result of the attack in Iraq and the subsequent occupation for more than 3 years, and the administration and this Congress have no plan for relieving ourselves of that obligation and responsibility.

One of the tragic aspects of that, of course, is the fact that more than 2,600 American servicemen and women have now lost their lives. That number now is approaching the number of Americans who lost their lives as a result of the attack of September 11th by the al Qaeda network.

There are a great many issues that this Congress has failed to address. Let me begin by talking just for a minute or two about the circumstances that existed prior to that attack of September 11, 2001.

The intelligence agencies of our country had informed the administration beginning with the first meeting of the National Security Council of this administration in January of 2001 that the al Qaeda network offered the greatest threat to the safety and security of America and that it was likely that they were going to advance some form of attack against our country.

Now, we know that they had done other things in the past. They organized the initial attack against the World Trade Center in 1993. They organized the attack against the two United States embassies in East Africa. They organized the attack against the USS *Cole*. The President of the United States was informed from the first day this administration came into office and virtually every single day thereafter up to September 11, 2001, that there was a great danger from the al Qaeda network.

On August 6, 2001, the President's daily briefing said that al Qaeda was determined to attack the United States, and there were other instances where the intelligence community told the administration that al Qaeda was determined to attack the United States. Yet nothing was done about it. No action was taken. The President was on a very extended vacation in Crawford, Texas.

One of the things that this Congress has failed to do is to investigate the intelligence that was available prior to the attack of September 11th and why that intelligence was not used appropriately by this administration to prevent the attack of September 11th.

Why has this Congress failed to carry out its obligations and responsibilities under the Constitution to oversee actions of the administration in that regard? The Senate Select Intelligence Committee has conducted an investigation, but they have failed to release the information with regard to the intelligence that the administration had available to it prior to the attack. We need to ask ourselves why that is the case.

And why is it that the House Intelligence Committee has not carried out its obligations and responsibilities to conduct an investigation as to the quality and caliber of the intelligence information available to the administration prior to the attack of September 11th and why that information, which seems to have been so clear and so focused, was not used appropriately? Let's focus our attention on that.

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

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

#### TWO WARS—NOT ONE

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

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, Iraq. A good number of people are confused when the name of that country is mentioned.

Let's be clear. Our country is engaged in two wars. The first is the war against terrorism, which has its genesis in Afghanistan with tentacles reaching throughout the world.

The terrorist group known as al Qaeda, headed by a man named Osama bin Laden, originated in Afghanistan and was protected by the former Afghan Taliban government. After the September 11, 2001, attacks on our country, which were sponsored by bin Laden's al Qaeda, our military forces struck the Taliban government and the al Qaeda strongholds in Afghanistan. Our military forces, along with allied and NATO forces, remain fighting the remnants of al Qaeda and the Taliban with the assistance of the Afghan National Army.

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The attack by our military in the ongoing conflict was a war of necessity. The second war, our attack on Saddam Hussein's Iraq originated because of the alleged threat of weapons of mass destruction against America and our interests. This is a war of choice. After soundly defeating the military in open battle, our occupation of that troubled country came about without proper planning or resources.

Massive looting was allowed. The Iraqi Army was disbanded, without giving former soldiers paychecks and shovels, which caused many to turn against the American occupation. There were insufficient troop numbers to provide a successful military occupation and reconstruction.

Former Sunni Muslim Baathist regime elements formed the basis of a growing insurgency against the occupation forces. They were joined by foreign fighters, mainly al Qaeda, and numerous criminals who were recently released from prison by Saddam Hussein shortly before the conflict started.

In more recent days, a new source of violence has erupted in Iraq, sectarian religious violence with Shia and Sunni elements killing each other. According to a recent Pentagon report, sectarian bloodshed has pushed violence in Iraq to its highest level in more than 2 years. Preventing full-scale civil war is now the most urgent mission of the U.S. troops in that country.

Thus, this is the status of the Iraq war, which is a separate and distinct

war from that against the terrorists. The enemy in each conflict has different goals. The al Qaeda terrorist group wishes to establish a Muslim caliphate throughout the entire Middle East. The Iraqi insurgents' goal is to cause the existing Iraqi government to fail and to establish Sunni dominance in Iraq.

The Sunni Arab insurgency remains strong and viable. The sectarian violence overlays this initial struggle with the sectarian leaders such as Muqtada al-Sadr in the wings of the Shiite groups. On September 4, 2002, and again on March 18, 2003, before we invaded Iraq, I wrote the President warning of the instability in the months following the initial coalition victory.

Sadly, my warnings were of Cassandra-esque value. They were not heeded by the administration. So there we are, two conflicts, two wars, and the two should not be confused.

There are those who attempt to fuzzle the two conflicts together as the war on terror, but the wars are truly separate and distinct. With the help of NATO troops, we made significant gains in Afghanistan, but these are in danger of being overturned if we relax our focus.

The picture is not so rosy in Iraq, which calls for a different policy and a different approach to bring about stability and representative government. The recent Pentagon report is not encouraging.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### LABOR DAY 2006: TOUGH TIMES IN AMERICA'S HEARTLAND

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the United States is spending \$250 million a day in Iraq, over \$11 million an hour. This week, as we celebrated Labor Day across this country, President Bush continued to proclaim the strength and health of the U.S. economy.

Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson, whom he appointed, said recently, the American people are clearly better off as a result of strong economic growth and job creation. Well, for the wealthiest 1 percent, that tiny slice that President Bush has called his core supporters, things might be looking up. But for everybody else, we are having to work harder for less.

As someone said to me, not only have we had the race to the bottom, we are now bouncing off the bottom. So as Congress left Washington for an entire

month, the economic anxiety felt palpably by the American people increased. The debt piled up more, now over \$5 trillion. Interest rates are up as a throttle on economic growth.

Unemployment is up, surely, in America's heartland. According to the Census Bureau, working families fell even farther behind in the past year as they have every single year since this president took office. President Bush's own Census Bureau reports that the median income of working age households fell by another half of a percent last year.

According to the University of Michigan, consumer confidence hit a 9-month low in August, and authors of a confidence report say the gap between rich and poor in the United States is quite different than anything else observed in the prior half century. Truly America is in uncharted economic waters.

According to The New York Times, for the first time since World War II, though productivity is up by our people, real wages have failed to increase for most workers at a time when the overall economy was even growing. Even though President Bush and Secretary Paulson might claim the American people are better off, working people know better. They trust their real life experiences, not White House press releases.

The reality for America's families is that high gasoline prices, higher natural gas prices, rising health care costs, credit card debt increasing and borrowing against home equity have topped out. They are eating away at disposable income, and everywhere they turn, many middle class families are getting squeezed.

Job losses due to more outsourcing and foreign competition have left working families wondering, what does the future hold? Does work have a value in America anymore?

The median hourly wage for American workers has declined 2 percent since 2003 despite their increased productivity. The Economic Policy Institute estimates that real median income for households headed by someone under age 65 has declined 5.4 percent since President Bush took office. Is anybody here in Washington paying attention?

The net result, according to the New York Times, is that wages and salaries now make up the lowest share of the Nation's gross domestic product since the government began recording the data in 1947. But yet corporate profits represent the larger share of gross domestic profit since the 1960s.

There is a little imbalance there. The Times quoted a report from economists at Goldman Sachs. The most important contributor to higher profit margins over the past 5 years has been a decline in labor's share of national income.

Our mother used to ask the question for the super wealthy and the super rich, did they ever fill up? When is enough? How many homes? How many

cars? How many chauffeurs? How many trips? How much do you really need? How much? So the bottom line on Labor Day 2006 is this: The strong economy that President Bush and his Secretary of the Treasury keep talking about has benefitted big business, but it has clearly bypassed the vast majority of the American people. It is time we change this Congress.

It is time we have people here in Washington who again represent the vast majority of the people of the United States who believe in hard work, who want to follow the rules, and they have a right to live a better way of life for investing themselves in the beliefs of this country and for putting their lives on the line for it. Mr. Speaker, America, this Congress, and, frankly, this President simply have to do much better.

#### GAS PRICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, right now in my district in rural North Carolina, folks are very concerned about the high cost of fuel. I rise tonight to call on this Congress to take action now to help the people who are suffering from this very serious crisis, not only in my district and State, but really in this country.

Gas prices are higher than they have ever been in the history of our country, and rural Americans are getting hit particularly hard. Our farmers are watching most of the profits from the crops that they harvest go back into their fuel tanks or their tractors and their equipment.

Our school districts in rural North Carolina are having trouble keeping the buses on the road. Rural Americans as a whole feel a greater pinch from these outrageous fuel prices. They have longer commutes just to get to the grocery store, to the doctor's office and to their church on Sunday.

Yet, while Americans are struggling to make ends meet, big oil companies are making record profits.

I support legislation to crack down on price gouging of gasoline and fuel. I also believe that it is our duty in this body to find alternatives to what has become a dangerous reliance on foreign oil.

As the co-chairman of the Democratic Rural Working Group, we have introduced H.R. 5372, the Biofuels Act of 2006. This is legislation that will help bring Americans a step closer to energy independence.

Today, we have the technology to solve our energy crisis. Other countries are already making significant progress and are far ahead of the United States in their energy independence. Countries such as Brazil already use over 80 percent ethanol and biodiesel, and they are 100 percent energy independent.