

has served on include the National Association for Law Placement, the Los Angeles Association of Legal Recruitment Directors and the Pasadena Public Library Association. Currently she is a board member of the Ecumenical Council of Pasadena Area Churches and Northwest Pasadena Development Corporation. Along with other faith leaders and the Coalition for Zero Violence, Pastor Burch participates in a united effort to end violence in the Pasadena Unified School District. Her church, Community Baptist, is the faith-based partner for Community Arms and Kings Villages affordable housing properties.

Pastor Jean, as she is affectionately called, is beloved and respected by the entire community. She is the proud mother of Leya Douglas, a member of her ministry team, and a grandmother to Kyley Douglas, born in January 2003.

I ask all Members of Congress to join me today in honoring a remarkable woman of California's 29th Congressional District, Pastor Jean Burch. The entire community joins me in thanking Pastor Burch for her continued efforts to make the 29th Congressional District a more vibrant and enjoyable place in which to live.

RECOGNIZING THE LEADERS OF
CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST FOR
THEIR LETTER TO PRESIDENT
BUSH EXPRESSING GRAVE CONCERN
ABOUT A POSSIBLE PRE-EMPTIVE
ATTACK ON IRAQ

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2003

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and commend the predominantly Black clergy, intellectual and informed laypersons of the community-serving Church of God in Christ for their letter to President Bush regarding a possible preemptive attack on Iraq. I sincerely hope that every Member of the House and every American will give serious thought to the points raised in this moving and thoughtful letter.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I wish to insert the letter into the RECORD.

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST, INC.,
Memphis, TN, January 23, 2003.

Hon. GEORGE W. BUSH,
President, The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR PRESIDENT BUSH: We write to you as predominantly Black clergy, intellectuals and informed laypersons of community-serving churches of the Church of God in Christ, to address matters of the deepest gravity, namely, that of war and peace, as presented by your statements and those of Vice President Richard B. Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld concerning a preemptive attack upon Iraq.

We are mindful that war, should it come to pass, will directly affect the safety and well-being of tens of thousands of our fellow citizens in the Armed Forces, of whom significant numbers are ethnic minorities in the enlisted as well as officers and non-commissioned ranks.

Our thoughts also extend to the safety and well-being of Iraqi civilians who have not lifted a hand against the United States. We are deeply concerned that critical moral reflection on the prospects of war has been

overlooked by some in your Administration. We do not advocate a weak America; unable to defend the innocent from rapacious tyranny of attack, but a strong America must examine itself before setting off to war.

Moreover, Mr. President, we must confess that we fail to see the rush to war as a rational expression of the compassionate conservatism that you promised the country at the beginning of your Administration.

Sovereigns in antiquity and national leaders today, especially those who identify with the Christian heritage, are expected to examine their war aims, strategy and tactics in light of these moral principles to determine if war should be pursued, and if so, to determine how these can be pursued in as humane a manner as possible towards all parties to a conflict. Failure to satisfy these criteria renders the war aims, strategies and tactics, at a minimum, morally suspect and perhaps morally unacceptable in the eyes of the Church universal and under the gaze of a just and Holy God.

We note the rising voices from all parts of America pleading for restraint, reflection and prudence in considering war against Iraq. Notable conservatives from your own party with significant prior foreign policy experiences, such as Brent Scowcroft and Lawrence S. Eagleburger, have counseled against this war. This is especially true in the absence of an actual attack, or evidence of preparation for it against the United States that could be put forth for public review.

We also note the similar wise counsel against the rush to war from your own Secretary of State, General Colin L. Powell, a soldier's soldier himself. Noteworthy also is the recent letter from CIA Director George Tenet to the House and Senate Intelligence Committees warning of the grave dangers to the United States of domestic terrorism if war is waged against Iraq.

We would agree that Iraq's President, Saddam Hussein, has demonstrated aggression against his neighbors in the past, some of which was unopposed by the United States government. We would also agree that if Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction this would be a matter of grave concern. In this regard, we believe that the United States' interests are best served by using the existing mechanisms of international law, collaboration and consultation with our allies and the use of existing United Nations resolutions to support the work of weapons inspectors so they may detect and destroy any weapons of mass destruction found in Iraq.

However, we do not find any moral justification for a pre-emptive strike in the absence of an attack, or real threat of an attack, upon the United States. A military strike of this nature puts the United States in the posture of aggressive warfare, not defense, which is precisely the behavior that we, and your Administration, deplore in the Iraqi regime.

We recall the moral witness of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., forty years ago when the United States launched its military excursion into Southeast Asia without significant prior public debate. In retrospect, had the American people been able to engage in a free public debate on the military aims and process, tens of thousands of lives on all sides of the conflict might have been spared.

As Church leaders, we painfully remember that while Blacks were struggling to secure full civil rights in the American South, our youth were sent off to fight and die in an undeclared war whose military and political objectives were unclear. We do not wish to see more young Americans die in a new war whose goals are ill-defined.

Money spent on war to destroy lives could instead be used to save lives by financing the

alleviation of the impending famines in southern Africa, or to provide clean drinking water to enhance the health of hundreds of thousands of poor, defenseless men, women and children throughout that continent.

These resources could also be productively directed toward providing treatment and prevention services for those afflicted by the HIV/AIDS holocaust in Africa, the United States and other countries around the world. Not to forget the blight and ravages of economic depression in Appalachia and the inner cities of America.

As those who are representative of the many churches that serve the spiritual and social needs of millions of Blacks and other ethnicities in America, we humbly ask your Administration to stay the hands of war and vengeance and instead yield to the rule of law and the inherent disposition toward peace that is central to America's Christian heritage. We call upon your decision makers to reflect upon the inspired Biblical witness of the Apostle James:

"What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but you don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures." (Saint James 4:1-3)

Surely our nation and its leaders can examine their own intentions in light of Holy Scripture before setting their feet upon the blood-soaked path of war, whose ultimate outcome is known with certainty only by the Maker of us all.

We pledge to pray for you and your Administration, that you might encounter the Divine Wisdom in this matter.

In Christ,

G.E. PATTERSON,
Presiding Bishop.

IN HONOR OF MAYOR "W" PETE
WISNIESKI

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 13, 2003

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and recognition of Mayor "W" Pete Wisnieski—Dedicated family man, accomplished community leader, and admired friend and mentor to countless. Mayor Wisnieski's foresight, integrity and leadership led the City of Independence through an amazing evolution—from a sleepy rural village to a thriving, viable and family-friendly City—all without compromising the city's small-town charm.

Mayor Wisnieski was born and raised in Independence, and continues his life-long commitment to the City. Soon after graduating with honors from Independence High School, Mayor Wisnieski became operator of the Independence Ford Garage, and began raising his family. Together, Mayor Wisnieski and his wife of 64 years, Marge, raised five children, and are blessed with many grandchildren.

Mayor Wisnieski has demonstrated a life-long commitment to serving the residents of his hometown, following the path of his father, Frank Wisnieski. Frank was elected to serve as the first Mayor of the Township of Independence, and served in that capacity for sixteen years. Instilled with the ideals of public service from his parents, Mayor Wisnieski