

and deserves the acknowledgment of the whole city. And we look forward to many more evenings in the theatre with August Wilson, gazing at America through his eyes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, just recently the economic report of the President, which was sent to Congress under the President's signature, predicted that the economy would create some 2.6 million jobs this year. Yet, Mr. Speaker, the President has yet to create a single net job since his inauguration, not one.

Meanwhile, we have lost almost 9 million people in this country that are hopelessly out of work. Many of these intelligent, educated, and able-bodied Americans have given up on looking for work because our national unemployment situation is so grim. As a result, they are unable to provide the basic necessities for their families. Instead, they are watching President Bush on television traveling the country, touting his economic record that again has yet to create a single net job.

Mr. Speaker, we have got to get the employment situation in this Nation back on track. The phrase "jobless recovery" is of no consolation to the nearly 9 million Americans who are unemployed and the millions who are underemployed in our country.

Mr. Speaker, zero represents the amount of money nearly 9 million people are bringing home bi-weekly instead of a paycheck. Zero represents a degree to which the tax cuts being promoted by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have worked to achieve their goal. Zero also represents the amount of compassion American voters should give this administration in November since these numbers will not change without new leadership in Washington.

Today, Congress had an opportunity to enact legislation that is guaranteed to create jobs. The Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Democrats proposed \$37.8 billion of Federal highway/transit infrastructure investment. These funds would have created nearly 1.8 million jobs and about \$235 billion of economic activity. However, our recommendations were disregarded because the President threatened to veto the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it crystal clear to the American people that the President of the United States has threatened to veto a bill that has proven to create jobs; yet he is in favor of unlimited amounts of tax cuts that have debatable job creation effects. Mr. Speaker, it has been found that transportation construction contractors hire employees within 3 weeks of obtaining a project contract. Yet nearly 3 years after passage of the President's first package of tax cuts, the economy has yet to create a single net job. Not one.

Mr. Speaker, the unemployment numbers from March will be released tomorrow. For the good of the American people, I sincerely hope that these numbers reflect a positive change in the Nation's unemployment situation. But it will not be because of anything this administration has done. It will be in spite of the obstacles to job creation that this administration continues to advocate.

Lastly, I continue to hear the President and the Republicans blame all of their economic woes on September 11, corporate scandals, and the drumbeat of the Iraq War. Let me remind my friends that every President and every administration has had to overcome challenges. How about World War II, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War, the Watergate scandal, the Iran hostage situation, the Cold War, and the first Persian Gulf War?

I could continue on, but my point is that every President has faced these types of challenges and still managed to create jobs, except one, since the Great Depression, and that is George W. Bush and this Republican House and Senate.

Mr. Speaker, we either need to change policies or change the leader-

ship of this country. In the words of Tracy Chapman, "Either we change or we live and die this way." I say we must, we must change.

THE STATE OF ARMENIAN/ AZERBAIJAN RELATIONS

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. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to address the decline in the state of affairs between Armenia and Azerbaijan brought about by Azeri President Ilham Aliyev and the members of his ministry. Including Namik Abbasov, Minister of National Security, through their encouragement of anti-Armenian propaganda that perpetrates anti-Armenian sentiments in the region.

Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, I was disheartened to learn of the brutal murder of an Armenian soldier by an Azeri soldier. Both were attending a NATO Partnership for Peace English-language course in Hungary. But I am doubly concerned by additional information that has recently been reported that the Azeri government is actually providing financial awards to individuals and organizations with the "best" propaganda works towards Armenians.

Recent accounts report that the Azerbaijani Ministry of National Security, a successor to the Soviet-era KGB, has awarded monetary prizes up to \$2,000 for the "best" propaganda works targeting Armenians. The Azeri Ministry, for instance, presented a prize in the books category to the Azerbaijani National Academy of Sciences' Human Rights Institute for an "encyclopedia" entitled "Crimes Against Humanity Perpetrated by Armenian Terrorists and Bandit Formations," and the minister himself was honored for funding the publication of this book. The MNS also granted a top monetary prize to two anti-Armenian propaganda films.

I mention this because I believe it is a blatant effort by the Azeri government to undermine years of efforts undertaken to encourage a peaceful resolution to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict by me and other Members of this body as well as the Minsk group and the former U.S. administration.

Three years ago, I was encouraged by developments in the Nagorno Karabakh peace process with the announcement of the Key West Agreement, reached in April 2001 by President Kocharian and former Azeri President Aliyev. I was hopeful that this agreement would lead to a peaceful resolution of the conflict and a stabilization of peace in the region. However, it was clear that any implementation of the Key West Agreement would have to wait until after the various legislative and presidential elections in the region including Armenia, Nagorno Karabakh, and Azerbaijan and when they were complete.