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No. 112

House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 12, 2006.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JUDY BIGGERT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 31, 2006, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

BUSH HAS NOT LEARNED LESSONS OF 9/11

Mr. MCGOVERN. Madam Speaker, yesterday we commemorated the fifth anniversary of that terrible morning of September 11, 2001. In communities across our Nation, people gathered to remember those whose lives were lost and, once again, our thoughts and our prayers were with the families, friends, neighbors and colleagues who lost someone on that tragic day.

There is no doubt that September 11 changed America.

There is no doubt that every American understands that there are individuals and networks of extremists who want to attack America and that terror is their weapon of choice.

And there is also no doubt that no attack of any kind can harm the pride each of us has in being an American and the privilege of living in the United States of America.

But I have to admit, Madam Speaker, that I am deeply disturbed by many of the statements and speeches that have been coming out of the White House over the past days and weeks leading up to this year's remembrance of September 11.

Five years ago, the world stood in sympathy and solidarity with America. Today, America's standing in the world is at its lowest point in history. More disturbing, the level of hatred against the United States is at its highest, and is spreading. This does not make us safer, Madam Speaker. It makes us more isolated and more vulnerable in an increasingly dangerous world.

Over the past few days and again last night, President Bush has finally admitted that he went into Iraq knowing there were no ties to al Qaeda, no ties to those who did us such grave harm on September 11.

We know now that there was no threat from weapons of mass destruction. Intelligence was manipulated. The mission of the U.N. weapons inspectors inside Iraq was deliberately cut short by our invasion. And no weapons of mass destruction were ever found.

We know now that Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld threatened to fire any military officer, no matter what his degree of seniority, expertise and experience, if he dared put forward a plan for stabilizing and consolidating Iraq following the invasion.

We know now that resources were diverted from Afghanistan, where the 9/11 deadly plot was born, in order to in-

vade and occupy Iraq. And we know now that the trail of Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of 9/11, has grown stone cold.

We know now that the President's policies in Iraq have put an enormous strain on our military, with U.S. military readiness levels now at historic lows.

We know now that the independent 9/11 Commission has just issued a 5-year report card on President Bush and the Republican Congress filled about D's and F's on homeland security.

We know now that the invasion and occupation of Iraq has increased the budget deficit to record proportions because this administration and this Republican Congress have done what no other President or Congress has ever done in the history of the United States. They have continued to fund this war completely outside the normal budget and to grant a series of tax cuts to the wealthiest of the wealthy during a time of war.

And we now know that Iraq is rapidly descending into an ethnic and religious civil war, with a daily civilian death toll that tells every single Iraqi that nowhere is safe from violence, not their homes, not their jobs, not their schools, not even their hospitals.

And still President Bush told us last night to stay the course. Told us that those who call for change or criticize his policy are giving comfort to the terrorists. Even worse, Vice President CHENEY said on Sunday's Meet the Press that not only was the invasion and occupation of Iraq the right thing to do but, quote, if we had to do it over again, we'd do exactly the same thing.

Exactly the same thing, Madam Speaker? Has this administration not learned a single lesson over the past 5 years? Did they intend to squander the good will of the international community? Did they intend for Iraq to fall into violent, sectarian civil war? Did they intend for our military to be

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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