

CONGRATULATING THE DETROIT SHOCK ON WINNING THE 2006 WOMEN'S NATIONAL BASKETBALL ASSOCIATION CHAMPIONSHIP

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

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I stand to congratulate the Detroit Shock, the Women's National Basketball Association's champions for 2006, the second time they have won the title in 3 years; 12 outstanding women, who have come forth and persevered and won the championship one more time. Six of those women were on the world championship team of 2003.

Congratulations to Coach Bill Laimbeer, Assistant Coach Rick Mahorn, as well as Cheryl Reeve. Most valuable player Deanna Nolan, congratulations for those jump shots and tenacity.

You stand in history in the Women's National Basketball Association, as well as the National Basketball Association, as winners. Let women all over the world know that you can persevere in whatever you choose to be.

Congratulations, Detroit Shock, 2006 Women's National Basketball Association winners. We love you.

HONORING XAVIER UNIVERSITY, DILLARD UNIVERSITY AND SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AT NEW ORLEANS

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

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, as we honor Historically Black Colleges and Universities this week, I rise to applaud the commitment and tradition of HBCUs in my district. I am proud to say that in my district I am able to represent three of the most well-known HBCUs in the country: Xavier University, Dillard University and Southern University at New Orleans.

Xavier University ranks among the top in sending African Americans to medical school and accounts for a large share of African American pharmacists nationwide.

Dillard, highly regarded by U.S. News and World Report, has become widely known for its nursing program.

After starting with only two buildings SUNO has produced leading African Americans in the disparate fields of social work and computer science.

Collectively, these schools have served as profiles in courage and leadership as they rebuild in the face of Hurricane Katrina, which still threatens the future of all of them.

They have done a great deal with sometimes lean resources; however, that is the signature of HBCUs across the Nation. As a proud graduate of Southern University in Baton Rouge, I have been one of the many beneficiaries of the positive, nurturing and high-quality education provided by

these nationally significant institutions.

I urge my colleagues to work towards ensuring that generations of African American students are able to benefit from the very special contribution that HBCUs provide to higher education.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF FORMER TEXAS GOVERNOR ANN RICHARDS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is my sad duty to report to the House of Representatives the loss of an American original, and that is our former governor, the great Ann Richards. Governor Richards died yesterday after a long battle with throat cancer. She was 73.

I can tell you for sure that Ann Richards made us proud to be Texans. Dorothy Ann Willis Richards began her career in politics in the early 1970s after having raised four children. A Democrat, she served as County Commissioner in Travis County, Texas, from 1977 to 1982. Ann Richards was elected to the first of two terms as Texas State Treasurer in 1982.

She was born in Lakeview, Texas. She grew up in Waco, Texas, and graduated from Waco High School. And she loved her Texas.

After graduation, she taught social studies and history at Fulmore Junior High School in Austin, Texas, from 1955 to 1956. She had two daughters and two sons in the following years, and she campaigned for Texas liberals and progressives such as Henry B. Gonzalez, Ralph Yarborough, and Sarah Weddington, and she was not ashamed.

In 1976, Richards ran against and defeated a three-term incumbent on the Travis County, Texas, Commissioner Court.

Ann Richards gave that unforgettable keynote address in the 1988 Democratic National Convention, and she turned the Nation around.

In 1990, she sought the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. She won and she won as governor. And I am reminded of the Honorable Barbara Jordan, who campaigned for her; and the two of them were Texas' dynamic duo.

She did a lot as governor. The first thing she said was to cut the shackles off of the governor's house and opened it to the people of Texas. That is the kind of public official Ann Richards was and continued to be, someone who believed in the people's house and the people first.

She helped jump-start the economy in Texas. She helped reform the prison system by providing an abuse program for inmates, and she instituted the Texas lottery so that educational opportunities could be improved for our children.

Texas has lost a wonderful native daughter, someone who loved and cherished democracy, justice, the oppor-

tunity for those who could not speak for themselves.

Ann Richards stood for the opportunity for women in the public sector. She said to us, do not turn back, and yes, we can.

None of us who knew and loved Ann Richards will ever forget her or the way she heightened and brightened the lives of all the people she served. She was one in a million and she will be deeply missed. She will never be replaced. She was an American original. She was my friend. We will forever be in her debt and forever miss her.

Thank you, Ann Richards, for being the kind of role model for all the women, all the girls and all of America.

FEAR IS ALL THE REPUBLICANS HAVE TO OFFER

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans gave us their November 7 resolution last night. Five years ago, the Nation stood as one, but the Republicans have divided us ever since. They believe dividing America is the best hope for clinging to power in the November election.

They can pass self-congratulatory resolutions that have more to do with November 7 than September 11, but patting themselves on the back is no substitute for protecting the American people by adopting the recommendations of the bipartisan 9/11 Commission.

Republicans have not done that. Instead, Republicans have been ordered by the President to continue his fiction that Iraq and al Qaeda were connected. The evidence proves otherwise, so Republican leaders are trying to hide the evidence beneath their rhetoric.

Just remember this: Republicans have propped up this President by spending more on the Iraq war than on domestic security. Republicans have given us fear and fiction around the fifth anniversary of 9/11. Just imagine what they have in store for us in the next weeks.

Fear has never made America safer, but that is all the Republicans have to offer, and that is simply not enough to protect and defend America in the 21st century.

WE NEED A NEW DIRECTION ON SECURITY IN AMERICA

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise because America needs a new direction for homeland security. Our Republican colleagues are ignoring our Nation's real security needs.

The 9/11 Commission made 41 recommendations on ways to make our Nation safer, but just this December America received a flunked Homeland

Security 101, receiving 10 Cs, 12 Ds and 4 Fs.

Only 6 percent of containers at our ports are being screened, most air cargo is not being screened, and 5 years after 9/11, the Nation still lacks a unified terrorist watch list for airline passengers.

We need a new direction for America's security. We must guard against future attacks by implementing all the 9/11 Commission recommendations; and we must screen 100 percent of our containers and cargo bound to the United States in ships and planes; and we must ensure our first responders have the training, equipment and technology they need.

PRESIDENT'S ATTEMPTS TO CONNECT IRAQ WITH THE OVERALL WAR ON TERROR

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, President Bush continues to say that one of the most difficult parts of his job is trying to connect the war in Iraq with the overall war on terror, but I tell you it is a difficult job because it is clear there is no connection between the war in Iraq and the overall global war on terror.

Just this past week, a bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee report concluded that there was no link between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. In fact, the Senators wrote that Saddam, "only expressed negative sentiments about Osama bin Laden."

And yet, President Bush continues to contend that our Nation's safety depends on what happens on the streets of Baghdad. With all due respect, this is just not the case.

The President is trying to convince the American people that al Qaeda is responsible for all of the violence in Iraq. In reality, the overall majority of the violence today comes from the growing sectarian divisions between the Sunnis and the Shias, a civil war which some of us believe has begun.

From day one, the Iraq war diverted the Bush administration's attention from those who attacked us on 9/11. Today, Osama bin Laden is still at large, and the Taliban is alive and well in Afghanistan.

It is time for the President to focus his attention on those responsible for the horrific 9/11 attacks 5 years ago.

AMERICA IS NOT SAFER ACCORDING TO BIPARTISAN PANEL OF FOREIGN POLICY EXPERTS

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, the President says America is safer today than it was before 9/11, but according to a new report recently released from Foreign Policy magazine at

foreignpolicy.com, an overwhelming majority of America's foreign policy experts across the political spectrum believe we are less safe today.

Eighty-four percent of those interviewed for the survey said we are losing the war on terror, and 86 percent said the world is becoming more dangerous for the U.S. and for the American people. Again, this is a study of the top 100 national security experts in our Nation, weighted for balance between conservatives and liberals.

Leslie Gelb, the president emeritus of the Council on Foreign Relations, stated, "Foreign-policy experts have never been in so much agreement about an administration's performance abroad. The reason is that it's clear to nearly all that President Bush and his team have had a totally unrealistic view of what they can accomplish with military force and threats of force."

In other words, our Nation not only needs a military strategy, but it also needs a diplomatic strategy. It is time for a new approach, a new direction that includes both.

U.S. MUST USE INFLUENCE IN A POSITIVE WAY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the United States must begin to use its influence in a positive way in the Middle East to help secure Israel by first bringing all parties together in the region, without preconditions, for peace talks. The U.S. made a mistake by standing aside during the 34-day war. We now must help to create the circumstances which stabilize the Government of Lebanon by assisting with the recovery and by helping with the restoration of housing, businesses and infrastructure.

Secondly, the situation in Gaza is desperate. Unemployment is approaching 50 percent. The government workforce, 40 percent of all workers have been paid only about a dime on a dollar due in wages since the beginning of the year. Childhood malnutrition cannot even be resolved by the massive U.N. aid now, which characterizes 70 percent of the population as refugees.

With no jobs, little or no electricity, limited access to water, conditions are dire. The U.S. cannot stand by and permit this humanitarian disaster to continue. We must do everything we can to help Israel secure itself.

We also have to remember that we must use our influence to bring about peace by recognizing the conditions which exist.

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IN MEMORY OF JOHN WATTERS WRIGHT, CORPORAL, WORLD WAR II

(Mr. LARSEN of Washington asked and was given permission to address

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

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor the life of John Watters Wright. I had the privilege of meeting John 3 short years ago when I was able to present a commendation and his Bronze Star he had earned in World War II.

In 1944, as a soldier in World War II, actually as a marine in World War II, John was badly wounded during a sniper attack. Despite serious injuries, he kept fighting. He destroyed the enemy sniper's nest, saving himself and the lives of others in his division. His CO recognized John's heroism and promised to cite him for a deserved medal to commemorate his actions.

In 2003, I had the privilege of presenting John with the awards that he had earned 59 years earlier. So nearly 60 years after his self-sacrificing actions, the United States finally acknowledged the heroism he displayed in World War II with a Bronze Star, but it was an acknowledgment delayed far too long.

Corporal Wright died last month, and as we honor the life of Corporal Wright, we are challenged by his patriotism. He challenged us not only to recognize our veterans, but he challenged us to care for our veterans when they come home from deployments. He challenged us to defend the Constitution and the Bill of Rights without question, but do that through debate and sometimes dis-sents.

So I stand today to honor the life of Corporal John Watters Wright, who is truly an American hero.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE DONALD RUMSFELD

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

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, more than 3 years after President Bush declared "mission accomplished," U.S. troops, their families, and all Americans continue to pay a high price for the Bush administration's "stay the course" policy in Iraq.

We cannot afford to stay the course in Iraq. We need a new direction, which must begin with new leadership at the Department of Defense. Secretary Rumsfeld must be held accountable for his misconduct of this war. He has executed it with no plan beyond the initial invasion, rejecting sound advice and guidance from experienced generals, Middle East experts, troops on the ground, and elected officials from both sides of the aisle.

From his failure to prepare the military for extended deployments, to his decision to disband the Iraqi military, to his unwillingness to acknowledge miscalculations and false information, he has demonstrated that he does not grasp the challenges facing the Iraqi people or the challenges facing our Nation and the military.