

Despite the known threats against this Nation, the House Democratic leadership has said there's no urgency on updating our Nation's intelligence laws. The FISA law dates back to the Carter administration, and that was almost 30 years ago, and they argue we should not update the law now?

It's no coincidence that the United States has been free from attack at home since September 11, 2001. Violent extremist terrorists are a threat, and that threat must be stopped. Congress must give our intelligence officers the tools and techniques they need to meet the long-term challenges.

Two weeks have passed since our national security community lost the ability to track intelligence without going through slow and burdensome bureaucratic hurdles. That's more than 2 weeks of terrorist communications that will never be recovered.

I am committed to providing responsible and appropriate tools to our intelligence community to protect and defend Americans at home and abroad. I urge my colleagues to do the same and pass the bipartisan FISA bill today.

THE PEACE CORPS

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

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to commemorate the creation of the Peace Corps. Forty-seven years ago this month, March 1961, President Kennedy called upon Americans to serve abroad. Since that time, nearly 200,000 Americans have responded to that call, including five sitting Members of Congress. They left behind the comforts of family and friends and decided to forego high-paying jobs to share their abilities with people across the globe.

Peace Corps volunteers work in the poorest communities of the world's poorest countries, where they build lasting relationships, inspire young people to become leaders, and simply make good friends. Peace Corps volunteers improve America's standing worldwide, one community at a time.

Today I have introduced a bill to reauthorize the Peace Corps and to double its size by the year 2012. I look forward to bipartisan support for the Peace Corps and ask all Members to join the Returned Peace Corps Volunteer Members of Congress who cosponsored the Peace Corps reauthorization.

FINANCIAL CRISIS FACING OUR NATION WILL REQUIRE BIPARTISAN EFFORT

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I testified last week before the Budget Committee about the enormous fiscal challenge we face as a Nation and offered a bipar-

tisan solution to respond to outgoing U.S. Comptroller David Walker's characterization of a "tsunami of spending and debt levels that could swamp" our Nation. We must come together across the aisle, and if we don't get our financial house in order and make the sacrifices necessary today, we will hurt our children and our grandchildren.

JIM COOPER and I have joined efforts, a Democrat and a Republican, calling for a national bipartisan commission that will put everything on the table, entitlement spending, other Federal program spending, and tax policy, and come up with recommendations to put our country on a sustainable path. Nothing would be off limits for discussion and recommendations by the commission members. Congress would be required to vote up or down on the plan. If other viable bipartisan solutions are presented, we should look at those too.

I urge Members, I beg Members on both sides of the aisle to come together to take this issue to heart. Let's work together to take the necessary actions to save this country.

IMPORTANCE OF STEM CELL RESEARCH

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I believe there is promise in all forms of stem cell research but especially in embryonic stem cells. Currently, this administration's prohibition of Federal funding for embryonic stem cell procurement is ridiculous.

I campaigned on this issue because people suffering from diabetes, Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, and epilepsy deserve a government that fights for them. Researchers who care about finding cures to these debilitating diseases need every resource available. That is why I promise to fight until funding flows from Washington to the lab benches in scientific institutions across the country.

Federal funding is essential for embryonic stem cell research and for progress in curing these tough diseases. Mr. Speaker, it is time that we get on track and we stop fighting science in this country.

FISA

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

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, the American public needs to know about misrepresentation. This morning we have heard a misrepresentation of reality about the FISA bill.

We passed a FISA bill that guarantees that we protect not only our Nation but our constitutional rights. Every single Member of Congress has sworn to uphold our United States Constitution, and that means we have judi-

cial oversight, oversight of our administration and the executive branch that may reach far too deep into our personal lives. No administration has the constitutional right to listen in on U.S. citizens. And at no time has FISA gone dark. Our intelligence community has at all times been listening in on conversations of those who seek to destroy our freedom and our rights.

Fellow Americans, understand this: The FISA conversation you're hearing here on the floor is all about a smoke-screen. We have been protecting America each and every minute of the day.

DEMOCRATS WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH FOR NEW DIRECTION IN IRAQ TO BRING TROOPS HOME

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, as we prepare to mark the unfortunate 6-year anniversary of the war in Iraq, a war that is being financed by deficit spending, it's important to recognize the serious effects this war is having on our military. Our generals are warning that our military has been stretched and strained too far.

Perhaps that's why in a recent poll of 3,400 present and former military officers, 88 percent of them said that the demands of the war in Iraq have "stretched the U.S. military dangerously thin." This is the worst readiness crisis since the Vietnam War, and military officers are justifiably worried about military preparedness. Military personnel are so concerned that nearly three-quarters of the officers surveyed in that recent poll said that their civilian leaders are setting "unreasonable goals for the military" in Iraq. And due to multiple deployments, the Army is facing a shortage of officers and enlisted personnel.

Mr. Speaker, the 110th Congress is listening to the military. We will continue to push for a new direction, a new change, and an end to the war in Iraq.

□ 1030

PRESIDENT SEVERELY OUT OF TOUCH WITH CONCERNS OF RISING OIL PRICES

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

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, it is clear that President Bush is out of touch with today's consumer. First, he refused to accept that the economy was heading in a downturn. Now, it takes a reporter's question for him to realize that gas prices in this country will soon reach \$4 a gallon at the pump. Despite being reported in newspapers around the Nation, President Bush has told reporters last week that he didn't realize that \$4 gas was possible. The President's energy record leaves a