

Iraq and Afghanistan as new veterans, you would think House Republicans would be willing to stand behind their promise to provide necessary health care to these new veterans.

Mr. Speaker, it is sad that Washington Republicans are unwilling to give America's veterans the support they deserve. America's veterans should be outraged by the treatment they are now receiving from the Bush administration and the House Republican leadership.

#### CAFTA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, last year, TOM DELAY, the most powerful Republican in the Congress, promised this House that we would vote on the Central American Free Trade Agreement, so-called CAFTA, before the end of last calendar year, before December 31 of 2004. Then earlier this year he promised we would vote on CAFTA sometime before Memorial Day. Then he promised that we would vote on CAFTA sometime before July 4. The simple question is why has Congress not voted on the Central American Free Trade Agreement? The simple answer is that dozens of Republicans and Democrats, small businesses and manufacturers, farmers, ranchers, workers, environmentalists and food safety advocates all across the board oppose this agreement. There simply are not enough votes in this Congress to pass the Central American Free Trade Agreement.

During this whole period, supporters of CAFTA continued to make the same old, tired promises about trade. They promised that passage of CAFTA would reduce our trade deficit, but it continues the failed trade policy of the last dozen years. In 1992, the year I ran for Congress, we had in this country a \$38 billion trade deficit. Last year, a dozen years later, our trade deficit had mushroomed to \$618 billion. From \$38 billion to \$618 billion and the CAFTA supporters say that CAFTA will reduce our trade deficit.

CAFTA supporters say it will increase manufacturing jobs. Again, another broken promise from these trade agreements. The facts are that in the last 5 years, the U.S. has lost more than 2 million manufacturing jobs, more than 200,000 of them in my State of Ohio, another 200,000 in Michigan and Pennsylvania and New York, hundreds of thousands in Texas and California, in the southeast North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, those regions of the country.

Because no one believed these promises that it would cut the trade deficit, that it would increase our exports, the promise that it would raise the standard of living in Central America, they now are bringing out a whole nother

round of promises. One promise they have made, CAFTA will stop illegal immigration from Central America. The facts are that based on a report by the Pew Hispanic Center, a quarter million undocumented Mexican-born workers entered the U.S. from 1990 to 1994, prior to NAFTA. Then NAFTA passed, the number of illegals entering the U.S. sharply increased to almost a half million from 2000 to 2004. Free trade agreements are not a solution for illegal immigration.

Another promise they made, another wild, unsubstantiated promise, is that CAFTA will stop illegal drugs from entering the U.S. However, all you have got to do is look at what happened with NAFTA. Despite the passage of NAFTA, the State Department says Mexico is the principal transit country for South American cocaine entering the U.S. The report says that Mexican drug traffickers have steadily increased operations in all illicit drug sectors in the U.S. during the period after NAFTA.

Another wild, unsubstantiated claim is that CAFTA will stop al Qaeda from utilizing our southern border to enter the U.S. Geography 101, Mr. Speaker, shows that our southern border is with Mexico, not Central America, and despite claims made about NAFTA, border security remains low. CAFTA supporters fail to argue how passage of the Central American Free Trade Agreement will fix the Mexico border problem.

Another wild, unsubstantiated claim is that Central American presidents support labor unions. The facts are very different from that. In every one of these CAFTA countries, Dominican Republic and the five countries in Central America, these nations are not compliant with internationally recognized labor standards today as defined by the International Labor Organization. Most CAFTA nations have inadequate protection for workers who try to join unions in violation of ILO Convention 98's right to organize and bargain collectively. They maintain onerous strike requirements in violation of the right to associate under ILO Convention 87. In Honduras, not a single one of the 8,000 workers in the Porvenir Export Processing Zone has the right of freedom of association. One worker in that zone said, "Look, there's a whole mountain of workers who have been fired over the last few years for trying to organize in the industrial park. They simply don't allow it." In other words, these nations, one after another, continue to violate International Labor Organization standards.

CAFTA would lock in those lower wage standards, lower worker safety standards, right to organize, bargain collectively, prohibition on child labor, all of those things that we hold dear as our moral values in this country, human rights issues, protecting workers, protecting children, protecting against forced labor.

Mr. Speaker, the answer is, defeat this CAFTA. It has been promised that

it would come to the floor week after week, month after month. Defeat this CAFTA and renegotiate a Central American Free Trade Agreement that workers and small businesses and farmers and manufacturers and environmentalists and food safety advocates and businesses can support.

#### ON SUPREME COURT RULING REGARDING PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, in ancient days of kingdoms and fiefdoms, those in authority would sometimes arbitrarily and sometimes capriciously order the transfer of property from one owner to another person who was in greater favor with the ruler at that particular moment. The owner from whom the property was taken had no recourse once the king or ruler had made the decision to transfer the property. To back up the transfer, the tyrannical despot would make clear that the full weight of his military or local law enforcement could be brought to bear against anyone who attempted to stand in the way of the transfer.

In the recent Supreme Court case of *Kelo et al. v. City of New London et al.*, the elaborate 20-page majority opinion of the United States Supreme Court is one of the most eloquent, articulate, intellectual efforts to ever rationalize or try to cerebrally legitimize the forced transfer from the legal, legitimate owner of nonblighted property to someone who is in greater favor with the ruler of that area. It is something that our high court can point to with pride that they almost make it sound fair that private property can be taken from one legitimate owner and forcibly transferred to one who offers greater financial rewards to the ruler of that area.

What a great day for the intellectual superiority of the highest court of the land as it gets a 10 rating in the field of mental gymnastics, even from the Russian judge. But what a very, very sad day for truth, justice and what used to be the American way.

#### UPPER MISSISSIPPI PROJECT TO BE CONSIDERED IN WRDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the House Water Resources Development Act is on its way to the floor this week, perhaps as early as Thursday. In that bill, there is authorized a \$1.8 billion expansion of lock work on the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, despite three National Academy of Science reports concluding that realistic projections of the traffic that it is meant to