

Middle East, can now show the way toward democracy in the Middle East.

Finally, the underlying provisions further supports congressional views articulated in the 9/11 Implementation Act regarding the need to reevaluate our previous policies of supporting dictatorships and, in turn, support civil society and reforms as a means of addressing the precursor conditions which breed terrorism.

In Egypt, we see a nation of great potential; and to fully realize that potential, Egypt must reform itself, economically and politically. The language already in the bill seeks to empower Egyptian civil society rather than the entrenched Egyptian military.

In this context, I ask my colleagues to oppose any amendments that seek to strike this provision. Any amendment to weaken or to strike the Egyptian language in the authorization bill would send the wrong message to Egypt and to other dictatorial regimes in the broader Middle East, that they can proceed with virtual impunity and it is business as usual. In a post-9/11 world, this is the wrong message to send.

RENEGOTIATE CAFTA

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, last year this Congress was promised a vote on the Central American Free Trade Agreement by the end of 2004. December 31 came and went. Then at a White House news conference in May, President Bush called on Congress to pass the Central American Free Trade Agreement by Memorial Day. Memorial Day came and went. In June, Congress was once again promised a vote which was supposed to have been before the July 4 recess. The July 4 recess came and went.

Now we understand a vote on the Central American Free Trade Agreement could come in front of the House next week.

The many of us who have been speaking out against CAFTA have a message for this Congress: renegotiate CAFTA.

Those of us opposed to this CAFTA do want a trade agreement with Central America, do want to trade with the five Central American countries and the Dominican Republic; but we want an agree that benefits the many, not the few.

This agreement was negotiated and written by a select few. This agreement benefits those same select few. As the President travels the Nation trying to sell this CAFTA to the American public, he is hearing firsthand from U.S. workers, from family farmers, from small business owners, especially small manufacturers, from ranchers, from religious leaders that they do not want this CAFTA either. Their message is loud and clear: renegotiate CAFTA.

In response to the President's trip this past Friday to North Carolina, a New York Times headline reads, "Bush Sells Trade Pact in Hostile Territory." That is what the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) spoke about earlier, a Republican from North Carolina. A Huntsville, Alabama Times editorial in Sunday's paper reads, "Say No to the Central American Free Trade Agreement." Again, a newspaper understanding that the free trade agreement is not good for Alabama. It is not good for the South. It is not good for Tennessee. It is not good for this country.

□ 2000

A Wall Street Journal headline today reads, and this is a newspaper that is always supportive of trade agreements, "CAFTA Is No Cure-all For Central America."

This CAFTA represents more than a decade of failed U.S. trade policies. Look what has happened with our trade policies in the last dozen years. In 1992, the year I was elected to Congress, the U.S. had a \$38 billion trade deficit. That means we exported \$38 billion less than we imported. Twelve years later, in 2004, that trade deficit went from \$28 billion in a dozen years to \$618 billion. That translates directly into lost jobs; more than 200,000 lost jobs in the district of the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP), more than 220,000 lost jobs in the district of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) and the district of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL). It is clear our trade policy is simply not working.

CAFTA languished in Congress for more than a year, then passed the Senate last month by the narrowest margin ever of any trade agreement because this wrong-headed trade agreement does not work for Republicans or Democrats. It offends Republicans, dozens of Republicans in this body, and it offends dozens of Democrats in this body.

We know this agreement is a continuation of its dysfunctional cousin, NAFTA, another failed trade policy of the last dozen years. It is the same old story. Every time there is a trade agreement, the President says it will mean more manufacturing products that we will export overseas. Every time there is a trade agreement the President says it will mean more jobs for Americans. And every time there is a trade agreement the President says it will raise the standard of living in the developing countries. Yet with every trade agreement their promises fall by the wayside in favor of large corporate interests that send U.S. jobs overseas and exploit cheap labor abroad.

This CAFTA is simply, as the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) pointed out, about exploiting cheap labor abroad. This CAFTA will not enable the Central American or Nicaraguan, or Honduras, or Guatemala workers to buy cars made in Ohio. It will not

allow those workers to buy software developed in Seattle. It will not mean more prime beef exports from Nebraska, because those workers simply cannot afford to buy those products. This CAFTA, instead, is about U.S. companies moving plants to Honduras, outsourcing jobs to Nicaragua, and exploiting cheap labor in Guatemala.

Desperate after failing to gin up support for the agreement based on its merits, CAFTA supporters are now attempting to buy votes with fantastic promises. And if that fails, they will twist arms. Count on this; this is a prediction: They will call the vote in the middle of the night, hold the rollcall open for hours to pass a bad agreement that will benefit only a select few.

Instead, Mr. Speaker, we should throw out this failed agreement and negotiate a better CAFTA. When the world's poorest people can buy American products and not just make them, we will know then that our trade policies are working.

THE ECONOMY/CARL ROVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago, our Democrat colleagues said Republicans should not lower taxes because we needed those tax dollars for more programs and more spending. Republicans knew that more new programs and additional spending was the last thing we needed to be doing. We fought to reduce taxes, and we said that lower taxes would bring this economy out of a recession.

Today, our policies have been proven to be correct. Our tax relief has spurred economic growth and created jobs. We have a near historically low unemployment rate of about 5 percent. Home ownership is at historic highs. We have helped millions of Americans achieve the dream of home ownership. We have a 69 percent home ownership rate.

Mr. Speaker, 146,000 new jobs were created in June, adding to the millions of jobs created in the past 3 years, giving us 25 months of sustained consecutive economic growth. We lowered taxes and this year we are seeing unexpectedly high tax revenues. Our deficit is going to be \$100 billion less because of tremendous economic growth.

And what about this is confusing to Democrats? Well, they say, okay, that is good economic news, but we have a deficit. And to that we say, well, why not join us and cut spending. Let us reduce and eliminate unneeded programs. Let us not raise taxes.

When we lowered taxes, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the minority leader, led the Democrats in predicting that this relief would do nothing at all for our Nation's economy. I think it is fair to say that she and her party are pretty much out of touch on that issue. And I know that