

OUR TROOPS ARE STATIONED IN  
THE WRONG GULF

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the amount of money that the House just appropriated is only a fraction of what is needed, and all Members know that. Let it go forward quickly, with bipartisan cooperation and with heartfelt thanks to those helping to saving lives with necessary food, water, shelter, medical care and security.

Congress must also demand accountability with the appropriations because until there are basic changes in the direction of this government, this tragedy will multiply to apocalyptic proportions.

The administration said yesterday no one anticipated the breach of the levees. Did the administration not see or care about the 2001 FEMA warning about the risk of a devastating hurricane hitting the people of New Orleans? Did it not know or care that civil and Army engineers were warning for years about the consequences of failure to strengthen the flood control system? Was it aware or did it care that the very same administration which decries the plight of the people today cut from the budget tens of millions needed for Gulf area flood control projects?

Countless lives have now been lost throughout the South in the cost of hundreds of billions in ruined homes, businesses and the destruction of entire physical and social infrastructure.

The President said a couple of hours ago that the Gulf Coast looks like it has been obliterated by a weapon. It has. Indifference is a weapon of mass destruction. Our indifferent government is in a crisis of legitimacy. If it continues to ignore its basic responsibilities for the health and economic welfare of the American people, will there ever be enough money to clean up after their indifference?

As our government continues to squander the human and monetary resources of this country on the war, people are beginning to ask: Is it not time we begin to take care of our people here at home? Is it not time that we rescue our own citizens? Is it not time that we feed our own people? Is it not time that we shelter our own people? Is it not time that we provide physical and economic security for our own people? And is it not time that we stop the oil companies from profiting from this tragedy?

We have plenty of work to do here at home, and it is time for America to come home and take care of its own people who are drowning in the streets, suffocating in the attics, dying from exposure to the elements, oppressed by poverty and illness, racked with despair by hunger and thirst.

The time is now to bring back to the United States the 78,000 National Guard troops currently deployed overseas. Many of our troops are already stationed in the wrong Gulf.

The time is now to bring back to the U.S. the equipment needed to search and rescue for clean up and reclamation. The time is now for Federal resources, including closed Army bases, to be used for temporary shelter for those who have been displaced by the hurricane. The time is now to plan massive public works with jobs going to the people of the Gulf Coast States to build new levees, bridges, roads, libraries, schools, colleges and universities, and to rebuild all public institutions, including hospitals. Medicare ought to be extended to everyone so every person can get the physical and mental health care they need as a result of the disaster.

The time is now for the Federal Government to take seriously the research of scientists who have warned for years about the dangers of changes in the global climate, and to prepare other regions of the country for other possible weather disasters until we change our disastrous energy policies. The time is now to change our energy policies, to end the domination of oil and fossil fuel, and to invest heavily in alternative energy, including wind and solar, geothermal and biofuels.

As bad as this catastrophe will prove to be, it is in fact only a warning. Our government must change its direction. It must become involved in making America a better place to live, a place where all may survive and thrive. It must get off the path of war and seek the path of peace, peace with a natural environment, peace with other nations, peace through a just economic system.

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

(Mr. BLUNT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER  
TIME

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time assigned to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Nevada?

There was no objection.

EMERGENCY RELIEF TO VICTIMS  
OF HURRICANE KATRINA

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, today we come to the floor of this body not as Democrats, not as Republicans, but as Americans, united in an effort to find a solution to find help for the people affected by the wrath of Hurricane Katrina.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we unanimously passed financial assistance to the vic-

tims of Hurricane Katrina and this Nation stands united. This entire Nation stands ready and willing to help the many thousands of victims in Hurricane Katrina's wrath. But first, let me extend my deepest sympathies to those who have lost loved ones in the rising flood waters and the devastation of this storm. We all share the grief they are feeling during this tragic time.

Our most immediate concern is the safety and security of the people of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama who are fighting this very day, this very hour, this very moment to survive.

Many Nevadans have stepped up to offer their help in this effort. We have contractors in Nevada who have donated construction material, concrete, steel to help rebuild. We have banking institutions like Wells Fargo that have offered emergency financial assistance, emergency financial support and processes by which these people can access financial assistance.

Members of the National Guard in the State of Nevada have also been called up, both from the 152nd Air National Guard Medical Group based in Reno and the Army Guard's Medical Detachment 5 headquartered in Reno. And Las Vegas were among the 100 already-deployed Nevadans assisting in the emergency response currently underway.

The emergency team doctors, nurses and other medical specialists and their equipment left Reno on a C-130 with less than 24 hours' notice. The team will spend up to 2 weeks aiding the victims of Hurricane Katrina. As the recovery effort continues, Congress took the necessary steps today as a united body to enable these communities to begin to rebuild.

Thousands of residents in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama have had their lives shattered, have lost their homes, their businesses; and entire livelihoods have been swept away.

Rebuilding these cities like New Orleans, Gulfport, and Biloxi and the many other once-bustling resort towns will not be done overnight, but the people of these Gulf Coast communities should know that the American people stand united, united not just with our rhetoric but with our action; and we will work with them to rebuild these cherished communities.

The people and businesses of Nevada, like Albertson's, which will provide \$9 million in water and food, have given generously to the relief effort and will continue to do so.

May our thoughts and our prayers be with the victims of Hurricane Katrina as they work to find the strength to overcome the devastation Mother Nature has wrought upon them.

Mr. Speaker, may God bless this great country and assist these people.

WAKE-UP CALL

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