

cutoff as a way to end our combat activity in Iraq, I would have liked to have forced the redeployment of our troops out of harm's way as soon as reasonably possible. But as our extraordinary Speaker has said, we must not let our search for the perfect become the enemy of the good. And last night we passed a good and reasonable approach to ending the war in Iraq.

The President has said that he will veto this bill, and it is clear to me that after 4 years of refusing help or advice from anyone who has not bought into his policy, he is not about to welcome our assistance now. But he should. This bill provides President Bush with the exit strategy he has never had, but which the American people so desperately want. He would be foolish not to sign it.

#### POVERTY CRISIS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Last year, and I guess also nearly 2 years ago, and really for many of our lives, we have known that there is a poverty crisis in America, which is growing. I think what we saw after the terrible hurricanes was that this gap, of course, is widening between the haves and the have-nots, and it is not only in the gulf coast region, it is throughout our country.

While the hurricanes, especially Hurricane Katrina, exposed the disparity for all to see, the fact is, poverty is not just isolated to the gulf coast; it does exist throughout our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about the fact and to remind the country that our land really should be a land of opportunity, but the sad reality is that income inequality continues to grow, and more people are falling into poverty than getting ahead. We are heading in the wrong direction, and we need a national commitment to address the growing poverty crisis in the Nation. That is why this week's release of a report by the Center for American Progress entitled, "From Poverty to Prosperity", a national strategy to cut poverty in half, this is a significant contribution to the efforts of anti-poverty activists, and it is a valuable roadmap for concerned lawmakers, like all of us are.

The report found that not only is poverty in the United States bad, it's getting worse. Just consider the fact that over 37 million Americans, more than the population of my home State, are in poverty, and the number has grown by 5 million since the Bush administration took office. One in eight Americans now live in poverty. Poverty in the United States is far higher than in many other developed nations, and poverty and inequality, of course, here is at an all-time high.

The richest 1 percent of Americans in 2005 held the largest share of the Nation's income since 1929, and at the

same time, the poorest 20 percent held only 3.4 percent of the Nation's income.

The report's recommendations are based on four principles: promoting decent work, promoting opportunity for all; ensuring economic security; and helping people build wealth. Based on these principles, the report offered 12 steps, which include raising the minimum wage and indexing it to inflation, expanding the earned income and children's tax credits, promoting unionization by making it easier for employees to vote to join a union, offering child care assistance for low-income families, guaranteeing early education for all, and providing 2 million people with opportunity housing vouchers.

Madam Speaker, you may have noticed that the new Democratic Congress has taken steps toward enacting these recommendations. Additionally, many of my colleagues have been advocating for related poverty alleviation issues and ideas and strategies through the Out-of-Poverty Caucus that I founded, along with my colleagues, Congressman JOHN CONYERS, Congressman BUTTERFIELD, Congressman MIKE HONDA, and Congressman JOE BACA.

In the same vein, I have also introduced a comprehensive package of poverty elimination legislation. These three bills are designed to create leadership, accountability, and the national reevaluation of our economic priorities and developing policies to eliminate poverty in our Nation.

The first bill, H. Con. Res 19, calls on President Bush to submit to Congress a plan, this is just a plan, mind you, to eradicate poverty by 2015.

The second bill, H. Con. Res 10, requires accountability from Congress by requiring the Congressional Budget Office to report the poverty impact of legislation pending before Congress similar to environmental impact statements.

The final bill, H.R. 352, demands a reevaluation of our priorities by rolling back tax cuts for the wealthiest 5 percent and dedicating the funds to poverty elimination programs.

Madam Speaker, fighting poverty really isn't a mystery, it's just not a priority for us, and it's time to make it a national priority. It just requires us to make a commitment to the goal of eliminating poverty and then dedicate the resources to do that.

So I urge my colleagues to join me in this important fight by reading the report, first of all, and cosponsoring these bills and joining the Out-of-Poverty Caucus.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. ENGEL (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of a family emergency.

Mr. ETHERIDGE (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of official business in the district.

Mr. SPRATT (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. REYES) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. REYES, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WYNN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFazio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. YARMUTH, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LEE, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PRICE of Georgia) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GOHMERT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, May 3.

#### ENROLLED BILL SIGNED

Ms. Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled a bill of the House of the following title, which was thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 1681. An act to amend the Congressional Charter of The American National Red Cross to modernize its governance structure, to enhance the ability of the board of governors of The American National Red Cross to support the critical mission of The American National Red Cross in the 21st century, and for other purposes.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, April 30, 2007 at noon.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1310. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Department of the Army, Case Number 04-07, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1351; to the Committee on Appropriations.

1311. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Department of the Army, Case Number 05-07, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

1312. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State,