

any connection between the two. Participation in CBI is not conditioned on a country's decision to approve or reject a free trade agreement with the United States."

As someone who has supported trade preference for Latin American countries like I have, the most recent the Andean countries, I can confirm that there will be absolutely no retaliation against the country or voters no matter what the outcome of the referendum. The people must look beyond the scare tactics being waged in this campaign.

How will CAFTA affect Costa Rica? Voters, all they have to do is look to Mexico to see what CAFTA has done to them. Since the passage of NAFTA, poverty in Mexico has increased. The middle class has declined. Many Mexicans are fleeing to America in hopes of finding a better wage and a life for their families.

Who benefits under NAFTA and CAFTA agreements? The multinational corporations, not the people. We have seen that corporations and their friends in the government will employ dirty tricks, election fraud, and tell outright lies to ensure that they continue to be able to exploit workers and ruin the environment.

This is a historic and important vote for the people of Costa Rica. I believe it is time for the United States and Costa Rica to go back to the drawing board and develop a new trade agreement that all sides can be proud of. The United States renegotiated Peru, Colombia, Panama and South Korea. We should do the same thing with the agreement with Costa Rica. It is time to develop an agreement that benefits our workers and communities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WALZ of Minnesota). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

**REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 928, IMPROVING GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY ACT**

Mr. WELCH of Vermont, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-358) on the resolution (H. Res. 701) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 928) to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 to enhance the independence of the Inspectors General, to create a Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

**REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2740, MEJA EXPANSION AND ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2007**

Mr. WELCH of Vermont, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-359) on the resolution (H. Res. 702) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2740) to require accountability for contractors and contract personnel under Federal contracts, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

**REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3648, MORTGAGE FORGIVENESS DEBT RELIEF ACT OF 2007**

Mr. WELCH of Vermont, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-360) on the resolution (H. Res. 703) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3648) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude discharges of indebtedness on principal residences from gross income, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

**REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3246, REGIONAL ECONOMIC AND INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2007**

Mr. WELCH of Vermont, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-361) on the resolution (H. Res. 704) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3246) to amend title 40, United States Code, to provide a comprehensive regional approach to economic and infrastructure development in the most severely economically distressed regions in the Nation, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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**DRUMBEATS OF WAR ARE COMING AGAIN**

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, out of a sense of duty and a growing fear, I rise to say that I hear the drumbeats of war coming again from this administration. This time, Iran is in the cross-hairs.

It's ironic that the alarm has sounded today, the birth date of Mahatma Gandhi, and the United Nation's first World Nonviolence Day in honor of Gandhi's commitment to peace.

Perhaps the contrast between the man of peace and an administration of war will underscore the need and the urgency for Congress to act before the President orders a military strike.

I listened and sounded the alarm in 2002 regarding Iraq. But the President and the Vice President had already set in motion their invasion plan, and those who got in the way were called unpatriotic and uncaring or worse. Back then, too many in the media, the Congress and across the Nation were willing to accept a war without justification or justice. Now, at least the American people overwhelmingly recognize the tragic consequences of the Iraq war and the occupation.

At least one development in 2008 may make this time different than 2002. The Internet has grown exponentially. Today, credible and factual information is readily available. The blogosphere is on fire sounding alarm, and we will have no one to blame except ourselves if we let this administration take us to war in Iran. Go to your computer and Google "Iran war." The search yields 74 million hits. Let me read a few of the top search results:

Day One: "The War with Iran."  
"Iran: The next war," in the Rolling Stone.

"America's hidden war with Iran," Newsweek.

"Is U.S.-Iran war inevitable?" Time magazine.

"The Iran plans," the New Yorker.  
And "The U.S. trains gulf Air Forces for war against Iran."

Some see the same signs as I do, and they are writing across a broad spectrum of the media, trying to be heard above the beats of war. However, the President and Vice President are using friendly fire from the right-wing media to lull the Americans to sleep, while they lay the groundwork and shop for a Gulf of Tonkin-like provocation to launch a military strike.

Journalist Tim Shipman of the Telegraph in London writes "American diplomats have been ordered to compile a dossier detailing Iran's violations of international law. Some U.S. diplomats believe the exercise will boost calls for military action by neoconservatives inside and outside the administration."

In the New Yorker, renowned journalist Seymour Hirsch says, "The revised bombing plan for a possible attack, with its tightened focus on counterterrorism, is gathering support among generals and admirals in the Pentagon.

Hirsch adds, "A Pentagon consultant on counterterrorism told me that, if the bombing campaign took place, it would be accompanied by a series of what are called short, sharp incursions by American special forces into suspected Iranian training camps. Cheney is devoted to this, no question."

Now, does that sound like a diplomatic solution to you?

For at least a year we've been lulled into believing that the administration cannot fool the American people again. But I say this is just the kind of wishful thinking this administration is hoping for. It gives them time to spin the rhetoric and plot the missile tracks into Iran.