

based in their country. We are furthermore hearing that Saddam, in fact, has considered Kuwait's action, in allowing the basing to take place there, an act of aggression against Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, we may want to, in fact, support all of this. But the point is that the President is doing this unilaterally. There, in fact, has been no consultation with this body.

My colleagues on the other side raised the issue of how they supported President Bush during Desert Storm. In fact, I went back and checked the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Two of the three speakers who stood up just a few short moments ago actually voted against President Bush's involvement of our troops. That is OK, because they should have that right to speak their mind. But we are not being given the opportunity to even understand what is going on, let alone vote to put our troops into harm's way.

Right now we are sending young troops and 117's over to the Middle East and no one has been briefed. The chairman of the Committee on International Relations, the chairman of the Committee on National Security, the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, even the majority leader has told me he has not been given a briefing as to what is going on. This, Mr. Speaker, is unacceptable. We need to know what is going on because we are putting our troops in a situation this weekend that could result in actions, hostile actions against our people.

I, for one, as a representative of 600,000 constituents, I want to know what, in fact, my constituents are being subjected to in terms of this President's operations.

□ 1245

Mr. Speaker, that has not been done. I yield to my friend.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. I know the gentleman was a Member of this body back with events leading, where at the time events leading up to Desert Storm occurred. Can you tell us that President Bush did at that time as far as informing the Members of this body what was going on?

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. The gentleman raises an excellent point and one that we need to keep in mind. President Bush went to the United Nations six or seven consecutive times and had the United Nations pass very specific resolutions, and then he came to this body and allowed us to have a vote, and I might add, by the way, just for the record, that I checked the RECORD. The Speaker at the time, Mr. Foley, voted "no" against President Bush; the majority leader at the time, Mr. GEPHARDT, voted "no"; Mr. BONIOR voted "no"; all against the deployment and the support of our troops in the Middle East as requested by President Bush. But that is OK. They are allowed to do that.

My point is that we are not being given that opportunity. Who knows

what this President is getting us into? We have no idea. We do not know. All we know is our allies are not supporting us except for Great Britain, and all we know is now even some of the Arab countries are having second thoughts about what unilateral actions we are taking. That to me, Mr. Speaker, is outrageous and should allow this body to have a vote.

Mr. Speaker, I am preparing right now today, and I would hope that our colleagues who are sitting in their offices, or their staff members, would call my office to support not only a letter asking what is going on but a resolution asking for the legal justification under the United Nations resolution that is very specific for us to take unilateral action, and also asking for the compliance with the War Powers Act. Why have not the leader of the Committee on National Security, why have not the bipartisan leaders of the Committee on International Affairs been consulted in the current plans for this weekend? Perhaps it is that we do not have any plans, or perhaps those plans have not been totally thought out.

We, in this body, whether a member of those appropriate committees or not, have the right and the responsibility to know what situations our troops are being placed into, and in my opinion based upon what I am seeing and hearing that, in fact, is not occurring.

This is an issue, Mr. Speaker, that is going to be on the minds of the American people this weekend because right now our kids who fly those F-117's are gassing them up and fueling them up for a 2-day flight to the Middle East. There is not one Member in this body who has any idea of what they are doing there. Are we going to be attacking specific targets? Do we know if there is backup support being provided? What is our exit plan? Is our goal to go in and get Saddam Hussein or to go in after chemical weapons facilities? What we are going after? No one knows.

Mr. Speaker, we demand some answers.

MAKING CLOUDS GO AWAY

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

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, this is a sad day for me as a Member of this body having served here 20 years. You know, last year when the ethics complaints were being filed against the Speaker, I characterized what is happening to this House as there was a great cloud over this House and we needed to remove that cloud. That cloud has not been removed; in fact, it has gotten darker. It has done more to harm the image of the U.S. House of Representatives than any actions that have been taken on legislation.

Even though their Contract With America would have cut Medicare,

would have cut environmental protection, would have cut education, all to give tax cuts for the wealthy; that is bad enough. But what is going on today and has been going on with the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct and its coverup of what the Speaker of the House has done is shameful beyond any comprehension.

It is a sad day when Members of the House cannot even get a copy of the report that the special counsel has filed with the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct on just one of several, seven, complaints that have been filed against the Speaker. Only on one. They have not done anything on the others.

What is the gentlewoman from Connecticut doing? Well, she met with the floor leader the other day. She has had press conferences in Connecticut. But she will not tell us anything. In fact they met just yesterday. Why did they not release the report?

I am sure not one of the five Republican Members of that Committee on Standards of Official Conduct will ever vote to release that report. All they have to do is vote to release it and it comes out. You and the public, Members of the House, the media, everybody, will know what is in that report. They do not want you and I or anybody else to know what is in that report.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. VOLKMER. Yes, and by the way, for the public's edification, no Democratic member of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct can tell us what is in that report. The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, as a body, has to release it. So we cannot find out from them—

Mrs. SCHROEDER. If the gentleman will yield, one of the things that troubled me was I believe they are now trying to say, "Oh, well, this is not a report."

Now I want to know what we spent \$500,000 for, for a hundred pages of paper, and they think they can escape all the rules of this House by calling it something other than a report. It is a very—what was this? Just kind of a gift to someone to go put some papers together? I mean that does not make any sense to me at all.

Mr. VOLKMER. I say it is a huge waste of taxpayer's money to spend \$500,000 to have a very good attorney to gather up all this evidence and give it to the committee, which the committee already had, and if it is not a report, then I do not know what it is, but it is their way of getting out of releasing it.

That is all it amounts to.

Ms. DELAURO. If the gentleman will yield? If I might, there is precedent here for what we are talking about. All you have to do is to go back a few years, and I just will read you two or three quotes, and I will let you guess who said them.

Now that report is secret. I do not know what is in it. I do not know of anybody other than the committee

members and Mr. Phalen who know what is in it, except Mr. Wright's lawyer, and I think that that report and the backup documents have to be published.

That was the then-Congressman NEWT GINGRICH.

I cannot imagine going to the country, tell them we have got a \$1.6 million report, and by the way there is nothing in it, but you cannot see it.

This is exactly what we are talking about.

Mr. VOLKMER. That is NEWT GINGRICH all over again.

Ms. DELAURO. Clearly that report is going to have to be published. That is right. The now-Speaker was right when he spoke in 1989. That report, it is a report by any other name is a report, ought to be published and the Members of this House ought to know what is in it. More importantly, the American public ought to know what is in it.

Mr. VOLKMER. That is correct. Good or bad, whatever. The public is entitled to know.

Mr. KLINK. If the gentleman will yield, our friend and colleague, the gentleman from Florida, PORTER GOSS, was on the floor a few moments ago, and he talked about the fact that the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct's investigation in the system was broken, and I would suggest to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, let us fix it in a bipartisan manner. Let us not make a difference in this House of Representatives whether the Speaker is a Democrat or a Republican, he would be treated differently. I think we need to send some sunshine on this House to make those shadows and those clouds go away.

ANSWER OUR QUESTIONS, MR. PRESIDENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. CHAMBLISS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, you know there is something going on here that I simply do not understand. A couple weeks ago when the President took the action that he took to counteract the action of Saddam Hussein and Iraq, I came out immediately in strong support of the action that the President took. I think the President did the right thing. There is not time in an emergency situation like that for the President to come to Congress and say, "Hey, this is going on, this is what I want to do, can I do it, should I do it?" That is his decision to make. He made that decision; the American people fully support that.

But now we are 2 weeks after the fact. We are 2 weeks into a crisis situation in the Middle Eastern part of this world, a very dangerous part of the world and a part of the world in which we already had sacrifices back 3 or 4 years ago. It is a part of the world that we have got to keep our pulse on, and what we are into now is the President

of the United States again sending our young men and women into harm's way without coming to the Congress and saying after this 2-week period, "Ladies and gentleman of the Congress, this is what is going on, I need you to know this, and I need your input into this."

As I go home this weekend, I have 3 military bases in my district, I am going to be asked by men and women, not only military men and women, but civilian men and women, "Tell me about what is going on in Iraq."

I am going to say, "Hey, you pick up the Atlanta Journal, you pick up the Macon telegraph, you will find out what's going on, and you'll know just as much as I know."

There is something basically wrong about that.

The chairman of a very powerful subcommittee on the Committee on National Security got up a minute ago and said that he knows nothing about this. He is the gentleman that is responsible for the research and development of the weapons that are being sent to Iraq today. He has no idea whether what he has been working on for the last several years by being a member of the Committee on National Security is the right thing to do. He knows nothing, nobody in this Congress knows anything about what is going on.

I do not think we are asking a whole lot of the President to say, "Mr. President, please come to us and just tell us what's going on. Why are you sending our men and women into harm's way? What should we tell our constituents out there as to why we are supporting you?" And it is a very crucial question on a very crucial issue that I simply do not understand why we are not being advised on, and I yield to my friend from Pennsylvania.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding, and I commend him for his leadership on armed services issues. He has been one of our brightest stars on the committee this year, and we appreciate that.

The issue here, Mr. Speaker, is we supported I publicly supported, President Clinton when he said we were going to send our troops to take action because of the situation with the Kurds. But then, Mr. Speaker, we heard that the first strikes were not successful, that some of the cruise missiles were off by as much as 500 miles. We were not given a specific briefing on that. I sat through the limited briefing that occurred last week, but then a second wave of attacks occurred, and we were told that was a mop-up operation.

By now, day by day, hour by hour, new information comes out, Mr. Speaker, that we have no idea what is going on. It is all from the news media that we are now sending 8 or 10 F-117's over, that we are redeploying some other troops, that we are now putting in Kuwait, that perhaps Saudi Arabia is not

being as supportive as it was, that the whole coalition that was there initially in Desert Storm is falling apart, that we cannot get that kind of support because the action has not taken—we need to have those questions answered because these are our kids that this President is sending into harm's way.

And believe me, Mr. Speaker, if there are casualties over this weekend, we are going to demand to know why we were not consulted, and we are going to demand to know why we did not have compliance with the War Powers Act; why, in fact, we are going beyond the U.N. resolutions where unilaterally it looks like the United States alone is taking up this mission. These are questions that FLOYD SPENCE and RON DELUMS and BEN GILMAN and LEE HAMILTON need to have answered and should have been briefed on.

But, Mr. Speaker, as of today, as the gentleman pointed out, less than an hour ago in an arms national security markup meeting when I asked the chairman very directly, "Mr. Chairman, have you at all been briefed on what is going on"; he said, "No, I will be coming out with a statement and a letter shortly, today or tomorrow, expressing my concern on this issue."

Mr. Speaker, we are talking about American kids. We are not talking about some far-off. We are talking about our kids that are now being put on alert status to be sent over into a hostile environment where we know this madman is out to get them, and if this President wants us to get behind him, then he better make that case to us.

We will support the troops, no doubt about that. The question is, will we support the President, and that remains to be seen based upon what the plan is. None of us know what the plan is. We read about it every day and not only hear about it from the news announcement by a man named McCurry. He is not the President of the United States, and he is not charged with the responsibility of briefing us.

HURRICANE FRAN

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 5 minutes.

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

Mr. DORNAN. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and of course I will not object, I do not know what happened earlier where 1 minute was cut off for the Members of the minority. I was a minority Member for 18 years. I just think 1 minute and 5 minutes, and 60 minutes can go on all night, and I did not vote for that midnight cutoff. But I just wondered if we have a long series of 5 minutes who were not recorded or requesting a 5-minute speech today so I know how much time I have before my special order, because I am the first with a 60-minute special order today.