

every one of us up here, Democrat and Republican, and that is this question: Where is the accountability for this money, these funds, to build Iraq?

I wish we could have set aside, and I worked hard to see if we could, the money for our troops, the \$67 billion, because that is another question. I do not think there is anybody in this House that would not vote to help our troops. But this House is in a convoluted state, just like this whole country is in a convoluted state, because there is a lack of accountability on this administration and this President for the monies that go to rebuild Iraq.

There are serious questions. If we do not raise those questions, if we do not answer those questions, it is not going to be so easy to come back and get money the next time, because the American people, I am here to tell you, have had it about up to here.

We are working with a country over there that is sitting on the world's second largest oil reserves, which arguably could be one of the richest countries in the world, and yet in this administration and in this supplemental there is not one timetable, there is not one direct amount of money that is going to get the oil wells producing, to get the oil production up and running at capacity. That should be the first business. Where is the money for that?

Why is there a cloud over the handling of this noncompetitive business? The American people are asking these questions. Halliburton and Bechtel, two companies, fine companies though they may be, but should they have non-bidding rights to get the taxpayers' money?

The American people are asking these questions. We owe it to them to ask these questions and get some answers. We have got to do it together, not as Democrats and Republicans, but together. We as a body must ask this administration to give the American people the accountability and the transparency on where this \$20 billion is going and how it is going to be spent, or else we all will lose our credibility, and that is something we must not do. The American people are counting on us to ask the questions of this administration on this money and get the answers.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as I have mentioned previously, I have been a supporter of our action against Iraq, I voted for the supplemental, and I will vote for this conference report. I will tell you that there are serious questions that have been raised by Members on this side of the aisle, and even some Members on the other side of the aisle, particularly on the issue of whether all of this money, all of this \$20 billion, should be a grant, or whether at least a portion of it should be a loan.

These are serious questions. The House went on record and the Senate went on record in favor of some of this money being a loan, but, unfortunately, the conference committee did not see the wisdom in taking that position.

Members have indicated and have served notice, and I believe Members on the other side of the aisle should listen carefully, Members have served notice that it will be much more difficult for the administration next time they come to this body seeking more funds for reconstruction.

Members have been willing to give the administration the benefit of the doubt, even though they have very serious reservations, but I would hope that this administration and the Members on the other side of the aisle, before they return to this Congress asking for additional billions of dollars, will take a long and hard look at this issue of loans versus grants and take a long and hard look at the opinions of the American people who are very concerned about unmet needs here in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN).

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to speak on this. In listening and thinking this through, I feel compelled to take the well.

I am one of the few on this side of the aisle that voted with President Bush the first time, as well as this President Bush, because I thought it was important, the right thing to do, that those of us who have said "never again" to tyrants must protect not just ourselves, but other people as well, and step up to the plate, and that it would be sinful not to do what we have to do in ridding the world of a tyrant. I am not sorry that I participated in that, because, indeed, it was the right thing to do, and remains so.

But things have happened and things have changed as we watch what has evolved, as we watch an administration that ran for office and continually talked about bringing morality back to government and taking personal responsibility, and suddenly seeing the evolving of what has happened here, which is truly mind-boggling.

Personal responsibility. Who knew what in the White House and when? Personal responsibility. Things starting to go wrong.

Where is the plan? Those of us who supported the action always said we were going to win the war. There was no doubt about it. You could not find an oddsmaker in Las Vegas to say that Saddam Hussein was going to win the war. The day, the amount of time, the casualties, that was always a question.

But the question that we pressed in the Committee on International Relations was, can you win the peace? What we have here is a Secretary of War who has now become the Secretary of Peace, and he does not know how to do it.

The President stood here in this House and said to us Members of both bodies assembled, "British intelligence tells us this." I think it is what Nixon called "plausible deniability."

I never heard a President say someone else's intelligence told us this. He was warned. He was warned by the CIA Director that that intelligence was wrong. Blame the British. Blame the CIA Director. Blame the brave men in the Navy on the *Abraham Lincoln*.

What happened to personal responsibility? Where is the plan? We have been deceived; we have been lied to, we in the Congress and the American people as well, and that is intolerable. People took the oath of office to tell the truth. Where is the truth?

Indeed, this is a dilemma. We have so many American lives on the line in that country, but the President owes us a plan. A company declares bankruptcy for a half a million dollars, they have to have a plan. For \$87 billion, there should be a plan. What is the plan? Nobody knows the plan.

"Trust us." Well, I have run out of trust in this administration. I do not mind that the emperor has no clothes; I mind that the emperor does not have a plan, because lives are at stake.

We want to protect our troops. Bring back a bill that would protect the troops. We are not going to leave them hanging out there. But to spend \$87 billion, and nobody knows how, nobody knows why, nobody knows where, nobody knows when, is something that is absolutely unconscionable, and something in which I can no longer participate.

I will be voting no.

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, we have no additional requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote for this rule so we can get on to fund the very important operation that we have in the Mideast. I just remind my colleagues that more than 75 percent of this bill goes to make sure that our troops are secure in this theater.

□ 2230

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the conference report accompanying H.R. 3289 and that I may include tabular and extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GOODLATTE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 3289,
EMERGENCY SUPPLEMENTAL
APPROPRIATIONS ACT FOR DE-
FENSE AND FOR THE RECON-
STRUCTION OF IRAQ AND AF-
GHANISTAN, 2004

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 424, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 3289) making emergency supplemental appropriations for defense and for the reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 424, the conference report is considered as having been read.

(For conference report and statement, see prior proceedings of the House of today.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG) and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG).

Mr. YOUNG of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this is the conference report on the supplemental to pay for our military forces, equipment, their salaries, and their medical care. A speaker who just left the well a few minutes ago said that nobody knows where the money is going, and I want to tell my colleagues that we do know where it is going. It is going to take me a little bit more time than I had anticipated using, but let me tell my colleagues this: \$65 billion of this money goes to the American troops, the American forces in Afghanistan and in Iraq. I will take the time to provide details of that funding:

Military personnel expenses: \$17,800,000; The operation and maintenance for our services involved in Iraq and Afghanistan, \$39,231,000; for procurement for the Army, for missiles, and WTCV for the Army, other procurement Army, aircraft procurement

Army and Navy, other procurement Navy, procurement for the Marine Corps, Air Force procurement defense-wide \$5,534,000. These pages that I will provide for the record are full of details on spending in this bill. And for someone to stand here and say no one knows where the money is going, is just not accurate. I really do not mind the political comments that are made here, but do not distort the facts.

We know where this money is going. Do we know where every penny is going? No. And for some of the programs that my colleagues support, we do not know where all that money is going, either. But we do the best we can. We know this money is going for our troops. In fact, all of this money is going for our troops.

Why did I say that? Because clearly \$20 billion is for construction and recovery in Afghanistan and Iraq. But our troops are there. And this House overwhelmingly voted to send them there, and so did the other body. And so they are there. And they are not coming home until they have created a secure Afghanistan and a secure Iraq.

Now, another speaker said, it is not working. The heck it is not. You talk to anybody who has gone from this Congress to Iraq and they will tell you that it is working. Is it working overnight? No. Of course not. It took 30 years for Saddam Hussein to destroy the lifestyle of people in Iraq. And our President decided to fix that. He was tired of Iraq threatening his neighbors. He was tired of Iraq supporting terrorists. And we voted to support him. Our troops are going to come home after we have been able to help the Iraqis create their own government and create their own security forces, so that they can have some quality of life in Iraq.

So this money is going for our troops, and \$65 billion of it is going directly to our troops.

There are other things in this bill. We had a good conference with the Senate. It took us a couple of days after pre-working this conference for a couple of weeks, and we have done some good things in this bill.

Remember the outrage that we all expressed when we found out that soldiers, wounded in battle, in a military hospital, were charged \$8.10 a day for

the food that they consumed while in the hospital? This bill fixed that. We had fixed it temporarily in an appropriations bill. This bill fixes it permanently. And it not only fixes it permanently, but it makes it retroactive, so anybody who was billed for their food while recovering from battle wounds will get their money back if they paid those charges. This bill does that.

We provide additional benefits for our National Guardsmen and our Reservists who are serving in our Nation's military in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, it has been said that there is no exit strategy, and that there is no plan. The fact is, there is an exit strategy, and that is to stabilize Iraq and Afghanistan so that our troops can exit and exit safely, and so that the people of Iraq can have a quality of life. They did not have a quality of life prior to the United States liberating that nation from the tentacles of Saddam Hussein, who had destroyed millions of his own people in one way or another, who had gone to war with his neighbor in Iran, who has invaded Kuwait, and who threatened Saudi Arabia. This was a bad guy.

I had the opportunity at the request of the Administration to attend the donors conference in Madrid last week, and I listened to speakers from many countries saying how bad Saddam Hussein was and how important it was to liberate the people of Iraq. They did not give the United States any credit for having made this happen, but at least they acknowledged that it had to happen, and that the United States, led by the President of the United States, George Bush, had the courage and the gumption to do something about it. I think we will find in the long range that this is going to be beneficial to the world. And this House obviously believed that, because we voted overwhelmingly to send those forces to Afghanistan and to Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of other things that I want to bring to the discussion this evening; but at this point I am going to reserve the balance of my time, and then we will have our exchanges and then have a final vote here very shortly.