

now-hawkish Republican colleagues of mine would not support force to stop genocide in the former Yugoslavia.

□ 1300

It is clear that we have mishandled the northern situation; that we have been less than diligent with Pakistan; that we have missed opportunities to retire weapons and nuclear material from the former Soviet Union. Moreover, the administration clearly did not provide adequate money for reconstructing Afghanistan in its most recent budget.

It is in an effort to highlight this situation that I have chosen to cosponsor a resolution offered by my colleague, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), to rescind Congress' authorization of force passed last year. Even though this proposal is unlikely to be approved by the House, it is important to send the right signal to the administration. It is not too late to be more strategic and to learn from our past mistakes.

Most important, especially if we are going to follow the route the administration is pursuing, a proper foundation is critical. If we expect multilateral cooperation and accountability from our friends, allies, and other world powers, we must demonstrate those characteristics ourselves. It would be outrageous if, as part of a deal with Turkey to secure their support, we end up selling out the Kurds in Iraq, the only people that have a modicum of self-determination.

Should we go to war, the American people are unprepared by the administration for the probable consequences of the inevitable United States short-term victory. Even supporters of the Bush policy admit that a post-Saddam situation in Iraq will very likely resemble Yugoslavia without Tito. There, after hundreds of thousands of lives were lost and billions of dollars spent, we still have 20,000 troops in the Balkans and the region remains a basket case. Our past actions should give people pause.

The United States gains little by rushing to war with Iraq. We should continue to work with our allies, pursue a program of coercive inspections, and marshal a much broader coalition in support of our effort.

Just as critically, we must try to stop the situation with North Korea from spinning out of control while reconnecting with South Korea. More time and money and effort should be expended on the Nunn-Lugar program to invest in decommissions of weapons of mass destruction in the former Soviet Union. Pakistan and its activities with the North Koreans and potential links to terrorists need to be elevated in our awareness and policy issues. Nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction are much less likely to come from Iraq than they are from North Korea, from dissident elements in Pakistan, or remnants of the former Soviet Union.

Most important, we need to acknowledge that the threats posed to America at home and abroad come primarily from terrorism. We should provide resources for the cash-strapped States and localities that have been dealing every day since September 11 with the consequences and potential for terrorism at home. This is beyond homeland security, this is hometown security, and deserves priority.

Our actions overseas should be appraised carefully as to the impact on our efforts to track down terrorists and prevent future attacks. It is important that the administration and Congress level with the American people that this is an expensive, arduous, complex task. It will require money, commitment, and, most important, patience over the long haul.

We certainly should be clear about the costs of any action in Iraq, and prepare the American public for the likely consequences our policy will have in that volatile part of the world. Americans may be conflicted about Iraq and anxious as to terrorism, but I know they are willing, as never before in my lifetime, to come together for the protection of their communities and the greater good of our country and peace in the world. Should we not take advantage of their interest and intention, we will regret this lost opportunity for years to come.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION HAS NO PLANS TO PROVIDE REAL PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFITS FOR SENIORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, this morning, President Bush announced his prescription drug benefit plan for senior citizens in this country. When it was all said and done, at the end of the speech it became clear that there really is no plan for prescription drugs from the Bush administration for the seniors in this country.

The President said he wanted to give seniors more rights to choose and it be more flexible, but the fact is, there is nothing to choose and nothing to be flexible about. He promised comprehensive benefits, but he refused to define what a comprehensive benefit was. He said he wanted to protect against high drug costs, but he refused to say what a high drug cost was. He said he wanted to provide catastrophic care, and yet he refused to say what that catastrophic figure would be so that the seniors could take benefit of it.

Why is that so? Because the prescription drug benefit announced by the President today is no different than the one that was announced just a few months ago; that is, he does not use prescription drugs to benefit the seniors of this country that need it to

maintain their health, to prevent diseases and illnesses, and to help them recover from illnesses; rather, he uses prescription drugs to beat down the Medicare system.

The plan he announced today is the same as he announced before: seniors must leave the Medicare system. In order to get a prescription drug benefit, they must leave the Medicare system that has served millions and millions of seniors so well over the last 40 years. It has provided them the health care they would not have otherwise been able to have; and it also kept millions of them out of poverty, because it provided that health care. It has improved all of the health statistics with respect to seniors.

Now the President says if they want a prescription drug benefit, they have to leave that system. They have to go into the HMO system. In the last several years, millions of senior citizens went into the HMO system. They enticed them with glasses, hearing aids, with prescription drug benefits. Only later did the seniors find out, as they read in the newspaper, that their HMO was going bankrupt, that their HMO was withdrawing service from that area. Millions of rural seniors have found out that the HMOs are not available to them if they do want to take advantage of them. Hundreds of thousands of seniors in northern California participated in the HMOs. Now those HMOs have gone, and they are looking for health care somewhere else.

Why would we do that again? Why would we rerun that history of trying to bait and trick the seniors out of the Medicare system, where every day they have health care coverage, where every day they are able to choose their doctor, where every day they are able to choose their physician, where every day their physicians should be able to do what is best for them?

The President wants to use prescription drugs to trick the seniors out of that system. That is not the answer. That is not the answer. Later this morning, the Democrats introduced a prescription drug benefit. It has no tricks, it has no sleight-of-hand, it has no gaps, it has no secret thresholds, it has no small print. It simply says that we will provide a prescription drug benefit to the seniors of this country in the Medicare system, all of those who are eligible, for \$25 a month with a deductible of \$100 a year and co-insurance. The beneficiary will pay 20 percent of all drugs, and Medicare will pay 80 percent. After one reaches \$2,000, the government will pick up the rest.

That is the prescription drug benefit that essentially Federal employees and Members of Congress enjoy. That is what the President stood here and said he wanted for America's seniors; but that is not the plan, that is not the plan that the President offers to America's seniors. Instead, what he offers them is a plan to dismantle the Medicare system, to do away with it; and for those who stay in the Medicare system, he offers them a discount card, a

discount card. That is not a prescription drug benefit.

So for those seniors who leave and join an HMO, lose the choice of their doctors, lose the choice of their pharmacy, lose the choice of their drugs; for those seniors, they will get a prescription drug benefit of minimal coverage, of minimal coverage. When the HMO goes bankrupt or refuses to see them, they will come back and they will not have their drug coverage.

He wants to make whether or not your drugs are covered based on where you get your health care as opposed to what your illness is, as opposed to what the doctor says you need, as opposed to what all of the indices say you might need for a particular illness. His determination is whether or not you are in Medicare.

That simply does not comport with the health care needs of America's seniors. America's seniors today need prescription drugs, just as they need coverage for doctors' visits, for surgery, for outpatient and inpatient care. It is part of the continuum of health care.

The President should not, the President should not do a bait and switch with America's seniors so that they can get a prescription drug benefit. Every Medicare beneficiary should be covered for prescription drugs, and that is what the Democratic bill does that was introduced today.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Reverend Norris A. Keirn, National Chaplain, the American Legion, offered the following prayer:

Eternal Father, You have been our shield and strength from the birth of our Nation to this present day. Our homeland has been preserved in the palm of Your hand. By inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, we have continuously moved to develop a more perfect union that would mirror Your divine purpose.

Through Your guidance these representatives have been raised to make laws and direct efforts for the enduring betterment of the peoples of this Nation and world. Grant great wisdom so that Your righteous purposes would be fulfilled. Afford each one the strength of will to be diligent dispensers of truth and justice. Bless them with soli-

arity that transcends personal views and political affiliations. Grant a bipartisan unity that would bring You glory.

Bless also those who defend this democracy and place themselves in harm's way. Dispatch Your angels to protect and to bring them home with victory over the evil forces that would attempt to destroy freedom. Enable them to break the bondages of oppression as You have so graciously granted in the past.

In the name of the Lord we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BEREUTER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise honored to wear the special scarf today to highlight the global fight to stop violence against women.

We know that women account for 85 percent of the victims of domestic violence, but only half of all female victims of violence report an injury, and of those, only 20 percent seek medical assistance.

I will shortly be reintroducing legislation to provide women over 18 with domestic violence screening and treatment services. Routine screening by a health care provider for domestic violence would unlock options a woman might not otherwise pursue and allow her to see that shelter and advocacy services may be useful to her.

Mr. Speaker, this year, Lifetime Television recognizes the importance of including men in the dialogue to combat violence. This is critical.

I encourage my colleagues to participate in the week's events and reiterate the need for fathers, coaches and other male role models to teach boys early and teach them often that there is no place for violence in a relationship.

SIMPLIFIED FAMILY CREDIT

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, in the coming weeks I intend to introduce a bill to create the simplified family credit, real tax relief for working families with children. My proposal would help grow the economy, simplify the IRS code by merging an array of tax benefits, the earned income tax credit with approximately 4.3 million families eligible Americans, including 1.7 million families with children, who, today, do not get, because of the complexity of the code, the child tax credit, the additional child credit, and the dependent exemption into a single credit, thereby shrinking well over 2,000 pages of the IRS Tax Code down to 12 easy questions.

This would also go a long way toward significantly reducing the marriage penalty, rewarding work and making the Tax Code more child friendly. Regardless of what political party we come from, we should all agree that these goals and that the Tax Code ought to reflect these values.

Despite the prospect of a war with Iraq, a stubborn recession, 2 million more unemployed Americans, urgent health care needs for the additional 4 million American that are without health care, we insist on debating a tax cut for the wealthiest in this country rather than focusing on those who need it most. A simplified credit in contrast is less, and far more responsive to the needs of working families.

PERMANENT PEACE

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, our Nation seems to be stumbling not just toward war with Iraq, but permanent war. We cannot end terror with bullets alone. If so, when do we stop shooting? When we find bin Laden? When we find Saddam? Or is there no end to war?

Instead, we should be talking about a permanent peace. We should be asking how to sustain societies before they crumble instead of asking how to destroy those that have already lost their way.

We should be asking how to educate children so they do not become terrorists instead of asking how we are going to kill those children once they do become terrorists.

We should be asking how to strengthen the United Nations instead of threatening to make it irrelevant.

As a Nation, we must emphasize finding alternatives to war. It is a matter of priorities.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings on motions to suspend the rules on which