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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SIMMONS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 11, 2003.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ROB SIMMONS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BALLENGER) for 5 minutes.

COLOMBIAN COFFEE CRISIS

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, to most Americans coffee is nothing more than a morning pick-me-up, a drink over which to socialize, or an excuse to reacquaint ourselves with old friends or even to make new ones. But to Latin America, our neighbors down there, coffee is a way of life, a key to survival, and a hope for the future.

As many of my colleagues may know, coffee prices are at a record low. Latin American families who once made a good living at farming coffee are now

being forced to leave the farm to find other work. Oftentimes, that means risking life and limb to emigrate to the United States or to engage in the illegal production and trafficking of narcotics just to survive.

As a businessman, I fully comprehend the ebbs and flows of commodity trading and the effects that oversupply can have on a market. But there is much more to the current coffee situation than profit margins. Latin Americans produce the highest-quality coffee anywhere in the world, but they cannot make a living from it. Without immediate action, the consequences will be felt well beyond the coffee fields.

It is important to remember that democracy is still young and fragile in Latin America. Growing poverty and an increasing lack of real economic opportunities are now threatening the very democracy that thousands of Latin Americans have risked, and sometimes lost, their lives to establish. Over the years, I have worked with Latin leaders to promote economic opportunities that would strengthen new democracies and improve the lives of their citizens. The production of real quality coffee, for instance, once brought unheard of prosperity to many of the communities in Central and South America. But with the price of quality coffee falling to historic lows, the flood of lesser- and cheaper-quality coffee entering the global market, these very communities are now left destitute and questioning the benefits of democracy.

Last July, the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, which I chair, held a hearing on what some have termed the "coffee crisis." Some may refute the premise that there is such a crisis. The abandoned coffee plantations of El Salvador, Nicaragua, Colombia, and elsewhere, coupled with the thousands of people who are now out of work, tell a different story. There is a crisis.

During the hearing, witnesses testified that the trade in coffee is negatively affecting the local, national, and regional economies of our hemisphere. The overproduction of coffee is the result of unrestricted imports from places like Vietnam, where coffee is not a traditional crop and the farmers are heavily subsidized by the communist government. In a span of just a few years, Vietnam has emerged as the second leading exporter of coffee in the world. This oversupply has driven coffee prices to their lowest level in 30 years, to just a fraction of what they were a few years ago.

As a result of this hearing, the gentleman from California (Mr. FARR) and I cosponsored House Resolution 604, along with eight other Members of Congress. The resolution simply expresses the sense of the House that the United States should adopt a global strategy with coordinated activities in Latin America, Africa, and Asia to address the short-term humanitarian needs and long-term rural development needs of countries affected by the collapse of coffee prices. It encourages the President to explore measures to support and complement multilateral efforts to respond to the global coffee crisis. But more importantly, it urges the private sector coffee buyers and roasters to work with the United States to seek their own solution to the crisis which is economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable.

Numerous foreign firms are already helping farmers move away from drug production and improve the local economies. A French grocery company, CarreFour, entered into a contract with the Colombian organic and specialty coffee farmers to buy their coffee at slightly higher prices to be marketed in CarreFour stores. While I am not prone to say anything really nice about the French, especially recently, this is the type of corporate citizenship

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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that should be emulated. This simple act of corporate citizenship is providing coffee consumers the best coffee available while giving the farmers and their families a way to earn a living without having to produce drugs. I also understand that Starbucks and Green Mountain engage in outreach programs for the Latin coffee farmers that allow them to purchase quality coffees for their shops.

In conclusion, if we stand by and allow the crisis to worsen, we are committing ourselves to more drastic action in the medium to long term when the crisis will have spiraled to our further detriment. As the crisis deepens, so do the problems at the U.S. border, such as massive migration and the inflow of more illegal drugs like cocaine and heroin. Although there are efforts under way to address this problem, more action must be taken. I encourage my colleagues to join me in solving this crisis.

IMPLICATIONS OF WAR WITH IRAQ MUST BE EXPLAINED BY ADMINISTRATION

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the administration continues to assert rightly that Saddam Hussein is an evil dictator, but the administration fails to explain how a preemptive war is in the best interest of the American people.

On February 25 I introduced House Joint Resolution 24 with the gentleman from California (Mrs. TAUSCHER) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL.) The resolution requires the President to submit a new report to Congress that answers eight specific questions. It includes a sense of Congress clause that requests the President present the report before a public joint session of Congress.

It is our duty in Congress on behalf of the American people to ensure that if the President authorizes military force against Iraq, that he first give Congress a full accounting of the potential cost and the potential consequences.

The two reports submitted to Congress by the administration under requirements of the October resolution have failed to communicate the President's plans for Iraq. The administration in reports included no indication of the potential financial costs of the war and its aftermath, no indication of how weapons of mass destruction will be secured, and no discussion of blowbacks, the CIA term for terrorist actions against the United States.

The second report clearly acknowledges the magnitude of the task of reconstructing and stabilizing Iraq, calling it a massive undertaking. Unfortunately, the report fails to explain how this challenge will be overcome, what level of financial, what level of polit-

ical, what level of military commitment that the administration is willing to make in Iraq after the war.

Before the U.S. initiates a preemptive strike, something we have never done before, without the consensus of the U.N. Security Council and in the absence of a clear, imminent threat to the United States of America, the administration must clearly explain to the American people the short- and long-term implications of attacking Iraq. H.R. 24 asks, and the administration should answer to the American public and to Congress:

Have we exhausted every diplomatic means of disarming Iraq?

Will America be safer from terrorism if we attack Iraq?

How will we deal with the humanitarian crisis that inevitably will follow this war?

How will the war with Iraq affect our already weak economy?

What will reconstruction of Iraq and providing humanitarian assistance to that country cost? And how long will it take, how long will American troops and civilians be stationed there and at what cost?

How will attacking Iraq prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, when Korea and Libya and other countries, and Iran, for instance, are much further along with nuclear development, we know, than Iraq is?

What will preemptive war do to the stability of the Middle East?

Are we ready to commit to a decade of military troops policing Iraq and the billions of dollars needed to rebuild and stabilize that country and make that country, in the words of the President, into a democracy?

These important questions need to be answered to the American public before President Bush decides preemptively, without U.N. support, to attack another country.

The Washington Post reported today: "The greatest source of concern among senior army leaders is the uncertainty and complexity of the mission in post-war Iraq, which could require U.S. forces," and get this, "to protect Iraq's borders, referee clashes between ethnic and religious groups, ensure civilian security, provide humanitarian relief, secure possible chemical and biological weapon sites, and govern hundreds of towns and villages." Simply put, we could be in the middle of a civil war.

How has the administration responded to these concerns? With silence. There are no legitimate plans for reconstruction that anyone has seen. There are no cost estimates for the conflict or the post-conflict occupation. There are no casualty estimates. These are concerns we must address.

Retired Army Major General William Nash commanded the first peace-keeping operation in the Balkans in 1995. After the Gulf War in 1991, he occupied the area around the Iraqi town of Safwan on the Kuwaiti border almost 2 years ago. He told The Post that during this time his troops dealt with

recurring murders, attempted murders, "ample opportunity," in his words, "for civil disorder," and refugee flows they could never fully fathom. He went on to say that 200,000 U.S. and allied forces will be necessary to stabilize Iraq. Two hundred thousand.

Note that he uses the term "allied forces" in that total. If we continue on the course we are on, there will be few allied forces. Maybe Great Britain, maybe a few Turks, if we pay them enough, maybe a few Spaniards, maybe a few Italians, but overwhelming almost all of those 200,000 will be Americans and we will be footing the bill alone.

The civilian leadership at the Pentagon and the Department of Defense continually refuse to acknowledge the enormity of the challenge in post-conflict Iraq. They respond to inquiries with delay tactics and uncertain estimates.

I am certain of one thing, Mr. Speaker. Any action against Iraq will be difficult, costly, and dangerous if we do not go to the U.N. Security Council.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss a very important issue: domestic violence. Last week marked the second annual "Stop Violence Week in Washington." A series of events were held here to encourage men and women to come together to stop violence.

As chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security, this issue is of particular concern to me. In the 108th Congress, our subcommittee will be tackling important issues relating to violence prevention. The Bureau of Justice statistics estimate that in 1998 about 1 million crimes were committed against persons by their current or former spouses, boyfriends, or girlfriends. These types of crimes are generally referred to as "intimate partner violence," and women are the victims in about 85 percent of the cases. In 1998, in excess of 1,800 murders were committed by persons against their intimate partners.

Although these statistics are shocking, we have made great strides in the last 2 decades at increasing awareness of this problem, which is half the battle. Congress has taken an active role in addressing the problem by authorizing expiring grant programs and establishing new grants to more effectively target violence and abuse. Federal grant dollars are available through the Department of Justice and the Department of Health and Human Services to be used by State and local authorities to assist their communities and schools in fighting violence. For example, grants may be used by local