

We need to take the time to ensure that our entry exit system works well. This may require billions of dollars to purchase real estate for new inspection lanes, to upgrade our inspection facilities generally, to develop our infrastructure and technological capabilities, and to hire additional inspectors. We must determine if the level of security the system would provide is worth the cost of the program. We also should consider whether the same level of security could be obtained through increased intelligence and database security checks that are performed outside the country.

I want to emphasize that the entry exit system is not designed to prevent individuals from entering or leaving the United States. It simply makes a record of their entry and exit. It is doubtful that it has much utility in enforcing our immigration laws. It can provide the immigration service with a daily list of non-immigrant visitors who have overstayed their authorized visits, but it will not provide information on where they are. The system will not tell us where they are until they appear at a border to leave the United States. I see little value in placing them in removal proceedings when they are trying to leave on their own volition.

Special registration is a program under which people from certain, specified countries who fall within a specified age range are called in to be interviewed by immigration officers. The program targets groups of people through the use of national origin, race, and religious profiling, not information gathered by intelligence. The special registration program does not enhance our security. Rather, it alienates the very communities here in the United States and abroad that are necessary allies in our fight against terrorism.

We need to do a better job of providing information to our immigration inspectors at the points of entry into our country. We need to obtain information from government agencies that collect criminal and intelligence data that may apply to some of the aliens who seek admission to the United States. A complete and accurate database should have a mechanism for correcting database errors. Having incorrect information only serves to hinder the inspection process and discredit the reliability of the security checks.

The Department of Homeland Security has the responsibility of implementing the President's commitment to admit 70,000 refugees by the end of fiscal year 2003. Among other things, this requires security checks which are causing substantial delays in moving people from refugee camps to the United States. In addition to the delays, there is reason for concern about the effectiveness of the security checks. The current system relies on name checks, and, according to the information my counsel received at a meeting with the State Department, the information from these name checks has not resulted in denial of refugee admission in a single case yet.

THE WAR IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, I think it is time to tell the American

people, "steady on." This operation in Iraq is proceeding according to plan. Our troops are well equipped, well trained, well led. Don Rumsfeld, our Secretary of Defense, is doing a great job. General Tommy Franks, who is the CINC commander and in charge of the operation, is doing a great job.

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This plan was well thought out, and it is being well executed. And as I looked at the map and looked at the bridges which we overran so quickly with a fast armor attack in which the defenders, the Iraqi defenders, did not have a chance to blow, I look at the oil wells that they did not have a chance to fire up, to put aflame as they did in 1991 when we came into an Iraq that was literally carpeted with fires because the Iraqi defenders had a chance to ignite their oil fields, when I look at the other key infrastructure that has not been destroyed and was not laid down in the wake of the retreating Iraqis as a barrier to the American forces, one thing comes to mind, a lightning armor strike as fast as we moved it up those narrow causeways coming up through the center of Iraq has paid off.

And if we had waited, if we had held back, if we had choked those roads with more men and material and we had given them time to blow key bridges, we would have had engineers working in an exposed manner, being subjected to sniping, to potshooting; and we would have taken, in my judgment, Madam Speaker, more casualties. This operation is being conducted very effectively right now, and the Iraqi military is feeling that effectiveness.

Beyond that as we are ringing now the Baghdad area and hammering the remaining Iraqi divisions with heavy air power, it is very clear that even if we had heavy units ringing Baghdad, if we had another two, three, four, five divisions, we still would not have gone in until we attrited or brought down the strength of the Iraqi divisions with air power. So the number of heavy divisions that we had in that staging area at this time would not have been relevant. So once again in reflecting on that and going through the many hearings and briefings that we have had on the facts as they emerge on a day-by-day basis, Madam Speaker, I once again am impressed with the great leadership of our Secretary of Defense, Don Rumsfeld; the leadership of the President of the United States, George Bush; and the great operational leadership in theater of General Tommy Franks.

Madam Speaker, it is clear now that there is another war being fought, and that is the war for hearts and minds; and incidentally I am proud that the gentlewoman of New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON), a member of the Committee on Armed Services and a veteran of the U.S. Armed Forces, has put together this Special Order because this is kind

of a time to talk about that other effort that is being undertaken, and that is what I would call the ambassadorial effort, the effort that is undertaken by all men and women who wear the uniform of the United States, and those people are proving to Iraqis who may have been subjected to lots of propaganda coming from Baghdad about how Americans were going to rough them up and be mean to them and ill treat them and they now have American GIs doing what American GIs have always done, and that is hand out candy to kids, be kinder than usual, giving away their rations and doing all those other things that young Americans are taught to do because of their moms and their dads and the communities that they are brought up in.

And, Madam Speaker, I think this is a historic time. I think it is a little bit like the days right after the close of World War II when all of Japan lay prostrate before the American military machine; and Japan's military leaders, because they were brutal and because they were cruel and because they were inhumane and especially looking at the things that they did to Chinese civilians when they took Nanking and looking to the beheadings and the mutilations that they undertook against American forces and the executions, they told their people to expect the same thing from the Americans.

And yet when those GIs walked down the streets of Tokyo, completely unopposed, in total power, they handed out candy bars to the kids; and we had almost no incidents, Madam Speaker, of brutality, of GIs acting out bad behavior. They were good ambassadors for this country and for our values. And they are doing the same thing right now, those grandchildren of those great GIs who persevered and won us our freedom in World War II. They are doing the same thing in Iraq because they are great people, and we are seeing now incident after incident of Americans proving that they have great values and that this thing that we call democracy over here is a good way to foster those values and maybe, when we get this country stitched back together, a good thing for the Iraqis to emulate.

I yield now to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON), my great colleague on the Committee on Armed Services, who has some very good evidence of those good ambassadors; and I yield to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding, and I also thank him for his leadership in the Committee on Armed Services at a time like this. I found his leadership to be refreshingly direct and full of good humor and also making sure that every Member of this body on both sides of the aisle have access to information, the kind of information that we need to make decisions.

I came to this whole thing very much a skeptic. I know about these things. I

think anybody who has ever worn the uniform is always very cautious about using military force because we know the consequences of war and we often know many of the participants.

When we came to this House in October to decide whether we would authorize the President to use force, I think all of us came to that decision, a serious and sober decision, having been gathering information for several months. And I came to the decision that, yes, we did need to give him that authority, that we could not allow Saddam Hussein to have chemical or biological weapons or the ability to deliver them against Americans; and I also came to the decision that Saddam Hussein had the intent to use those weapons against Americans.

Over the last 2 weeks we have seen the cruel brutality of this regime. Day and night air power is degrading Iraq's command and control and its armored divisions with powerful, sustained, and precise engagements. And to prevent the regular army from surrendering or defecting, Iraqi death squads now depend on executions to maintain a climate of fear. They kill people, civilians, women, children, the elderly trying to cross bridges just to get food and water. That is the regime we are facing.

Most folks probably do not know this, but as Members of Congress, we are not told in advance exactly what the war plan is because we have no need to know, and the security of the operation is more important. We do not direct the Army or the Navy. We do not instruct the diplomats. Our role is different. But we do get briefings as things are going on, and we have been briefed daily; and I commend the Defense Department and the military for coming up here every day and answering questions from every Member of Congress that has them in a classified way about exactly what is going on so that we can put in some kind of context the soda straw views that all of us are getting on our televisions 24 hours a day.

I am very much a skeptic about military plans too. I was one of the Members of this House that opposed U.S. action in Kosovo, and I opposed it for the reason of principle. So I believe when we go into combat we must first have a very clear political objective, and in this case we do. Our objective is to overthrow the regime of Saddam Hussein, to rid Iraq of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, and then to put in place in Iraq a unified Iraq, a government that is responsive to its people. That is a clear political objective. I think people can understand that.

Second, we need a military plan that is tied to that objective. That was our failure in Kosovo, by the way. It was a largely humanitarian mission, and we had a plan that included only air strikes against a door-to-door campaign of ethnic cleansing. We failed in that military plan.

I have been looking day by day at this military plan as it has unfolded,

not only what we see on television but what we are briefed on in detail in the gentleman's committee; and I have been very impressed. We were reassured before this started that we would use overwhelming force, the full force and might of the United States military, so that we could secure our objectives and bring our men and women home again. And that is what they have brought us, overwhelming military force, the full force and might of the American military.

At the same time this plan is being executed, we are also seeing not only the greatness of the American military but the goodness of the American military. The commander of the United States Marines in Southwest Asia the night before the launch of the ground attacks said to his troops we are going to show the world, we are going to show the world that they have no better friend and no worse enemy than a United States Marine. They have been showing the world. There is no better friend and no worse enemy than a member of the United States military.

This picture beside me was taken this weekend. It is of Annette Gonzalez; and she came to downtown Albuquerque in the plaza in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and she was a very quiet woman, but she brought a picture of her son. He is a sergeant in the United States Marine Corps, a staff sergeant. His name is Anthony. And before she knew it, Annette was surrounded by people on the plaza there in Albuquerque who gave her comforting messages, who told her that she would be in their prayers, who thanked her for her son's service; and she gets pretty choked up when she talks about Anthony. She says she is very proud to be a Marine mom, but nowadays it is very hard.

The last time that the family heard from Anthony was about 3 weeks ago when he called his wife to tell her that he loved her. Anthony grew up in Las Lunas. He wrestled there and he played football, and he joined the Marines in 1993 shortly after he graduated from Las Lunas High School. He is a proud father, and he is considering becoming a preacher so he can help his fellow Marines learn about God. And that brought his picture of his full dress uniform to Friday's rally in support of our troops in New Mexico because she wants people to know that there are real people serving in Iraq. There are husbands and wives and sons and daughters proudly serving their country, and Annette is very proud of her son. They need and deserve our support and our prayers, and they have it.

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for that wonderful story, and I think that really reinforces the idea that the best ambassadors we have are not folks that stay in consulates and embassies. Of course we have Marines in consulates and embassies also, but they are the folks in uniform. And the gentlewoman mentioned Kosovo and of course the Bosnia

operation preceded Kosovo, but I am reminded of a story that is another true story about another Marine, and that is General Randy West, now retired, who was undertaking a recon operation in Bosnia and came with his unit, with his force, to a bridge where a massacre had taken place, and Randy noticed among all the bodies there was a blanket laying on the frozen ground. It was the dead of wintertime. There was a little lump under that blanket, and he peeled it back, and it was a little baby boy. And he wrapped the baby up and sent it back to a hospital in the rear, and a couple of months later Randy was asking the governmental officials what had happened to this little boy that his recon element had shipped back to the hospital, and the official told him that the baby was still in the hospital, that he had not been claimed because the mom was Bosnian and the dad was Serbian and that the baby was still there but without anybody to come and claim the baby.

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So Randy was telling me this story as we were walking up to his house in the Blue Ridge Mountains a couple of months ago, and as we got to the door, I said well, Randy, what happened to that little baby boy? And Randy opened the door, and there stood a young man, a couple of years old, and Randy said, "I want you to meet Randy West, Jr.," now his son. And that kind of heart and those types of values is something that permeates the United States military.

Madam Speaker, interestingly, and I would say to my colleague, the Vietnam experience was largely reflected, and I would say in an aberrational way, to the American public through the prism of some folks who probably would have to work hard to qualify for the title of drug-crazed hippies. Of course I am referring to some of the folks in Hollywood who saw Vietnam through the prism of their own experience. And generally, that experience was one of not participating in the Armed Forces and not having any idea of what went on in Vietnam.

So we had these nitwit movies like Full Metal Jacket and Platoon and all of these other things where every other GI was setting fire to a hut or madly spraying the countryside with his M-16, which, of course, were totally false and erroneous images. And in reality, most of the GIs, a great, great majority of GIs who were in Vietnam were also wonderful ambassadors. They were good people. They treated the people well. That is why after we left that country, half the nation tried to swim after us.

Now, they did not try to rush to the North where they could consolidate with the North Vietnamese Communists who offered them, of course, a worker's paradise, and they did not try to rush out to join up with the Hollywood directors who felt this great kinship for the folks from the North, but

they tried to follow the GIs, because they knew the GIs were basically really good people.

That has been the story of this country. We see it in every town, every city of any size. We see the Korean community, much of which came over to the United States after getting to know the American military community, and we see the German community, and many other communities that got to know Americans and, because of that, wanted to be in our home within the boundaries of this great country.

So these folks are making relationships right now. They are meeting people. They are working with people. They are smiling, they are just being GIs. You cannot fake it. You cannot fake that sense of humor.

I know when I was in Afghanistan here a few months ago with a good CODEL of folks, Pete Geren, our great former colleague from Texas was with us, and Pete pulled me off to the side as we were going down through the row of tents and he said, we have to take a picture over here. I said, what is it? He said, I have to show you a picture. And this was in the middle of a windstorm and stuff was blowing all over the place. There was not a speck of grass. One of the tents had a sign in front of it that said "yard of the month," and Pete had to get a picture of that sign, "yard of the month," and that little windswept front of that tent that I think had a couple of cactus in a tin can prominently displayed.

So GIs still have that great sense of humor. They also have a sense of goodness about them.

Madam Speaker, Tom Brokaw wrote the book about the greatest generation, and since 50 years or so have passed since we won World War II, I think he felt he could now feel close to the people who probably had a lot of values that he probably would not agree with. But I think this generation that is over in Iraq right now in that theater is every bit as great a generation as the generation of World War II, the generation of Korea, and the generation of Vietnam.

I yield to the gentleman.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I told the gentleman I was a skeptic about plans, and I am. I will share some of the things I think are right about what we have seen so far, what the military has accomplished under the leadership of General Franks in southwest Asia. First, the tactical surprise. I do not think the enemy, and I do not think a lot of Americans, expected him to jump off with a ground assault. We did not do that 12 years ago. We waited for 38 days of punishing air strikes. But instead, they did something that I think was smart and took advantage of the situation, a completely different situation on the ground, a completely different political objective and military plan to achieve that objective. But they got tactical surprise.

As a result, that force that came out of Kuwait not only seized the oil fields

intact after they saw seven of them burning, they jumped off early to try to keep the rest of the oil fields intact to benefit the Iraqi people and rebuild Iraq, but they also seized the bridges up and down the Tigris and the Euphrates to allow our forces to advance instead, as the gentleman said, to build them as they go. So they had tactical surprise. They were rapid, very nimble.

We think about how hard it is to plan, to move forward a large mass of people and vehicles at the same time. Think about doing that and then all of a sudden telling them we are going to do that 12 hours early or 24 hours early. That could be a real mess. And they did it.

I think we have done a much better job in western Iraq than we did 12 years ago with the problem of Scuds and dealing with Scuds. Special Operations forces have been much more integrated with the ground and the air operation than we saw 12 years ago. And, as a result, they managed to control not only all of western Iraq where the Scuds were launching from 12 years ago, but to team up with the Kurds in the north and manage the problems in the north and seize key areas in the south and in the Persian Gulf.

It was the Polish special forces that were some of the first to fire and the first to act in the Persian Gulf in seizing oil platforms, and British and American special forces moving forward to seize key sites in southern Iraq. So we have seen that integration of Special Operations Forces into the plan.

Precision air. Madam Speaker, air power was decisive in the first Persian Gulf War, and I think even more so in this one, because we have gone from about 10 percent of our munitions being precision guided to 90 percent of our munitions being precision guided. And they are pounding the tar out of the Republican Guard divisions from the air. They have been integrated with the ground forces, so that the marine on the ground knows that if he needs air power, he gets it now, and he is not sitting in some queue or waiting for some A-10 to fuel up in Kuwait and fly for an hour and a half to get to him, while he has to sit there and take it until he gets there. He gets air there, now.

We have precision, very good real-time intelligence and the integration of space to the battlefield and to the soldier on the battlefield so that that real-time intelligence is actionable. All of us have seen the pictures of the Predators and the Global Hawks. We are also getting information on that first night of the war, the Central Intelligence Agency, working very closely with our military, both here in Washington and in the field, so that if there is a piece of information, the military can act, whether it is to rescue a prisoner of war as was done so effectively yesterday, or to target a critical target, as was done on the first night of the war. We are seeing unit-

level communications much better than it was 12 years ago.

And we are seeing a joint operation. If we look back to Vietnam, we really did not operate as a joint military. The Navy had its route packages to fly, the Air Force had theirs, the Army was doing something different on the ground; there was no kind of integrated military operation. How much the American military has changed in the intervening years is astounding, and it is even more integrated today than it was 12 years ago.

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman would yield on that point, if we go back to precision munitions, it is important for the American people to understand what that means. That means that instead of having to carpet bomb a bridge to knock it down, we can hit one strut on that bridge, if you hit the right one and you know where you have to go, with one precision munition that goes in and hits that particular strut and brings that entire bridge down. Now, that not only gives you your military goal, which was to knock the bridge down with only one bomb instead of maybe hundreds of bombs, but it also means that the village nearby is not going to be damaged, it means that the car halfway up the road is not going to be damaged, although I remember Norman Schwarzkopf talking about the world's luckiest taxicab driver. When that one precision munition went into a bridge in 1991, just about a split second after the taxicab had gotten on to firm footing, that bridge went down. But those precision munitions give us a chance to be more humane and not to hurt people, and that is what we strive for in these operations, and we have done it very successfully.

As the gentleman said, most of our munitions now are precision munitions, and that enables us to use these big platforms, whether they are the fast-movers, the F-15s, F-15Es, F-16, our stealth aircraft, 117s or even the large heavy bombers, we are able to use those platforms to bring an enormous amount of firepower into a very tight area.

Madam Speaker, I saw the after-action photos that were taken after the Kosovo operation where we were trying to destroy the revetments for the Serbian Air Force. We did not want their planes to escape and come up and challenge ours. And B-2 bombers had flown all the way from Whiteman Air Base in Missouri to those targets; it hit the targets and returned home, and those craters and those revetments were as precisely placed as if somebody had walked out on the tarmac with an explosive and placed it by hand and then finally detonated it. That is the American technology that allows us to use less assets and to turn these platforms really into very precise military equipment that spare civilians and do not cause collateral damage.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman would yield,

on the Monday after the war started, I went to Holloman Air Force Base, and for those who are from New Mexico or who watch these things, on the opening night of the war, everyone who knew that those were the F-117s knew that the only base in America where we have the F-117 is in Alamogordo, New Mexico, at Holloman Air Force Base. I went there the Monday after it all started, and I met and had lunch with a lot of the spouses whose husbands, in this case, all of them were women, the spouses, and their husbands are deployed overseas. The squadron commander's wife has a wonderful sense of humor, which I think always helps in these kinds of situations. Apparently the wives were all talking about the morning after the whole thing started and they were trying to decide which two husbands were on that first mission, a very dangerous mission as it happens, because they went in without the usual cover that you would have in front of you. And she said that she looked at one of her friends and said, if they hit the target, it was my husband; if they missed, it was yours.

The families are so strong at home, and you can see it and feel it when you are talking to them. They support each other. And that is so true of the Air Force. One of the things that I thought was wonderful there is the wing commander, who is not deployed, every day when all of the 117s are back, he gets a phone call that everybody is home from their missions. And then the wing commander calls the squadron commander's wife, and then she calls all the flight commanders' wives, and they have a telephone tree. And by go-to-bed time in New Mexico, every spouse and every parent who has somebody flying the 117s in southwest Asia is reassured. And every child knows that dad is okay, that today dad is okay. And they sleep a lot better.

Now, that probably violates some rule or regulation, and Colonel Hunt may get in trouble for it for me mentioning it here, but please do not. He is using his judgment to do the right thing. His guys are halfway around the world flying and fighting a war, and I know in his heart he would dearly love, like any fighter pilot, to be with them. But he knows the best thing he can do is to make sure their families are taken care of so that they can focus on doing the job that they are doing and doing so well.

By the way, they hit the target, and they now know whose husbands were on the raid, and we are all very proud of them.

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

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Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, I want to say as the proud Representative from the part of Georgia that has not just Fort Stewart and Hunter, where the 3rd Infantry division is headquartered, but we also have Kings

Bay Naval Base and Moody Air Force Base and Robbins Air Base, we are very proud of what the 3rd Infantry and all of our soldiers and all the branches of service are doing.

I have had the opportunity to meet with the wives' groups at Fort Stewart. It is incredible, the strength these people have. As we often are sitting in our hearings in Washington, we can tell that most Members and most members of the public do not realize that many of these soldiers have already been in the theater area for 6 months. They are not on a 6-month rotation that some people seem to think, or a 3-month rotation. Many said good-bye to their loved ones back in September or October, and they have no idea when they are going to be coming home.

Our friend, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST), who is a Marine veteran and a veteran of Vietnam, raised that issue today among us, about how much time until these folks are getting off. We do not know the answer to that question, because war is imminent. Nobody is talking about, you have Saturday off.

The reality is our soldiers have been fighting and training in the theater for many, many weeks and months at this point. It is key for them to have a good support group back home, and to have the families saying, Everything is okay, honey. Don't worry about us, just come home alive. That means so much to them.

Today, I have an e-mail from one of our staffers, whose husband is deployed, about an Easter egg hunt that the families are putting together at Fort Stewart. Everybody is going to be joining in, and it is going to be an Easter egg hunt like we have never seen before. There will be lots of big and little kids looking for Easter eggs. We cannot have the soldier in the battle without the family support group back home.

I will say also that our Reservists who have come to man these bases and posts while the actives are gone, they are doing a very vital thing for the war effort. It is amazing to see the unity of people coming together.

I had mentioned to the chairman today, one of the distressing things is some of our weak-kneed supports from groups in the U.N. that we thought were going to be with us. I was wondering if it would be appropriate to bring up some of those thoughts.

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman. Let me say that we definitely have some thoughts about countries which heretofore the United States had relied on very strongly. I am thinking of France, a country that we saved twice, actually three times in this last century, in World War I, World War II, and of course the Cold War; and also Germany.

I am reminded of that Berlin airlift which was a lifeline for free Germany, that enabled them to stand up to the Soviet Union with the help of 300,000

American troops over a long period of time, and finally marry up with the captive portion of Germany, East Germany, and become a community again. That was all done because of the strength and the friendship of the United States.

So, of course, I think lots of Americans have thoughts about those countries. But I would ask the gentleman if we could shift back just briefly. I was thinking about the operation taking place right now in Iraq.

In fact, I had my old company commander, Jim Yarrison, a great gentleman, a wise officer, here.

Mr. KINGSTON. Is that the one up here last week?

Mr. HUNTER. Yes. I think I introduced him to the gentleman.

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, I had the honor of meeting the gentleman's former commanding officer. He said his years in the military did not wear him out nearly as much as being the gentleman's commanding officer.

Mr. HUNTER. I did not do anything special in the military, in the 173rd Airborne, but I served with some great guys; and Jimmy Yarrison was one of them. The day he came up, unbeknownst to him the 173rd Airborne, reconstituted in Italy, had jumped into Iraq.

We were with another great former trooper from Vietnam, Tom Carhart, with the 101st Airborne. It was awfully good to see a great comrade of the 173rd Airborne when the Sky soldiers have gone into northern Iraq, they are stabilizing that front, they are giving some American spine to that community, the Kurdish community, and acting as a great stabilizing force in northern Iraq right now. So the Sky soldiers were famous folks in Vietnam, and they are proving their mettle in Iraq.

That takes us to the point that the gentlewoman made when she went over the units that are in Iraq. When we look at the enormous firepower arrayed there, when we combine that with the great leadership they are moving under right now, and the fact that the 4th is now moving into place, it is clear to Saddam Hussein's forces, now isolated in a number of very poorly defended areas, that time is drawing short.

I would ask the gentlewoman to give us a little description of her thoughts of that, of the present situation in Iraq.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Madam Speaker, the gentleman was talking about the pride our American people, and particularly our American veterans, have in our units. All of us get a lot of mail, and I love getting letters from people.

I got a letter from a veteran of the 507th in the Vietnam era. It says here, "Heather, my name is John Campbell. I served two tours in Vietnam. I was a member of the 507th Engineer Group. I was a crane operator and a dozer operator and cleared land mines, among

other things. Today I am in a wheelchair, in part because of combat-related injuries.

"I am proud to have served my country, and today I am proud the men and women of our military have once again answered our Nation's call to service. I particularly feel a connection to the brave soldiers of the 507th Maintenance Group from Fort Bliss. I am certain you have seen and read the news reports of the POWs from that group now in Iraq.

"I want to let them know that I and others from the Vietnam-era 507th group support them. Enclosed is a banner I had made that says, '507th Engineer and Maintenance, Vietnam and Iraq, good luck.' I would appreciate your help in getting this banner and a message to their home base at Fort Bliss, Texas. I want to tell them, 'Good luck and hang in there. We are praying for you to come home soon, and we know how rough it is. I wish I was there with you, but my wheelchair would probably get bogged down in the Iraqi desert sand.'"

Those kinds of connections and that support from the American people matter so much to our soldiers and sailors and airmen and Marines who are serving all of us now in Southwest Asia.

I find these letters encouraging, and also letters from troops who are over there now. I have a copy of another letter that is from a young Marine. I will not use his name, but his first name is Kent. He is with the 3rd Battalion, 5th Regiment, 1st Marine Division, so he is kind of busy at the moment. He went to St. Pius High School and graduated from there in Albuquerque. His parents live in Albuquerque.

He wrote a letter to them that I just thought typified the greatness and goodness of these young men and women we have serving in the military.

It says, "Hey, mom and dad," and this is written just before things started over there, when he was still sitting in the desert, "Hey, mom and dad, still living the high life. If there was a worse area in the world, I don't think I want to see it. This place just keeps getting better and better, since it is right now raining. Well, I, for one, feel great and proud. I feel great and proud and I love what I'm doing. This place is terrible, the toilets are disgusting, the sleeping areas are all right, and I love it.

"I love it because I just got done talking to our wacky Iraqi, Jack. He is our local Iraqi defector who escaped to the U.S. after the Gulf War and now works as an interpreter and an intelligence source. We just had a long conversation over lunch about what we are doing here, Iraq in general, and all sorts of things. His family was tortured by the Saddam regime, and his father was killed. He said his story was way too common, and that is why he is doing what he is doing.

"I thought the most poignant thing he talked about was about the protesters and people wanting a peaceful

resolution. He says that anyone wanting a peaceful resolution needs to be over here for a year or so. He said his dad, who was tortured and killed, wanted a peaceful resolution, too. It didn't quite happen.

"Anyway, he made me realize that this is where I need to be. I am, of course, coming home; but, you know, war and all. But damn, I feel like I am part of something great and truly going to help a lot of people. Is that too much of a cliché? Anyway, the point is, this place is awful and there really is no place I would rather be. Okay, that is all. I will write soon. Love you, Kent."

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, if the gentlewoman will yield, it is unbelievable when we talk to the soldiers who have that sense of mission, who have had the opportunity to talk face-to-face to the Iraqis who have been oppressed.

There is a group in Washington, D.C., a women's Iraqi advocacy group. They talk about being arrested and having their family members killed, and having cousins and brothers disappear. They say over and over again that the only thing that is going to liberate them from this oppression is an outside intervention by a country such as America that has a moral high ground.

It is unbelievable when we hear the Hollywood crowd, the blame-America-first people, who have done so well by the United States' system of capitalism and government. Yet, they are the first ones to jump up and down and blame things on America.

What I would say to the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), I hear a lot of people say, I do not support the mission, but I support the troops. Tell that to the young soldier who wrote that letter. We cannot do it, we have to say, love me, love my mission. If we are going to support the soldiers, tell them we agree the mission is very important and what they are doing is the right thing.

Mr. HUNTER. Madam Speaker, I am looking at the picture behind the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Mrs. WILSON) of the G.I. with the baby. Before this campaign is over, we will have passed out lots of vitamins; given lots of inoculations; lots of milk, probably in powdered form; and lots of food for the people of Iraq. They are going to know the friendship of the American people.

That takes us back to our contribution as Members of Congress. What we can do now is get our folks in uniform the tools they need to get the job done. I looked at the supplemental appropriations bill coming up and the \$62 billion for DOD, for the Armed Forces. We have to replenish that ammunition, those spare parts, all those things.

I looked at that fairly carefully and looked at what the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS), our chairman of the Subcommittee on Defense of the Committee on Appropriations, has

done; and what the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), the chairman of the full committee, and all the members have done, Democrat and Republican. They have put in a good supply of what it is going to take to get the job done.

Of course, along with that there is going to be lots of humanitarian aid. There is going to be, after this operation, water systems to maintain, transportation systems to maintain. We are going to have to be able to keep the wheels turning and get this country with a new birth of freedom rolling again. Of course, that will be the Americans.

I am reminded, somebody said, war is terrible. I thought, yes, war is terrible. It is what gave us our independence, and it is what got rid of Nazism and fascism. War is terrible. But in the wake of war, only the Americans are generous and good and kind to the folks, even to the folks who ran the operations, the military operations against them.

Once again, I am reminded of the country of Japan, which after it had engaged in a sneak attack at Pearl Harbor and killed 5,000 American service people in that surprise attack, mutilated people, executed people in World War II, killed 30 percent of our POWs while they were incarcerated, we took that country, and they expected us to be as brutal to them as they had been to us.

America said, here is a Constitution. We have one requirement of you, you conquered people. They said, what is that? We said, be free, have access to our markets, sell anything you want in America. You do not have to buy anything from us; we will give you money. We will help you out when you need it, and we will provide for the next 50 years a defense umbrella to make sure that nobody engages in violence against this great nation of violence in World War II, the country of Japan.

We did the same thing to Germany; and after the two Germanys came together, a united Germany.

□ 2000

And that is the mission of this country, and people know that, too. And one of the great stories that represents, I think, is one that my mom and dad told me is when they had been ON a trip to the Philippines. They related being in Manila at the American Embassy when an anti-American demonstration was taking place and there were some organizers in this demonstration and they had some very carefully worded placards all with anti-American slogans on them. And they were paying people to march around with these slogans, "Down with America."

Well, my mom and dad looked at this long line of people at the embassy waiting to get their visas to come to the United States, and they noticed that the anti-American demonstration organizers would regularly go over to

the line of visa seekers, pay them money. The visa seekers would ask the person in front of them in line to hold their place, and they would then go out and take their placard that said "Down with America," and they would march around for half an hour or an hour or so, and they would go back, give the placard back to the organizer, receive their money in payment and go back and get in line to get a visa to go to the good old United States of America.

Do people know what we are all about? Absolutely. And a little propaganda television from Saddam Hussein or any of the other people who want to paint us as evil folks cannot erase that and they cannot take that away. People are smart. And the people of Iraq, when they do not have a gun to their head and when they know their families are safe, are going to turn in the right direction. That direction will be towards the United States of America.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. There has been a lot of carping in the last few days about plans and a lot of criticism from folks who have not seen the plan and have not been briefed on the plan, do not know what the plan is but they are critical of it, and others who say, oh, well, you did not anticipate this in your plan. There is a quote I remember once from General Eisenhower. He said, "Planning is indispensable because it gives you something from which to deviate."

Any commander worth his salt will plan well and then will react to what is going on on the battlefield. I would be concerned if our commanders were sticking slavishly to a plan and not reacting to the things that were going on around them. The point is not the plan. The plan allows people to think through the potential problems. You cannot anticipate all of them, but they have done pretty well. And when they have not anticipated, they have relied on the ingenuity of the American soldiers to sort it out and their good commanders to give them the resources they need to get the job done.

And I know that there is a war, a battle in southwest Asia and we all know there is the battle of the Potomac as well. There are people with different agendas around this town who might be upset about the Crusader cancellation or the fact that there is a Marine as the SACEUR or that there is a Marine as the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff instead of somebody who is wearing a different shade of green. There is a lot of bitterness and game playing going on in this town. And, frankly, there are a whole lot of us here who do not much like it, and we do not even respect it.

And I was glad that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who is a pretty taciturn Kansan, was just about as blunt and direct as I have seen him yesterday and saying exactly what he thought about this kind of arm-chair quarterbacking by folks who had either long ago hung up the uniform or were still in it and calling themselves

"anonymous sources." No decent officer is an anonymous source. And I was very glad to see him put some of them right and defend exactly what his plan was in collective operations going on in southwest Asia.

So here is to you, the gentleman from Kansas, and thanks for standing up for what you believe in.

Mr. KINGSTON. It does seem that in Washington, D.C. you go from maybe major to lieutenant colonel to colonel to general to journalist. And it seems that after you have turned in your uniform, you get more information and you are briefed in more top secret stuff than when you were active. Because it is amazing, the ex-generals who now can tell people what the plan is; where I would kind of think that if you do have a plan, which obviously you may need to deviate from, but you sure do not share it with everybody and his brother, as much as these embedded journalists like to think that they are in the Army. The reality is there are certain things they do not need to know.

I wanted to say a little bit, one thing about this open society we have, this open war where the camera is right next to the rifle, it has got some good and it has some bad. But one thing that is seen over and over again is the United States' efforts to minimize collateral damage. And here you have Saddam Hussein who hides behind school children, who hides behind mosques, who takes his palaces into the civilian areas so that he can cover behind them. And even with that we minimize collateral damage.

But you know, it is really bad when you have groups like the U.N. who have a role to play on the treatment of our prisoners of war, and all Kofi Annan has done today is say he is worried about the collateral damage because a missile hit a marketplace in Baghdad. We do not even know if it was an American missile or not. Does he say, America is bending over backwards to minimize collateral damage? That is a good practice. And is it not too bad that Saddam Hussein is hiding behind civilians and children and women? Is it not too bad? And is it not too bad that the Iraqis put out white flags of surrender and then turn around and ambush and shoot troops? And is it not too bad that they parade American POWs out on worldwide television and even show executed prisoners of war on TV. Not one word from the U.N. on that, but let them come back one more time with one of these veiled criticisms of America.

I think one thing you have mentioned is people can do all the anti-American talk they want, when there is a problem in the world it goes to the United States of America to solve. And the biggest criticism we get is people do not like the way we try to solve problems. But can you imagine trying to turn to France, trying to turn to Germany, trying to turn to Russia, trying to turn to China to solve problems

in the world today? What kind of world would we live in if Saddam Hussein could have continued to gain the U.N. and America blinked and backed down from the action that we are having right now?

Mr. HUNTER. On that point, it is interesting that since the days of World War II people have asked in schools and colleges and in family settings, how could the world stand by while Adolf Hitler gassed people to death in these gas chambers in places like Dachau and Auschwitz, and literally killed millions of people in such a horrible way, gassed them to death? How could the world stand by?

Well, the answer is, if you look at what happened to these Kurdish villages and you see the pictures, which we have all seen, of little Kurdish babies and their mothers lying on the ground after a heavy dose of poison gas by Chemical Ali, the gas-dispensing Minister of the Department of Defense of Iraq under Saddam Hussein, we see the answer.

You know what is interesting, after those Kurdish villages were gassed and those people were killed in that despicable manner, there were no demonstrations in Berlin or London or in liberal places throughout the United States. In fact, nobody, nobody in the world did anything except one country, the United States of America.

Now, we have missed some of these and one thing that I have regretted is seeing those bodies float down the Rwanda River after the massive massacres that took place in Africa where innocent people were killed in huge numbers and the United States, with all of our power, did nothing. And as a Member of Congress, I wish and I regret that I had done more, that I had taken an effort.

There are massacres that take place around this world and there are evil deeds that are done to people by dictators. And sometimes those dictators are beyond the means and the reach of the United States of America. We saw that, I think by British estimate, some 20 million people were executed by the Communist Chinese and actions were not taken by this country.

But in many cases we do act. This is one of those cases. So when those people asked the question about how you could stand by and watch Mr. Hitler commit the atrocities that he committed before and during World War II without taking action, the answer is that just recently thousands of people were gassed to death by an evil dictator, and no one in the world took action except the Americans and our allies.

And I want to mention the British and those folks that sided with this coalition, and there were lots of them. But the real message for us is if the United States does not lead the free world, the free world will not have a leader.

President Bush is manifesting that leadership right now in a very effective

way. And right by his side is Donald Rumsfeld and, of course, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs who has been mentioned, General Myers. And of course we have that great American, very sharp, very smart, very effective in strategy and tactics, General Tommy Franks, leading this operation in the theater. With that team and with the team of all of the folks that wear the uniform of the United States, we are going to win this contest.

Once again, I want to thank this gentlewoman for bringing out not only the military operational effectiveness of this present campaign in Iraq, but also the campaign of goodwill that people in uniform are bringing to the people of that country, the good old GIs who by their values and by their demonstrations of kindness are winning a lot of folks over even as we speak.

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. I thank the chairman. And maybe the way for me to at least close my participation in this 1-hour Special Order that we are having tonight is with another e-mail. I think it shows the goodness of the American military. It is one thing to be great. We have a great American military who can do things that no other military in the world can do, the overwhelming power. But we also have a very good American military. And sometimes I think it is more important to be good than to be great.

This is an e-mail that was forwarded to me by a master gunnery sergeant. And master gunnery sergeants are not necessarily known for their soft-heartedness, although I think that is actually a myth. I think some of them are the softest-hearted guys. They are kind of like chocolate-covered marshmallows, tough on the outside but marshmallows on the inside.

It says, few things move me to get misty but there are a few, and this one did. He saw this and described it this morning on CNN. And he wrote it down in an e-mail, what he saw. He said, Martin Savage of CNN, embedded with the 1st Marine battalion, was talking with four young marines near his foxhole this morning live on CNN. He had been telling the story of how well the Marines had been looking out for and taking care of him since the war started. And he went on to tell about the many hardships that the Marines had endured. And he told them that he cleared it with their commanders to call home, for each one of the four to call home. And he turned to the first marine next to him, a 19-year-old kid and said, Who would you like to call? And he said, Well, sir, if you do not mind, I would like to allow my platoon sergeant to use my call. I would like to give my call to him to let him use it to call his pregnant wife back home who he had not been able to talk to for 3 months.

Savage was stunned. And the young man ran off to get his sergeant. And then he turned to the other three who were still there and he asked which one would like to call home first. And the

marine closest to him responded, Sir, if it is all the same to you, we would like to call the parents of a buddy of ours, Lance Corporal Brian Buesing of Cedar Key, Florida. He was killed on the 23rd of March near Nasiriyah. We want to see how his parents are doing.

At that, Martin Savage was close to tears and unable to speak, and all he could say before signing off was, Where do they get young men like this?

I will tell you where we get them. We get them from Palestine, West Virginia and Saint Charles, Indiana; we get them from Sherwood, Oregon; Queens, New York; from Midland, Texas; from San Diego, California. We get them from Lee, Florida; from Adams, Colorado, and Mountainair, New Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for letting me join him here this evening.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman. The USA will prevail.

□ 2015

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1559, EMERGENCY WARTIME SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2003

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-57) on the resolution (H. Res. 172) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1559) making emergency wartime supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2003, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHOCOLA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I come with a heavy heart and come with members of the Congressional Black Caucus and some members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

We come, Mr. Speaker, at a time when our country is at war; and we want to say from the outset that we support our troops with all our heart and that we spend our days and our prayer time praying that they will be kept safe.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, on next Friday, it will be my sad duty to be with a gentleman named Michael Waters as he parts with his son Kendall Waters-Bey, Sergeant Kendall Waters-Bey for the last time. His son was one of the first young men to die in the Iraq war. As a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker, I was supposed to be meeting with the father of Kendall Waters-Bey tonight; but he, I am sure, would have preferred that I join the Congressional Black Caucus this evening in not only

lifting up the name of his son but also lifting up the names of all of our people who are in our military who are giving their blood, sweat and tears and, in his case, his life.

So our sympathy goes out to all of those families who have lost loved ones. Our prayers go out to all of our military personnel and others who may have been harmed. Our prayers go out to all of those who find themselves in harm's way.

As I sat here, Mr. Speaker, listening to the previous hour, I could not help but think about the fact that the Republican budget cuts \$28.3 billion in veterans benefits over 10 years, compared to the amount needed to maintain purchasing power in at the 2003 level. It hurts my heart. Of this \$28.3 billion, \$14.2 billion are cuts in health care, and there is a 3.8 percent cut in overall benefits.

Mr. Speaker, I ask how we could possibly, with a clear conscience, deny the tens of thousands of veterans that we just heard about. They will be veterans, too. How can we deny them these benefits?

So it gives me great pleasure to yield to the distinguished gentlewoman from the great State of Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON), who has been a fighter with regard to standing up for what is right and has consistently been a conscience for this Congress and for the United States of America.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me express my appreciation for our Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus for organizing this hour tonight.

Mr. Speaker, sometimes when I hear the comments about the troops that we all strongly support, we forget that if they survive this war they will be veterans; and it is the veterans that we owe a great deal to for our freedom, but we really have left them behind in this budget.

So I rise to express my opposition to the Bush budget, because despite President Bush's pledge to leave no one behind, the budget has proposed leaving out over half of African Americans and Hispanic families; and this really is not compassion with conservatism, conserving resources for a very, very few.

Can my colleagues just imagine in less than 2 years, 2.5 million private jobs have been lost since January 20, 2001? The unemployment rate for African Americans has climbed 28 percent from 8.2 percent indicating really how African Americans will be disproportionately impacted by this budget. The employment rates for Hispanics is up by 33 percent.

I am from Dallas, Texas, where we have lost many jobs because we are very high tech in our employment. For every job lost in the high-tech field, there are three other jobs lost in low-income jobs because they are hired for cleaning homes, doing the yards, keeping the children; and we have a record number of foreclosures, not of poor people, but working people because they have lost their jobs.