

rule of law, interdict and eradicate narcotic crops, and grow its economy. During the past 3 years, the Plan Colombia initiative has provided a comprehensive strategy to reassert government control of Colombia's territory as well as to restore public confidence in the viability of Colombia's democratic institutions. Since the inauguration of Colombian President Alvaro Uribe in August 2002, the Colombian Government has stepped up its implementation of a wide variety of Plan Colombia programs affecting narcotics eradication and interdiction, enhanced law enforcement and other security-related measures, and alternative development efforts.

A recent United Nations study estimates that Colombian coca production has been reduced by 40 percent since Plan Colombia was begun. With the strong support of President Uribe and improved mobility and capacity of Colombia's military and police forces, there is an excellent opportunity in 2003 for our bi-national coca eradication program to eradicate 100 percent of Colombia's coca production zones, an area that encompasses over 150,000 hectares. While this is very good news in the short term, our two governments will have to pursue this nationwide eradication and interdiction strategy for at least the next several years as coca growers are forced out of their illegal business and the Colombian Government is able to establish a stable and effective security presence in numerous coca production zones across Colombia.

While the coca eradication trends show promise, I am concerned that insufficient attention has been given to developing and implementing an effective strategy to locate and eradicate Colombia's opium poppy crop. Our latest U.S. Government poppy crop data estimates that Colombia produced 14.2 metric tons of export quality heroin in 2002; virtually all of this Colombian heroin was exported to the United States and represented the large majority of all heroin consumed by Americans in 2002.

Despite the clear statutory direction and funding guidance in both Plan Colombia and in related Congressional authorizations and appropriations measures during the past 5 years, our bilateral effort against Colombian heroin has been so far insufficient. Given the lethal effects of the heroin trade on both our countries, this key element of Plan Colombia demands senior-level attention by both governments, appropriate resources, and the application of a new, more effective mix of eradication and interdiction technologies to locate and kill the opium poppy on the 12,000–15,000 hectares where it has been grown in Colombia's high Andes mountains.

Plan Colombia has registered some notable successes in the past 3 years. We need to stay committed to this important fight with our Colombian allies—not just for our national security, but for the safety of countless Americans who are threatened by the linkages between narco-trafficking and international terrorism. We need to redouble our efforts to stem the production and export of heroin and coca from Colombia, which harm and kill thousands of Colombians and Americans every year.

I commend the leadership of Speaker HASTERT in this important national security initiative. It was his foresight and concerted effort that has brought us this far. I look forward to working with the Speaker on this effort, and

continuing to build upon the success of Plan Colombia as it enters its fourth year.

NATIONAL POLICIES IN IRAQ

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on and to include extraneous material on the subject of this Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, we are here this evening to talk about Iraq, to talk about the military activity, to talk about the weapons of mass destruction, to talk about the postconflict steps that have been taken and need to be taken. I am joined this evening by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT), and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL), and perhaps others, to talk for the next hour about our national policies in Iraq.

Some of us, myself included, voted in favor of the military authority requested by the President to invade Iraq. Some of us who will be speaking tonight voted against that military authority. But all of us have some common questions. We all salute the brave and courageous efforts by our young men and women in uniform. They won a very impressive military victory in short order. That military victory was never in doubt, but it was impressive nonetheless how well our troops performed.

But there are two questions, really: Is our military mission completed in Iraq? And secondly, are we winning the peace?

Now, I would suggest, just to get the conversation started this evening, that first off, our military mission is not complete, because we have not found the weapons of mass destruction. Those weapons are what motivated me to vote in favor of this military authority, because I believed then and I believe now that it was necessary to disarm Saddam Hussein of weapons of mass destruction. But if we cannot find those weapons of mass destruction, there are serious questions. And we need a full accounting, first, of where those weapons are so that we know they are secured or dismantled and in safe custody. Secondly, we need a full accounting of how accurate our intelligence was. Were our intelligence agencies accurate in the information they gave to the administration? Was that information properly used by the administration?

And this is not just an academic exercise. The entire Bush doctrine of the

preemptive use of force requires as a foundation accurate intelligence regarding the intentions of other countries and potential enemies around the world. If we are going to use force preemptively in the face of imminent threats to this country or to our allies, we have to know that our intelligence is accurate.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOEFFEL. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I would just simply add one other item that I would hope that tonight we can discuss and that our friend from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) has really, in my judgment, done an extraordinary job in terms of laying out for the American people what it is going to cost the taxpayers of the United States and the impact in terms of service cuts for Americans that that will entail.

But if for a moment I could just simply go to the issue that the gentleman from Pennsylvania raised about the issue of weapons of mass destruction.

It certainly is well-known that the two premises for the rationale for the military attack on Iraq as articulated by the President was, number one, links between the Saddam Hussein regime and the possession of weapons of mass destruction, coupled with an intent to use them by that regime that presented a clear and present danger to the United States and to our people. Since the end of the conflict, we no longer hear about links between al Qaeda and the regime of the tyrant Saddam Hussein. In fact, I would dare say there is a consensus now that there was no evidence to indicate any collaborative effort or any cooperation between Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden, and, most likely, the opposite was true.

I am sure the gentleman from Pennsylvania remembers and I know the gentleman from Illinois took note of the fact that about, I think it was in April of 2001, there was a report that Mohammed Atta, the ringleader of September 11, met with a senior Iraqi intelligence agent in the Czech Republic.

□ 2215

It was later revealed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation that that could not have happened because Mr. Atta at the time of the alleged meeting was here in the United States plotting against the American people. No longer do we hear about links between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda. So that argument proved to be false and inaccurate.

Mr. HOEFFEL. If I could reclaim my time for a moment just to point out that the gentleman is pointing out that the Bush administration has a growing credibility gap regarding its prior claims and the evidence that is forthcoming after the conflict. And I know the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) was the first on

this floor to my knowledge to raise the questions about the accusations regarding the country of Niger in Africa.

I wonder if the gentleman would share the latest information that has been made public on that score.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, the latest information is that today, today, the White House announced that when the President made the statement regarding the sale of highly enriched uranium to the Iraqi regime by a country in Africa, they made a mistake. Better late than never.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL).

Mr. EMANUEL. I think it is very important to note this fact that 2 weeks after the State of the Union, the Secretary of State was handed that same information as he was preparing his presentation to the U.N., and he rejected that data as insufficient and inaccurate.

Now, having worked in the White House, having worked on a few State of the Unions, which are the most important speech a President will give in their Presidency outside of an oval address, I cannot think of a moment in time where you can have a Secretary of State reject the information as inadequate for their presentation to the United Nations, and yet is adequate and sufficient for the President of the United States to stand in this well at that desk and address the Nation, the world, and for this speech on why we need to go to war.

Now, I happened to have supported the resolution, but the entire credibility of our ability to marshal the resources of the world as we relate to North Korea and Iran are going to be heretofore questioned. And I always think it is interesting if I were giving advice, not that I would be giving advice, nor would they be seeking my advice, that before the President of the United States was back from Africa, he would have the name, the phone number and the forwarding address of the individual that gave that information because they would not be in this White House any longer.

Mr. DELAHUNT. That is a point very well taken because several weeks ago, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE), our colleague who has joined us, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) and I were having this discussion just as the gentleman pointed out, the President of the United States in the State of the Union Address made that statement to the American people; and one week later before the United Nations Security Council when he made his presentation, Secretary Powell discarded that information. But it has taken until today, today, more than 6 months later, that the White House acknowledged that that information, and let me quote what they had to say, that it was incomplete and perhaps inaccurate information from American intelligence agencies.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask my friend, the gen-

tleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL), if he could give an educated, speculative assessment of what would have taken place had this same circumstance occurred today during the Presidency of Mr. Clinton.

Mr. EMANUEL. Well, heads would have rolled. You cannot allow the President of the United States to have gone up on any speech, let alone a State of the Union, to address the Nation and in this case, this State of the Union was unique, on the precipice of war, the world with information that was clearly, because of Secretary Powell's actions, inadequate, not up to snuff. Heads would have rolled. There would have been an accounting. There would have been an internal accounting to that; and I think properly so, Congress would have asked for it.

I would like to note, I cannot think what is worse, the fact that they have used, since there is ample evidence to say that Saddam Hussein was a dictator who used chemical weapons on his own people and started three wars, why you would go and stretch information, damage your own case. I cannot figure out what is worse, the fact that they used this phony memo, or the fact that they have had no plan for the occupation and no strategy for our exit.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Would the gentleman allow me to venture perhaps an educated guess myself on that score? Because they were trying to establish a new doctrine for the United States of preemptive warfare. Not that citations might not have been made with regard to other military actions by the United States in previous times, perhaps up to and even including President Clinton's Presidency, but that there was to be established with this a new paradigm of preemption based on an imperial view of the world that the stamp of the United States must be placed upon the rest of the world.

I would venture to further my question to the gentleman from Illinois, if President Clinton was in office today and this information was revealed today, what do you think the response of some of our colleagues might have been?

Mr. EMANUEL. I can feel the foam and the lather building up. We would not be arguing for 2 weeks whether Congress should call the inquiry an investigation or not. There would be a full-blown investigation, and it would be proper. Because the President of the United States at that point, at that Chamber, at that speech, at this podium would be addressing the world as the President of the United States speaking for all of us, not just the bodies in here and the cameras up there.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. I do not think we would be speaking in a Chamber as we are tonight during Special Orders with, again, the press being absent. I will presume perhaps some of them are watching on C-SPAN. We would not have an empty Chamber. On the contrary, there would be a full-blown cry throughout the opposition to Mr. Clin-

ton indicating that he should be brought to account or those around him who are giving advice should be brought to account. And I agree with the gentleman, that would be true.

Mr. EMANUEL. I want to add one thing to this whole discussion if that is okay with the gentleman from Pennsylvania.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Yes, it is.

Mr. EMANUEL. Because as we talk about this memo from Niger and how it got into the speech, how it got into the British dossier for the justification for the war, what is equally telling and missing in the debate is the discussion of reconstruction in Iraq. And if you go over and pull over at USAID, an agency within the State Department, the plans for Iraq's reconstruction, I would like to cite some statistics.

They call for 20,000 units of housing. Yet the budget for this country only calls for 5,000 units of housing here in the United States; 13 million Iraqis, half of the population, will get universal health care. Yet not a single penny in the budget presented by the administration or passed by a Republican Congress does anything to support health care for the 42 million working uninsured in this country; 12,500 schools will be given full resources for reconstruction and books and supplies. Yet in our country, teachers have to get a tax credit because they have to take money out of their own budget, personal budget, their salary to pay for supplies. Four million kids in Iraq will be given early childhood education. In the President's budget, 58,000 kids cut from Head Start. We have a deep water port in Iraq being built from top to bottom. Yet the Corps of Engineers in this country is cut by 10 percent, their budget.

I think if we look at the history, the American people are quite generous and quite supportive of our efforts and we support the notion of Iraq having a new beginning. But I do not think they would ever support the notion that we can deconstruct America while we reconstruct Iraq.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Given the extraordinary examples that the gentleman has just cited of American generosity to help reconstruct Iraq, does the gentleman think that we are winning the peace in Iraq?

Mr. EMANUEL. The fact is that there is nothing that has gone on post the war in Iraq that we could not have seen ahead. Nothing new. There was no plan for the occupation. In fact, there is no plan for the exit. We have 158,000 troops based there as far as the eye can see out to the horizon and there is no family member who can count the days of when they are coming home because they have no knowledge of when they are coming home. So nobody can check the calendar at home when the husband is coming, the wife is coming, the sister is coming, the brother is coming.

Remember, this is the heydays. These are the days we are getting the

kisses, the hugs and the flowers. A year from now they will be tired of our presence there.

Mr. DELAHUNT. If I may, the day of the hugs and the cheers really could be numbered in hours. Since the official end of the hostility as declared by the President, almost on a daily basis, tragically, American service men and women are losing their lives.

Mr. EMANUEL. I checked that statistic. It has been 69 days since the President on the Lincoln aircraft carrier declared our mission complete and 70 Americans have died; 69 days, 70 Americans since May 1.

Mr. DELAHUNT. And they are all in our prayers. But I would like to make one other observation if I can. I do not want the American people as they watch here tonight to think that this is just simply four Democrats railing for political purposes against the White House and the administration. I know that many of our colleagues on the other side share our concerns. And I found extraordinarily interesting an article that was penned by someone whom we all respect, Senator RICHARD LUGAR of Indiana, who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

And if I might, just for a moment, read his words:

The combat phase of our war in Iraq ended with a speedy, decisive victory and minimal loss of life. That impressive success is now at risk. Clearly, the administration's planning for the post-conflict phase in Iraq was inadequate. I am concerned that the Bush administration and Congress have yet to face up to the true size of the task that lies ahead or prepared the American people for it. The administration should state clearly that we are engaged in nation building. We are constructing the future in Iraq, and it is a complicated and uncertain business. The days when Americans could win battles and come home quickly for a parade are over. And when some in the Pentagon talk about quick exit strategies or say dismissively that they don't do nation building, they are wrong.

This comes from a Republican, highly regarded and well respected. It is important that we are doing this here tonight so the American people know that, so they hear the truth.

Mr. EMANUEL. The fact is among us four we had different opinions and votes on whether we should or should not go to war, whether there was a case for a war.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I voted against the resolution. The gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) voted to support it, as did the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL); and the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) voted against it.

Mr. EMANUEL. But we are united in our view that an administration should not mislead the America people; that a person who gave the President the wrong information needs to be held accountable because all of our reputations are on the line when the President of the United States is talking to the world with our judgment and justification. Second, that as we plan for this occupation, that if we had done the hard work of building allies on the

front end, we would have allies on the back end. And that the only faces in the occupation are American and British and others, but dominantly American, and, therefore, Americans bearing this burden alone, which it should not, in both financial and human costs.

□ 2230

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, if I can follow up on the comments of the gentleman, I certainly agree with him that we need to internationalize the postconflict situation in Iraq. We are bringing on ourselves the frustrations of those people. We do not have anyone sharing the burden other than the British. We do not have anyone else sharing responsibility or blame for things that are going wrong.

We need to bring in NATO to help with peacekeeping. We need to bring in the United Nations to help with reconstruction. And, obviously, the United States would be the major partner in both of those operations. We still would be very deeply involved, but we would have international allies and international institutions to help with resources and to help with credibility and to help with responsibility for the work that needs to be done.

We need to turn over to the Iraqis as quickly as possible two things: One, their oil; and, secondly, their government. We need to make sure that the Iraqi oil industry is transparent, corruption-free, and the proceeds from which are used to rebuild Iraq. And we have to turn over to the Iraqis their own government. We are moving way too slowly to do that.

Paul Bremer, the viceroy occupier, I am not sure what his title is, has postponed repeatedly the formation of an Iraqi interim government. He is now calling it an advisory committee that he will appoint to advise him. I do not think that is the way to give the Iraqis the stake in their future government that they expect and deserve.

Mr. EMANUEL. If I can add one thing to this debate before I need to go. I remember during the Reagan administration there was an open public discussion between the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of State, which continued in years past, about the fact that we could not get into a military operation without an exit strategy. And I think it would behoove all of us in this institution, regardless of party or regardless of position, if we could define what the exit strategy is. What is the test? What is the standard?

When we have 70 deaths in 69 days, and some people, I think Senator LUGAR noted that we have to level with the American people we are here maybe 5, 10 years, that does not sound very convincing for an exit strategy and a standard that says here is when we know we are done. We cannot just say to the American people that we will know when we are done when we are done. We cannot have an open-ended checkbook and an open-ended sense of lives that are to be lost.

Again, I remind my colleagues that these are the days that are supposed to be flowers and kisses and hugs. A year from now we are supposed to be experiencing what we are experiencing today. Not today.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Before the gentleman leaves, let me ask him if he has been able to figure out what strategy the President was pursuing last week when he suggested, in the face of the guerilla attacks and ambushes and assassinations of American soldiers, that our opponents should "bring 'em on?" Could any of the gentlemen joining me on the floor today tell me what they think the President's strategy was with that comment?

Mr. EMANUEL. As a former staff person who worked for a President, I believe that every staff person in that White House who was sitting on the side cringed when they heard that, because you cannot but think that there was a President whose rhetoric got ahead of where the policy is and what they were saying.

Nobody would ever suggest that our men and women in uniform, who are doing all of us proud, should be the focus of further attacks, this notion of "bring 'em on." We have lost 70 Americans in 69 days. There are other Americans we have lost in this whole battle, but 70 Americans who are fathers, who are mothers, who are brothers, sisters, who are Boy Scout coaches, leaders in their community, YMCA leaders. And the notion that somebody would sit here in the comfort of our great country in our capital and say "Bring 'em on" to our soldiers I think misses what they are facing every day. And I think it was a very, very unfortunate choice of words.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. If the gentleman would yield a moment further in that regard and in that context, I do think that the response to the gentleman's question is that the President, and my point to my colleague is, I wonder if he could corroborate or whether he would agree that the President, at least in my estimation, has said that this is wide open; that this does not have an end; that the calculations will be made on essentially an ad hoc basis; and that there is nothing that he can foresee at this moment that would lead us to the kind of exit strategy conclusions that the gentleman has raised.

Mr. EMANUEL. Well, my worry is not only do we not know the standard for our exit, and that before you get into any military engagement, you should know what your exit strategy is; that because we have 168,000 troops based now in all of Iraq, with no ability of any ally to come and replace our troops at a serious level, that our forces are stretched thin when it comes to the war on terrorism because of their occupation and being tied down in the deserts of Iraq.

Now, I think we are there, and we have to help turn this country around, but clearly now our troops are being targeted from guerilla warfare and

from terrorists. Our ability to do what we need to do around the world, both in Afghanistan and other corners of the world, our resources are being stretched thin and spread thin when it comes to the war on terrorism.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I am glad the gentleman mentioned Afghanistan, and I know he has another appointment, but let us review for a moment where we are in terms of Afghanistan.

How long have we been in Afghanistan? We are talking years already. And yet what progress have we made in Afghanistan? The American people should be aware of the fact that it is a mess. The President of Afghanistan, President Karzai, whom we supported from the beginning, is unable to travel throughout Afghanistan. He is just about able to leave the central district of the capital city of Kabul. We did not conclude our work there before we took on another military intervention of a much different magnitude, much larger size, when we went into Iraq.

As has been stated by all three of my colleagues tonight, America's word is at risk here. If we just go back again to the quality of the intelligence, I do not want to leave the impression with those who are watching this conversation that we are having tonight that this is, again, exclusively restricted to Democrats. These are concerns that are shared across the aisle. This is simply too important. Decisions were made regarding whether to wage war based on this intelligence, and, clearly, that is, in our democracy, a question of the most serious consequence, to wage war.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. May I follow up in that context?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Certainly.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Today, as I am sure my colleagues will acknowledge, and not everyone who is observing us and listening tonight may be aware, we passed a defense appropriations bill from this House. If anything should reflect the concern of the administration with regard to the issues of resolving the consequences of our attack in Iraq, it should be contained in here.

I have, for my colleagues' information, Mr. Speaker, referring to the House Action Reports, a Congressional Quarterly publication, a fact sheet edition published today on defense appropriations. In it, section 3 addresses military personnel. It includes things like a military pay raise and a civilian Defense Department pay raise. Active Duty personnel are listed at 1,388,100 in fiscal year 2004, equal to the President's request of 1,600 less than the current level. On Reserves, the bill sets a ceiling on Reserve personnel for a total of 863,300 in the next fiscal year, equal to the administration's request of 1,258 less than the 2003 level.

Now, think about it. We now have 150,000 plus people committed in Iraq under the circumstances and conditions that have been discussed here tonight, personnel deployed throughout

the world, not just in Afghanistan, but the Philippines, Yemen, and dozens of places, now possibly in Liberia, again under circumstances that are not clear as to where we are going, what we are doing, and who we are doing it with.

The President says, "Bring 'em on," but here is the congressional responsibility and obligation as manifested in the appropriations which follow on our authorizing personnel. And what we are saying is, is that the same deployments that have been taking place up until now, which have put such an enormous strain on the Guard and Reserves are going to continue. We are not adding a single person. We are not facing with any respect whatsoever the realities of what these deployments and the obligations attendant upon them will require of us.

That is why we are here in the evening during these Special Orders trying to reach out to the American public to explain that we are not quiescent on this. We are not merely observers. We are trying to participate in a respectful and responsible way as Members of Congress. But we have to rouse the attention of the American people to let them know that we are failing those men and women in the armed services if we think for a moment that we are providing adequate support and foundation for what we expect of them.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I would say to my colleague that that is only half the story. When those men and women come home, when they are discharged from Active Duty, and when they assume the title of veteran, what are we doing to them then? What are we doing to them then? Well, what we are doing to them is, in some respects, discriminating against them. We are creating new categories of veterans who no longer will have access to veterans health care. That is unconscionable.

We send them to war, and when they come home, we reduce their benefits and, in fact, eliminate some of these heroes and heroines from having access to health care provided by the Veterans Administration. That is shameful.

Patriotism is more than just simply raising the flag. The flag represents respect, respect especially for men and women who serve this country in the military, and we are disrespecting and dishonoring them. That is wrong.

Mr. HOEFFEL. If the gentleman will yield on that point, is he aware that the Bush tax cuts in 2004 will reduce revenues about \$60 billion, and that for \$1 billion we could fully fund our obligations to all of the veterans, including category 7 and category 8 veterans, so that they all would get the health care that we promised all veterans?

We are \$1 billion short. Now, \$1 billion is a lot of money.

Mr. DELAHUNT. But when it comes to Iraq, we are going to be sending hundreds of billions of dollars, as the gentleman from Illinois indicated, to build schools, to provide health care, and to provide deepwater ports, but we cannot take care of our own veterans.

Mr. HOEFFEL. The gentleman is correct. We are appropriating \$29 billion next year for veterans health care. We need \$30 billion to meet all of our obligations, our moral obligations, and we are not measuring up, and it is wrong.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. If the gentleman would yield in turn, to follow up on my point in regard to our analysis, or rather not so much an analysis, I daresay, but our observation that these offhand remarks, these ad hoc remarks by the President, which take on the weight of policy, such as "Bring 'em on," this kind of childish assessment of what constitutes the ground operations in Iraq, are now followed by an observation of the President that Mr. Taylor, the President in Liberia, has to go.

Now, where he is going and how he is going and under what circumstances is not said. And the questions from the press, the press which is absent, which do not appear, at least as far as I can tell; now, whether or not people in the White House are so covetous of being in the White House that they do not dare ask the question that anybody with any journalistic bent worthy of the name would ask, just who is supposed to replace Mr. Taylor when he does go, wherever you think he should, provided you have got that far?

□ 2245

Mr. Speaker, the reason I raise this issue and the reason I raise it in the present context is if you think we had no planning in Iraq, I can tell you now and tell the American people and tell my colleagues we do not have a clue or an idea of what we will do in Liberia in terms of who will replace Mr. Taylor and who will prevail when he leaves.

Now, are we to send in not tens of thousands of, but perhaps hundreds of, American soldiers into a situation that we do not have the slightest idea, nor has there been any discussion in the Congress about what we are going to do, how, when or why we are going to do it, and what the circumstances will be upon the action taken.

Now, I for one admonish all of us to take into account where we are now in Iraq and remember that we face exactly the same circumstances in terms of lack of forward-planning policy with regard to Liberia, and the consequences could be just as severe. The numbers might be different, but the situation is the same. We have an administration now that thinks that military action in and of itself constitutes political policy. Furthermore, support for the troops is then defined as being support for whatever political agenda they have. Now, that is what we are facing this evening.

No one can say if only for the fact that we appear here on the floor tonight that due warning has not been given to the American public by Members serving in the Congress of the United States that we should have a full debate with respect to what we are going to do in Liberia, most particularly in the wake of what is taking

place in Iraq, and that before any action is taken in Liberia, the will of the Congress has to be determined.

I would hope that we take the most serious and sober view before we commit American troops in furtherance of a political agenda, and that political agenda is made manifest for the world to judge on the basis of action by American troops.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments. I think we need to learn our lessons and learn them well and ask the questions that need to be asked and avoid the taunts and the arrogance that can get us into a lot of trouble when we fail to think things through.

I would like to point out to my colleagues that editorial opinion is focusing on the President's comments and on the post-conflict realities in Iraq. The Philadelphia Inquirer on Sunday in response to the President's comments about "bring it on" in their lead editorial title "Bring Reality On," said continued hubris in high places heightens risks for U.S. soldiers in Iraq. The Inquirer asks: "Mr. President, do you live in a playhouse or the White House? Childish taunts such as that are not the calibrated words demanded of the United States President at this turn of history's wheel." And the Philadelphia Inquirer goes on to make several points about the reality that is needed in our policy.

First, they say get real about the number of U.S. troops needed to establish and maintain order for months to come; get real about the full scope of reconstructing Iraq, its costs and duration; get real about cutting taxes. The incumbent is the only President, the Inquirer says, in the Nation's history to cut taxes in the middle of a hot war. They say get real about spurning the value of the United Nations; get real about the democratic aspirations you unwisely inflated among the long-oppressed, divided Iraqi population; and get real about admitting mistakes.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, obviously we all make mistakes, but it is important to acknowledge the making of mistakes. I would submit that if Secretary Powell had information that was available to him a week after the President of the United States in his State of the Union message referenced the sale of uranium by an African country to Saddam Hussein, then it is almost inconceivable that the Secretary of State, Colin Powell, would not have had a conversation with the President suggesting or informing him that he did not find that information reliable in terms of his presentation to the United Nations; and yet for 6 months the White House, the President, has continued to insist on the reliability of the intelligence that he selected when he made his presentation to the American people.

The complaints are not coming just from this side of the aisle, but are coming from the intelligence community. Even the top U.S. Marine officer in

Iraq, General James Conway, said U.S. intelligence was simply wrong in leading the military to believe that the invading troops were likely to be attacked with chemical weapons. I respect the general for making that statement; and it is time that the administration, the President and those who, upon review, discovered that the premises and the facts that supported those premises were inaccurate or incorrect, it is time to acknowledge them and restore the confidence of the American people and the people of this world in the integrity of the United States and its leadership.

These are just some quotes from intelligence officials, individuals who have no particular partisan axe to grind, and these are reports from the New York Times, and I am quoting, "As an employee of the Defense Intelligence Agency, I know how this administration has lied to the public to get support for its attack on Iraq. Some others see a pattern not so much of lying as of self-delusion and of subjecting the intelligence agencies to these delusions."

Another quote, "The American people were manipulated," bluntly declares one person from the Defendant Intelligence Agency who says that he was privy to all of the intelligence on Iraq. "These people are coming forward because they are fiercely proud." He is referring to intelligence analyses at the Defense Intelligence Agency, and those that are watching should be aware that there are many intelligence agencies, but this is the consensus of their opinion, that they are fiercely proud of the deepest ethic in the intelligence world, that such work should be nonpolitical and are disgusted at efforts to turn them into propaganda.

This is from an individual who retired in September after 25 years in the State Department. His name is Greg Thielmann, and he spent the last 4 years of his public service in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and these are his quotes: "The al Qaeda connection and nuclear weapons issues were the only two ways that you could link Iraq to an imminent security threat to the United States, and the administration was grossly distorting the intelligence on both things."

The outrage among the intelligence professionals is so widespread that they have formed a group, an association, called the Veteran Intelligent Professionals for Sanity, and they wrote to President Bush this past month to protest what they called, and again this is their language, "a policy and intelligence fiasco of monumental proportions."

I am quoting from their letter: "While there have been occasions in the past when intelligence has been deliberately wopped for political purposes, never before has such wopping been used in such a systematic way to mislead our elected representatives into voting to authorize launching a war."

A comment by Larry Johnson, one of those talking heads that we always see on those cable programs, he used to be a CIA analyst and worked at the State Department, referring to the low morale among the intelligence community: "I have never heard this level of alarm before. It is a misuse and abuse of intelligence. The President was misled. He was ill-served by folks who are supposed to protect him on this. Whether this is witting or unwitting, I do not know."

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I am sure the gentleman is aware that there is a perfectly rational reason why the White House admitted this week that they made a mistake with the President's State of the Union speech in which he claimed Iraq was trying to buy uranium from Africa. The reason that the White House had to finally admit their error is they were basing this on British intelligence, and the British system has resulted in an open inquiry where British parliamentarians have investigated and continue to investigate the question of the accuracy of their intelligence prewar, and the uses of that intelligence by the Blair administration.

They have concluded that while Prime Minister Blair did not himself mislead the public, that this information regarding the purchase of uranium in Africa was simply wrong and was based on forged documents.

This White House could no longer maintain the fiction that there was any basis in anybody's intelligence reports that Saddam Hussein was trying to buy uranium in Africa, and they simply had to because of a more open system in England where their Parliament has been more aggressive than this Congress. They had to face reality.

Mr. DELAHUNT. I am sure that C-SPAN viewers have witnessed those hearings. Sources and methods were protected. No State secrets were given out. It was a respectful discourse; and it informed the British people, a people, by the way, who sent men and women into combat with the United States. But I do not believe that is the only reason, and I am directing this to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) because while they admitted it today, ironically Sunday there appeared an article in the New York Times written by the individual, a former ambassador who, on behalf of the CIA, went to Nigeria to investigate this assertion that, according to some newspapers, came via the Italian intelligence service, and what he has to say in his words, one might draw the inference prompted this response today by the White House. Some might claim it to be an effort at damage control. But his name is Joseph Wilson, and the article is entitled "What I Didn't Find In Africa."

He starts it by saying, "Did the Bush administration manipulate intelligence about Saddam Hussein's weapons programs to justify an invasion of Iraq? Based on my experience with the administration in the months leading up

to the war, I have little choice but to conclude that some of the intelligence related to Iraq's nuclear weapons program was twisted to exaggerate the Iraqi threat."

Mr. Speaker, I am not going to read the whole article, but it is extraordinarily informative. Maybe we can do it here in the United States as well as they can do it in the United Kingdom.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I want to assure our colleagues as well as those who may be observing and listening to us that we do not intend to make this a 1- or 2- or 3-time deal.

□ 2300

This is not two or three Members of Congress off on some individual crusade. We are not here simply to recount those things with which we have a disagreement. What we feel very strongly about is what I believe is the views of the overwhelming majority of the people of the United States and most certainly those who have talked to me about that Members of Congress have not stepped up to the plate with regard to the discussion of these issues in illuminating what is at stake for this country, and that right now some of these corporation-controlled media networks and the organs of the executive government are controlling the message that is out there, and only free men and women, freely elected with the faith and trust of the electorate, the people have put us into these positions of trust here in the people's House.

It is up to us with that kind of an obligation placed upon us by the people to speak out and to speak up, to speak forthrightly, to speak with as much knowledge as we can bring to bear, to exercise such judgment as we are able to bring to bear, and to keep the people of this country informed, and to let them know that we will not be silenced in this, that we are going to be back night after night after night, and that if we cannot get these issues discussed during the regular business of the day, then rest assured we will be here in the Special Orders that are given to us here in the people's House to make certain that the hammer of truth is going to come down on the anvil of inquiry that is required of a free people in a democratic society.

We are going to return here again. We invite our colleagues to engage in this colloquy. We invite our colleagues to come forward and express their views. We invite our colleagues to come forth and make inquiry of one another so that we can be better informed ourselves, so that we do not have a circumstance that comes to fruition again in this Nation such as we experienced in Vietnam.

If anything motivates me to be down here on this floor, I see parallels. I am not drawing analogies, but I see parallels, distinctly fearful parallels, to what took place in Vietnam in which we were urged to keep quiet, in which we were urged not to say anything for

fear it would be called dissent, as if there was already an understanding as to what the correct position should be when it comes to issue of life and death as we face now in Iraq and other places where American troops are deployed.

I believe it is an absolute necessity of democracy that we have the fullest and freest and the deepest and with the widest breadth of discussion that it is possible to have, and that is what we are going to be doing on this floor.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, we would be derogating our duty. And I applaud the eloquence and the obviously genuine commitment that the gentleman from Hawaii just respected. We would not be honoring our obligation, and additionally we would be failing those members in the military that have fought as well as they have, and we would be failing those individuals in the Intelligence Community that have expressed their views.

It brings to mind a story that again appeared in the newspapers shortly before we broke, I think it was the day that we broke, where someone stood up and testified before a House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. There was a number of intelligence officials within this closed hearing. Of course, it appears in the press, so I can speak about it. And this individual's name is Christian Westerman, and he happens to be a top State Department expert on chemical and biological weapons, and he told the committees that he had been pressed to tailor his analysis on Iraq and other matters specifically pertaining to Cuba to conform with the Bush administration's views. That is unacceptable. He is viewed within the Department, according to reports, as a careful and respected analyst of intelligence. He served in the Navy, and he was obviously not comfortable making that statement, but that kind of courage is important if we are going to ascertain the truth.

And whatever the truth is, the American people deserve the truth, and it is our responsibility to make every effort that we can to seek it. And I want to associate myself with the words of the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE).

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments, and I actually wrote those words down. "The hammer of truth will be brought down on the anvil of inquiry," and that is our job. It is our challenge here. It is not unpatriotic to ask questions. It is not unpatriotic to seek accountability. It is not unpatriotic to dissent. In fact, it is the highest form of patriotism to seek the truth, to ask questions, to try to get to the bottom of this in the name of the American people.

I know our time is short. Mr. Speaker, does either gentleman have any concluding remarks?

The gentleman from Hawaii I thank for being here.

The gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if at some point in the future, and

we should discuss this with other Members of the House, but I for one would like to extend an invitation to some of our colleagues who serve in the Parliament, in the House of Commons, to come to the United States, or maybe some of us to go there to further this discussion, because I was so impressed with British democracy after viewing on C-SPAN those hearings that we have alluded to tonight. And there is real deep concern among the British, and it is clear that it is having an impact in Britain to a far more significant degree, unfortunately, than it appears to be having in this country. Maybe at some point in time, because I really believe it is necessary to have an independent commission depoliticize this issue, take it out of the realm of partisan politics.

Yes, there are congressional committees going on, but we know that there was an independent commission that was chaired by former Senator Rudman and former Senator Gary Hart that, unfortunately, they examined national security and just about predicted the events of September 11. It is so important to restore the confidence of the people in our national security, in our system. I think that happens to be the answer, but I would really welcome the input from the members of Parliament, from the House of Commons that sat in on those hearings to come and give us their observations.

I was particularly impressed with former Minister Robin Cook and a female former member by the name of Claire Short. I would think that if we invited them, they would come here, and hopefully the American media, as the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) have put up with, finally start to take a good look, because this is an issue that is not going to go away because it is about time that we reflected and began to see ourselves as others are viewing us if we are going to continue to claim a certain moral authority in this world.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments, and I would only add it would also be nice if we could be joined by our friends across the aisle in some of these discussions during these special orders. I thank my colleagues for being part of this discussion.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to comment on the Special Orders matter related to Post-Conflict Iraq and the U.S.-U.N. involvement therein. I ask that our colleagues remember that two wars and over a decade of sanctions have crippled Iraq's infrastructure. With respect to the events that led to the need for Iraq rebuilding, I renew my concerns that there has been an apparent break down in U.S. intelligence as to the search for Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) that suggests that the current administration may have misled the public in order to garner support of the war in Iraq. Secondly, because the international community looks, in large part, to the United States as the nation with the best ability to aid in the job of rebuilding Iraq, it is important that our leadership respect its humanitarian needs, especially of the

right to self-determination and ensure that these needs take precedence over capitalistic prospect. Moreover, as will be evidenced by my introduction of a bill to authorize the formation of a women's peace commission, I strongly advocate the involvement of women in the peace and rebuilding process in leadership capacities. In fact, not only should the women's peace commission be composed of Members of Congress, American small, minority, and women-owned businesses should also be active in the rebuilding process.

As to the potential misleading of the public as to the U.S. motive for waging war on Iraq, I will offer a resolution calling for the establishment of an independent commission to study the performance of U.S. intelligence agencies in gathering and disseminating intelligence on WMD in Iraq, the current administration's knowledge of WMD in Iraq, and the accuracy of the information given to the public. During a Presidential address on March 17, 2003, President Bush stated, "Intelligence gathered by this and other governments leaves no doubt that the Iraq regime continues to possess and conceal some of the most lethal weapons ever devised." Thereupon, the administration initiated Operation Iraqi Freedom on March 19, 2003. Although the public justification for this war was Saddam Hussein's alleged possession of WMD, we have seen nothing to date in the form of WMD in Iraq. This failure to locate any WMD in Iraq or any evidence that WMD have been destroyed or relocated strongly suggests the U.S. intelligence's inaccuracy or the inaccurate communication of this information to the public. At this point, thorough assessment of the performance of U.S. intelligence agencies with respect to the gathering of information as to WMD will be required to restore public confidence in the American Government before we are in a position to efficiently offer genuine aid in the rebuilding process of Iraq.

The United Nations (U.N.) has been in the nation-building/rebuilding business on a worldwide scale for over a decade: East Timor, Cambodia, Kosovo, Bosnia, Haiti, and to some extent El Salvador, Guatemala, and parts of Africa. Although the U.N. has experts and experience, it does not have sufficient resources in which to undertake the task of rebuilding Iraq. While, as I mentioned above, the international community looks to us for the lion's share of support resources, we must yield to the U.N. as a legitimizer of a new order in Iraq. Legitimacy through international alliances and high overt purpose is vital to an effective rebuilding process. The U.N. power is that bestowed upon it by its member-nations; however, it has great capacity to bestow legitimacy to this effort. In obtaining legitimacy through the U.N., we must not abuse the interest in self-determination of the Iraqi people. All ameliorative efforts should aim toward the goal of facilitating Iraqis in running their own trials without the involvement of U.N. international expertise. Furthermore, the United Nations will aid the effort to build internationally acceptable electoral machinery and run elections for the rebuilding nation. Experienced U.N. advisers could remain in government ministries, for years if necessary, without creating looking like an occupation.

As to the method of rebuilding Iraq, I have suggested the creation of a bipartisan, bicameral working group on Iraqi reconstruction. I proposed the convening of an immediate

working group to craft a comprehensive strategy for the reconstruction of Iraq. I am deeply troubled by the reports we are receiving from Iraq. The picture that was painted for us before the war—what we would find and how the Iraqi people would respond to being "liberated"—seems to be wholly inaccurate. It seems that our forces, as well as the American people, were unprepared for the challenges we are now facing. It is essential that we develop a truer vision for the future of Iraq, and a realistic plan for making that vision come to be. Doing so will demand all the expertise and experience that Congress has to offer.

To tap into those skills, we should form a working group, composed of a diverse array of qualified and committed Members of Congress. Conceptually, we must immediately dispense with partisanship and turf-wars and come together to form a plan that is right for our troops, right for the people of Iraq, and worthy of support and financing by the American people. We do not have the luxury of time to start this discussion in both the House and Senate, a dozen committees, and then assimilate ideas later. So, I propose that we convene a joint House-Senate bipartisan working group on Iraq.

Since tensions began to escalate in Iraq last year, I have consistently fought for resolving the crisis with four goals in mind: minimizing the loss of American lives; minimizing the impact on the Iraqi people; minimizing the costs to the American taxpayers; and ensuring that our work in Iraq leads to long-term peace and stability in Iraq and the Middle East. I believe that those of us against the war, as well as those who supported it, can all agree on those four principles. We owe it to our troops and to the people of Iraq to acknowledge the problems that exist, and to make the investments of time and money necessary to get the job done—so we can bring our troops home.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CRAMER (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of official business.

Mr. FROST (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of business in the district.

Ms. HARMAN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of official business.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and July 9 on account of official business.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of a family emergency.

Mr. SANDLIN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of business in the district.

Mr. GIBBONS (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today and the balance of the week on account of traveling with a congressional delegation to Iraq.

Mr. GOSS (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today and the balance of the week on account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. PALLONE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. DUNCAN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and July 9, 10, 14, and 15.

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, today and July 9 and 10.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, for 5 minutes, today and July 9.

Mr. KOLBE, for 5 minutes, today and July 9.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 9 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, July 9, 2003, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3009. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Extension of Tolerances for Emergency Exemptions (Multiple Chemicals) [OPP-2003-0179; FRL-7311-5] received June 20, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3010. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Flufenacet (N-(4-fluorophenyl)-N-(1-methylethyl)-2-[[5-(trifluoromethyl)-1,3,4-thiadiazol-2-yl]oxy]acetamide; Pesticide Tolerance [OPP-2003-0181; FRL-7313-9] received June 20, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3011. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Clothianidin; Pesticide Tolerance [OPP-2003-0133; FRL-7306-8] received May 29, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3012. A letter from the Acting Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Methoxyfenozide; Pesticide Tolerance [OPP-2003-0088; FRL-7308-6] received May 29, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.