

an interdependent world, made smaller by travel, technology, and the demands of a burgeoning population. America has a critical role to play as the most powerful member of the world community. And in this community, as in all others, the golden rule still applies: we must act toward other nations as we would have them act towards America.

Tonight, let me address very quickly, in the remaining time that I have, one of these 10 commandments of national security, and that is sound intelligence.

I believe we ought to have an independent commission investigate the intelligence on Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. I supported the authorization of force, as did many of my colleagues, in a bipartisan manner, on the basis of intelligence that showed that Iraq possessed chemical, biological, and nuclear programs. We must determine whether that intelligence was accurate. We must determine whether that intelligence was weighted properly. We must determine whether that intelligence was presented to this Congress and the American people in an accurate manner.

This is essential, number one, because this Congress made the most important determination it can make, and that is the determination authorizing the use of force on the basis of that intelligence; and, number two, if we are to avoid another September 11, we must ensure we have a sound intelligence process. And, finally, our standing in the world, the willingness of other nations to cooperate with America in the future will be dependent on how we resolve this issue.

INCREASED EFFICIENCY IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to add my voice to those of my fellow Representatives who are calling for increased efficiency in our Federal Government. Our group has taken the charge to protect precious taxpayer dollars by streamlining and improving our Federal Government. There are many important programs that are being hurt. There are expenditures which could have been handled with much greater care. With wise stewardship, we can ensure that public servants have more prudent oversight when allocating American taxpayer dollars for Federal programs.

Mr. Speaker, in my previous life I was a simple country doctor. I want to share with my colleagues some astonishing examples of some of the extreme expenditures in the Medicare program.

Over 90 percent of Medicare payments to community medical health centers in five States, \$229 million, were "unallowable or highly questionable."

Medicare paid roughly \$20 million to dead beneficiaries between 1999 and

2000. Some of these benefits were distributed despite the fact that the Departments's database had the dates of death already logged in.

Mr. Speaker, since coming to Congress, I have been appointed a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. On that committee, I wanted to make certain that the United States Department of Transportation was ensuring the most efficient business practices within the agency. On March 19, 2003, I met with the Department of Transportation Inspector General, Kenneth Mead, to discuss the business practices of the agency and how the Congress can better facilitate the decrease of inappropriate expenditures in relation to transportation's spending. Inspector General Mead and I discussed the need for greater stewardship and oversight in all of the Department of Transportation's programs.

The Department of Transportation has not changed the way the agency disburses transportation funding to State and local entities since President Eisenhower was in office. We talked some tonight about trying to achieve one penny in savings for every dollar that we spend. The Inspector General of the Department of Transportation pointed out that if 1 percent of the \$500 billion spent over the last 10 years on transportation programs was set-asides, the Department of Transportation would have an extra \$5 billion to spend. That \$5 billion, incidentally, would fund four of the current top 11 transportation building programs going on in the country today. I believe this practice could better assist the Department of Transportation in spending the taxpayers' dollars more wisely.

There are several successful transportation projects that can be used as examples for greater government efficiency. For example, Interstate Highway 15 in the State of Utah was rehabilitated ahead of schedule and under budget. Today, from my district, I met with representatives of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit and those officials reported to me that they are currently within their budget, and DART intends to return some transit funding to the Federal Government.

And, of course, we all know there are examples that are not so good of transportation projects that are overbudget and behind schedule: the Springfield Interchange, not far from here in Virginia; and perhaps the poster child of government inefficiency, the Central Artery Project in Boston, Massachusetts, the Ted Williams Tunnel, we all know down in Texas as the Big Dig.

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We need to address the misuse of Federal transportation expenditures as soon as possible.

Members may also be interested to know the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure believes government efficiency is important because next week on July 22 the com-

mittee will hold a hearing on the elimination of waste, fraud, and abuse in mandatory transportation programs as required by the fiscal year 2004 budget resolution instructions. I look forward to participating in the hearing, as well as working with the Inspector General, Mr. Mead, to further address this issue within the U.S. Department of Transportation.

We are dedicated to protecting taxpayers' hard-earned dollars from being spent on inappropriate expenditures. We need to work together to ensure that our Federal Government is more effective and more efficient for the American taxpayer.

STALLED NORTHERN IRELAND PEACE PROCESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow afternoon British Prime Minister Tony Blair is scheduled to address a joint session of Congress in this Chamber. Mr. Blair will likely spend much of his speech discussing both the U.S. and U.K. victory in Iraq and our efforts to bring democracy to the Iraqi people. He can certainly tout the fact that the Iraqi people are now free of oppression and finally afforded the basic human rights that were denied under the regime of Saddam Hussein.

But, Mr. Speaker, I cannot help finding it hypocritical for Prime Minister Blair to discuss freeing the Iraqis given the nature of his policies in Northern Ireland. Prime Minister Blair sent tens of thousands of British troops thousands of miles to bring democracy to a region at the same time he was denying the basic right of democracy to people only miles from the British seat of government.

Mr. Speaker, as you may know, in May Prime Minister Blair announced the indefinite postponement of the elections in Northern Ireland, which were scheduled to be held on May 29. Since his announcement, Prime Minister Blair has made little progress towards reinstating the stalled Irish peace process and providing basic human rights to the people of Northern Ireland.

Five years ago under the guidance of former Senator George Mitchell, all of the major parties, both Catholic and Protestant, signed onto an agreement that was to govern the future of Northern Ireland. The Good Friday Accords were touted near and far by human rights groups and media outlets as an agreement which would finally bring an end to the sectarian violence in Northern Ireland.

Now, just when the agreement seemed to be bearing a fruitful peace, Prime Minister Blair and his Protestant allies have decided it is time to derail the process to ensure that the citizens of Northern Ireland continue

under the control of the British Crown and be continually denied their basic human rights.

Mr. Speaker, I call on Prime Minister Blair to announce in his speech here tomorrow a specific date when elections will be held in Northern Ireland. He must indicate to this body his support for bringing democracy and home rule to the people of Northern Ireland. I also call on him to again begin the process of putting the Good Friday Accords back together. Prime Minister Blair must use his leadership to bring all of the parties back to the table and begin discussing ways to reinstate the Belfast Assembly.

Finally, I hope Prime Minister Blair will use this opportunity to address several of the concerns that I have raised on this floor several times in the past. Mr. Blair must address the issue of policing and military presence in the North. For people to feel safe and secure, they must be assured that there is a police force that is representative of the local population.

Mr. Blair should enact the Patten Commission's recommendation on police reform. The North must provide its citizens with a full, fair, and just reform of their police service. And the police service of Northern Ireland must be representative of all ethnic, religious, and political groups in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues in this body will join me in urging Prime Minister Blair tomorrow to immediately address many of the human rights concerns in Northern Ireland. It is time we bring true electoral democracy to the people of Northern Ireland.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ROY JONES, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the achievements of one of my constituents, the World Boxing Association's heavyweight champion of the world, Roy Jones, Jr.

Roy began his rise to greatness when he was awarded the Silver Medal in the 1988 Olympics and was voted the outstanding boxer of the Games. Roy has since compiled a record of 48 wins and 1 loss with 38 of his wins being by knockouts over the period of his career. Roy Jones, Jr., earned his first title by beating IBF middleweight champion Bernard Hopkins in 1993. He quickly moved up to the super middleweight division and dominated the weight class by beating James Toney in 1994.

Roy's next move to the super light heavyweight division produced even more success by winning the welterweight boxing champion 1997, WBA 1998, and IBF titles in 1999. His only loss was due to a disqualification to Montel Griffin, which he avenged

with a first-round knockout 5 months later.

Roy is widely considered the best pound-for-pound boxer of this era. He became the first boxer in over a century to win both a world middleweight title and a world heavyweight title.

Roy is one of the boxing world's best ring technicians by finding ways to beat his opponents who are often bigger than he is. He attributes much of his success in the ring to watching tapes and finding his opponents' weaknesses and then exploiting them.

On March 1, 2003, he squared off against the WBA champion, John Ruis, who had a 50-pound weight advantage over him. He won the title from Ruis, proving that only one fighter, Roy Jones, Jr., can make history and overcome such an enormous disadvantage.

Roy has always given back to his communities through mentoring of amateur boxers, encouraging locals to get involved with African American community issues through his music, and his vast philanthropic work. Roy has not forgotten his roots and always shows the pride of his hometown when he thrusts his arms in the air and screams "Pensacola" after each victory in the ring.

Roy is constantly distinguishing himself with achievements that are unmatched by any boxer in history. Northwest Florida is recognizing this great man by designating July 19, 2003, as Roy Jones, Jr., day.

And on behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to recognize this very special person, Roy Jones, Jr., for the example he has set in the sports world, in his country, and in northwest Florida. I offer my sincere thanks for all that he has done for northwest Florida and the United States of America.

FEDERAL DEBT AND THE DEFICIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor tonight to talk about something that apparently no one else wants to talk about: the Federal debt and the deficit. We are about to see record deficits, nothing like this country has ever seen. This year \$615 billion we will borrow. Next year, \$639 billion we will borrow.

The mid-session review just came out. The Office of Management and Budget tends to explain it away that it is really not the largest that has ever been before as a percent of GDP; it is less. But every time the deficit has been larger in the past, the Congress and the President have come in with a proposal of how to do something about it. This time for some strange reason no one on the majority side chooses to talk about what we are going to do to reduce the deficit.

We will hear that the tax cuts are in place and that will turn the economy

around. We were told that in 2001. We were told it again in 2002, and we were told it again this year. As I have said from this floor many times, I hope Members are right, and I hope I get to eat the biggest plate of crow in town, and I see some colleagues on the floor tonight that would love to serve it up to me. But that is not what I am here tonight about. Finger-pointing does not do any good, and it darn sure is not going to do our grandchildren any good.

It is time for us to start looking at what can we do to turn this around other than talk about platitudes. We keep hearing if we just reduce spending. And the chairman of the Committee on the Budget said in his presentation today, if we just control spending. Well, let me remind Members we are at war. We are at war on the homeland front, we are at war in Iraq in which we are losing a soldier or two or three every day. The cost of that war is estimated at \$4 billion per month. At no time in the history since 1812 of this country have we ever gone to war and not had a sacrifice demanded of those of us fortunate enough to stay back home. But this time some way we are looking at it differently. I guess it is not going to change because the minority party cannot change the direction that we are going.

I suppose that we can continue to talk about the deficit. We can continue to explain it. No matter how Members attempt to describe it, in the last 2 years we borrowed a trillion dollars. In the next 2 years, we will borrow in excess of \$1.2 trillion. That is trillion. When we consider it took us over 200 years to borrow the first trillion dollars, that should mean something to somebody.

OMB Director Mitch Daniels has left, but where has he been over the last year or two? Usually OMB directors come up and proudly defend the economic game plan we are under, but that is not to happen.

The economy has lost 2.5 million jobs and employment has increased from 4.1 to 6.4 percent. The number of workers unemployed for more than 6 months has tripled to 2 million. That is where we are. Yet there is a curious silence of what are we going to do about it, or does it not matter? Do deficits not matter?

I have been told that now so many times. I have been here too long. During the 25 years that I have been here, I remember standing with my friends on the other side of the aisle decrying deficits. I remember voting five or six times in the last 3 years to lock up the Social Security surplus and not touch it because that is money that is reserved for the baby boomers about to begin retiring in 2011. The same folks that voted for locking it up today, just curious silence, or having some platitude, do not bother.

I remember when we passed the balanced budget constitutional amendment, which was one of the happiest