



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 108th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 149

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2003

No. 131

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Washington, DC, September 23, 2003.

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

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

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 3. An act to prohibit the procedure commonly known as partial-birth abortion.

The message also announced that under the authority of the Order of July 30, 2003, the Senate disagrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 3) "An Act to prohibit the procedure commonly known as partial-birth abortion", agree to a conference asked by the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. HATCH, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. SANTORUM, Mrs. FEINSTEIN and Mrs. BOXER, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

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

except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

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

REPEALING THE TAX ON THE DEATH GRATUITY

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this is a very important issue that I bring to the floor. As you can see behind me, these are the faces of just a few of the men and women who have died for this country, both in Afghanistan and Iraq. I bring this to the floor because last year I introduced a bill to repeal the tax on the death gratuity.

The death gratuity, Mr. Speaker, is a "thank you," if you will, not enough, but it is a check that is given to the families of those who have given loved ones in uniform that have died for this country. I want to say to the leadership on both sides that last year you did, and I thank both sides, put the language from that bill into a larger bill to bring tax relief to our men and women in uniform, but the other body did not pass the bill.

This year, I put the bill back in as H.R. 693, to repeal the tax on the death gratuity. It was put into a larger bill known as the Military Tax Fairness Act, supported by both sides, sent to the other body, known as the Senate, and they still have not moved that bill. So I am coming to the floor as much as possible to ask the leadership on the House side, both Republican and Democrat, to please bring up as a stand-alone bill, H.R. 693.

Mr. Speaker, I wanted to show you another photograph. This is a young fellow whose father was killed in Iraq. His name is Tyler Jordan. His father was a Gunnery Sergeant killed while fighting for freedom in Iraq. Mr. Speaker, I bring this to the floor because this next year, his mother will receive a tax bill from Uncle Sam.

Mr. Speaker, how much does a family have to give? It gives a loved one, who has died for freedom, to protect the American people. Why can we not, as a Congress, send to the President, before we leave in November, a bill to say that we are going to repeal the tax on the death gratuity?

Mr. Speaker, I hope that the leadership on the House side, both Republican and Democrat, will join me in bringing this bill to the floor as a stand-alone bill, and let us send it to the other body and ask them to please look into their own hearts and pass that legislation and send it to the President. No family that has given a loved one, and in many cases a child, a father, a husband, should be asked next year by Uncle Sam to pay a tax on that gift.

So, with that, Mr. Speaker, I am going to close, as I do all over my district, the Third District of North Carolina, the home of Camp Lejeune Marine Base, Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base.

Mr. Speaker, I ask God to please bless the men and women in uniform; I ask God to please bless the families of the men and women in uniform; I ask God to please hold the families who have lost loved ones in His loving arms. I ask God to please bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of the Lord; and I ask God to please bless the President of the United States, that will he have courage and wisdom to what is right for this Nation, today and tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, I close three times by asking God, God please, God please, God please continue to bless America.

THE COST OF THE IRAQ WAR AND OCCUPATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Ohio

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

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



Printed on recycled paper.

H8405

(Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, a study released by the House Committee on the Budget staff concludes that the cost of the Iraq war and the Iraq occupation could easily reach \$417 billion over the next decade. That is \$17 billion more than the President has proposed for a prescription drug benefit for our seniors. The report says the best-case scenario would cost taxpayers only \$308 billion. Deputy Defense Secretary Wolfowitz said recently, "No one I know of would ever say that this war is cheap."

That, Mr. Speaker, contradicts what everyone in the Bush administration was saying before the war. Budget Director Mitch Daniels said Iraq would be "an affordable endeavor" that "will not require sustained aid." Top White House Economist Glen Hubbard said back then before the war, the "costs of any such intervention would be very small." And another White House aid, Larry Lindsey, was fired after he said it would cost \$100 billion to \$200 billion.

The report details how the President's request allocates \$157 per Iraqi for sewage improvements, while the President's budget has only \$14 per American for sewer improvements. This is U.S. tax dollars. The administration is devoting \$38 per Iraqi for hospitals, compared with \$3.30 per American.

The President is seeking \$5.7 billion to rebuild and expand Iraq's electricity generation, transmission and distribution systems, just as millions of Americans are regaining power lost due to Hurricane Isabel, and Congress continues to deal with the fallout from the August blackout in my part of the country and in the Northeast.

The President's request would send over 350 times more per person, \$255 per Iraqi, compared to 71 cents per U.S. citizen on electric power rehabilitation.

The President wants \$856 million to upgrade Iraqi airports, seaports, railroads and communication systems. Another \$470 million would go towards repairing roads, bridges and houses in Iraq and rehabilitating Iraqi government buildings.

The fine print of the President's request shows how far U.S. expenditures are going overseas and how the Bush administration, frankly, misled us before the war when he said this could be done on the cheap.

In Iraq, \$875 million is earmarked to restore drained marshlands, while at home the administration wants to hold wetland conservation programs to last year's level at \$100 million, one-eighth as much.

We have a duty, to be sure, to help the people of Iraq and Afghanistan as they rebuild their countries, but not at the expense of our own. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1738, the Iraqi Parity Act, a bill to require the U.S. Government to pay for infrastructure and social service needs for the 50 U.S. States in the same amount as the

amount of relief and reconstruction funds provided to Iraq. State and local governments in the United States deserve, at a minimum, the same level of Federal involvement to address infrastructure and social service shortfalls as the amount of relief and reconstruction funds provided to Iraq.

What I am hearing from my constituents, and I have come to this floor day after day reading letters from constituents about their concern about our entry into the war and the aftermath of that war and how the administration may not have told us everything, it may not have told us the truth in how this Congress, this Republican leadership in this Congress, has failed and refused to investigate these expenditures and failed to and refused to investigate many of the other issues around the Iraq war.

But what I am hearing from my constituents in these letters is the U.S. cannot go it alone in Iraq. My constituents are uncomfortable with the huge price tag for reconstruction; my constituents do not feel their tax dollars should bear the entire burden of reconstruction in Iraq; my constituents do not feel our troops should bear the entire burden of protecting Iraq; and, most of all, my constituents are concerned that the administration is simply not doing enough to ensure the safety of our men and women in the Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, this is a serious issue that this Congress needs to debate. We need answers. We need the Bush administration to tell us what their plans are. How long we are going to be in Iraq? How we are going to rebuild that country? How much it is going to cost, and when we are going to withdraw from that country?

SERIOUSNESS IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is recognized.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I just would like to start by saying that Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in fighting World War II, did not tell the American people how long it was going to take or what it was going to cost; all he told them was that we were going to win.

Ronald Reagan did not tell the American people how long it would take or what it would cost to defeat communism; he just told the American people we were going to win.

This week, two items on the agenda will give Members of both parties the opportunity to show the American people just how serious they are about winning the war on terror. In the coming days, we will hold hearings on the President's supplemental spending request for military and democracy-building operations in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And also this week, the House will likely debate the conference report on the Homeland Security spending bill.

Since September 11, some have tried to split homeland security from national security, as if they were two separate issues. But the war on terror cannot be won if we employ such flawed logic. Homeland security and national security are one and the same, and only by accepting this fundamental fact can we hope to defeat terrorism.

Whether we like it or not, we have to fight this war on terror. Our choice is whether to fight it in the streets of Baghdad, or in the streets of Brooklyn.

Critics of the President's policy suggest that spending billions on civil defense without aggressively fighting the terrorists everywhere they live and plan will, in and of itself, make America safer. But in this war, with an enemy that acknowledges no rules of engagement, we should not have to rely on responding to their actions; they should be responding to ours. And today in Afghanistan and Iraq, they are.

Here at home, the President's comprehensive security policy has made America a safer and better prepared Nation than ever before. Our intelligence and law enforcement communities foil terrorist plots every month. Our enemies, those here and around the world, are on the run, killed or captured, hiding in caves, or sitting in cells.

And the comprehensive security policy of the Bush doctrine is the reason for our success in the war on terror and our only hope for seeing that war through to ultimate victory.

If the President's critics do not like this policy, then it is time for them to either propose their own or get out of the way.

□ 1245

In the hearings and debate, the President's critics once and for all will finally reveal either alternative war policy or their basic unfitness for wartime leadership.

THE STATE OF THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the state of our ailing economy. The administration recently announced that it is requesting \$87 billion from Congress to fund the war and rebuild Afghanistan and Iraq's infrastructure and the economy. This is in addition to the \$79 billion that Congress made available for these efforts last spring.

Mr. Speaker, I do not have any problem with fighting the war against terrorism, whether it is in Iraq or in Afghanistan, but I am wondering where the funding is to rebuild our own economy.

Just put this \$87 billion in context for those in the Chamber and for our