

Then, finally, there is Ahmed al-Barak, a member of the Ruling Council, very prominent, who became unpopular with this administration, although previously had been very favored by them, when he said the savings could be a factor of 10 if the Iraqis did their own work. Basically, where they spend \$1 billion, we would spend a hundred million.

So I offer the 10 percent solution to this administration. Two point three billion dollars is still a lot of money where I come from, but it is a lot better than \$20.3 billion, and the Iraqis could do it for that price. We could do the reconstruction, whatever we are really obligated to because of the destruction of the war, but we do not need to give them exotic things they never had before.

I have heard we have to rebuild the electrical infrastructure. We have kind of got a failing one here, and the reason was they have got boilers from the 1950s and 1960s. Guess what? Our war did not install boilers from the 1950s and 1960s, so why is it the American people have to borrow the money to give them brand new boilers or new high-efficiency turbines to generate electricity when we could use that money here at home to put Americans to work? If we spent \$20.3 billion on real infrastructure projects that are underfunded by this administration in the United States of America, we could put one million Americans to work.

So, no, to the gold-plating, maybe a 10 percent solution if that is justified, but we should not be borrowing in the name of the American people \$20.3 billion and indebting generations of Americans to pay for the gold-plated war profiteering in Iraq.

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

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. OSBORNE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the gentleman from Michigan's (Mr. SMITH) time.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1630

PARTISAN STRIFE WEAKENS NATIONAL RESOLVE

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

Mr. OSBORNE. Madam Speaker, I am relatively new to Congress. When I

first came here 2½ years ago, I was surprised and somewhat disappointed by the partisanship that I encountered. I was from a competitive arena, and yet I had really never encountered anything like it. And then 9-11 came, and for 2 or 3 months I saw Congress function as it could. What we saw was unity of purpose. Welfare of the country was the primary priority. Partisanship, personal ambition was set aside.

Now here we are 2 years later and it seems as though we are drifting toward and have drifted toward business as usual. We are told that this is an election year that is coming up. Partisanship is escalating and some people say, well, we really cannot get much done next year because this is going to be an election year. Yet I would submit that the threat to our Nation is just as great as before 9-11 at this time. The battle lines are more clearly drawn. The stakes are higher. And still the internal dissension intensifies.

To me, this is a little bit mystifying. The great majority of people I have gotten to know, both sides of the aisle here in Congress, are genuinely good people. Yet that is really not the image that we project. Most people in my district are totally turned off by the discord they see. They do not seem to understand it; and they dismiss it as, well, that is just politics.

Certainly not all Democrats are tax-and-spend liberals with no moral compass. Certainly all Republicans are not heartless pawns of big business. And yet many times that is the way we portray each other. Certainly the President of the United States has not started a war to boost his approval ratings. Those types of comments are alarming, and they are very disturbing.

Unfounded congressional comments impugning motives and denigrating character only give substance to the belief we have no national resolve or unity. Where there is unity of purpose, the whole exceeds the sum of its parts. And I saw that consistently in athletics. If people were committed to a common goal, they pulled together and the dissenting factors tended to fall away. But where there is a lack of unity, the whole is less than the sum of its parts. Sometimes I feel that that is what characterizes this body as we get fragmented, as we throw rocks at each other.

It is critical at this time in our Nation's history that both parties pull together, that civility is exercised. As far as I am concerned, we are at war. It is a different type of war. At a time of war we cannot afford partisan strife that weakens national resolve.

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

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THIMEROSAL

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, as we approach the flu season, many of my colleagues will visit the doctor's office here on Capital Hill and receive a flu shot. And before they go, I think all my colleagues ought to know that that flu shot contains mercury, which is a substance that is toxic to the human brain. That is not to say you should not get your flu shot if you want to, but there is a lot of neurological disorders that have been caused by mercury, and I think everyone should know there is mercury in that vaccine.

That is not the only vaccine that contains thimerosal. From anthrax to hepatitis, from lyme disease to DTaP, which is given to infants to protect against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough, numerous vaccines exist that contain mercury, a harmful preservative. And parents around this country, I am sure, would be very upset if they knew that.

Scientific evidence continues to accumulate regarding the biologically-plausible connection between mercury and thimerosal, autism, and other neurological developmental disorders. Yet several well-known and firmly established pharmaceutical companies continue to put mercury into vaccines as a preservative, and it has never been tested. That is very interesting. Although the U.S. Food and Drug Administration asked vaccine manufacturers to begin removing the mercury-latent thimerosal from vaccines in 1999, they did not order them to do it. So the pharmaceutical companies continue to put that in our vaccines.

During my tenure as chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, a myriad of scientists testified at a series of hearings before the committee that mercury in vaccines is a contributing factor to developing neurological disorders, including Alzheimer's disease and autism in children. Fifteen years ago, one out of every 10,000 children were autistic. Now it is one out of 150. And many scientists believe that is because of the mercury in vaccines.

In May of this year, the California Department of Developmental Services released a report entitled "Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Changes in the California Caseload: 1999 to 2002." And the findings are very alarming. California's autistic population has nearly doubled in 4 years, from 10,360 cases in 1998 to over 20,000 cases in 2002.

This growth rate represents a 97 percent increase in just 4 years and a nearly 100 percent increase in California's case law since 1999. And they are not alone. The rate of growth in the population of persons with autism across this country is really horrible, and it is very bad in States such as Georgia, Minnesota, and Massachusetts. We have an absolute epidemic on

our hands. And if this trend is allowed to continue at a constant rate, we could have as many as 4 million autistic children in America in the next 10 years.

Despite a growing body of science linking autism to mercury and thimerosal, and the protests of hundreds of thousands of concerned parents across the country, the pharmaceutical industry continues to put mercury into vaccines for both children and adults even though they know mercury is toxic to the human brain. Pharmaceutical companies are concerned that they may be held liable in potential class action lawsuits for brain damage caused by the mercury-based preservative, which is still found in childhood vaccines diphtheria, hepatitis B and the flu shots. Because of these liability concerns, language was inserted at the last minute under the cover of darkness in the homeland security bill to protect the pharmaceutical industry from class action lawsuits. However, because we caught it, we were able to get it out of there because a lot of Members of the House and Senate thought it was terrible what they did.

Numerous scientists have testified there is a simple way to prevent this, and that is to go to single-shot vials. Those little glass containers. They would not have to put thimerosal or any preservative in if they did that. Moving to single-shot vials could have an enormously positive impact in helping to minimize, perhaps even eliminate, some of the cases of Alzheimer's and autism and other neurological disorders linked to mercury.

This is something that the pharmaceutical companies must address. Our Food and Drug Administration and our health agencies are asleep at the switch. They are letting children and adults be damaged day after day after day by allowing mercury to continue to be put into vaccines for adults and children.

We have a growing number of people who are becoming Alzheimer's patients, a dramatically growing number. We have one in 10,000 children 10 years ago that were autistic, now it is one in 150. And scientists before my committee say it is in large part because of the mercury in the vaccines. We have to get the FDA on the stick. They have to demand that pharmaceutical products having mercury be taken out of them very, very quickly. If not, we are going to continue to have an epidemic on our hands that America does not need and should not tolerate.

COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF ALTHEA GIBSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Madam Speaker, tonight I am introducing a resolution to commemorate

the life of the very talented Althea Gibson. Miss Althea Gibson represents an honorable and indelible mark on the history of America and the history of African Americans.

On this day, we seek to commemorate the life and achievements of Althea Gibson, a pioneer who left an unforgettable mark on sports as she broke the color barrier in tennis in America in the 1950s and helped pave the way for future generations of black athletes.

On Sunday, September 28, Miss Gibson died at the age of 76. Though the general public had largely forgotten her name in sports, Althea Gibson will always be a giant in sports history. The eldest of five children, Miss Gibson was raised in the Harlem section of New York City. She began studying tennis privately through the support of friends while furthering her education by attending Florida A&M University where she graduated in 1953.

Althea Gibson was the first black player on the Ladies Professional Golfers Association tour. She was a self-described born athlete who broke racial barriers not only in tennis but also in the Ladies Professional Golf Association. In a capstone to her career, she toured with the Harlem Globetrotters basketball team after retiring from tennis.

Miss Gibson won the American Tennis Association's Women's Singles Tournament 10 years in a row. However, tennis tournaments outside the ATA remained closed to her until 1950. In that year, white tennis player Alice Marble wrote an article in American Lawn Tennis magazine, noting that this excellent player was not able to participate in the better-known championships for no other reason than bigotry.

So later that year, Althea Gibson entered the Forest Hills, New York, national grass court championship, the first African American player of either sex to be allowed to enter. In 1950, Gibson became the first black player to compete in the U.S. tennis championships, and she played at Wimbledon in 1951. She captured the Wimbledon and U.S. championships in 1957 and 1958, and also won the French Open, and three Wimbledon doubles titles from 1956 through 1958. Her presence helped pave the way for later stars, such as Arthur Ashe, Venus and Serena Williams, and, of course, Tiger Woods.

On this day, let us all commemorate Miss Althea Gibson's fighting spirit and championship efforts. Miss Gibson came from the depths of racism and overcame much adversity. She proved as much as anyone that desire can beat the burdens of racism.

In closing, I would like to end with a quote from Miss Gibson: "In sports, you simply aren't considered a real champion until you have defended your title successfully. Winning it once can be a fluke; winning it twice proves you are the best." Today, we would like to commemorate Althea Gibson, truly one of the best.

H.R. 693, REPEALING TAX ON DEATH GRATUITY

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

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, I am on the floor again. I come to the floor about once a week to talk about a bill, H.R. 693, to repeal the tax on the death gratuity.

The history of this is that in 1991 the United States Congress enacted legislation that created going from \$3,000 to \$6,000 the death gratuity. The death gratuity is a payment to the families who have lost a loved one in uniform, whether they be training or they be in war.

A couple of years ago I heard about this tax; and I thought about how unfair, how unacceptable that any family who has given a loved one in uniform for this country should have to pay a tax on a very small amount of money known as the death gratuity of \$6,000. A year ago I introduced a bill that would take care of this tax and remove it. It was put in a larger package by the House leadership, which I appreciated, and sent over to the other body; but they did not act on the legislation. So we went another year that families who lost loved ones paid a tax on their gift of that loved one to this Nation and for freedom.

Again this year, Madam Speaker, we sent a bigger bill over with this language in it that would repeal the tax, but the other body will not take it up. And I want to give some examples of this, Madam Speaker.

From September 2001 through December 2001, 292 families in America had to pay a tax on their gift, that gift being a family member in uniform. In the year 2002, 1,007 families had to pay Uncle Sam for their gift of their loved one in uniform who died fighting for freedom. Already this year it is over 300. I do not know what the total will be when we reach December 31.

Madam Speaker, let me show a photograph of a young man who is 6 years old. His name is Tyler Jordan. Tyler is holding the American flag under his arm as he is looking at his daddy's casket. Tyler's father was a gunnery sergeant named Phillip Jordan, who was killed in Iraq fighting for freedom.

□ 1645

I look at this little boy, I saw it in the newspaper and it struck me so personally, I decided to try to get a copy of this young boy's face. Tyler's mother is going to get a bill from Uncle Sam, is not giving your daddy enough without receiving a tax from Uncle Sam on a small amount of money, \$6,000, the death gratuity.

I want to read an e-mail from a father who e-mailed me last week. "Dear Representative JONES, Thank you for your support of H.R. 693. Our son, Sergeant Jacob Frazier, was killed in action on March 29, 2003, in Afghanistan. Upon being told we would be taxed on