

as what we get from the entire individual income tax. With that kind of spending, it should have been able to create some jobs.

□ 1515

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield once again. The other thing that would create the climate for jobs would be small businesses. And yet here at the end of last year, the 7(a) loan program, which is really the driving force for financing for small businesses was absolutely turned out. No money in it. It was eliminated. But because we raised so much havoc on it, they have brought that back, but with fewer dollars. So we still do not have the infusion of money for this powerful engine that drives the economy through job creation, which are the small businesses.

So, again, the President is not operating in the true sense of helping Americans to get back to work.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, again, the Congressional Black Caucus stands up, as we have over and over again. It is said that we are the conscience of the Congress. I claim we are the conscience of the United States of America.

The fact is that President Bush is doing no favors for not only the African American community but communities throughout this country; for hardworking Americans who got up early this morning, some of whom had a job, but for others who are about to lose their job, and still others, Mr. Speaker, who do not have to go to work because they have already lost their job. I just find it very interesting that the President would go to Ohio, a State where there has been phenomenal job loss, and tell people who do not have a paycheck to hold on and hold out.

CONDOLENCES TO TERRORIST VICTIMS IN SPAIN; AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS VULNERABILITY AND REDUCTION ACT OF 2003

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

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my condolences to the families of the terrorist victims in Madrid, Spain.

This heinous act of violence is becoming all too common an occurrence. This morning, as we are all painfully aware, a series of explosions ripped through several packed commuter trains in Madrid during the morning rush hour. The blast killed at least 173 people and wounded 600.

Last month, in an all too familiar circumstance in Moscow, a bomb exploded inside a crowded subway train during the morning rush hour, killing at least 39 people and wounding more than 130.

Securing our Nation's public transportation system has been a top priority of mine. At the outset of the 108th Congress, I introduced the Public Transportation Systems Vulnerability and Reduction Act of 2003, which is H.R. 1148. For years, Mr. Speaker, governments around the world have recognized that public transportation is a major terrorist target. Until 9-11, the United States had been largely spared the kinds of terrorist campaigns waged against public service transportation. However, we cannot wait for a tragedy to happen to prompt us to address our vulnerabilities.

In October 2001, a study released by the Mineta Institute, Protecting Public Surface Transportation Against Terrorism and Serious Crime: An Executive Overview, cites that between 1920 and 2000, there have been approximately 900 terrorist attacks and other significant criminal incidents involving public surface transportation systems. However, all but 14 of these attacks occurred after 1970, the year that marks the beginning of modern terrorism.

Attacks against transportation and transportation infrastructures accounted for about 42 percent of all international terrorist attacks according to the most recent statistics provided by the U.S. DOT Office of Intelligence and Security in 1998. We are seeing these statistics play out before our eyes on CNN.

My legislation, the Public Transportation Systems Vulnerability and Reduction Act of 2003, will provide our Nation's transportation systems and workers with the training and funding to help protect our homeland. This legislation will provide funding for ongoing vulnerability assessments which would build continuously on information collected, allowing for easier implementation of new technology that will assist in averting terrorist attacks on all modes of public transportation. It will have training programs for front-line transit employees, ensuring that these employees, who are the eyes and ears of transportation systems, are prepared to respond to emergency situations. And it will develop and have implementation of local and regional emergency preparedness plans that fully utilize a community's transportation resources.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in continuing to work to give our Nation's transportation systems and employees the resources to protect our communities. I urge my colleagues to support the Public Transportation Systems Vulnerability and Reduction Act of 2003.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. I yield to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for yielding, because I want to identify with the remarks she made starting off her 5-minute speech. I was going to start my

special order in the same way, recognizing and extending our sympathy to the families of the victims in Spain.

It was only a short period ago that the prime minister from Spain was here, and last summer I had the opportunity to visit in Spain with the prime minister, along with the Speaker of our House, to express our appreciation to our colleagues in Spain who have been very involved in the war on terrorism. And so I thank the gentlewoman for bringing that to the attention of our colleagues here in the House.

I will also take a look at the legislation that the gentlewoman has authored, recognizing that the war on terrorism is a real war.

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for his interest.

IRAQ

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

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, today, I am joined in this special order by my colleague, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE). As my colleague from California just indicated, we come to the floor of the House recognizing the tragedy of the terrorist attacks in Spain. We are not quite sure who was responsible, but we know there was a significant loss of life.

We know that Spain has been an ally in the war on terrorism. Their soldiers have fought with our troops in Iraq. Their prime minister was here a couple of months ago indicating their strong support and their partnership, whether it was al-Qaeda, whether it was domestic terrorism, or whatever.

But we join in expressing our sympathy to the government and the people of Spain for the loss that they suffered today and reaffirm our commitment to the people of Spain that we will continue to work and fight with them in this war on terrorism that in so many different ways has reared its ugly head not only in Spain, the United States, but in Africa, in Saudi Arabia, and with the USS *Cole* and a number of other attacks throughout the world.

Today, we want to talk a little bit about the situation that has gone on in Iraq and kind of put that in context. We have recognized this war on terrorism. We have recognized the threats from Saddam Hussein and others for a long period of time. It was back in 1992 that Senator Gore was talking about what a threat Saddam Hussein and Iraq was.

Here is a quote from a speech he gave in 1992. Senator Al Gore: "He," meaning Saddam Hussein, "had already launched poison gas attacks repeatedly, and Bush looked the other way. He had already conducted extensive terrorism activities, and Bush looked

the other way. He was already deeply involved in the efforts to obtain nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Bush knew it, but he looked the other way. Well, in my view," and the "my" was Senator Gore, "the Bush administration was acting in a manner directly opposite to what you would expect with all the evidence it had available to it at the time. Saddam Hussein's nature and intentions were perfectly visible."

Already in 1992, Senator Gore had identified Saddam Hussein and Iraq as a threat to American Security and to the security of the Middle East and as a danger to his own people. And I think that goes on to President Clinton, who, during the 1990s, identified Saddam Hussein and Iraq as a threat. And I think my colleague from Indiana may have some of the statements that President Clinton was making.

This is not to say what should or not have been in the 1990s, this is saying that through the last 10 to 15 years we knew Saddam was a threat.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from Indiana.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for hosting this special order. And having just returned from Iraq, it is particularly meaningful to me to acknowledge the gentleman's leadership in this Congress in traveling to Iraq since the end of hostilities more, I think, than any other Member of Congress; and having just learned what that has meant to our troops and what that has meant to the people in the transition process at the coalition authority, I want to thank him for that.

There is no question this issue of weapons of mass destruction, which has become such a political football in America today, represents some form of an intelligence failure, if by that we recognize that we have not found the vials of chemical and biological weapons. But it is absolutely imperative, as the gentleman suggests, to know that if it was an intelligence failure, it was a world intelligence failure and it was an intelligence conclusion that was drawn by at least two previous administrations.

I cite in evidence the remarks of President Bill Clinton on February 17, 1998. Again, these are the words of the President of the United States about what official U.S. policy was relative to the possession of weapons of mass destruction by the regime of Saddam Hussein.

President Clinton said, "And they," referring to predators of the 21st century, "they will be all the more lethal if we allow them to build arsenals of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them." President Clinton went on to say, "We simply cannot allow that to happen. There should be no doubt," President Bill Clinton said, "There should be no doubt Saddam's ability to produce and deliver weapons of mass destruction poses a grave threat to the peace of

that region and the security of the world."

President Clinton went on to say, "There is no more clear example of this threat than Saddam Hussein's Iraq. His regime threatens the safety of his people, the stability of his region," and he went on to describe Iraq as, "a rogue state with weapons of mass destruction, ready to use them or provide them to terrorists who have traveled the world. If we fail to respond today to Saddam Hussein, he will be emboldened tomorrow by the knowledge that he can act with impunity."

These are the words of the 42nd President of the United States of America, William Jefferson Clinton, about the conclusions of the Intelligence Community and his personal conclusions as our Commander-in-Chief that Iraq did possess biological and chemical weapons in the year 1998.

□ 1530

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, what we know is through the 1990s, there was a consensus that there was a war on terrorism that was being fought, that there were issues dealing with Iraq and dealing with Saddam Hussein. It was not only the President; it was the Clinton administration. Madeleine Albright said "Hussein's weapons will not discriminate if and when they are used, and therefore it is important for the region to understand that he is a threat."

In September 1998 she said, "Our adversaries are likely to avoid traditional battlefield situations because there American dominance is well-established. We must be concerned instead about weapons of mass destruction and by the cowardly instruments of sabotage and hidden bombs. These unconventional threats endanger not only our Armed Forces, but all Americans and America's friends everywhere." That is September 9, 1998.

So the threat of weapons of mass destruction, but most importantly the larger threat not specifically identifying what terrorist organizations would use, but recognizing the emergence of a different kind of threat to American, to Western Europe as the Cold War collapsed of unconventional threats that would endanger not military folks, but that would target civilians.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, on February 18, completely consistent with Secretary Albright's remarks, "In the next century the community of nations will see more and more of the very kind of threat Iraq poses now." In describing it, President Clinton said, "A rogue state with weapons of mass destruction ready to use them or provide them to terrorists."

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I think the quotes go well on to other folks in 2000. So this is a continuing story of intelligence. As we move through this process, on a bipartisan basis, this is what we believed the threat was to the United States. One of

the things that we are going to focus on here today, not what we think about here in Washington, when we put this in context, we will talk about the threat that Saddam Hussein was, not to America, not to the Middle East, but most importantly to his own people.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, to that end, and I am anxious to get to that conversation, I have to tell my colleague that the search for weapons of mass destruction found for the Iraqis that I spoke to in Basra, it found its locus the day Saddam Hussein was captured by American troops. This is a man who, according to former prisoners of war, he and his regime were responsible for the death by incarceration or other means of 1.2 to 1.3 million of their countrymen. According to Amnesty International, we have identified the remains thus far in 270 mass graves of 400,000 men, women, boys, and girls in the mass graves of Saddam Hussein.

But the weapons-of-mass-destruction issue is an issue, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. HOEKSTRA) is right to address it in the beginning inasmuch as it is in the mind of the American people. But none other than Senator DASCHLE, who has been the majority leader of the Senate in recent years, but at the time in 1998 and President Clinton's decision to fire cruise missiles and attack Iraq was minority leader, Senator DASCHLE said, "We are here today to affirm that we and the American people stand with the President and the international community in an effort to end Iraq's weapons of mass destruction programs and preserve our vital and international interests."

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The Chair reminds Members not to refer to individual Members of the other body.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, there is no question whatsoever that the position of the administration and others in America supported the conclusion that the intelligence community, not just of the Bush administration, but of the administration that preceded it came to a singular conclusion: that Iraq was in possession of weapons of mass destruction.

I am always anxious to remind my constituents in eastern Indiana that the reason we know Saddam Hussein possessed weapons of mass destruction was because he used them. He used them on his own people. He used them to kill thousands in Kurdistan in the early 1990s in the immediate aftermath of the first Persian Gulf War. We are told by eyewitness accounts of men, women and children running in the middle of the night out of their bedrooms, out into the streets, grabbing their throats as they were asphyxiated by mustard gas or some other chemical agent and killed in the streets and towns of Kurdistan. Chemical weapons were used against his own people. It is not a subject of theoretical analysis or

intelligence analysis; but as the gentleman from Michigan knows, it is a matter of historical fact and record that Saddam Hussein in the early 1990s possessed and used chemical weapons against his own population.

What became of them in the days immediately prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom, we will continue to investigate. I traveled by the site of the Iraqi survey group in Baghdad just 1 week ago, and I know in meeting with the intelligence community there that that search goes on. And as we continue to bring Iraq forward in the family of nations, and as the people of Iraq, I believe, become more confident in their own future and in the end of the dark days of Iraq and the regime and the thugs that preceded this new Iraqi Governing Council and this new government, more people will speak and more daylight will shine, and we will eventually find out what became of this program and its horrendously dangerous by-products.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, during much of the 1990s this was done on a bipartisan basis, which is maybe different than what we see today; but here is Vice President Gore talking on May 23, 2000: "The classic challenges of war and peace, of course, extend beyond Israel's immediate neighborhoods to Iraq and Iran. In 1991, I broke with many in my own party and voted to use force to stop Saddam Hussein's aggression in the Middle East. I believe in bipartisanship most of all when our national interests are at stake." Going on, he wants to build bipartisan bridges to bring Democrats and Republicans together in support of policies that would promote what is in our Nation's best interest.

As my colleague has gone through and read some of the quotes, there was a bipartisan understanding about Iraq and the threat that it posed. Here again is Al Gore, the Vice President, in May of 2000: "Despite our swift victory and our efforts since, there is no doubt in my mind that Saddam Hussein still seeks to amass weapons of mass destruction. You know as well as I do that as long as Saddam Hussein stays in power, there can be no comprehensive peace for the people of Israel or the people of the Middle East."

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, a very moving part of my trip to Baghdad was our meetings at the headquarters of the Coalition Provisional Authority at Saddam Hussein's palace.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. One of many palaces.

Mr. PENCE. One of 100. It was the size of three or four resorts in Florida and twice as opulent. But across the street, there is a bunker underground hidden underneath what appears to be a garbage dump or a broken and destroyed building. It was three stories underground. It was one of those sophisticated bunkers we hear about; but what was most provocative to me was to learn that in that bunker was an enormous financial investment in a

ventilation system which was designed as a countermeasure to the distribution of chemical or biological weapons. There was a decontamination room to essentially remove chemical or biological agents that were on a person before they could enter the bunker itself.

For a regime that, according to some of the administration's critics, never had weapons of mass destruction, Saddam Hussein's own bunker, literally down the street from his primary palace, had an enormous multi-million dollar investment to protect him from weapons that he apparently did not possess.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Right. And we knew that he used these weapons, and so he had them at one time. The interesting thing about what Vice President Gore said in May of 2000, "We have made it clear that it is our policy to see Saddam Hussein gone," that became the official policy of the United States, was to remove Saddam Hussein, not only because of the weapons of mass destruction, but because of the threat that he posed to his own people, to the Middle East, and to the rest of the world.

We can go on and there are lots of quotes by other folks who have talked about that. This morning we had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Kay again, the original head of the Iraqi survey group, taking a look at exactly what was going on in Iraq. He has said, and I tend to agree with him after having met with him a number of times and after having gone to Iraq, we may not find the weapons of mass destruction. They may actually not be there. But what he has said is take a look at what was going on. He was developing the capability to go into quick production of weapons of mass destruction. He said I am not going to inventory this stuff, but as soon as the U.N. inspectors are gone, as soon as the sanctions are lifted, I will have the capability that 3 to 6 months I will be able to produce all of the chemical or biological weapons I need, so why store them. Get rid of the inspectors, develop the capability under what appear to be legitimate purposes; but they are dual-use capabilities. I will use them to make this, but just with the flip of a switch and fine-tuning, I can use those to make weapons of mass destruction. We know that he was developing those capabilities.

There is evidence that he was doing human testing to fine-tune the capabilities that he would have and the weapons and products that he would eventually produce. We know that he was doing research on UAVs, unmanned aerial vehicles, potentially to be the means for delivering weapons of mass destruction.

We know that he was developing a missile capability well beyond the authorized levels that had been established by the U.N. So in all of these areas, he was either moving his program forward secretly or moving them beyond what the U.N. sanctions had

said. So there is no doubt, and that is the message through the 1990s.

We are not sure exactly what was there because it was a very secretive society. He was very good at deceiving others when we were trying to penetrate into what was going on in Iraq. But there is no doubt about what his plans and intentions were. This is why Dr. Kay will say we may not have found exactly what we were expecting to find when we got into Iraq; but what we found was as dangerous, if not more dangerous, than what we had anticipated that we would find.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I think that the statement that the gentleman just made is extremely important. I think that statement should be highlighted and underscored and chiseled in a place where every American can read it.

As he said again here on Capitol Hill, Dr. David Kay, weapons inspector who led the original effort after the war with the Iraqi survey group, he said what he found was more dangerous than what they believed would be there. In terms of the establishment of a diverse program of chemical and biological weapons, as the gentleman has with great particularity described, was prepared in the event of the strictures being lifted, was prepared to produce large amounts of these types of weapons.

Of course we found the nose cones on missiles hollowed out just for the size of an inclusion of a vial of certain types of agents that would have no other reason to be hollowed out as a warhead in that way. We found these munitions in large numbers. But David Kay said that what we found was in many respects more dangerous than what we expected to find.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I think it is a very valuable debate to have here in the United States about what did we find versus what we expected to find; and that will force us to seriously look at our intelligence capabilities, what do we need to do to improve our intelligence capabilities to give us as policymakers better information on which to make decisions in the future; and we will have that discussion and debate. The President is fully cooperating with the various commissions that are out there to do an investigation of the intelligence community.

□ 1545

The Senate Intelligence Committee is doing it, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence is doing it. We all recognize that the intelligence business is a very, very difficult business; that we do not get all the information we would like to have; that when we go into a place like Iraq or try to take a look at what is going on in North Korea, Libya or Iran, as we are trying to look in and figure out what is going on, these folks are trying to hide and deceive us so that we do not understand what is going on.

Mr. PENCE. If the gentleman will yield, I would like to know why President Bill Clinton got it wrong. I would like to know why Vice President Gore had the weapons of mass destruction estimate for Iraq so wrong. And I do not say that in a partisan spirit, I say that because if, in fact, there were never any weapons of mass destruction following the time he used them against his own people in the early 1990s, then there was an intelligence failure. But if it was, it truly was an institutional failure; not, as some would suggest, not associated with the present administration, but associated with an institutional failure that, I will add one other point if the gentleman will permit me, was not just an intelligence failure of the U.S. intelligence failure, but it was, as I said at the beginning, a world intelligence failure.

The intelligence communities of every one of our allies in the western world, in this cause, and even many who chose not to join us, France and Germany and Russia's intelligence community, as their votes in the U.N. Security Council support, all of them came to the conclusion, unequivocally, that Saddam Hussein possessed biological and chemical weapons.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I get a little nervous talking about saying we got it wrong, because I have had the opportunity, having served on the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence now for 3 years, to have met a lot of our men and women involved in this process.

The first thing we have to recognize is they got a very important thing right, Saddam was a threat. It is not like we got into Iraq and it is like, wow, there is nothing here; he was not doing anything, he was just trying to build the country for his people. He was focused on delivering them quality healthcare, education. You guys got it all wrong.

That is not the Saddam Hussein we see and this is not the Saddam Hussein that his own people saw. They got it right, that this guy had every intent of restarting a weapons of mass destruction program, and we missed that he changed his strategy, from stockpiling to producing these things on demand.

So we got some of those things wrong.

But overall, the strategic analysis, because these men and women we have in our Intelligence Community, this is an art, and Saddam Hussein was a master at deceit, and we did not necessarily give our intel folks everything they needed to figure it out.

Mr. PENCE. The gentleman has caught me in a little bit of a rhetorical joust, and it seems to me that those who want to say we did not find what would have amounted, if we were absolutely correct, to a two-car garage load of biological and chemical weapons, it would not have filled more than that. But if we were wrong at the time, we went to war that that did not exist,

that is the straining of the gnat when we ignore the elephant in the room.

The elephant in the room is the man and his regime were a weapon of mass destruction, terrorized and killed over 1 million of his own people, had these weapons and used them against his own people in the past, and, as the gentleman from Michigan says eloquently, most assuredly our conclusion that he was a menace and threat was accurate.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Let us go to where the gentleman wanted to go today. I was in Iraq last year in August, I went back in September of last year, and then I was there 3 weeks ago. You were there last week. If there is any question about whether Saddam was an instrument of mass destruction, I think you and I were most touched when we actually had the opportunity to talk to the people of Iraq and their response. Then you talk to the next group that has had the most interaction with the Iraqi people on a personal level, and that is our troops. Then you talk to the policymakers and all of those kinds of things.

But the closer you get to the people who were closest to Saddam, I think my colleague will agree, that, by and large, the vast majority of those folks, and I will admit and recognize that Iraq continues to be a very dangerous place; there are people there who want to kill our troops; there are people there who want to kill the Iraqis that are working towards building a new Iraq; but for the average person in Iraq, they are absolutely thrilled and thankful that Saddam Hussein is gone.

Mr. PENCE. Apart from the inspiration of meeting particularly Hoosiers in uniform in Baghdad, the most inspiring for me, and this picture gives evidence, was the opportunities we had a week ago to meet with ordinary Iraqis, people working construction, men and women of various traditions, and even various faiths.

One of our meetings, and it may astound some that could be looking in, Mr. Speaker, is we had a meeting with a Shia cleric, a Shiite Muslim politician and the Catholic Bishop of Basra, who walked in in full religious garb, embraced the Shia cleric, as they obviously had great affection for one another, and then spoke of the religious pluralism that was a tradition for over 800 years in the communities of Basra in southeastern Iraq.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. What we forget is the rich tradition of Iraq. I do not know whether you have got it, but I have some things that have been posted on the Internet by folks who recount the history of this part of the world. It is a rich cultural heritage, the cradle of civilization, and that is what the people of Iraq want to be recognized and remembered for. They want to forget about the days of Saddam Hussein, because he robbed them of that great history and tradition.

Mr. PENCE. That is absolutely right. Basra itself is just south of the convergence of the Euphrates and Tigris Riv-

ers, which the Bible records to be the location of the Garden of Eden. At Tallil Air Base, you can see essentially a pyramid from 2100 B.C. that marks the birthplace of Abraham, what was known as Ur of the Chaldeans. It is a place of incalculable historical value and significance, and the people reflect that.

But I have to tell the gentleman from Michigan, Mr. Speaker, that I fell in love with the Iraqi people that I met. The two qualities of the people that I met, and, again, it was only 60 or 70 regular Iraqis that we spent significant time with in the course of that weekend, but the Iraqi people that I met were highly literate, most of them spoke functional English, which was helpful to me, and the two characteristics, there were three. Number one, they were people who had very strong opinions, which made me feel at home, being from Indiana and the Midwest, as the gentleman from Michigan is.

We sat in a meeting, and, boy we heard it. Some people did not like how we were spending money on construction, other people did not like how we were investing in domestic security. But they had strong opinions, they were articulate, and they were revealing in the ability to express the opinions for the first time in their lifetimes.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I experienced some of the same stuff when I met with the Iraqi people. You went right to where I was going. They are learning the ability to speak out, because under Saddam Hussein, if they had spoken out, they would be dead. So they are aggressive, and sometimes you kind of say look, you cannot say it that way or whatever. But, wait a minute, they have only had the opportunity to speak out for the last 8 months. You are right, they do not know everything they have to do to be politically correct.

But what a wonderful experience for them for the first time to be able to speak out, to meet with Members of the U.S. Congress or of the Parliament from Britain or members from Spain, but representative government, and for the first time, to have the ability to express their opinions and their vision for their own country and communities.

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman. That was evident. The reason I start with that is to say this was not a group of people that were handpicked to tell four Congressmen what they wanted to hear. These people had some sharp elbows. But when you would ask any Iraqi, what do you think of our decision, along with 33 other nations, to remove Saddam Hussein, they would stop in many cases, their eyes would well up with tears, they would often grab us by the hand, and, as one Shia cleric looked me in the eye and said through an interpreter, Saddam Hussein was a nightmare, and I quote, he said, because I will never forget it, he said, "The day you defeated Saddam Hussein

was like a dark curtain being lifted off of the Iraqi people and the daylight shone in."

The sense of gratitude among the Iraqis, not only leaders, but rank and file folks that we met, was deeply moving to me as an American, and it was real and it was genuine. And I believe that from what they said, that among the 10 million souls who call themselves Iraqis, it is the dominant, overwhelming opinion of the people, one of gratitude to the people of the United States of America for ending a nightmare in their Nation.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. It is the same experience I had. In September I had the opportunity to spend a day with one of my constituents who is kind of heading up the healthcare rebuilding in Iraq, Jim Hoveman. I spent the day, and we went through one of the facilities where they are rebuilding an administrative building.

Again, I am just kind of walking through the building, and I stopped and talked to two of the construction workers. It was not long, and I had about 40 of them around me, kids, maybe 18 years old, and then individuals that were probably getting closer to 45 or 50. But they wanted to talk, and they wanted to ask questions. But you could see the excitement that they felt, to have the opportunity to talk with people, to express their views and express their appreciation.

Then we went to one of the hospitals. The doctors and everybody focused finally on equality of healthcare, meaning it was going to be available all across the country. In Basra, they did not have much at all. This is a country that spent like \$1 per individual.

A couple of weeks ago, I had the opportunity to be at the White House where the First Lady introduced the program that they are going to do with Project Hope to build a highly technical state-of-the-art Children's Hospital in Basra.

There is some debate as to whether this hospital should be built or whether the money should be spent in a different way. Again, we will have that debate. But what it says is it is not awesome that for the first time, rather than seeing a high quality healthcare system that deteriorated for 30 years, now there are people that are looking at going into Iraq and creating a state-of-the-art children's hospital so that not only all the kids from Iraq, but that children from around the Middle East will now go to Iraq for quality healthcare and special care for the kids.

Mr. PENCE. These are the stories, Mr. Speaker, that are not being told. These are the stories of compassion that are, however, reaching the Iraqi people. They may not make it on American broadcast television with great frequency, but they are reaching the hearts of the Iraqi people. You can see from this photograph, which is one of literally dozens I returned with, these men were construction workers

at a USAID program, and some were attending a class on democracy. And we just stopped, and I think you can see even from this poor reproduction the warmth with which I was greeted by regular Iraqis.

I share one anecdote. We walked into a classroom, they are holding these democracy classes all over Iraq, and they are probably at, what we would say in the United States as a 5th grade level, where they are teaching what it means to live under a constitution, what the Bill of Rights are. We went into one of these classes. They are all adults. And I walked in, and, of course, was listening in for a time as they spoke in Arabic.

Then they rose and started to greet me and a few other Members of Congress. Several women wearing traditional garb walked up. I said, "Do you speak English?" They all said yes. They proceeded to share with me, and I have got them in my office, handwritten poems about what democracy means to them. And on my Web site, Mike.Spence.House.Gov you can see this picture, literally these women handing this to me as if it were a newborn infant, this poem, their hands literally shaking at excitement with the idea of being able to be involved in representative democracy as citizens.

I close on this point. I looked them in the eye and I said, "You all are like the founding generation of the United States of America. You are like the people that lived in 1776." I said, "I envy you, because future generations of Iraqis will look back at you and thank you for your courage and your success and your belief in a free future."

□ 1600

And they all giggled with delight; they understood what I meant and were obviously thrilled with the comparison to our founding generation.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding; and I think he has it exactly right, because we have to recognize how far these people have to go and where they are coming from. I mean, whether it is in Afghanistan where they were under the control of the Russians and the Taliban for 12 years and their per capita income is \$150, where they do not have the rule of law, they do not have police agencies in place, they do not have a judicial system in place, they do not have transparent government agencies, so they have to go through that whole building process and they have to learn about representative government.

It is unrealistic for America, for Congress, or for anyone else to expect that by July 1 they will be like us, that they will fully understand representative government. That is going to take a tremendous amount of work; and we are doing this work in a very difficult environment, because there are still folks there who, if they saw and could identify the Iraqis that were meeting with the gentleman from Indiana (Mr.

PENCE), those folks will become targets. There are groups out there, this is still a very deadly environment, but the gentleman is absolutely right. These people are going to be at the leading edge of building a new country.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, because the point he just made to me is a colossal one. The very willingness of regular Iraqis to attend democracy classes sponsored by the United States Agency for International Development is an act of personal courage. The day after we left Baghdad, literally a week ago, was the bloodiest day in Iraq since the end of the war. Four mosques were attacked in Karbala and in Baghdad where we just were. Nearly 300 Iraqis were killed; many more hundreds injured, and all of the mosques that were attacked, as the gentleman alluded to, all the mosques that were attacked were clerics and imams who were cooperating or understood to be cooperating with the transition to democracy in Iraq.

One last point. The Iraqis that we spoke to were rather incredulous that we were in any way surprised by the violence. I will never forget the Iraqi who said to me, these people killed over a million of our countrymen to hold on to power. Why does it seem surprising to your people that they would kill to get it back?

And I yield back.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, some ask, are you winning the war on terror, and the level of violence in Iraq is something that we are very, very disappointed in. But the gentleman is absolutely right. We should not be surprised. There was a letter that we intercepted and captured a couple of weeks ago that clearly indicates we are making progress, because the letter indicates that, Hey, we need to kill Americans and coalition forces; but where we really now need to move to, because we know that they are being successful, we need to target Iraqis, either to discourage them from moving forward to building a new Iraq, and to try to create divisions between the Shiites and the Sunnis and the Kurds and try to incite civil war. The terrorist organizations and individuals who feel that they will be disenfranchised because they are associated with the former regime will do just about anything to keep power, and that anything right now means that they will target and kill Iraqis.

When we were there, we had the opportunity to meet with 600, 500, 600 police cadets, and we went there because the week before we were there, again, two bombings and over 100 either police recruits or policemen were killed. They are the first step in building a civil society, keeping law and order on the streets. And we talked to them; we laid a wreath at the academy and spoke with them about how we were going to stand with them. Because we know that these young men and women, men and women in their police academy, the day they leave that academy, they

are going to go into an environment where the police are going to have a price on their head. But when we went through, and I mean the gentleman had the same experience with the folks that he saw, the first thing you did is you looked in their eyes. They were glad that we were there. You looked in their face and there was a smile on their face. You heard what they had to say, and I think there was appreciation in what they had to say. You shook their hands, and it was a firm handshake.

Something that I had not experienced in my previous trips: when we were at the police academy, after just about every handshake and every thank you, they put their hand over their heart and then put it at their side. I said, What does that mean? I got it wrong; sometimes I would start with that. And they said, no, no, no, you end with that. What they said when they explained, they said, that demonstrates the intensity and the sincerity with which they are expressing their appreciation and their feelings to you for being there. So we had six Members of Congress who went to their academy and said, thank you, and as the gentleman states, our chairman was very eloquent when he talked to them, saying that you are the generation that will create the foundation for a new Iraq, and people will remember you because of what you are doing and the risks and the sacrifices that you may take. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman, and I thank him for that moving explanation. I can candidly tell the gentleman that I did not have the presence to ask why almost every one of the nearly 80 Iraqis that I met ended every conversation like this; but I am very moved to learn it on this blue carpet, that it meant this is the intensity of the gratitude and the feelings. But I can attest on this floor that virtually every Iraqi with whom I spoke ended with their hand on their heart, speaking to me as a member of the United States. And I really believe, although intelligence estimates are that we are dealing with 1,000 to 2,000 insurgents, left over thugs, imported terrorists, people that are doing the killing that is going on and purposing to do more, but this is 1,000 to 2,000 essentially criminals and terrorists in a country of 10 million. And I believe in my heart, and I know the gentleman is my senior in Congress and often cautions me about over generalizations, but I believe in my heart if the Iraqi people could look the American people in the eye and rise as one man or one woman, they would be standing with their hand over their heart.

The people of Iraq that I spoke to are profoundly and overwhelmingly and emotionally grateful to the people of the United States of America, of Great Britain and Spain and all of the 33 nations that freed them from this nightmare of Saddam Hussein. I think of particularly the moment where a man

who had been jailed 12 times over 25 years, who now is heading up an organization to identify the fate of nearly 1.2 million Iraqi men, women, and boys and girls who are still missing, who were dragged from their homes because of the belief in their disloyalty to Saddam Hussein. No due process of law, no trial of a jury of their peers, simply dragged away, never to be heard from again. And that man, as I expressed my appreciation for his courage, put his hand over his heart and expressed his thanks to the people of the United States of America for ending the nightmare, as he described it, of Saddam Hussein.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, let us take a look at a different layer, because the gentleman and I know that when we are in Iraq, we do not get to go to all of the places we would like to go. I mean, when I have been in Baghdad, it is kind of like there is a lot of commerce, there is a lot of cars, the roads are busy, there is lots of people; and you want to just grab your driver and say stop, let me out, and let me spend the next half hour, hour just walking down the streets and talking to the people of Iraq, because I want to find out whether you are giving me the straight scoop. I think I am getting good input from the Iraqis, but are you selectively feeding me people that will only come with a smile on their face and those kinds of things.

The gentleman and I have both had the opportunity to talk to another layer of people who have interacted with the Iraqi people, and that is the American and coalition troops. When I was there last time, I had the opportunity to have dinner with 10 soldiers from Michigan, and my colleagues had dinner with 10 to 15 troops from their States. So we are talking to 75, 80 troops. And then I also had the opportunity to talk to parents or spouses whose husbands or wives are over in Iraq; and the American troops and the coalition troops, they are the ones, the ones that I met with. They are the ones that are patrolling the streets of Baghdad. Baghdad is divided into sectors, and the group that I had dinner with, they are patrolling four segments. So you ask them and say, What are the Iraqi people saying to you? And our troops, although I have not spoken to all of them, so I cannot say all of the troops, but the ones that I have spoken to have no doubt that we are there for the right reasons.

The gentleman from Indiana is right, they are not worried about whether we found weapons of mass destruction. Again, they have heard the stories of the torture, the killings, the brutality they have seen, how Saddam took care of himself and did not take care of his own people. They know all of this stuff. And they will tell us we are there for the right reasons. The Iraqi people are thrilled that we are there. The Iraqi people are frustrated that some of the rebuilding is not going as quickly as they would like it, that the security is

not where they would like it, it is not where we would like it. But at the end of the day, they are glad we are here, they are glad Saddam is gone, and they are going to help us rebuild. They will tell us great stories about interacting, handing out books, rebuilding schools, digging wells, cleaning up irrigation trenches, getting the power going, and doing all of these things to help the Iraqis on a personal level.

I think the gentleman from Indiana had an opportunity to meet with some of the troops, and I yield to my colleague.

Mr. PENCE. We did, Mr. Speaker. As this picture attests, this is the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON), who led our delegation with great distinction, and me with a number of Hoosiers in the Air Force at the air base south of Baghdad. We were able to dine, as the gentleman from Michigan did, with a number of men and women in uniform; and it was truly inspiring.

As the gentleman suggested, Mr. Speaker, I just have to say that among the Iraqis with whom I spoke when I was in Baghdad and Basra, and among the soldiers, both British and American, when I would bring up the subject of weapons of mass destruction or the lack thereof or the search therefore, people would be completely uninterested. I remember speaking to an American intelligence officer who had been in charge of surveying a handful of the 270 mass graves that we found so far. And I looked him in the eye and I said, What say you of the lack of weapons of mass destruction? And he looked at me and he looked down at his shoes covered with sand, and he looked back at me with emotion in his eyes and he said, sir, from what I have seen, we did what needed to be done, whether we ever find any of those kinds of weapons or not. And this was the attitude that I got among our troops. I will say this without hesitation.

Having walked into the palace of Saddam Hussein myself and walked into another one of his palaces and seen the opulence with which he indulged himself and his cronies, and then having walked through the ruination of Basra, which is a city with 20 percent of the sewage capacity that it requires, with 50 percent of the electricity it requires, 30 years of neglect and repression, and the tyranny and murder of over 1 million people, I am going to agree strongly with that intelligence officer. We did what needed to be done in Iraq and we, as these soldiers reflected again and again, and the gentleman from Michigan got this as well in his words, these soldiers know we were on the side of the right in ending the 30-year reign of a murderous dictator, Saddam Hussein.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I have not had the opportunity to go to Basra, but the gentleman from Indiana talked about the Third World conditions. Again, I spent more time in the health care area in talking on a pretty regular basis with Mr. Haveman, talking about

what is going on there and what existed before. This is actually what the first lady talked about when she was talking about the new hospital we want to build in Basra. Decades ago Iraq had one of the strongest systems. But here are some of the stories.

Mothers tell stories of watching their children die because doctors do not have a small enough tube to give them oxygen. When parents bring their children to the hospital, they must also bring food, bedding and clothing, even their own blood supply. Under Saddam Hussein, one in eight children died before the age of 5. One in three was malnourished. Infant and child mortality rates doubled in 10 years while low birth weights increased from 4.5 percent to 30 percent. Today, infant mortality rates, and this is when the coalition came in, infant mortality rates in Iraq are similar to those in much less developed countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The prevalence of leukemia has also increased dramatically in the past decade and continues to grow at an alarming rate. Children in the United States with leukemia have a 90 percent survival rate.

□ 1615

In Iraq, the rate is less than 10 percent. Saddam took care of himself, his family, and a core group of Baathists, but other than that, the country just totally slid. And those folks received very little health care, very few benefits from the government.

Mr. Speaker, I will yield to my colleague.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I just remember when my colleague first returned from Baghdad, he shared with a number of us, his colleagues, video footage of Baghdad as a bustling city, a very modern city, which it was. And the reason we went to Basra the first day was because Ambassador Bremer and other officials were locked in round-the-clock negotiations over the constitution. So they sent us as the first delegation of American Congressmen to Basra.

I have to tell you that going from Basra, which is like a Third World country, I mean it is ravaged not by war, it is ravaged by 30 years of neglect and tyranny by Saddam Hussein who refused to, even though billions of dollars were flowing from the Oil for Food program into his regime, and he was building more and more palaces, these monuments to his own greatness with marble floors and crystal chandeliers the size of minivans hanging from the hallway ceilings, but then go to Basra, and there is ramshackle dirt buildings falling down, roads in disrepair, sewers in disrepair, it demonstrated to me that contrast more than anything between the bustling city of Saddam Hussein to a city under the control of Basra, the Shiite population, the mendacity of this regime and the self-indulgence and evil of this regime letting so many people live in poverty while they live in sinful opulence.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) for bringing it up. It reinforces the amount of work that needs to be done there: Getting a constitution, establishing a law, getting the police force in place, getting the judiciary, getting government institutions in place, and then also practicing the art of representative government.

But there is no doubt that I believe the people of Iraq are thankful that we are there, that we are making progress in that. And we have talked about the people in Iraq that my colleague and I have personally had the opportunity to meet. We have talked about our second hand accounts that are told to us by our troops who are interacting with the Iraqi folks on a daily basis.

Then there is one other level that I just want to get to before we run out of time, and that is before I went to Iraq the last time we spent a day in Libya. And for those who do not believe that we are making progress in the war on terrorism, there are a lot of folks who are believing that we are not winning or making progress in the war on terror, or that we are not serious about it, Muammar Qaddafi, Colonel Qaddafi believes that we are making progress, that we are serious about winning this war on terrorism.

The changes that have happened in Libya are dramatic, going from somebody who had a weapons of mass destruction program, a nuclear program all under development, all secret, to where we are today, fully exposing it, telling us not only what he has, but how he got it and these types of things.

We do not fully understand exactly why, but I do not doubt that there is some relationship to what we did in Iraq and where we said we are going to be focusing on, a war on terrorism, focused on it like a laser, we are going to go after it, and however he got to where he is and however Libya got to where they are today, we ought to be thankful that in this element of the war of terrorism, we have made that much progress in a very short period of time.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. This photograph illustrates a brief meeting that we had with Ambassador Paul Bremer across the hallway from the negotiations over the constitution. My colleague spoke of the long work we have ahead. There is a new interim Constitution, which is a radical document in the Middle East, people have basic Bill of Rights freedoms in this ancient land for the first time ever in their history. In this picture actually appears the draft of that interim constitution that Ambassador Bremer calls it.

If we will stay the course, not only will we see the changes and the repentance that we have seen of Colonel Qaddafi, but I believe we are going to see the transformation of the society of Iraq as an Islamic country in their own form of democracy and freedom and a society built on rights that will trans-

form that part of the world for our children and grandchildren and for the children and grandchildren of the good people of Iraq.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt we are making progress. I want to read a couple of quotes from a speech that we heard in Libya. And if it becomes the role for the Middle East, we will have made great progress. Think about this quote. This is one of the Libyan parliamentarians. "I believe God created man on this earth. Therefore, they have natural needs and natural rights. These are not bestowed by anyone else and they cannot be taken away by men." This is in Libya.

Now, think if they move that that direction. "Every person has the right to develop to their full potential to live in peace, security and prosperity." "How can you enslave people who are born free?"

There is something that is inside of all of us that we recognize these types of rights as being basic rights. And as we help bring those rights to Libya, as we help bring and foster those rights in Afghanistan and Iraq, we do not light the spark or the flame in these peoples, we give the flame the opportunity to grow and flourish. It is there. That is something that is in all of us, the right to be free, to be secure. And what we are doing is we are giving them the right to do that. But we also, at the same time, recognize the difficulty and also the number of people who want to extinguish that flame and enslave these people one more time just like Saddam did.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time. I thank my colleague for joining me today.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

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

S. Con. Res. 98. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment or recess of the Senate.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, once again it is a wonderful day to be here in the House and share not only with my colleagues, but with American people, the issues that are facing not only our economy but our children's future.

I guess I would have to start, since this is budget time and as we are here on the floor simultaneously, the Committee on the Budget is meeting to try to work out this \$2.4 trillion budget