

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

#### ADDING TO THE NATIONAL DEBT

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

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, that great country singer and philosopher Merle Haggard has this wonderful song called "Rainbow Stew." And the words go something like this: "When a President goes through the White House door and does what he says he will do, we will all be drinking that free Bubble Up and eating that rainbow stew."

Now, there must be a barrel of Bubble Up in the Republican cloakroom tonight because, if I did not know better, the last two speakers on the Republican side, I would suspect that they might have gotten here by falling off a turnip truck on Independence Avenue. I have never heard such ridiculous goings on in all of my days.

Now, I know that they have not been here very long, and I understand that. What we need is a little bit of sanity. This would be hysterically funny if it was not so painful for the next generation. What we need is a little credibility. What we need is a little honesty from the gentlemen on the other side of the aisle that just voted today to support a budget that will raise the debt ceiling over \$8 trillion. And then they come down here and talk about some ridiculous deal that they do not even know what they are talking about and blame the Democrats for it.

The Republicans have been in charge since 1995 in this place. And it is the Democrats' fault? Some of these fraud cases that they are talking about were contracts that were administered by the current administration. You have got to wonder when the turnip truck got through the barricades out here.

When the President came in this January of 2001, the Blue Dogs went to him, we said, We want to work with you. We will work with you to cut taxes. That is all we ask. But if you are going to cut taxes, cut spending. Let us agree on that. Let us work together, and we will do it. And we will all be proud of our work when we get through.

They sent Vice President CHENEY down here in room 122, downstairs. I will never forget it. And he said this: "We think you all are nice people, but we do not need you and we are going to do what we are going to do." And they can.

Now, look what we got, a budget that was voted for by the gentleman from Texas this afternoon that is going to borrow another \$700 billion from our children and grandchildren. Now, you talk about waste, fraud, and abuse, that is it. There is not any proposal in there to cut spending in a responsible way.

The Blue Dog Coalition has worked and worked and worked to try to get

the other side to sit down with us and let us do the responsible thing. We have proposed raising taxes. We have proposed balancing the budget in a responsible way. Then they sent Mitch Daniels, the head of the Office of Management and Budget, and he told us, "Do not worry, we are going to have so much money after we cut taxes we are going to pay off all the debt. The biggest problem we are going to have is you will not be able to buy any U.S. Treasury bonds; they will not be a safe investment." They did just about fix it with the U.S. Treasury bonds; they are not a safe investment anymore. I just wonder what in the Sam Hill these people are thinking about.

But I can tell you this: you can keep trying to fool the American people which will not be successful. You can keep doing what you are doing which is add to the debt load of our children and grandchildren in such an irresponsible way that it will be a horrendous day when the payday comes. And you will be the one that suffers, because I am so old I will probably be dead when it happens. But the young man from Texas over there that is sitting there smiling in such a cute way, he is going to still be around. And he is going to have to pay this tax.

The one tax that you cannot repeal is the interest on the national debt. Now, they want to raise that one as much as they can. And, boy, they are doing it great.

I just cannot imagine why. That is the great mystery to me. Why would you want to do such a ridiculous but, more importantly, irresponsible thing to our children and grandchildren.

#### TERRORIST ATROCITIES IN SPAIN

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member rises today to fervently condemn the terrorist bombings in Madrid on March 11 and to express his strong and unwavering support for the Spanish people in their fight against terrorism.

As all of our colleagues surely know, last Thursday at the height of the morning rush hour, terrorists detonated 10 bombs on commuter trains in the Spanish capital of Madrid. These synchronized attacks blew up four different trains. Several of them were in station at the time, increasing the carnage. At last count 201 people were killed in these attacks and almost 1,500 people were injured. These attacks were the worst terrorist atrocity in Spanish history and maybe the most terrible on the European continent in modern history.

Mr. Speaker, in the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the French newspaper *Le Monde*, often a font of anti-American sentiment, declared that "We Are All Americans."

Now we are all Spaniards united in solidarity and resolve with our friends and our allies.

To compare terrorist atrocities is in some ways to minimize the importance of each human life that was so brutally and pointlessly extinguished by those who exalt in the murder and maiming of their fellow men, women, and, yes, children too. But I sense that most Americans saw the slaughter in Madrid on March 11 through the prism of our own experience on September 11. Even the dates mirrored each other with 3/11 coming exactly 2½ years after 9/11.

For those of us who evacuated our offices on 9/11, watched the smoke from the burning Pentagon, and heard the sirens of emergency vehicles, we could not help but identify with the scenes of killing and bloodshed that we all repeatedly saw on our television screens last week.

Sadly, last week's attacks marked not a new phenomenon in Spanish life, only a new magnitude of suffering.

For more than 30 years, Spaniards have endured a vicious terrorist campaign by the fringe, Basque-separatist ETA organization. Given this bloody history, it was no surprise when Spanish officials first blamed ETA for the March 11 train bombings.

Since then we learned that these reprehensible attacks are more likely the work of the Islamic terrorists linked to al Qaeda. A clear determination is not yet possible. We often speak of the global war on terrorism. Last week we were reminded just how global the threat of terrorism really is. Al Qaeda has already struck in Africa, Asia, and North America. Now nearly all relevant authorities are tentatively concluding that these terrorists have struck in Europe as well.

In conjunction with these attacks, Spanish authorities have arrested five suspects, three Moroccans and two Indians, who are believed to be al Qaeda loyalists. Authorities are seeking other suspects in conjunction with the bombings. The bombings in Spain demonstrate that Europe is indeed a target of al Qaeda and the brand of Islamic extremism that it espouses. It is a terrible shock, but it comes as no surprise to European terrorism experts. Europol, which helps coordinate police activity among nations, warned in December that al Qaeda was still active in Europe and remained a threat there. However, if there was still any thought among Europeans that they were somehow immune from al Qaeda attacks, these bombings proved them wrong.

An additional concern in this case is the obvious, and apparently successful, effort by terrorists to influence a democratic election. Many analysts have attributed the unexpected victory of the Socialist Party in Sunday's national elections to voters' reactions to the terrorist attacks. Spain's participation in military action against Iraq was unpopular among the electorate. Some post-election reports indicate that a large number of Spanish voters

may have voted against the ruling popular party in the belief that its support for the Iraq war was responsible for Spain being targeted by al Qaeda.

If, indeed, as this Member believes, al Qaeda carried out these terrorist attacks just 3 days before a national election in order to affect the results of the election, it would be an extremely troubling development. We already know that al Qaeda aims to kill our people and cripple our economies. It is, furthermore, extraordinarily disturbing that this group seems to be targeting governments friendly to the United States in order to bring them down.

An editorial in the Omaha World-Herald yesterday declared that, "The Spanish voters, in their sorrow and anger, have broadcast exactly the wrong signal: terrorism works."

Mr. Speaker, if anyone in Europe believes that standing on the sidelines will somehow protect them from al Qaeda, they are wrong. Europe was a target of al Qaeda even before 9/11 and the Iraq war, and it remains a target of al Qaeda. The response to terrorism cannot be a quest for neutrality. It cannot be the pursuit of a nonaggression pact or a *modus vivendi* with al Qaeda. This is not possible.

The only response can be a reaffirmation of a commitment to strenuously work together within Europe and within the Atlantic Alliance to root out the terrorists in our midst and to destroy their ability to operate throughout the world.

Fortunately, we see indications from our European allies that this will be their response. Already officials in European countries and in the European Union are stepping up their efforts to improve cooperation against terrorist groups and strengthen legislation against terrorism.

However, that inclination, apparently, is not shared by Romano Prodi, the President of the European Commission, which is the executive bureaucracy of the EU. On Monday, Mr. Prodi said, "It is clear that using force is not the answer to resolving the conflict with terrorists."

This outrageous, wrong-headed comment is the worst thing an EU official could have said in response to the terrorist attacks in Spain.

Instead of vowing to redouble efforts to defeat al Qaeda in the mountains of Afghanistan, the head of the European Commission advocates appeasement and surrender to those who orchestrated the massacre of innocents in Madrid.

If the terrorists were encouraged by their apparent success at influencing the Spanish elections, they must be ecstatic that high-ranking officials like Mr. Prodi want to pursue a separate, dishonorable accommodation with terrorists.

In an article in yesterday's Washington Post, Robert Kagan offered a withering critique of Mr. Prodi's comments.

Mr. Kagan wrote, "Al Qaeda seeks to divide Europe and the United States not just in Iraq, but in the overall struggle. It seeks to convince

Europeans that not only the use of force in Iraq was mistaken, but that the use of force against terrorism in general is mistaken and futile—just as Prodi is arguing. Are Europeans prepared to grant all of al Qaeda's conditions in exchange for a promise of security? Thoughts of Munich and 1938 come to mind."

And Mr. Kagan recognizes that the policy of weakness advocated by Mr. Prodi will only encourage the terrorists. "Responsible heads in Europe must understand that anything that smacks of retreat in the aftermath of this latest attack could raise the likelihood of further attacks," Mr. Kagan wrote.

Surprisingly, a more realistic European assessment of the motivations and goals of these terrorists came from the French newspaper *Le Monde*.

Never known for sharing a worldview with the Bush Administration, *Le Monde* on Monday noted that these terrorists "attack democratic societies because of what they are: open, flexible, respectful of the rule of law," and for them "the only measure of success is killing as many people as possible."

Mr. Speaker, America must stand by our Spanish allies and all of our European allies in this struggle against terrorism. We extend our sympathy to the families of those killed in the Madrid bombings, to those injured, and to the Spanish people. And we reaffirm our commitment to work together to defeat the perpetrators of this terrible crime.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I will insert into the RECORD the Omaha World-Herald article.

[From the Omaha World-Herald, Mar. 16, 2004]

#### WRONG SIGNAL

Spain's change of leadership can be viewed as saying that terrorism works.

The surprise is not that Spain's prime minister-elect figures on pulling his nation's troops out of Iraq. He had made that pledge during the campaign. The surprise is that he was elected.

Spaniards have a long history of bravery verging on stubbornness. So it is unsettling to see them give at least a surface appearance of knuckling under to terrorism. Prior to last week's death-dealing bombings aboard Spanish trains, national polls had strongly suggested that Mariano Rajoy, candidate of the incumbent Popular Party, would be elected prime minister.

Then evidence increasingly pointed to the likelihood that Islamic fundamentalists—quite possible al-Qaida—were responsible for the bombings. After that, enough popular votes shifted to swing the Socialist Party into the parliamentary majority. That will make José Rodríguez Zapatero prime minister.

In campaigning, Zapatero vowed to make fighting terror his "most immediate priority." He has a strange way of showing it. The signal being sent here, intentionally or not, is that radicals can gain advantage by murdering hundreds of innocent people.

There may be some wiggle room in all this. What Zapatero has specifically said is that he will pull out his nation's troops on June 30 unless, by then, the United Nations has taken charge in Iraq. That brings to the forefront what is meant by "take charge."

The occupying forces intend to hand political control of Iraq to an interim government on July 1, and there is ample evidence that the United Nations will embrace that change. Moreover, substantial U.N. involvement in peacekeeping would be widely welcomed. But expecting the international body

to actually run the show is unrealistic. It isn't staffed to handle the task.

Spain's withdrawal from Iraq would be symbolic, in that its troops number less than 1 percent of international forces there. But in such matters, symbolism is important. It's true that about 90 percent of Spaniards opposed their nation's involvement in Iraq. But that opposition appears to have taken on added weight after the bombs went off.

The world weeps with Spain, which suffered a terrible blow. But the Spanish voters, in their sorrow and anger, have broadcast exactly the wrong signal: Terrorism works. It's enough to make you wonder what nation might be next.

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

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

#### WASHINGTON WASTE WATCH

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

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to offer an update from the Washington Waste Watch. Every year the Federal Government wastes billions of dollars as a result of overpayments of government credit cards, abuse of the Federal entitlement programs, and the mismanagement of the Federal bureaucracy. The waste exists in every program in every agency, in every Department of the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, let me share a few examples with you. Accounting errors prevented the Department of Agriculture from being able to account for \$5 billion of its receipts and expenditures. The Department had no way of knowing where the money came from and where it had gone.

The Department of Defense spent \$41 million to develop a system to track its ammunition, but 8 years later no system had been created or was close to completion.

Individuals defaulting on their student loans cost the Department of Education \$4 billion in 1999 alone. An audit of the Department of Energy discovered that the Department had incorrectly listed \$900 million in assets instead of liabilities and could not account for \$56 million in missing funds.

That is not all, Mr. Speaker. A 2000 audit of the Department of Labor discovered that 35 percent of the recipients of dislocated worker benefits were ineligible for the program.

More than a quarter of the IRS's earned income credit payments were improper. The error rate is consistently between 27 and 32 percent of the total claims. In 1999 alone it cost the American taxpayers \$8.1 billion.

The Veterans Affairs Department continued to pay the daughter of a veteran \$78,000 in benefits after the veteran had died.