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AMERICA NEEDS SMART SECURITY

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago on May 1, President Bush made a huge mistake when he stood in front of a banner that read "Mission Accomplished" and told the Nation that major combat operations in Iraq were over; huge error. The truth is that major combat operations are very far from being over. Of the 734 American soldiers who have died in Iraq, nearly 600 have died since the President claimed an end to major combat operations.

April of the year 2004 was just as devastating to our troop levels as April of the year 2003. To add insult to injury, the Bush administration continues to maintain its tight grip on the media, engaging in a brand of censorship that is at stark contrast with fundamental American values of freedom of speech and freedom of press, a mistake in every way in this country of ours.

First the Coalition Provisional Authority, which runs Iraq and which was created by the Bush administration, decided to create its own television operation to broadcast live to the United States 24 hours a day from Iraq. The point of C-SPAN Baghdad, as it was dubbed, was to put a positive spin on events and circumvent the major networks by transmitting directly to local and regional media outlets in the United States. This is not the first time Bush has attempted to control the media in Iraq.

Fearing that support for the Iraq war would fade if Americans caught sight of U.S. soldiers returning home in flag-draped caskets, the Bush administration banned all coverage and photography of dead soldiers' homecoming on military bases. Another gross mistake, our President has not attended any homecoming or burials to date.

There has to be a better way and there is, one that emphasizes brain instead of brawn, one that is consistent with American values, one that trusts Americans will do the right thing when they know the truth. I have introduced legislation to create a SMART security platform for the 21st century. SMART stands for Sensible Multilateral American Response to Terrorism. SMART treats war as an absolute last resort. It fights terrorism with stronger intelligence and multilateral partnerships. It controls the spread of weapons of mass destruction with a renewed commitment to nonproliferation, and it aggressively invests in the development of impoverished Nations with an emphasis on women's health and women's education in Third World countries.

SMART legislation promotes more effective conflict assessment and early warning systems, multilateral rapid re-

sponse mechanisms, human rights monitoring, civilian policing and investment in civil programs and fair judicial systems. SMART security is about promoting a foreign policy that is open and honest, not one that is cloaked in secrecy and hidden agendas.

If we cannot trust our government to pursue policies that are best for America, then I ask, who can we trust? The Bush doctrine has been tried; and it has failed. It is time for a new national security strategy. SMART Security defends America by relying on the very best of America: Our commitment to peace and freedom, our compassion for the people of the world, and our capacity for multilateral leadership. SMART Security is tough, it is pragmatic and it is patriotic. SMART Security is smart, and it will keep America safe.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A QUESTION OF CREDIBILITY

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, page 23 of the Times today, the headline says, "Agency Sees Withholding of Medicare Data From Congress As Illegal." That is pretty serious business.

So we have finally secret documents. We have backroom deals. We have intimidation and misinformation. We have threats. We have exclusion, possible bribery, propaganda, lying. I am not referring to the KGB, I am not referring to the Chinese authorities, I am not referring to Napoleon's France, a medieval court, or Imperial Rome. No, there are elements of government scandal right here in the Medicare issue.

All of these things describe a significant role in the narrow passage of the Medicare prescription drug bill. Members may wonder here who, in the United States of America, the freest country in the world, would employ such tactics to pass a controversial Medicare law; the Bush administration, that is who. The White House position of win at any cost eventually did lead to the new law, but what was the cost? The cost has been the credibility and reputation not only of the administration but that of the Congress, the integrity of this institution and the entire law-making process.

The American people must ask themselves, is this how my government actually works? Everyone knew a Medicare prescription drug benefit was going to be expensive. To the end, the Bush administration assured Congress their plan would cost \$400 billion. However, it has since been discovered that

the White House knew 6 months before the vote that their bill had a price tag of \$140 billion more, a slight error of \$140 billion.

Further, it has been reported that the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services, their administrator, remember this name, Tom Scully, he since has gone and found himself a lobbying job. Well, old Tom threatened to fire the chief actuary who was responsible for calculating the cost of the bill. The actuary's name was Richard Foster. If he had made this information available to congressional Democrats, he was going to be fired. At the time, Mr. Scully was negotiating with health care interests that had large financial stakes in the Medicare bill. Not only about the bill though, Mr. Scully.

That is not to say Mr. Scully was in this alone. Last month, Mr. Scully told members of the Committee on Ways and Means that he had shared the information with Doug Badger, President Bush's health policy adviser, who is right in the White House, and James Capretta, associate director of the Office of Management and Budget, his analysis that the Medicare legislation would exceed its target goal.

Not only was this underhanded, not only was it deceitful, but according to the Congressional Research Service, this gag order was against the law, and they made this public just yesterday. There has been a violation of the law, and this House has done nothing, nor has the other House, nor have the folks down the street. When you break the law, something should happen.

According to the report, Congress' "right to receive truthful information from Federal agencies to assist in its legislative functions is clear and unsailable." That is what it says.

The issuance by an officer or employee in a department or agency of the Federal Government of a gag order on subordinate employees to expressly prevent and prohibit those employees from communicating directly with Members of Congress or the committees of Congress would appear to violate a specific and express prohibition of Federal law.

McGrain v. Dougherty, a 1927 Supreme Court decision, states very clearly, as it does in other Supreme Court decisions, legislative bodies cannot legislate wisely or effectively, in the absence of information regarding conditions which the legislation is intended to effect or change. That decision by the Supreme Court goes back to 1927. Thus, "Political gamesmanship must yield to the clear public interest of providing the people's elected representatives in the Congress with accurate and truthful information."

Mr. Speaker, they have broken the law. I come to this floor always with bipartisan hands open. My legislation will show that. The gloves are off.

Mr. Speaker, you have been lied to; we have been lied to. The question is, what will we do about it? The question is, do not the American people deserve

more, and should the people demand more from us, regardless of which side we are on? We did not know all of the facts, and that bill would not have passed if we did know all of the facts.

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

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

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS).

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

There was no objection.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED, I THINK NOT

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I watched the weekends events somewhat in horror, but also somewhat in recognition that our troops on the ground, our enlisted officers, Reservists and National Guard, operate under the most heinous conditions, and certainly the actions that we have seen in the abuse of Iraqi prisoners is not to be excused, but I lay the burden more on the policymakers and those who have extended the stays of those civilian troops, 6 months, 12 months and 18 months, those who made the statement a year ago May 1, "mission accomplished." The burdens of disarray of the military in Iraq lay at our feet.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that we cannot, as a Congress, do nothing. I would hope that we will hear more potently from the President, the Secretary of Defense, and the Joint Chief of Staff on the solutions in the aftermath and the crisis of a so-called mission accomplished.

Although those acts were to be not tolerated, we must find the trail of hierarchy that created such havoc that our soldiers who were there to liberate, have turned into those who would perpetrate such acts. That is what I want to speak about this evening: Mission accomplished, I think not. Until we pass what I am now calling, and we are now reviewing and hoping to write as legislation for this House, the Welcome Home Act of 2004. Mission accomplished, I think not. Until we write legislation for those combat veterans who have come home from Iraq and Afghanistan, really, the Vietnam War of the 21st century.

And what do I believe is appropriate for those wounded and those individ-

uals coming home from this war? First of all, an apology and explanation by this administration for the war and the present status of the conditions in Iraq and, yes, Afghanistan. Provisions for long-term mental health needs for those veterans, both wounded and those not wounded and their families; immediate treatment for trauma, mental trauma if you will, that will be ongoing and that we have already discovered in some of our military hospitals today; continuous educational opportunities for these young men and women, and maybe even the Reservists and the National Guard who now come home with a whole different attitude about life and their future; family counseling, so that the terrible murder of a military spouse of a returning veteran cannot happen again; enhanced opportunities for homeownership so our military families are not in cramped conditions after the military person leaves the particular branch and so they are not Nicole Goodwin, an Iraqi combat veteran who is now homeless, walking the streets of New York; health care for 10 years so that those ailments generated by the combat situation and the Veterans Hospital will not maintain and keep, we will have care; long-term health care and rehabilitation when the veteran's benefits run out; military whistleblower protections so that those individuals who have seen things in Iraq that should not happen, such as what happened in the prison and the abuse of prisoners or what is happening in terms of those individuals who are outside of their job description of which they were brought into the military, where carpenters are being police officers and truck drivers are being gunners, we need to find out what is wrong with this system and this war.

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Provisions for those who are severely injured with long-term understanding of those severely injured and the families who lost loved ones. Who is attending to those families after the burial? Who is comforting them, and what are the resources being provided for those families? And so I would suggest that a lump-sum payment under the Welcome Home Act of 2004 be made to those families of the severely injured and those who lost loved ones out of the profits of the Iraqi oil fields.

Mr. Speaker, mission accomplished, I think not, until the Welcome Home Act of 2004 is both legislatively presented to this Congress, until we acknowledge the wrongness of this war by giving some dignity to those who are coming home, who are coming home to lonely places, to homelessness, to bad health care, to the inability to provide for their family. We must provide for these severely injured veterans as well as those families who have lost loved ones because, as we know, the toll of those dying continues to rise; and 736, Mr. Speaker, is not the last count that we will have. How can we

claim a mission accomplished unless we present the Welcome Home Act of 2004 alongside a final resolution to the conflict in Iraq?

NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, the President, as you can see from the poster, said at his press conference last week that he was not aware of any mistakes that he had made. Let me tell my colleagues and him a few mistakes he has made, three major mistakes:

First, in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, the Bush administration chose deliberately to mislead the people of New York about the safety of the air and the environment in the aftermath of that disaster. We now know from the Inspector General of EPA's report that the White House instructed the EPA to mislead the people of New York. The former administrator of EPA, Mrs. Whitman, said 2 days after the disaster the air is safe to breathe, when they had no test data to show that.

Because of that misleading, Federal, State, and city government followed policies that have resulted in catastrophe. We now know from recent medical reports that an absolute majority, most of the first responders, the heroes, the fire officers, the police officers, the construction workers who descended on Lower Manhattan to help with the rescue operations, most of them now, 2½ years later, have serious respiratory disorders which will probably plague them for the rest of their lives. We know that women who live within a mile, 1.6 kilometers, of the World Trade Center, today are giving birth to low birth weight babies at twice the natural rate because the White House chose to mislead the American people.

Second, the White House chose to get us into a useless, stupid war in Iraq to divert our attention from the war against us by the Islamic terrorists. We know that there were no weapons of mass destruction, contrary to what they told us in Iraq, no great stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction. We know the Iraqi people did not, as the White House told us they would, greet our troops as liberators. We know that when the President stood there before the sign and said mission accomplished and said that major combat was over, he was wrong. We know this administration did not plan adequately for an occupation. We know they sent too few troops there to properly secure the country. We know they fired General Shinseki because he had the impudence to say the truth in advance. We know that they disbanded the Iraqi army without having enough troop strength to replace it and they are now trying to reassemble it.

We know, in short, they got us into a quagmire and so thoroughly alienated