

Women live 4 or 5 years longer, maybe 85 years compared to us male counterparts, about 81 years. Many of them who work get into the workforce a little bit late in life, maybe they are choosing to raise a family, to be a mom, to be a grandmom; and they never quite catch up in their income level, even though in some instances they are doing the same work. And so more of them, a disproportionate share of women are the ones who are living and many times single at or near that Federal poverty level. They have got, Mr. Speaker, a great deal of health care needs, of course, and a lot of prescriptions, whether it is something for osteoporosis or high blood pressure, cholesterol or maybe even chemotherapy to control cancer. They are in desperate need.

So I say to my colleagues across the aisle, if you want to truly be the party of women's rights, then you certainly ought to support this bill.

Mr. PEARCE. I thank the gentleman for his comments and the gentlewoman for her comments. Women are the great beneficiaries, and a tremendous number of the people who will participate in this prescription drug program under Medicare will be women because many of them fall in the lower income strata and many will qualify for the 100 percent coverage throughout the spectrum, but they have been made afraid that they are going to be the ones falling into the gap.

□ 2230

The only people who fall under the gap are those who can afford it. Those with the most desperate needs get coverage all the way up and down the spectrum, Mr. Speaker. So that is an important distinction to make.

One of the things that we have not yet talked about that the prescription drug bill did, it did three things to kind of give the prescription drug makers a wake-up call. None of us would choke the prescription drug manufacturers down to nothing because they are making magnificent miracle-like drugs that are extending life and extending the quality of life. But we did three things in this bill to really get the attention of the prescription drug manufacturers just a little wake-up call, if the Members would.

First of all, we cause generics to come to the market sooner in this bill. Secondly, we give incentives for people who will use the generics to convert useage over from the more expensive prescriptions into the generic field. But the third thing that we did was to stop an abusive pattern of constantly extending patents which kept competitive prescription drugs from coming to market. A prescription drug maker gets a patent when they reinvest in a new drug. When they do the research and development and create a new pharmaceutical, they have a patent period, and what they are doing is just indefinitely extending the patent. They would go to a second patent period, a

third, a fourth, a fifth, and a sixth by minor changes in their patent application. It was legal, but it was not right.

So what we begin in this bill is saying that they get one patent period, they get one extension, and no more. The effect of that is it is going to bring those competing products to the market sooner. So we did three things in this bill, Mr. Speaker, to really address the seniors' frustration with their prescription drug makers to let them know that we appreciate what they do, they do good work, they are good companies, they are good corporate citizens, but to please look at their practices just a little bit.

Access and affordability are the two parameters of care. It does not matter if one has affordability if they do not have access. This bill attempted to cure access as well as affordability. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that we have done well in our job.

I thank the gentleman from Georgia and the gentlewoman from Florida for coming out tonight. This is a very important topic, and since yesterday was the initiation point of the ability to sign up for the drug cards, those discount cards, we felt like it was important to remind the people of this House exactly what that means and what the bill means. We wanted to have a review of the process which was directed at again the two basic overarching problems. One is the need for a prescription drug benefit in this country because our seniors were having to choose between food and medicine.

The second need we were addressing is the financial difficulty that Medicare faces in a very near-term future, extending on into the very distant future. This Medicare bill and this prescription drug bill began the process of reforming the Medicare program to where its financial viability is greater to where the next generation and the generation beyond that has access to the Medicare bill. But we also put in a prescription drug benefit that has the potential to dramatically lower the prescription drug cost that our seniors will face.

Mr. Speaker, I for one am proud of the work that we have done. And as I have visited with seniors around my district, and we have had 10 or 12 town hall meetings in my district about the prescription drug bill, I find that seniors are energized and excited about what we have done here in our legislation. They are excited about what it does currently for seniors, but they are also excited about the reforms that we have made to where their children and grandchildren will hopefully have access to the Medicare plan which they have grown to love and to trust.

Mr. Speaker, I share with the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE) the pride in what this body has done.

## IRAQI DETAINEES AT ABU GHRAIB PRISON

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

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, it is hard to decide where to start in expressing one's outrage about the revelations, including the graphic photographs, that our military personnel literally tortured Iraqi detainees at a prison near Baghdad. It is even harder to know where the responsibility ends for conduct that obviously violates the Geneva Convention on care for prisoners of war and Geneva Convention on the obligations of an occupation authority.

For any decent-minded American, whether he or she supports the war or opposes the war, to remain silent about this conduct is to be complicit with this conduct. To refuse to condemn it in the strongest terms possible, to be reluctant to hold accountable not only those who did this but also those who permitted it, those who ordered it, those who created an atmosphere that encouraged it, and those who sent the signals that everything and anything goes, no matter how far up the chain of command, it jeopardizes our relationship with the entire Arab and Muslim world. We should all fear for every American soldier and civilian in Iraq whose life has been placed in jeopardy by this irresponsible behavior and, frankly, the irresponsible conduct of this war.

Before these revelations, it was manifestly clear that our Iraq policy was in deep, deep trouble. It was already clear that we faced a widening and deepening resistance. It was already clear that the administration's characterizations of the resistance as "dead-enders," "remnants of Saddam's regime," and "terrorists from the outside" did not coincide with reality. These allegations, revealed first last week by 60 Minutes II, then detailed by investigator reporter Seymour Hersh of the New Yorker Magazine, and substantiated in a courageous report by Major General Antonio M. Taguba, may have made our situation irrevocably untenable.

Think of the predicament now facing U.S. occupation this way: What would anyone anywhere in the world want to do to someone who had done such despicable acts to a family member?

The President and other senior administration and Pentagon officials have been quick to say that only a few participated in these deeds. My question is who are the few? Over the weekend, the mistreatment was said to involve only six or seven military police. Now at mid week, we are told that 17 U.S. soldiers are under investigation for their role in the abuses, including seven supervising officers who will receive an official reprimand or admonishment, six enlisted personnel who are charged with criminal offenses in

March, and another four who are under criminal investigation.

Against this backdrop, General Richard Myers, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said this past Sunday that he had not read the Taguba report. It has taken until today for Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld to make a statement, and according to a Pentagon spokesman, as late as today, Mr. Rumsfeld had not read the report either.

National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice is the coordinator of our overall efforts in Iraq. She has been silent as well. Secretary of State Colin Powell says that the entire military should not be condemned for the actions of only a few.

No one is condemning the entire military, but once again I ask who are the few? Does it include those, whoever they are, who told the military police to "soften up" the detainees for interrogation? I cannot accept, especially when we hear that military intelligence and private contractors ordered the actions, that these military police officers just happened to choose acts that are offensive in any culture, but are especially humiliating to males in the Arab and Islamic cultures.

And logic leads me to believe the psychological implications were well understood, and the acts imposed on the detainees were deliberately selected.

It is fair to ask what else may be going on? Has there been such a heavy reliance on private military contractors precisely to evade criminal liability? Have not Iraqis been given new reason to view the United States war on terrorism as a war on terrorism against them, their religion, and their culture?

Congress needs to conduct a probe of the incidents and their wider ramifications. Congress and the American people must answer to questions that we can be sure that the people of Iraq and all Muslim lands are asking. While the full weight of punishment should be brought on all of those implicated, the American people, as a whole, need to appreciate how much higher the mountain now is that the President must climb to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people and to persuade the Middle East to follow the model of American democracy. Under his leadership things continue to go from bad to worse to terrible.

#### IRAQ WATCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) is recognized for half the time remaining before midnight, approximately 40 minutes.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House this evening in this special order representing those of us who have participated in what we have termed "Iraq Watch."

For some period of time now, several of us have come before this House to

try to analyze in a hopefully dispassionate way but in an informative way what is taking place in Iraq and what the implications are for us here in the House of Representatives, and by extension for the Nation in terms of the political ramifications.

I come here tonight by myself because the other members of Iraq Watch, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOFFEL), the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND), the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE), and others who have joined us periodically are otherwise occupied this evening. But I come here representing those who have participated because of the seriousness of the issues that are now confronting us with respect to Iraq.

I have before me, Mr. Speaker, a copy of the May 3, 2004, issue of the New Yorker Magazine entitled "Torture at Abu Ghraib." I cite this, Mr. Speaker, because I am afraid we are going to hear this phrase on more than one occasion in the days to come. It is written by Seymour Hersh, subtitled "American Soldiers Brutalized Iraqis, How Far Up Does the Responsibility Go?" I am citing this to the Members this evening, Mr. Speaker, because this is the only comprehensive report that I, as a member of the Committee on Armed Services, and as a Member of the House, have been able to get. I was intrigued by it because it mentions two reports. The speaker before me, the gentleman from New York, mentioned a report written by Major General Antonio Taguba, who happens to be by coincidence from Hawaii, but he did not mention nor have many other venues that I have observed, television, radio, newspapers, articles, et cetera, another report. The report from General Taguba being completed in February of this year, but that followed on a report that was written and submitted in November of last year, November of 2003, by the Provost Marshal of the Army, the chief law enforcement of the Army, General Provost Marshal Donald Ryder.

□ 2245

I think that I can begin to account for the tone, at least the summary of the tone as far as it has been delivered to us, which is one of outrage. I withdraw that. That is my characterization.

But let me put it this way: I believe it is fair to say if Mr. Hersh's summary is correct, that General Taguba's report was, at a minimum very, very intense, and that Mr. Hersh stated as follows: Its conclusions about institutional failures in the Army prison system were devastating. I think that is a fair summary.

The reason I am citing this to you, Mr. Speaker, is that at a meeting this afternoon, at a briefing this afternoon, convened under the direction of the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), chairman of the Committee

on Armed Services, under his auspices, officers appeared. Given the nature of the hearing, the secret nature of the hearing, again, for good and sufficient reason, I cannot cite to you and will not cite to you the exact dialogue that took place, nor those who were involved in it.

But, suffice to say, it was confirmed to me in that hearing, I should say in that briefing, that there was indeed a report given to General Sanchez, the Supreme Commander in Iraq, in November of last year, and that General Ryder, according to Mr. Hersh, indicated in November, and this is important. The reason we are going through this now and the reason I am going through this recitation is these incidents did not just happen. They did not just appear out of nowhere.

This is not something that the Army was aware of only in February of this year, that there was some kind of shock recognition by the Army that this was taking place in February. Because General Ryder clearly warned, quoting now from the Hersh article, "that there were potential human rights training and manpower issues system-wide that needed immediate attention."

It also discussed serious concerns about the tension between the missions of the military police assigned to guard the prisoners and intelligence teams who wanted to interrogate them.

Again, I will go on, another quotation: "Army regulations limit intelligence activities by MPs to passive collection."

I think this is an important point, because I see some of these National Guard people who have been identified and who have had their pictures on television and are being pointed out and being looked to for responsibility. I think it is important for those who may not be familiar with the situation in prisons, Army prisons, military prisons, that Army regulations limit intelligence activities of MPs to passive collection.

Something obviously went awry here. There was evidence, according to the Ryder report, evidence going back as far as the war in Afghanistan. Now we are going back even previous to 2003. We are talking about post-9/11 and the attack on the Taliban forces in Afghanistan.

According to the Ryder report, as reported by Mr. Hersh, the MPs had worked with intelligence operatives to "set favorable conditions for subsequent interviews," a euphemism, according to Mr. Hersh, for breaking the will of prisoners.

Now, Mr. Hersh indicates that the Ryder report called for the establishment of procedures to "define the role of military police soldiers, clearly separating the actions of the guards from those of the military intelligence personnel."

I am citing this detail to you, Mr. Speaker, because I think it is very important to establish a context here.