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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PENCE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 11, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE PENCE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) for 5 minutes.

CALLING FOR THE RESIGNATION OF THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Vice President CHENEY has told the Nation that people ought to get off Secretary Rumsfeld's case and let him do his job. President Bush has called him "really good" and "superb" in the last week alone.

There are many reasons why Mr. Rumsfeld should resign from his position as Secretary of Defense. It is not just because he engaged in a cover-up in keeping the atrocities at the Abu

Ghraib Prison from the Congress of the United States when he had full knowledge about it, but it is also his incompetency to appreciate and understand the political firestorm that would be set off across the Islamic and Arab world by the humiliation that was taking place, or even the suffering and the humiliation that Americans would feel when they saw these out-of-control soldiers engaging in that conduct.

But it is also because he is reigning over the most incompetent and mismanaged occupation of the country of Iraq, because his arrogance would not allow him to pay attention to those prestigious institutions and people who had actual experience in peacekeeping and restoring democracy to countries, who had done it without taking casualties of American soldiers. They pushed ahead with an inadequate number of resources in terms of soldiers and equipment; they pushed ahead with inadequate resources in terms of paying for this, and for the force protection, his number one responsibility, the force protection of our soldiers.

Because of his actions and because of his rush to war, as the Pentagon Joint Chiefs of Staff study tells us in Lessons Learned, they failed to provide for the protection of these soldiers. More recently, that failure has been translated by the Pentagon to say because of improper equipment for the personal protection of soldiers, because of the improper kind of mix of equipment in terms of non-armored Humvees, one out of four of the casualties was unnecessary, had we been properly prepared with the proper equipment, the training, for our soldiers. One out of four of the casualties was unnecessary, according to the Pentagon, another reason why Secretary Rumsfeld should resign.

HEALTH CARE AND AMERICAN PROSPERITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Janu-

ary 20, 2004, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is recognized during morning hour debates.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, this week, the House will make history, taking up the first of eight components of the most ambitious and forward-looking economic agenda in a generation. For the next 8 weeks, the House will debate and pass legislation that will begin the process of remaking our economy for the new century.

Rather than treating individual policy initiatives in a vacuum, the American Careers Initiative takes a comprehensive approach, treating health care, energy, education, taxes, regulation and lawsuit abuse reform as parts of a broader economic agenda.

For the next 2 months, the House will focus on one of the eight components of the Careers Initiative each week, starting tomorrow with Health Care Security.

First, we will pass legislation to reform medical malpractice liability laws to protect good doctors, nurses, and hospitals from predatory trial lawyers and their abusive lawsuits, lowering the cost of health care.

Second, we will pass the Small Business Health Fairness Act, which will allow small businesses to enjoy the same economies of scale now used by large corporations, organizations, and labor unions in their health plans.

Third, we will make Flexible Spending Accounts even more flexible, by allowing account owners to hold on to some of their unspent health savings year to year or even roll some of that money into a new health savings account.

We will do all of these things not simply because they are good health care policies, but because they make for greater economic policies.

By reducing the threat of abusive lawsuits, more doctors will continue to see patients and thereby help to reduce the crisis in health care access. By allowing small businesses to reduce the

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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cost of employee health insurance, those businesses will in turn use their savings to invest in new products and hire new employees. And by expanding the utility of Flexible Spending Accounts, we will promote more health care competition and help Americans save money on their insurance costs.

All of these new policies will help break down the barriers between the American people and the affordable quality health care that they demand. And they will also break down the barriers between them and the thriving competitive and prosperous 21st-century economy that they deserve.

FULFILLING OUR DUTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, before I discuss the legislation that will be considered on the floor this week, I want to comment briefly on the continuing revelations about the abuse of Iraqi detainees in American custody and the need for vigorous congressional oversight through full and open committee hearings.

I could not disagree with my friend, the majority leader, more when he says the idea of a congressional investigation is like, and I quote, "saying we need an investigation every time there is police brutality on the street."

The abuse of Iraqi detainees, as we are learning, is, unfortunately, not isolated, and responsibility extends up and down the military chain of command. We must not abdicate our constitutional responsibility as an independent, coequal branch of government, as some Members of the other body have stated.

For example, the Senate majority leader is quoted today in Congressional Quarterly as saying, "The Senate will continue to do its duty. We had several hearings last week. We will continue to maintain a close watch on the unfolding situation." In fact, they are having hearings this week.

This shocking episode demands a full and open inquiry. It demands a bipartisan approach. I urge the Republican leadership to work with this side of the aisle in getting to the bottom of these abuses, in holding the responsible parties accountable and ensuring that it never happens again. The world expects no less, and we should expect no less ourselves.

Now, Mr. Speaker, while the other body exercises vigorous oversight, this body will consider a Republican bill that will actually increase the budget deficit, which is projected at more than half a trillion dollars this year alone, and three health care bills that would do virtually nothing to help the uninsured.

This Republican majority is not responding to America's needs. We can, we must, do better.

The Republican bill to make the 10 percent income tax bracket permanent could win overwhelming, perhaps unanimous, support if it were paid for. Instead, it would add an estimated \$218 billion to the national debt. Our children and grandchildren will pay that debt.

The Democratic substitute, in contrast, is paid for. Unfortunately, Republican leaders believe that tax cuts are a freebie. In fact, the chairman of the House Committee on the Budget, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), said in March, and I quote, "We don't believe that you should have to pay for tax cuts."

It is that mathematically challenged philosophy, that denial of reality that continues to stall negotiations on the 2005 budget. House Republicans refuse to pay for tax cuts. House Democrats, a bipartisan majority of the Senate and the chairman of the Federal Reserve, Mr. Greenspan, fully support pay-as-you-go budget rules. In fact, if my Republican friends missed the comment of Chairman Greenspan last week, let me repeat it. He said, "The free lunch has still not been invented."

This week, the Republican leadership will also put three health care bills on the floor, apparently in recognition of Cover the Uninsured Week.

Today in America, the richest, most powerful Nation on the face of the Earth, 44 million Americans do not have health insurance; and that figure has increased by 4 million since President Bush took office. Yet none of the Republican health care bills directly addresses this growing problem.

We have already passed two of these three bills, on medical liability and associated health plans, almost in exactly the same form; so we are simply repeating that which we have already done, presumably for political purposes as opposed to substance. The third, on Flexible Savings Accounts, would mostly benefit those who are already insured.

House Democrats, by comparison, will introduce three health care bills this week that, together, would provide health insurance for more than half of the 44 million uninsured. These bills are aimed, Mr. Speaker, at three growing groups of uninsured: those with low income, retirees, and small businesses and the self-employed.

I say to my friends on the Republican side, our constituents did not send us here to pretend to legislate, to repeatedly pass legislation so that it could go to the Senate. They sent us here to solve problems and fulfill our duty. This week, there is ample evidence that we are doing neither.

DOUBLE STANDARDS APPLIED REGARDING TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, the infamous Iraqi prison photographs with which we are so familiar portray deplorable scenes for which we will apologize. I am concerned that these inappropriate practices occurred, but I am further concerned regarding the double standards that many countries apply regarding terrorism, and I will discuss that in detail herewith.

Much attention has been directed, Mr. Speaker, against America regarding the Iraqi prison matter; but comparatively speaking, little has been expressed against the terrorists.

Who will apologize or express concern for the 9/11 attack and the 3,000 innocent lives lost?

Who will apologize for the first attack to the World Trade Center and subsequent attacks upon our embassies and the U.S.S. *Cole*?

Who will apologize for the recent deadly explosion in Spain?

Who will apologize regarding hostages who were mutilated and hanged from a bridge while onlookers gleefully applauded and laughed obscenely?

These questions are rhetorical, Mr. Speaker, because no apologies are forthcoming, and many do not appear to be concerned about it.

I am told that the majority of Iraqis wanted Saddam removed from power, but they were unwilling and were incapable of doing the job themselves because they feared Saddam and knew the pain and torture he was capable of inflicting upon them.

Incidentally, Mr. Speaker, Saddam's rape rooms are no longer open for business, nor are Saddam's torture chambers. Why do we hear virtually nothing about the rape rooms and the torture chambers having been shut down? They are shut down because America, Great Britain, and coalition members stepped forward and Saddam retreated to his spider hole where he was captured.

Some in Iraq embrace us as liberators, while others, including terrorists from beyond Iraq, reject us as occupiers.

□ 1245

The closer Iraq approaches freedom and democracy, the more impediments and barriers the terrorists will erect.

When the government is handed over to the Iraqi Council on 30 June, many have declared, oh, the Americans must never leave because civil unrest may erupt. Well, I agree, we cannot abruptly depart, but Iraq needs to step up to the plate on 30 June.

Mr. Speaker, there is an expression uttered in the rural South to indicate appropriate timing. This expression is called "high time." So I say today it is high time for Iraq to accept responsibility and express a willingness to govern and stand up to terrorism. If they want us to leave, they can show the world they are capable of governing responsibly. They can show the world they have the fortitude to avoid intimidation by terrorists and the evil practices they dispense.