

these cards and gives the insurance industry a \$46 billion subsidiary. And do my colleagues know what? While the drug benefit program does not go into effect until 2006, the insurance industry, the HMOs, already got their payment on March 1, their first payment.

Mr. Speaker, we could have done this right and done a regular prescription drug program through Medicare with a good discount. Instead, the President and the Republican leadership have again done the bidding of the drug industry, again have done the bidding of the insurance industry, again have done the bidding of these companies that make these discount cards.

It is outrageous, Mr. Speaker, that instead of doing Medicare right and preserving the Medicare that we know and that this country likes and that seniors have benefited from, we have privatized this system. We have confused seniors, and we have let the drug industry and the insurance industry write this legislation, benefit from that legislation, and cash in on this legislation.

WE MUST SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

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

Mr. PEARCE. Mr. Speaker, first of all, in response, I found a different case from my constituents. The first woman who signed up for one of the drug cards, Mr. Speaker, was 85. She had a monthly cost of \$409, and after the card was given and she was able to navigate her way through it, her cost was \$13.61. Mr. Speaker, that hardly sounds like the drug industry is going to get a payoff.

Mr. Speaker, I, like many, am profoundly disappointed in the photos and the actions of a handful of our soldiers, but I do not for one moment mistake the actions of a few to be representative of the many.

On the floor of this House, Mr. Speaker, I have heard my colleagues from the other side of the aisle say that the war being fought in Iraq cannot be won and is, in fact, "unwinnable." And yet with straight faces these same colleagues say that they support our troops.

They have short memories, Mr. Speaker. They say they support our troops, and yet some of them earnestly voted against providing our troops with the very resources they need in the field, fighting not only for our liberty but for the freedoms of others.

Mr. Speaker, the words and actions of these individuals do not indicate support for our troops, and I find it profoundly disappointing when some show such blatant disregard, dishonor, and disrespect for our troops. Some of my colleagues have made such comments without concern for the impact that it has on the morale of our troops who are currently fighting in Iraq as well as those who are poised to go to Iraq.

Is this Election Year rhetoric and the partisan banter part of the Democrats' winnable strategy in Iraq? The bottom line is that some Members of the other party have become representative for retreat and appeasement. Mr. Speaker, appeasement and retreat has not worked in the past and will not work in the future with the terrorists. Mr. Speaker, we must win this war on terror. The stakes are too great for the future of humanity.

I went to Iraq late last year and personally visited with our soldiers. The young men in this picture and the young women that I met, those are the soldiers in Iraq who are an all-volunteer force who are fighting so that our children and grandchildren do not have to live in a world where there is daily fear of terrorism. These men and women deserve the thanks of a grateful Nation and a grateful world. They deserve to have our unwavering support for their unwavering belief in liberty and their understanding of freedom.

Since the American people will not hear these stories on the evening news, Mr. Speaker, I am here tonight to share true stories of astonishing bravery, courage, compassion, valor, and steel nerve. Mr. Speaker, I am talking about our soldiers and what they have done for America, Iraq, Afghanistan, and the entire world.

The soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division have been working to make Iraq secure but also have been putting time and effort into helping towns and villages with their "Operation Helping Hands" program. With "Operation Helping Hands," our soldiers donate their own money to help provide families with food and health care necessities. Brigade Commander Colonel Ben Hodges came up with the idea of helping the poor families in the area. They have collected several thousand dollars, which goes a long way toward helping many Iraqi families.

Mr. Speaker, our troops are compassionate. They are helping Iraqi families in a way that they have never been helped before. Soldiers are often out in Iraq communities to provide medical care and humanitarian assistance. A small, impoverished village about 10 miles from Baghdad was recently paid a visit by personnel from the Medical Civic Action Program. This program sends doctors and medics out to provide free medical care on a regular basis. Because of conditions under Saddam Hussein, soldiers are treating diseases we rarely see here at home such as tuberculosis, hepatitis, and polio.

Mr. Speaker, we should also be proud of our troops for fighting for women's rights. For the first time in history, women in Mosul, Iraq were able to join the rest of the world in celebrating International Women's Day. The day recognizes coordinated efforts of women everywhere for equal rights and political and economic equality.

The People's Assembly Building was rededicated as the Center for Iraqi Women. The center will serve as a

meeting place for all women of Iraq where they can share ideas, offer training, coordinate communications, and build a safer homeland.

And in Mosul, Iraqi police say they are grateful to the soldiers from the U.S. Army's 503rd Military Police Battalion for their assistance in rebuilding police stations. Coalition forces helped to renovate several police stations and enabled the Iraqi police officers to protect their fellow citizens. There are more than 1,600 policemen who have trained from scratch in an 8-week training program.

Mr. Speaker, these are the stories of our young men and women in Iraq. These are the stories of the people who are fighting for freedom and fighting to rebuild a country. Mr. Speaker, the war on terror must be won.

The new Iraqi Army is growing. In early March, more than 1,000 recruits of the 4th Battalion graduated from the nine-week basic training program.

These are our soldiers' stories. There are hundreds, perhaps thousands more. I am proud of our soldiers and want to say "thank you." These are not the stories that you will hear on the news, or in the newspapers—nor will you hear them during election year rhetoric.

A U.S. soldier evacuated an Iraqi woman, Farha Abed Saad for medical treatment after she had been harmed by the thugs who wish to rob Iraqis of their right to freedom. "Thank God, you have come here to Iraq and make us free," said Ms. Saad, kissing a soldier's hands. "When I see you, I see my own sons! Thank you, thank you."

It is a sad day, Mr. Speaker, when some in this city who routinely ignore the great accomplishments of our soldiers only to politicize the war at their expense.

We will win this war on terror, Mr. Speaker, there is no other option. This IS a winnable war—and we must stand behind our policy and our troops with a firm resolve.

A world controlled by terrorists is not acceptable. If the United States of America cannot defeat terrorism, who in the world can? We will continue to fight against Al-Qaeda and Al-Qaeda affiliated groups—like the one who viciously beheaded 26-year-old Nick Berg. Nick Berg was a civilian who voluntarily went to Iraq to help rebuild Iraqi communication antennas. And my prayers are with his family.

After 9-11, Mr. Speaker, America was called to a new destiny. Our destiny is to defeat terrorism and tyranny. Amid the towers of American tragedy, Mr. Speaker, emerged our soldiers as towers of American strength.

And they shall have my eternal gratitude.

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REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4275, PERMANENT EXTENSION OF 10-PERCENT INDIVIDUAL INCOME TAX RATE BRACKET

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-483) on the resolution (H. Res. 637) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4275) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, to permanently extend the 10-percent individual

income tax rate bracket, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4279, PROVIDING FOR DISPOSITION OF UNUSED HEALTH BENEFITS IN CAFETERIA PLANS AND FLEXIBLE SPENDING ARRANGEMENTS; H.R. 4280, HEALTH EFFICIENT, ACCESSIBLE, LOW-COST, TIMELY HEALTHCARE (HEALTH) ACT OF 2004; AND H.R. 4281, SMALL BUSINESS HEALTH FAIRNESS ACT OF 2004

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-484) on the resolution (H. Res. 638) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4279) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the disposition of unused health benefits in cafeteria plans and flexible spending arrangements; for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4280) to improve patient access to health care services and provide improved medical care by reducing the excessive burden the liability system places on the health care delivery system; and for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4281) to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to improve access and choice for entrepreneurs with small businesses with respect to medical care for their employees, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

A FAILURE OF LEADERSHIP AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, in response to the gentleman who spoke earlier in the well about casting aspersions on Donald Rumsfeld and others in the Bush administration, I will not cast aspersions. I called for his resignation earlier; and if I have time at the end, I will go into those again.

But I am going to read from the *Army Times*, not exactly a bastion of Democrats or liberalism.

“Editorial: A Failure of Leadership At The Highest Levels.

“Around the halls of the Pentagon, a term of caustic derision has emerged for the enlisted soldiers at the heart of the furor over the Abu Ghraib prison scandal: The six morons who lost the war.

“Indeed, damage done to the U.S. military and the nation as a whole by the horrifying photographs of U.S. soldiers abusing Iraqi detainees at the notorious prison is incalculable.

“But the folks at the Pentagon are talking about the wrong morons.

“There is no excuse for the behavior displayed by soldiers in the now infamous pictures, and an even more damn-

ing report by Major General Antonio Taguba. Every soldier involved should be ashamed.

“But while responsibility begins with the six soldiers facing criminal charges, it extends all the way up the chain of command, to the highest reaches of the military hierarchy and its civilian leadership.

“The entire affair is a failure of leadership from start to finish. From the moment they are captured, prisoners are hooded, shackled and isolated. The message to the troops: anything goes.

“In addition to the scores of prisoners who were humiliated and demeaned, at least 14 have died in custody in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Army has ruled at least two of these homicides. This is not the way a free people keeps its captives or wins the hearts and minds of a suspicious world.

“How tragically ironic that the American military, which was welcomed to Baghdad by the euphoric Iraqi people a year ago as a liberating force and ended 30 years of tyranny, would today stand guilty of dehumanizing torture in the same Abu Ghraib prison used by Saddam Hussein's henchmen.

“One can only wonder why the prison wasn't razed in the wake of the invasion as a symbolic stake through the heart of the Baathist regime.

“Army commanders in Iraq bear responsibilities for running a prison where there was no legal advisor to the commander, no ultimate responsibility taken for the care and treatment of the prisoners.

“General Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs, also shares in the shame. Myers asked ‘60 Minutes II’ to hold off reporting news of the scandal because it could put U.S. troops at risk. But when the report was aired, a week later, Myers still hadn't read Taguba's report, which had been completed in March; Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld also failed to read the report until after the scandal broke in the media.

“But then, of course, it was too late.

“Myers, Rumsfeld and their staffs failed to recognize the impact the scandal would have, not only in the United States, but around the world.

“If their staffs failed to alert Myers and Rumsfeld, shame on them. But shame, too, on the chairman and Secretary, who failed to inform even President Bush.

“He was left to learn of the explosive scandal from media reports instead of from his own military leaders.

“On the battlefield, Myers and Rumsfeld's errors would be called lack of situational awareness, a failure that amounts to professional negligence.

“To date, the Army has moved to court-martial the six soldiers suspected of abusing Iraqi detainees and has reprimanded six others.

“Brigadier General Karpinski, who commanded the MP brigade that ran Abu Ghraib, has received a letter of admonishment and also faces possible disciplinary action.

“That is good, but not enough.

“This was not just a failure of leadership at the local command level. This was a failure that ran straight to the top. Accountability here is essential, even if that means relieving top leaders from duty in a time of war.”

That is from the *Army Times*, the May 17, 2004, issue.

I called earlier for Secretary Rumsfeld's resignation, as had others, because of the jiggered intelligence about the weapons of mass destruction and the so-called links that did not exist with terrorist groups with this regime, the fact that they ignored intelligence reports and plans drawn up by the State Department, and concerns about post-war occupation of Iraq, about the number of troops necessary to prevent looting, the downward spiral that could begin with looting, the fact that the troops did not have body armor, armored Humvees.

That is all because they were not ordered, not because there was not enough money. They were not ordered. Rumsfeld did not think they would need them, in his arrogance.

And today he talks about troops as fungible, and he reigns over a Defense Department that has wasted billions, while the troops are lacking basics. And he is the guy at whose desk the buck stops when prisoners are abused, as says the *Army Times*, not just a progressive Democrat from Oregon.

WHAT AMERICA HAS ACCOMPLISHED

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, we all demonstrated our righteous indignation over what took place in the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq, and we are horrified by it. But I would like to take just a few minutes to share the transcript of the Fox News Sunday program hosted by Chris Wallace, in which he talked about the positive accomplishments.

He said on Sunday, “As many of you may know, we thought the ABC News program, ‘Nightline,’ made a mistake last week, listing all the brave men and women who died in Iraq but without providing the context of what they died for. So we have said that we would put together our own tribute, our own list of what these brave men and women have built in Iraq.

“A couple of points before we begin. Some of you have written saying that we're pushing the White House agenda. As you saw in the last segment, there are plenty of hard questions to ask about the Bush administration's policy in Iraq, and we will keep asking them.

“There were also times this week when you couldn't help but wonder about putting on the good news from Iraq, as we saw those ugly pictures from the Abu Gharib prison. But the more we thought about it, what better