

were prayer beads, there were prayer caps, there was a Koran, and each of these detainees were treated in a very humane fashion.

So I would say this to my colleagues, that, indeed, if we are "GTMO-izing" the operation in Iraq, amen. That is what we need to do.

UNCOVERING WASTE, FRAUD, AND ABUSE

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

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss what my colleagues have been discussing here today: issues of waste, fraud, and abuse. But, before I do, I would like to make one statement. I operated as a trial judge in Texas for about 21 years, and we had rules in the court at that time that if the opposing counsel for any purpose attacked or impugned the honesty or integrity of another member or got vicious and attacked them in any form or fashion, we could correct them; and if they continued in that type of style, we could actually fine them. It has been my limited experience here in Congress that if we were able to allow the Chair to issue such fines, we could probably balance the budget here in Congress without much problem at all. And I think we have seen a lot of that here today with the use of some terms like "liar" that I have heard here used today. I just as an aside wanted to say that.

Back about a year-and-a-half ago, I was in a meeting in Houston, Texas. As I said, I have been a trial judge. Before the meeting, I had an undercover Department of Public Safety officer come to me at this meeting and say he would like to talk to me in private for just a minute; and I went in and talked to him.

He said, Judge, I want to tell you about something. There is something going on here in Houston that I think you ought to know about it. There is a gang of Middle Eastern folks that are stealing baby formula from our local supermarkets and selling it to the WIC program.

Well, my first reaction would be the reaction I would think of most Americans, and that was, gee, whiz. I mean, do you guys not have anything better to do than go out and investigate shoplifting? But knowing that he was part of an undercover task force, I figured he had something to say, and I said, well, how big a deal could that be, Lieutenant?

He said, well, Judge, here in Houston it is about \$1 million a month.

And I said, good Lord, \$1 million a month for baby formula?

He said, yes, sir; and, you know, it is not against the law to possess baby formula. It is against the law to possess narcotics and dangerous drugs, but it is not against the law to possess baby formula. So if we catch a guy with a trunk load of baby formula, we cannot

do anything to him. But we know what he is doing. He is stealing this formula, and he is selling it to the WIC program to the tune of about \$1 million a month. In fact, the estimates are that in Texas alone it is \$1.5 million a month Statewide.

He said, we have followed this group to Phoenix, Arizona. We have followed them to New Mexico, although I do not remember which town in New Mexico; to California, San Diego and Los Angeles. They have an operation in each one of those towns, to the possible tune of \$30 million a month Nationwide. I was shocked.

And he said, we also have evidence that this is being used to fund terrorism.

Now when you want to talk about waste, fraud, and abuse, how much more fraudulent could it be than stealing from the mouths of our children and the poorest of our Nation, taking away a program that was designed to help poor mothers feed their babies, stealing from them, and letting a government agency be a fence for that purpose?

I asked him, I said, have you talked to the people in the WIC program? He said, yes, I have explained to them that they should not be buying this stuff off the street, that buying it off the street was fencing for criminal activity.

□ 2000

And he said, "Well, they do not see the seriousness in it."

Mr. Speaker, those of us who have been in criminal justice in this country have sent people to the penitentiary for a whole lot less than stealing a million dollars a month. I, for one, have done that on several different occasions.

It shocked me so that I am proud to let my colleagues know that in H.R. 3873 I got an amendment which now requires that the WIC program have certified vendors that they buy this product from. But when our government has risen to the size that it has risen, that it misses that kind of waste, fraud, and abuse; we have got a serious problem. And yet the other side of the aisle, the Democrats, want to raise our taxes to grow a bigger government, a bigger government that in many instances the right hand does not know what the left hand is doing.

For that reason, I honor the members of Waste Watchers for the hard work they are doing trying to be watch dogs.

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHAT IS THE OCEAN'S ROLE IN CLIMATE?

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

Mr. GILCHREST. Mr. Speaker, what I would like to do to the Members assembled here tonight is to give a perspective on whether or not to some degree the climate on the planet is changing based on observational techniques by U.S. scientists.

What I would like to do as far as this perspective is concerned is to say about 500 years ago people thought the world was flat until there was observations and exploration. And through those techniques, Columbus, for example, it was discovered that the Earth was round. Galileo, the scientist, said that the Earth revolved around the Sun. As a result of that, he was put in prison and his life was threatened because at the time the religious doctrine was that the Sun revolved around the Earth because it was not mentioned in the Bible that it was the other way around. But then through certain techniques and observation, scientific discoveries, more information being disseminated, we realized that the Earth revolves around the Sun.

The other interesting perspective about 100 years after Galileo was a man named James Usher, a bishop in Ireland, said that the Earth was formed in 4004 B.C. but that was before we had the science of geology, geologic techniques. And through a series of information-gathering, it was discovered that the Earth was several billion years old. In fact, we did not realize how old it was in the extent of the universe until the Hubbell spacecraft.

Now we have this thing called climate change. And there is a great deal of discussion on that, whether or not there is climate change or whether there is not climate change, can humans impact the Earth so that the actual climate will change.

What I would like to go through very briefly are some observational discoveries about planet Earth. For example, the oceans cover 70 percent of the surface. The oceans store 1,000 times more heat than the atmosphere. The ocean transports about 50 percent of the energy it receives from the Sun. It transports that. That means if you look at

the heat that hits the equator, and the oceans have a current and they move that, that heat is moved to the northern latitudes and that moderates temperature so that it is not that cold. In the northern latitudes, the high latitudes, since the ocean currents move back the other way, some of that cold is moved down toward the equator, and it moderates the heat at the equator.

As a result of those ocean currents, the Earth, as we know it now, 21st century, has a heat balance that we are used to. But that heat balance throughout the geologic time has changed many, many, many times.

So what are the observations of the ocean? There is increased salinity as a result of some of the warming trends that the Earth has experienced in the last 100 years, and there has been a warming trend. There might be some dispute about how that warming trend has impacted, but there has been a warming trend.

We could look at some of the impact of the warming trend since in the last 50 years we have put more CO₂ back into the atmosphere than what it took nature millions of years to lock up in the form of CO₂ trapped in fossil fuel deep under the ground. If you looked at a map of the United States at night, you could see all the lights, you would see one long consistent trail, which actually is about 24 hours, from Florida to Maine of automobiles on Route 95. From Florida to Maine we would see this crease.

You will see it in all the major cities, whether it is Miami, Chicago, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, et cetera, et cetera, and New York City certainly, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Houston, Dallas. We are spewing more CO₂ into the atmosphere than the Earth's ability to absorb that and process that so we have that same balance.

We have seen a change. This kind of change in the balance or the makeup of the atmosphere has not been seen on planet Earth based on scientific ice core analysis for 400,000 years. So we see a salinity change around the equator in the ocean currents. We see elevated evaporation rates around most of the oceans because of the warmth, warming trend. We see increasing freshening of the ocean water in the northern latitudes, consequently changing the direction of these currents. And through these observations, we find some interesting perspectives that need more research on climate change.

WASTE FOUND WITHIN THE PELL GRANT PROGRAM

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

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, as another member of the Washington Waste Watchers, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight just one example of what we are now learning to be

the vast amount of waste throughout our Federal Government. Unfortunately, no Federal agency is immune to this waste, even those that are implementing the Nation's most important Federal programs.

One particularly troubling example of waste is found within the Pell grant program. \$336 million in Pell grants were improperly dispersed to applicants that understated their income in 2001. Let me be clear, American taxpayers spent \$336 million in Pell grants for applicants that were not eligible.

Not only does this represent a terrible misuse of taxpayer dollars, the expenditure of these funds denies the legitimate financial assistance provided by Pell grants to the thousands of students who truly need and deserve this help.

Mr. Speaker, we belong to a Congress that has brought unprecedented increases in Federal funding to our schools. Yet the administrators in my district continue to ask why have I not seen that money. I should not have to report to the administrators, teachers, and parents in Minnesota that the money they need to provide the quality education our children deserve is not available because it has been wasted by an inattentive Federal bureaucracy.

We have got to put an end to this harmful waste. Unfortunately, some of our colleagues on the other side of the aisle would prefer to ignore this waste and simply complain about, quote, lack of funding for Pell grants. Rather than crack down on the ineffective bureaucracy responsible for this waste, they would like to create more funds by raising taxes on hard-working American families.

My colleagues and I in the Washington Waste Watchers have a more responsible approach. It begins with eliminating the waste in government spending and creating more efficiency in Federal programs.

The budgets passed by the House Republicans both last year and this year make great progress toward our goal of eliminating waste. Last year's budget led to a report that highlighted between \$85 and \$100 billion of wasteful spending. This year's budget instructed committees to reduce or eliminate the most egregious examples of waste.

Mr. Speaker, American taxpayers deserve better than to have their hard-earned paychecks squandered by an irresponsible bureaucracy in Washington. I ask my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to join us in creating a better Federal Government, not making it bigger through more tax increases, but helping us to expand services for those who truly need them by eliminating the waste.

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

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

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2003

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

Mr. BONNER. Mr. Speaker, Monday December 8, 2003, was truly a historic day for millions of Americans, especially our senior citizens. During the long anticipated and much planned for ceremony at the DAR Constitution Hall here in our Nation's capital, President Bush signed into law the conference report on H.R. 1, the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act of 2003.

This event, attended by lawmakers from both sides of the aisle, as well as from both Chambers here in this building, was a landmark moment in the history of the Medicare program. It marked the culmination of years of effort by Members from this Chamber, as well as by some of our colleagues in the other body.

Make no mistake, the revisions to the Medicare program will provide great benefits to the senior citizens of this country who need the help the most. By signing up now for the new prescription drug discount card, seniors will be eligible for at-the-register savings of between 10 and 25 percent today. Soon, 75 percent of the drug costs of up to \$2,250 will be covered by Medicare; and before long, catastrophic coverage of up to 95 percent will take effect for amounts over \$3,600.

This new plan includes incentives for employers to keep their current employees enrolled as well as retirees under their existing plans as well as employers who will be able to include new provisions of this Medicare plan, the expanse of which is in their new plans.

In my home State of Alabama, the Medicare program will assume responsibility for the prescription drug cost of nearly 140,000 seniors who are currently eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid coverage.

Mr. Speaker, the revisions to the Medicare program are more extensive than can be covered during the time we have this evening, but there is also one important fact to remember: this plan is purely voluntary. Many Americans may well be satisfied with the coverage that they currently have, and they do not have to do anything. They can stay where they are. Senior citizens have the right to choose whether or not they want to enroll in this important new program. Unfortunately, with all of the great news about this new program, many American seniors have failed to take action at this point largely because there is still confusion about the specifics of this program.

In a survey conducted in my district just recently, residents were asked how they felt about the new Medicare prescription drug plan. Sixty percent of those questioned said that they actually approved of the measure, although many did have additional questions