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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. RENZI).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

THE SPEAKER'S ROOMS,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 21, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RICK RENZI 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 Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

THE FORGOTTEN WAR ON TERRORISM

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I think there is substantial agreement that the world, Iraq, the Middle East are better off without Saddam Hussein in power. But the question remains particularly as raised most recently and poignantly by General Zinni about the timing, necessity and the conduct of the Iraq war. No weapons of mass destruction, the push for model democracy and a vibrant capitalist free economy is not going so well, so the Bush administra-

tion has fallen back upon the idea that somehow there were substantial links between al Qaeda, 9-11 and Saddam Hussein.

Unfortunately, last week the 9-11 Commission, a truly bipartisan commission, came out with a statement in their most recent report, "We have no credible evidence that Iraq and al Qaeda cooperated on attacks against the United States." Yet, the administration insists on trying to put 9-11, al Qaeda, and Iraq and Saddam Hussein in the same sentence or run-on sentence and paragraph all the time.

Vice President CHENEY has been even more outspoken on this issue. Of course, Vice President CHENEY is the same gentleman who in a closed-door meeting 3 years ago told the Northwest Energy Caucus that there was no collusion, Enron was not manipulating energy markets in the western United States. These were purely market forces. We were just really stupid and we did not understand, but he did.

Well, of course, he was kind of wrong and maybe even this week Ken Lay will be in a criminal indictment as others from Enron have gone to jail, and the appalling tapes that have come out.

Then, of course, Vice President CHENEY also is fond of saying that deficits do not matter. We are just indebting future generations of Americans. Working and wage earning people will pay the bill, while the wealthy and the big corporations skate in the future world that the Bush administration proposes.

So he is not exactly infallible and, unfortunately, I believe the 9-11 Commission is more right than he is, with one exception. There is one really bad guy, Abu Musab Zarqawi. He has now been blamed for more than 700 terrorist killings including U.S. troops in Iraq.

Now, the interesting thing is that the United States of America before the war with Iraq knew exactly where Zarqawi was and they could have taken

him out. In fact, the Pentagon asked 3 times. Now, this is the President who was going to go anywhere and everywhere to take out known terrorist threats. This guy was a known terrorist threat. We knew exactly where he was. In fact, when Colin Powell made his famous presentation full of inaccuracies to the United Nations Security Council, the one accurate thing he did point to with a pointer was a terrorist training camp way up in Northern Iraq, inside the U.S. no-fly zone and protected by the Kurdish area, an area, in fact, that Saddam Hussein could not get to, and that is where Zarqawi was. And 3 times, 3 times the Pentagon asked to take him out.

The first time because they had good intelligence. The second time because they had intelligence that he was developing ricin and other chemical weapons. And then the third time they asked was after some of his cohorts were found with ricin in England.

They asked 3 times and 3 times the Bush National Security Council and the Bush administration turned down the Pentagon. This could have saved U.S. troops and lives and prevented a lot of the mayhem going on in Iraq today. But this administration was so distracted from the war on terror to the war against Iraq and Saddam Hussein that they let this guy go. They let him go. That is absolutely outrageous.

We have got to question whether the distraction from the war on terror, from Osama bin Laden, who is still out there plotting and planning and his second-in-command, who is still out there plotting and planning and this guy Zarqawi, who is out there plotting and planning, if we could have gotten them, if we had been focussed on the war on terror and following the principles that the President set out, instead of this obsession and this distraction and diversion into a war in Iraq where we pulled all of the intelligence

□ 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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out of that area and focussed it all on Iraq, they would not take out Zarqawi because they were afraid it might hurt their coalition building. Iceland might not have joined the Coalition of the Willing to take on Iraq, and some of those other major military powers that have been involved with the United States if we had taken out Zarqawi. They were worried that that would disturb that.

We would take out a real threat to our troops, to the region, to terrorism, to go after Saddam Hussein whose own people would have taken care of him some day.

He was surrounded. His military was a shadow of its former self. The sanctions were depleting his energies and the energies of his military day by day; and sooner or later, with encouragement, the Iraqi people would have taken care of that guy. They tried to kill him 13 times. They just were not successful. They might have got him on the 14th try. But this administration was obsessed with the war and dropped the war on terrorism.

CONGRESS MISSING IN ACTION

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, often we take to the floor to speak to the American public. Well, today I would like to speak to my colleagues in the House of Representatives and the men and women who are preparing their work for our floor action this week.

I would call to their attention that according to the Defense Department's own data, the program to clean up unexploded ordnance on formerly used defense sites will take as much as 252 years. That means in the year 2255 that Congress passing spending bills will still be appropriating money to deal with the problem that we could solve today.

Why, if we have technology that has already realized \$100 million saving at the former Lowry Bombing Range outside of Denver, Colorado, why are we not moving forward to address this problem?

Despite the fact that this Defense Science Board has proposed 5 recommendations that would allow us to address this problem, 80 percent of it over the next 5 years, why do we do nothing but continue to study it? Worse yet, we have actually decreased the funding that is crippling the Department of Defense. It is burdening other Federal land management agencies and it is endangering the health and safety of the American public.

We have to ask why.

Is it because we need another tragedy to occur like what happened in San Diego when 2 boys were killed when they discovered bombs in their neigh-

borhood that, unknown to the residents, sat on top of a former bombing range? Is it because somehow we do not need 8 million acres of land that we could put in productive use in 5 years instead of 252 years? Is it because we believe somehow this contamination exists only in isolated places when, in fact, it is in every State in the Union and almost every Congressional district? Are we somehow unaware that when wildfires strike our public lands from New York to Colorado to Alaska that many of these lands are former ranges?

Three times since I have been in Congress we had to pull men and women out of the front lines fighting the fires because the extreme heat is exploding bombs around them.

Is it because we are unaware of the plight of a North Carolina couple with 5 children who are risking bankruptcy because they moved out of their home when their young son found an old bomb in their front yard and they feared for the safety of their family? It is now a year-and-a-half later and they are still paying the mortgage on a home they cannot live in. They cannot sell it because the clean up has yet to begin because we underfund these programs.

Are we unaware that in the same area of North Carolina, the former Camp Butner, the Army Corps of Engineers has determined that they need to investigate another 20,000 acres for unexploded ordnance contamination? Yet, developers are buying up land and building homes before clean-up has even begun.

Can we in good conscience risk the health and safety of future residents? Is it because we do not know that other residential and business developments already exist or are being proposed in Texas, South Carolina, California, Colorado, here in Washington, D.C., and Massachusetts? Others will surely follow.

Is it because we are unaware that many of these unexploded bombs and discarded munitions are on tribal lands, thereby posing yet another hazard to the highly at-risk Native American population? Are we somehow unaware that the Federal land managers in the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife system, the National Forest Service, the National Park Service, where many of these former ranges are located, do not have the capacity needed to ensure the public safety?

Or is it despite the fact that the Department of Defense believes that ordnance and munitions on these formerly used sites poses enough of a national security risk to remove critical information about the sites from the public because they are afraid terrorists may find out, but we do not believe these same sites left untouched pose a risk to our citizens? Or is it simply that we hope that we can avert a tragedy in our lifetime and just pass this risk off to further future generations?

Whatever the reason, it is simply unacceptable. It is indeed unconscionable that we continue to turn a blind eye to a responsibility that we should be undertaking now.

After years of working on this issue and seeing Congress still missing in action, I will work this week to make sure that my colleagues have a chance to be heard, to take action that might help protect people at risk in the future.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 43 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. TERRY) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord, Your steadfast love never ceases. Your mercy never comes to an end. They are renewed each day because Your faithfulness is so great.

As the House of Representatives begins this week of legislative business, be present to each Member and bind all together to accomplish great deeds for this Nation.

Because Your faithfulness made this such a great Nation, as a people we have an awesome responsibility. Anything we do has ramifications the world over. Make us strong enough and give us broad vision to embrace boldly what is required of us.

In You we find wisdom, prudence, and the courage to create a hopeful future for ourselves and for others both now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. CAPUANO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CAPUANO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.