

SPEAKING OUT AGAINST ADMINISTRATION'S RECORD IN COMBATING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. MAJETTE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. MAJETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against this administration's deplorable record in combating violence against women. This administration has shown a very disappointing tendency to ignore the plight of mistreated women, both at home and abroad.

Through actions taken by the President's cabinet, such as Attorney General Ashcroft's refusal to grant asylum to a battered Guatemalan woman, and the President's widespread cuts to domestic violence programs, this administration has much to answer for in its neglect of battered women.

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It is, therefore, all the more important for Congress to remain vigilant and to protect our sisters all over the world from those who would mistreat them.

The American Medical Association estimates that over 4 million women are victims of severe assaults by boyfriends and husbands each year, and about one out of every 4 women is likely to be abused by a partner in her lifetime. In 85 percent of reported domestic violence cases, the victim is female.

Domestic violence against women is clearly an issue that our government must address head-on.

It saddens me to think that millions of women continue to be abused each year, while this administration sits idly by, taking no initiative and, in some cases, decreasing resources available to battered women.

It would shock the conscience of this Nation to know that this administration has placed individuals hostile to women's interests on expert advisory committees, including those responsible for providing advice on domestic violence and reproductive health. It simply reveals a disregard for the National Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women to appoint members to this body who represent organizations that have outspokenly criticized the Violence Against Women Act. Yet that is exactly what this administration has done.

In addition, the President has refused to include protections for battered women in the marriage proposal programs that are integral to his welfare proposal, despite the risk that poor women could be pressured to remain in abusive relationships.

Finally, this administration has proposed funding emergency shelters, crisis hotlines, and other domestic violence intervention services at 26 percent below authorized levels. I am upset by all of these disturbing trends, but the last of them hits close to home.

In the district that I represent, in DeKalb County, Georgia, there is a

very successful domestic violence intervention center, the Women's Resource Center to End Domestic Violence. The Women's Resource Center's development has truly been a community effort. Established in 1986 by DeKalb County, the center was originally run by one part-time advocate who led support groups. Now, this center runs nine successful programs, including community education and advocacy, providing free legal services, and a 32-person occupancy emergency shelter. So what message is this administration sending to the Women's Resource Center when it refuses to fully fund such an organization and others like it around the country?

As a former judge, I have seen the damage that domestic violence can cause to women and their children, and that is damage to our community and our future.

In Congress, we can and must do more to ensure that local law enforcement can expeditiously deal with domestic violence. This is why I have co-sponsored, and I call on my colleagues to support, the Domestic Violence Courts Assistance Act, which would provide the resources necessary for municipal court systems to develop and establish specialized domestic violence courts. I also urge my colleagues to support the Domestic Violence Screening, Treatment, and Prevention Act. This legislation would establish family violence research and education centers to study and disseminate information on family violence. These centers would then act as a critical support for local community domestic violence intervention centers.

When we read the frightening statistics that illuminate the severity of this problem, how can we not be appalled? We are here as representatives of the American people, representatives of these very women; and what have we done as a Congress to help them? We have the opportunity to create better laws to aid them, yet precious little legislation has been passed. We hold the purse strings of the Federal Government, yet we have not provided an adequate level of funding to supply the resources they need to escape their abusive relationships and lead safe lives. It is past time for this administration and this Congress to make a dedicated effort to relieve their suffering. It is never too late.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure once again to address the U.S. House of Representatives and the American people and also Members of the Congress. I just want to first say that as my colleagues know, every week, the 30-Something Working

Group, under the leadership of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the Democratic leader, we come to the floor to address the House and the American people to share with them what is going on that is good for young people in America, young working people and families, and also what is not going so well, and come with not only constructive ways that we can make things better for Americans throughout this great country of ours, but also make sure that we point out issues that may harm them in the future or that will harm them.

Tonight, we have the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) and also the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN), who are my partners in this effort. I would be remiss if I did not, number one, say that it is a pleasure being here with the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) again. One more week, we made it, another week in America, and also the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ), who is from the great State of California and who has so much to contribute to our dialogue.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I think today, with the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ), there is a lot more class in this Chamber with her here as opposed to just the gentleman from Florida and me.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, there are a number of Americans who are just holding on to their clicker right now to hear exactly what she has to say and how she says it. I know that the gentlewoman from California has another engagement, and we definitely want to hear from her.

First, I want to just share a few things as an update real quick. We still have the voter suppression issue that is alive and well in America. We have been getting the vote out through the Rock the Vote effort and also a lot of other folks who are out there, making things happen, sharing with young people who are going to be on college campuses this fall, that they can register where they are going to school, whether it be community college or wherever. So we ask them to go do Rock the Vote because we still have a problem with supervisors telling people even in summer terms that they cannot register.

Once again, in 1975, the Supreme Court spoke to that issue saying, you can vote when you go to school so that your voice can be heard in this upcoming election. We have other issues that we will touch on throughout the hour.

Mr. Speaker, I will now yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) to please share with us some of the issues that are important to her. I know the gentlewoman will talk about some news dealing with issues facing young people here in America today.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I would join my colleagues a little more often if they

were not up here so late at night. I know that the gentleman has already talked about a number of issues that particularly impact young people in this country. I know that I was here when we talked about the tuition increases and the rising costs of student loans, the increasingly bleak job market for recent graduates. I know that the gentleman talked about the voter suppression issue, and tonight I want to talk a little bit about the men and women who are putting their lives on the line in Iraq and in many places around the globe to protect our country.

Mr. Speaker, we are rapidly coming up to the 4th of July, our Independence Day; and I think it is timely to thank the men and women who sacrifice themselves on behalf of our country.

An interesting statistic that I ran across is that 70 percent of the people serving in Iraq are ages 18 to 30, and that is obviously a big group of young Americans. Unfortunately, while people talk a lot about patriotism and about supporting our troops, unfortunately, what we are seeing under the current Bush administration is that many of the support mechanisms for these men and women, once they come home, are being dismantled. So instead of talking and giving just lip service to how we should be supporting our troops, we should be passing legislation that stops the cuts that the President has proposed, especially cuts to VA health care.

It was not too long ago that I visited, and I have been there on several occasions, Walter Reed Medical Center, which is where the wounded soldiers come after they are stabilized from the theater in Iraq; and I had an opportunity to talk with many young men in the amputee ward, some as young as 19, 20, 21, 22, who are going to need ongoing health care for their injuries. They are going to need job retraining because the jobs that they are going back to they cannot hold anymore. And, unfortunately, what we have seen this government do is cut benefits to VA programs, especially the health care programs, at a time when out of the other side of their mouth, they are saying we need to support our troops.

So I find that there is a level of hypocrisy in what the Bush administration says and actually what they are doing. I tell people all the time, the measure of our patriotism is not just about rah, rah, and cheering the troops while they are in war, in theater; but it is how do we treat those same men and women once they come home and they need us. Unfortunately, we are seeing that this administration is bent on cuts to VA services. Veterans who have fought some of their toughest battles for this country on foreign soil then come back to fight the bureaucracy of the VA health care system and face ever-increasing delays to be seen by doctors, closing of facilities and consolidation, which means that they have to travel many, many more miles just

to go and get the basic services that they are entitled to.

I just want to note, before I engage my two other colleagues here this evening in discussion, that even VA Secretary Anthony Principi publicly acknowledged that he tried in vain to secure more funding from this administration. So what kind of priorities does this administration have if they cannot meet the funding request of the VA Secretary who was hand-picked by President Bush? Mr. Principi is someone the President picked, but he is also a veteran. So he could not keep quiet about how egregiously low the funding level is for the VA administration.

So I think it is timely that young people know that we are asking them to make a great sacrifice in risking their health and their lives overseas; they are being divided from their families and, again, they are coming back to an administration that is saying they support the troops when, in fact, the services and the follow-up care that they are going to need is being cut while they are away.

I do not know what my colleagues think about that, but I yield.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we talk about and put ourselves in the shoes of these veterans who are going to be coming back, and one of the issues that they are going to be dealing with is their veterans benefits, which the gentlewoman has talked about.

Secretary Principi is saying they need another \$1.5 billion. The House budget, both Democrats and Republicans, for the most part, on the committee have agreed that we need another 2.5 or \$3 billion more for the veterans to meet their needs. And I think it is important to understand that what we hear from the administration is that we have increased funding for veterans, the Veterans Administration by ex-fold or whatever the percentage points they want to cite, and that is great; but the problem is we have thousands and thousands more veterans accessing the system, so although we are putting more money into it, it is not addressing the demand of the people going into the system.

I know in northeast Ohio we have a large concentration of veterans. I think I have 73,000 veterans in my district out of a 700,000-person district; that is almost a sixth of who we represent, and the reason is, the steel mills close down, you lose your pension, you lose your health care, you do not have anywhere to turn, you never utilized the VA system, but because of the drastic downturn in the economy and the weeding out of manufacturing, you are having a lot of these people enter the system.

So the gentlewoman's point is very well taken, and I think it is something that needs to be addressed and it is an issue that, again, it is easy for us to say here, but these veterans save this capitalistic system. These veterans save the democratic system. And there

would be no one generating wealth, there would not be CEOs making however many times, 300 times as much as the average worker if the system was not saved by these heroic veterans.

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So I think it is important for us to know that this system that we have that is generating all this wealth would not exist if it were not for the veterans. So I think we have some obligation some responsibility to make sure that we provide them with the health care, the benefits, and everything else that they need.

I yield to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I was really appreciating the dialogue here. I know I am not a veteran myself, being from the State of Florida, I can tell that we have a number of veterans, very patriotic veterans that are very concerned from St. Petersburg to the Panhandle, to Miami, Florida, we have a VA hospital where veterans just need to see the ophthalmologist and it takes 6 months for them to see him.

Meanwhile, World War II dedication, remembrance of D-Day, politicians falling all over themselves wearing flags talking about we love you, we love you, trying to get in a photo op with these patriots, even patriots of past wars whether it be Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War I, out there trying to take a picture on these Memorial Days and Veterans Days, but the real issue is this: How do we treat them outside of Veterans Day and Memorial Day? That is the real issue.

The real issue is when the rubber meets the road and the reality after each one of those holidays they still have long lines and they still have inadequate and underfunded VA centers.

So when we look at the credibility of United States and our efforts, I will tell my colleagues for all of us here who care so much about our troops, and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) knows today in the Committee on Armed Services that it is not a question about do we love and appreciate the troops' commitment to the sovereignty and the United States and our friends abroad, that is not a question, I mean, will the troops fight for 20 years? They will fight for 20 years if they have to fight on the behalf of the United States and our reputation. But it is the management of not only the country, but also VA services that we will go into in a minute, and also what is going on in Iraq right now.

And I must say that for every turn this Congress has given this administration credit when credit was not due, but on behalf of the efforts that were in and people that we have in forward areas throughout the world, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is just so very, very important that we bring point to this.

If I can, my colleagues, I always read the paper. I know that there are some people who said they do not read the

paper, but I will leave that alone. We know who that individual is. But this is the Dallas Morning News. "Iraq Trust Gap." And this editorial is from this paper. And I must say that the President is from Texas, right?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I think so.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Allegedly.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Dallas is in Texas. I want to make sure. I am from Florida so I want to make sure I have it right.

They are saying, "You have got a credibility problem, Mr. President." Now, this is the hometown paper in a home State that is saying that there is an issue. It goes on in this editorial.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Before we get into this, because we, being on the Committee on Armed Services, we talk about this all the time. This seems to be like every conversation you have on the floor and off the floor somehow gets back to the war, somehow gets back to this administration's march to war.

I just want to be clear with the American people, this is not personal. This is not us trying to demagog an issue for political gain. We have 800 soldiers who have been killed. We have thousands of soldiers who have been wounded. We have had hundreds, if not thousands, of innocent Iraqis killed because of this.

This is a distinction that my colleagues and I have to make because we are elected Members. My colleague represents 700,000, my other colleague represents 700,000 and I represent 700,000 citizens of this country who want to know why we are in the predicament we are in. This is not personal with the President. I am sure we would all say he is an affable man who we all would probably sit down and have a Diet Coke or a cup of coffee with and completely enjoy the time together.

But, we have an obligation, a constitutional obligation because this Chamber, Article 1, section 1 of the Constitution says the people govern, not the administration, not the executive branch. The legislative branch, everything starts here in the House.

This is why we are bringing this up. This is why my colleagues and I are going to have this discussion because we have a responsibility to question the leadership of this country, a constitutional obligation that when we stood here a year and a half ago, we put our hands up and said, "I do," "I will."

So I did not mean to interrupt my colleague, but I think it is important that we lay this out before we have this discussion to say this is not personal. This is about the policies of this administration that we questioned initially, our voices were not heard. The press tried to question early, they were shut out. And now we are in a situation where we have not been given all the facts.

So I am sorry to interrupt my colleague, but I wanted to lay that out before we got moving here.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) this is important that the American people understand this is not the Ryan-Meek-Sanchez report, but this is the Dallas Morning News. I do not sit on that editorial board.

What has happened here as it relates to this editorial, it is saying, "Mr. President, we backed you for President of the United States, we backed your decision to do certain things in this country." But I will tell my colleague as it relates to other people in this democracy like the 9/11 Commission, that is made up of Democrats and Republicans, okay, that have said there is no link between al Qaeda and Saddam Hussein, and you are saying yes, there is, as it relates to the war, the preemptive strike that we took in Iraq when we keep changing the reason why we went into Iraq, there is an issue there.

So that is the reason why 76 percent of the American people feel that we were receiving too many casualties in Iraq. I must say to the families to the four Marines that lost their lives within the last 24 hours that my heart goes out to them. And every Member of this Congress, Democrat and Republican, appreciate their service. But it comes down to the management of the war and also the management of the country.

We cannot separate ourselves like a quarterback to a receiver when it comes down to bad news from the war saying, well, whatever they want on the ground we are going to give them, but otherwise you are telling them what they are going to have. Do not separate yourself on those issues coming up.

And I will tell my colleague what is so very, very important as it relates to credibility, as it relates to veterans affairs, as it relates to a real health care plan, as it relates to reducing the deficit, there are a lot of people saying, oh, we are going to take the deficit down but we are having to have action here on Thursday that will separate the boys from the men and the girls from the women when it comes down to the vote of who really cares about the growing deficit in this country.

I pull no punches when it comes down to what happens in the management of this war, how we approach June 30 and beyond. We have a question of command, who is going to be in charge afterwards of American troops and what happens with their safety. It also comes down to the issue of how long we are going to be there? How are we going to bring other world leaders into it? When one has a G-8 summit with the hopes of hopefully someone will say, hey, we are sending more troops and that does not happen, something is wrong.

So it means that 135,000, 137,000 troops in theater right now are going to be in theater for some time to come with really with us saying, well, there

will be elections in December. I say to my colleague from California we cannot even have elections in Afghanistan. Okay. I am not belittling Afghanistan, but Iraq and Afghanistan are two different issues.

The war against terror, I will tell you this, if we cannot have elections that we are postponing for the second time, Secretary Wolfowitz of the Secretary of Defense, he said the U.N. was not able to register folks. I wonder why the U.N. is not able to register. It is a safety issue in Afghanistan. There is a safety issue in Iraq.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, would the gentleman yield? That brings up the whole point that I have been trying to make for months now. And I am going to continue to make it until somebody hears me or maybe we could figure out why we did this the wrong way.

Today in our Committee on Armed Services, Secretary Wolfowitz said we went to Iraq because there was a connection between al-Qaeda and Saddam Hussein. And he said we went because Iraq was harboring terrorists from al-Qaeda. And we went because Iraq was funding terrorists. Connection, harboring terrorists, and funding terrorists were the three reasons throughout the committee, we were there about three hours today, that the Secretary gave.

There was an article today in the Houston Chronicle, it said, verbatim, Pakistan and Saudi Arabia harbored al-Qaeda, funded al-Qaeda, and they were connected to al-Qaeda, more so than Iraq. So the dangerous thing that we need to talk about if this is the standard, if you have been connected, harbored, or funded terrorist organizations, the United States or some other country could now go to war with this country.

So we should be in Pakistan, we should be in Saudi Arabia, we should be in Iran, we should probably be in Sudan where bin Laden met supposedly with the Iraqi official. When does this end? When does this end?

We have pulled our troops out of Afghanistan, we have 130,000 in Iraq. We have 10,000 in Afghanistan. Why cannot we have elections in Afghanistan? We do not have the security. They are all in Iraq.

Why is poppy now half of the GDP in Afghanistan? Because we do not have enough troops on the ground in there. And they said we wanted to set up a democracy in the Middle East? Why did we not do it? We were already in Afghanistan if we wanted to set up a democracy in that area of the world.

And it is very frustrating, and I think the ultimate issue that we have talked about many, many times, I say to my colleague from Florida, is that when we asked this administration what the deal was with the poppy, 70 percent of the world's poppy which turns into heroin, is converted into heroin, is from Afghanistan.

And when we asked this administration what they were doing about the

drug problem in Afghanistan, the \$2½ billion that is coming out of there, that is going right to al-Qaeda, that is going to continue their terrorist acts, direct funding, drugs on the market in the United States and elsewhere, mostly in Europe, to al-Qaeda to fund terrorists, we asked what are you doing about the drugs, the poppy this year? And the answer was, "We missed it." "The harvest came in early and we missed it." I want to repeat that. The harvest of poppy came in early in Afghanistan and we missed it. And so it has already been harvested and it is already on the market being converted into heroin on the market now.

So there will be 365 days worth of funding of al-Qaeda from the drugs that are grown in Afghanistan. And there is one reason why that happened: We do not have enough troops on the ground in Afghanistan. We have 10,000 or 11,000 there. We have 130,000 in Iraq.

Imagine if we would have spent just half of what we spent in Iraq and had half the troops that we have in Iraq in Afghanistan where bin Laden came from, what the situation would be. We would have a democracy in the Middle East, we would have taken care of our drug problem, and we would have elections that would not have to keep getting postponed.

I am sorry to talk so much but that is so frustrating to me. I cannot figure out why we did what we did when we did not have our problems fixed in Afghanistan.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to mention one thing in the hearing, you talk about the testimony in the Committee on Armed Services. It just further illustrates how unfair of a burden we really are delegating to, again, these young men and women who are going overseas with the best of intentions. They want to serve their country well. They want to do the right thing. They are doing their job under very difficult circumstances and to the best of their abilities. But their leadership at the top is failing them.

It is making the situation such that they are going to have to stay for longer and longer periods of time. They will have to endure worsening conditions and continuing instability. And these are folks that are proud Americans that want to serve this country. And, again, their leadership from our President is failing them.

I just think it is such a tragedy because we are asking these young people to take the brunt of the risk. And when they come back stateside and, hopefully, they come back safely, the way that this administration is thanking them for taking that risk is unbelievable.

I want to talk about one brief issue before I have to run, and that is called concurrent receipt. We like to call it the veterans tax or the disabled veterans tax. And what that is is people who have served in the military who have earned a military pension and

they are injured in combat and they are receiving disability pay, they have their pension payment deducted by whatever amount they are receiving in disability.

So they are not receiving their disability payment and their pension payment as they should. Because they are meant to do two different things: Disability payments are meant to compensate and help people who have been injured and suffered disabilities from fighting.

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A pension was meant to give them a cushion for retirement. They are actually deducting the disability payment from the pension payment so the person gets one amount of money when they should actually be getting both concurrently; and I know that there are Democrats in this body who have been fighting like hell, and pardon my French, to try to eliminate this disabled veterans tax, and we have met full on resistance from the other side of the aisle and the Bush administration.

I think that doing that to veterans who, again, have sacrificed much, have been honored for their work on the battlefield, is just a hypocrisy, and it is like slamming the door in their face after they have taken the brunt of the risk; and, again, it is a failure of leadership, things like the GI bill that were intended to help veterans come back and reestablish their lives by helping them fund a college education.

Today is actually the 60th anniversary of the GI bill. We have seen the GI bill pretty much gutted to what it initially was so that even with the GI bill help, many kids coming back from theater having served overseas in combat just do not have the kind of benefits they do to pick up their lives and move on with a college education and try to move into other fields.

Again, I just think it is shameful that this administration is failing our young people in such a way.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) is 110 percent right as it relates to what our commitment should be to these men and women that are putting their lives on the line; and after every young person that walks into a recruitment office to offer themselves as patriots to the country, that is the least they deserve is to be able to at least get 80 percent of what they were promised.

Right now, they are not getting that; and what is so very, very unfortunate with the growing deficit that is taking place in this Congress, and this is the reason why I take the opportunity along with you and others like the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) to make sure that we give voice to the growing deficit and the lack of commitment to our veterans of what we know will be adequate and strong health care in this country, providing them with that.

We have veterans that are close to 100 years old that are out there who

have needs; and we also, from the statistic that the gentlewoman gave earlier, 70 percent of the individuals that are in Iraq right now and Afghanistan, they range from the age 18 to 30. So now we are talking about fathers and mothers with young children that hopefully their commitment to our country will mean that the country that they defended and stood under the flag for, some of these individuals came back without a leg or an arm or years that they can ever pay their families back, the anguish that their families have to go through when they hear about troops that were killed or a roadside bomb that went off, and they have to hold their breath and shudder when the doorbell rings because it could be someone from the armed services to share with them that Mom's not coming home or Dad's not coming home.

The least that we can do is follow up on our commitment; and I think bring that kind of not only tender, loving care but oversight to this Congress, that our Democratic leader, our whip and others, those of us on this side of the aisle, even though we have good Republicans that want to do these things for veterans. As you know, some of the bills that we pass here, it takes some Republican votes, but to be able to bring the kinds of leadership that is going to be ready to attack this issue and say, veterans, you put it on the line for us, we are going to follow through on what we told you, you are going to be respected even when you hang up the uniform, we are going to keep your honor throughout the wars that you fought in the past and the one you just fought and the time that you spent serving this country on our call. We are going to do everything we can to help you.

You know something, that is not Democrat, Republican, Independent, Green Party. It is not really north, south, east, west. If you put it on the line, citizen or noncitizen I must add, if you put it on the line for this country, the least that we can do is do what we said we are going to do for you, and you should not have to worry and should not have to come marching up like the VFW and many others saying, please, please, Congress, do not have us waiting 8 months now, because we are already waiting 6.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, there is going to be a great opportunity this week for us in the House of Representatives, and I hope the people at home pay very close attention to this.

The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY), the ranking member on the Committee on Appropriations, great guy, will have an amendment this week that will repeal a portion of the tax cut for millionaires, people who make \$1 million a year or more. They will still get a tax cut, but it will be repealed partially. That money will go to fund veterans and will go to fund homeland security, two major issues that we have talked about in this Congress over

the last year and a half that are underfunded. The homeland security is very important because we are only checking one or two of all ships that come into ports in this country. We do not have enough first responders in this country, and we do not have enough border patrol. We do not have enough Coast Guard. All underfunded.

So this is going to be a clear message to the American people. Is this Congress going to support people who make over \$1 million a year and say they have to have their tax cut regardless of what any of the other challenges are in this country, or are we going to be responsible and we are going to fund local initiatives that are going to help protect people in this country and, in turn, invest in our veterans? I think that is a clear distinction to make, and people who make less than \$1 million are not even going to be affected by this.

I would think that, again, the point is that without these veterans, there is no system where you can generate \$1 million a year for yourself, and I think it is a clear distinction and it is going to be a great vote; and I think it is going to articulate for the American people the difference between the two parties. I am sure the other side will say, we are raising taxes, and the answer to the American people, yes, we are for people who make over \$1 million a year. They will see an increase.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, excellent point, and I am going to have to leave you gentlemen now, but I just wanted to commend both of you for your excellent work in trying to bring issues to light that impact young adults in America, and I think this topic is so very timely, and I urge you to continue your great work on the issue.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. We thank you. You are marvelous.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. You are part of that solution, and we thank the fact that you have joined us on several occasions and you are part of us.

I just want to say quickly that we talk about priorities in America. I am so glad on the Democratic side of the aisle, and even some Republicans within this process, that we believe in keeping the deficit down, not increasing the deficit, not playing games about how we are going to decrease it in the future; but this is my credit card and the reason why the numbers have not changed is the fact the Congressional Budget Office, they are going to have a mid-session review in July, and this deficit number is going to change. Unfortunately, it may not change for the better, but this is a big number right here, and this is the U.S. Treasury and down here you have the Republican Congress. That is there.

I want to share with the American people that the Democrats here in this House, we can only do so much to bring the deficit down. We can try to build coalitions and try to come up with resolutions, but the majority of the House

is Republican. The majority of the other body of this Congress is Republican. The White House is Republican.

I must go back to say that in the Dallas Morning News, I wanted to read just one segment of this editorial at the beginning so that it is important that we have the kind of diverse thinking. You mentioned this a couple of weeks ago, how important that we have balance in this process to be able to bring about accountability.

"A time comes in most administrations when supporters tell the President he has a problem. Bob Dole told Ronald Reagan he should worry about the deficit. Tip O'Neill," who was one of the great Speakers of this House, "told Jimmy Carter he better improve his icy relationship with Capitol Hill. And George W. Bush told his father that the White House chief of staff John Sununu needed to go."

There comes a time that some of us in this process have to voice our opinion, and that opinion is based on the American people. My colleague is from the State of Ohio, I am from Florida, and the gentlewoman (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ) is from California; and I will tell my colleagues that as we look at the security of the country, as we look at the deficit, and I am going to tell you this honestly, I take no pleasure in being a part of the 108th Congress and presiding over the highest deficit in the history of the Republic. The 108th Congress, since we have had 108 Congresses, and we are a part of it, we have the honor or the dishonor to stand over or be in control of the highest deficit in the history of the Republic. I would not be able to sleep at night if I was calling the shots or the Democrats were calling the shots to be able to make the deficit what it is.

This amendment that the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) has, who is the ranking member on the Committee on Appropriations, coming up on Thursday will set forth the priorities of this country: that we care about our veterans and we care about protecting the homeland, not that we care about millionaires, millionaires getting a tax cut on top of a tax cut that is permanent.

The American people need to understand this is not homeland security for Democrats. This is homeland security for the Republic. It is not veterans benefits for Democrats. This will be veterans benefits for the Republic, for men and women that put it on the line, for VA workers, many who are veterans, who put it on the line in serving other veterans.

So as we look at this time of patriotism that one may say, then it is only appropriate for us to put our money where our mouths are. What Mr. OBEY is trying to do on Thursday in this great House is to vote on trying to do something on behalf of those individuals who have done something for us.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And pay for it.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. And pay for it, not increasing this number, not in-

creasing this number, but hopefully having this number go down, so that we do not have to knock on the bank door of China and say, hey, guess what, we need to borrow more money because we need to pay down our deficit.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Remember how many years ago when we had the Contract with America, one of the main components of that contract was that we were going to have a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, which meant that the budget in the United States had to be balanced every year. Everything had to be paid for. You either cut spending or you raised taxes, but you pay your bills, and I think there is some confusion at home, the debt is the mounting of yearly deficits, and it just keeps compounding. So the national debt is about \$7 trillion I think, close to it. The annual deficit now for next year is projected to be, I think, \$500 billion, close to \$500 billion.

So as you have a growing debt caused by annual deficits, you have to go out and borrow money. As the gentleman from Florida said, the country loaning us the most money, number one, is Japan. Number two is China. We are going to Japan and China to borrow money to pay for these deficits that we have so that we can keep giving these tax cuts to millionaires. It makes no sense. We are becoming more dependent on these other countries because we are borrowing money from them and paying interest. So they take the interest that they make on the money that they loan us, and they invest it in the manufacturing and everything else. So that is a whole other issue that they keep taking our money and investing it in that way, too.

□ 2045

If one wants to go to the home page here, it is [www.House.gov/George Miller](http://www.House.gov/GeorgeMiller), who is our ranking member on the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

There is a page on his Web site, Issue No. 14. It is called the debt burden, and it gives a chart that will show how much American families are paying in what we are calling the debt tax. Because we are borrowing so much and having to pay interest, we have got to pay more on taxes to cover our spending habits, or are generating less revenue by giving millionaires tax cuts.

So there is a little chart on there, and in the year 2004 the interest per family of four is \$4,392. By 2014, we are going to be paying almost \$9,000, \$8,934.

So who is raising the taxes now? The facts are the facts, and it makes sense that if one goes out and one borrows money for a car and has to pay interest on it because it was borrowed, that interest is something that one has to pay out of pocket.

What we are trying to say is repeal a portion of that tax cut for millionaires. Increase the child tax credit. Keep the child tax credit. Keep the marriage penalty. Remove it and leave it off for married couples. If one makes under

\$200,000 or \$300,000 a year, none of the benefits that are received under the tax cuts over the last few years would be touched at all. You are safe. You are going to keep it.

What we are saying is people who make a million dollars a year or more should pay their fair share, because it is going to benefit the whole society, and that is why we are here, is it not?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. When we talk about sacrifice and commitment, we have to make some tough decisions here in the Congress, and I will say that we dodge making those tough decisions constantly when it comes down to doing the things that we should be doing. And the good thing about our democracy is that we can tolerate one another's opinion, and being able to share the truth with the American people is important too.

And in this House we have a Democrat and Republican side, with the one independent, and I think it is important that we have the diversity of arguments but at the same time speak to all American people about the issues that are facing us.

We were talking about veterans, talked about the deficit, because it all intertwines with one another. In the past we have talked about 43 million Americans without health insurance that are working, I must add. We have talked about student fees being at the highest rate that they have been in the past history. We have talked about how the banking industry is trying to get students out of having the option to be able to lock in a low interest rate versus sending them back to a veritable interest rate where they will end up paying more in the long run.

But I think it is important for us, and I think this work towards force protection in Iraq, that we talk a little bit about the management from the Pentagon of this effort in Iraq.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. The guys with the suits.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I will say that the individuals that are wearing the shirts and ties, just like I shared today with Secretary Wolfowitz, who is the Under Secretary under Donald Rumsfeld, it is something fundamentally wrong when the Department of Defense is not handling the war in the way that it should be handled.

And if we have not only Members of the Congress, but members of the press that say, hey, you know something? Things are not going all that well in Iraq. One may think that everything is good and it is productive. We support our troops. We stand with our troops. That is not the question. The real question is as it relates to Abu Ghraib and other prisoner abuse issues that are out there on how we are managing that issue, how we are managing that issue and how the people at the top are going to be dealt with who set forth the culture.

Now, I am not saying that Secretary Rumsfeld was there at Abu Ghraib. I am saying that there is policies that

have come out of this administration that have put a light on interrogation, and it is also mismanagement and also a lack of training in a prison that Saddam Hussein had in Iraq that was known for abuse and torture.

Now, for the administration to say we have dealt with that, it is over, it is done, next subject, we have to move on to winning the war, well, let me say, when it comes down to insurgents and the recruitment of insurgents, our lack of attention to that issue is so very, very important.

The first person to go down in this thing was an enlisted man. That is interesting. The Pentagon appointed a two-star general to oversee the investigation, knowing full well that this two-star general could not go above his rank, define wrongdoing anywhere else as it relates to the Department of Defense or the chain of command.

The four-star general in control, General Sanchez, said, well, maybe you all need to appoint a four-star. Secretary Brown, I would say Secretary Rumsfeld, appointed a four-star. Guess what? Out of the Secretary's office to oversee the ongoing investigation into Abu Ghraib.

I think it is important for the American people to understand, it is not totally how we feel about the handling of the investigation. It is how the world feels, how the handling of the investigation is done, because guess what? We cannot do this on our own, and if we are looking towards force protection or troop protection, it is important that we let the Iraqi people know that we are doing everything we can, no matter where it is. At the top or the bottom, we are going to get to the top and the bottom of the situation.

And it is important that on behalf of those troops, those that have served, Reservists, National Guard that have now returned, in their honor and their respect for our effort in Iraq, we have to make sure that not only enlisted men and women take fault for what took place, but it is important that individuals up the chain of command also takes fault for what has happened. And I will say right now the truth will rise to the top, and since we are talking about 18- to 30-year-olds, 70 percent of the force that is over there, I want to say, we cannot sit by and watch these individuals play the Potomac two-step and go around the responsibility for what has happened.

It has happened under his watch, it has happened under Secretary Rumsfeld's watch, and I have said it before and I will say it again, there comes a point where you, say hey, maybe I have done all that I can do for this effort. Maybe I need to allow someone else to do it. But come this November, Democrat, Republican, independent, they will make the choice if this administration does not make the choice as it relates to new leadership and making sure that we get good information about this war and making sure that we have good management of this war to protect American lives.

People talk about how Iraqis feel. I care about how Americans feel. Seventy some-odd percent of American people feel that we are taking too many casualties in Iraq. Seventy some-odd percent of individuals feel that decisions that are being made on this war are hurting our image throughout the world. We cannot do this on our own.

I know the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) knows that. But I am not pleased. I know many Members of this Congress are not pleased with the way things are going. I have said it once before that our troops would fight 20 years if they had to fight on behalf of this country. That is not a question. Do we support them? You are doggone right we do. But we cannot sit here and allow the mismanagement of this war to continue.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I think if you ask why there is a lot of frustration here, I think there are a lot of reasons for it. If you look at what was said before the war and you compare that to what is being said now, you will find that nothing of record from what I can tell that was said before the war on our reasons for going has been true. We were told that Saddam Hussein was somehow tied to 9/11. That was not true. We were told that there was an imminent threat from Iraq to the United States and the possibility of a mushroom cloud in Cincinnati is a real threat. That was not true. They had weapons of mass destruction. That was not true. That we would be able to use the oil in Iraq to generate revenue and we would not have to pay for the war because we would just use the oil and sell it and then that would pay the United States back. That has not been true.

We are up to \$200 billion that we have spent. Then comes the issue of Halliburton. Was the Vice President, who had strong, strong ties, an officer in the company, did he have anything to do with Halliburton getting an unbid contract? Right, wrong or indifferent. Some may even say, Hey, that is politics. He is the Vice President. He used to work there. Let his former company do it. There aren't a whole lot of companies that do it. The problem is that for months and months and months the Vice President denied, and his office denied, knowing anything or having anything to do with the contract.

We find out last week that Scooter Libby, who is the chief of staff of the Vice President, in essence okayed the contract, knew about the contract, was familiar with the contract, okayed the contract. Why would you lie about that for 6, 8 months when people were trying to figure it out? Then we were told that this Abu Ghraib was just an isolated incident. We find out later that the Secretary of Defense approved of hiding a prisoner from the Red Cross. That seems pretty systemic of a problem to me.

So when we are up here questioning what is going on here, it is not like we do not have any reason to do so. I think we have ample evidence. As I

said earlier, I think we have a constitutional obligation to do it. A member of my staff has been saying this, Ryan Keating, no one likes to be the bad parent. No one likes to be the one who comes in and says, You know what, you're grounded. You're not doing this right, to be the enforcer. It would be nice to always be nice but someone has got to question what is going on here because we are losing lives, we are losing people because of these misjudgments. And then this Chalabi who gave us all this information on how great the war was going to be, and that was another one, we were going to be greeted as liberators, not occupiers. We are 800 dead later, most of that happening after we have toppled Saddam and the statue was pulled down.

Now everyone is saying that this Chalabi, well, we never really worked with him. We knew him, we talked to him, but we get advice from everybody. He was sitting up in the Chamber when the President gave his State of the Union address, right behind Mrs. Bush.

I do not like to be the bad parent. I do not have kids. I am not a parent in any sense. But I think the point is well taken that somebody has to say, what is going wrong here, and I think there is a growing frustration among the American people. It is not just Democrats. It is not just Democrats. It is the frustration that I think you see when we see the President's hometown newspaper editorializing against him I think is a pretty good sign that people better start shooting straight. The problem is you cannot put the bullet back in the gun. The bullet is out of gun. We have got to make the best of a bad situation and work with our soldiers to make sure that we do not lose any more of them while they are over there.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, let me correct myself. It is one of the home State newspapers in Dallas. I know that the American people associate the President with Crawford, Texas. Let me just say very quickly that we encourage the e-mails that we have been receiving. The gentleman can give our e-mail address out and then I will give another e-mail address out, but the gentleman from Ohio can go ahead and do that. David Letterman has his Top 10. You have the e-mail. I am going to give out this e-mail address so I do not want to take that away from the gentleman.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. This is mine. This is my role.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. This is your role.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. You are not going to take it away from me?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. No, sir.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. 30 Something Working Group. Send us an e-mail. 30SomethingDems@mail.house.gov.

Send us an e-mail. We would love to hear from you. We would love to hear what you have to say. We have to continue to have these discussions. Again, as we started, this is not personal. We

need, you and I hopefully in our own little way, to raise the level of debate here to say it is not venomous, it is not malicious, it is not personal. We do not mean to personally attack anybody, but there are some real policy concerns. In a time of war, I think we have even more of a responsibility to do it.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. In closing, I just want to say that our next 30 Something hour will be on Tuesday, July 6. That is after Independence Day which is going to be a festive celebration, I understand, here in Washington, D.C. There will be fireworks on the Mall to celebrate our independence once again. They can check the Web site which is the Democratic Leader Web site, democraticleader.house.gov/ 30something to get that information. I would also like to commend the WWE which is our wrestling component here, World Wrestling Entertainment, for their voter registration effort of the 18 to 30 demographics.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4548, INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

Mr. SESSIONS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-561) on the resolution (H. Res. 686) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4548) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2005 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

□ 2100

SANCTUARY CITY POLICIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, we have had an interesting discussion for the last hour on the issue of security of the homeland and whether or not our efforts in Iraq are on track, whether or not we are doing the right thing. It is intriguing to me to listen to this discussion for a variety of reasons because, regardless of whether or not anyone believes that our efforts in Iraq are right and honorable and good, I have yet to meet anyone who believes that the need to defend the homeland from terrorist attack is not greater than it has ever been.

One may disagree entirely with whether the decisions made by the President have been appropriate; but no one says, no one has dared to say that we should do anything but aggressively pursue policies that are designed to make us more secure from terrorists

who we know are out there, whether or not they conspired with the Iraqi Government, with Saddam Hussein, or whether or not our efforts in Iraq will lessen that particular threat. The reality is we know we have a threat and we know that we should be doing everything possible to, in fact, defend ourselves against that threat. That is a given. No one argued it.

Now, amazingly, Mr. Speaker, a couple of days ago I brought forward to the floor of the House an amendment to the Homeland Security Appropriations Act, and I have to give just a little bit of background to help explain exactly what the amendment was all about because there are people who are perhaps viewing this tonight who really are not sure. But let me explain that Members of the Congress knew exactly what this was all about.

There are, in fact, a number of cities and States around the country that are pursuing policies that we describe as sanctuary city policies. In the case of a State, the State of Maine is contemplating and actually has proposed that they become a sanctuary State. What does that mean? Sanctuary from what? Sanctuary from investigation by the Bureau of Immigration Control and Enforcement. Because there are cities, there are localities that are saying that they will not allow their police forces, for instance, to, in fact, report the arrest or the detention of anyone who is here illegally. They will not allow their police force to report that to the Bureau of Immigration Control and Enforcement because there is a desire to eliminate the category of illegal immigrant from the whole lexicon. And so this is happening throughout the country.

Why is this significant? In 1994, the Congress of the United States passed a law, and the law said that no city or State could, in fact, impede the flow of information to the Bureau, which then it was INS, or from the INS so that we could be helped, the Federal Government could be aided, in our efforts to try to control illegal immigration. That is on the books. I was not even in the Congress of the United States when that particular proposal was accepted and passed into law. But it is the law. That is the given. We have a law that says that they cannot hide these people, that no State or city can provide sanctuary for people who are living here illegally; but, of course, the unfortunate aspect of that particular law is that it did not include any penalty provision.

So cities and States are doing it. They are doing it all over the country, and they are doing it to the detriment not just to the security of the United States of America but to the security of their own people in cities and States where these things are in place because we have seen cases where people who are here illegally and who had been arrested in the past for being here illegally, but not turned into the Bureau of Immigration Control and Enforcement, were then allowed to go back on