

Quite frankly, I believe it takes strength and courage to admit a mistake. What I see from this administration is a stubbornness and an arrogance that is unwilling to admit even one mistake.

My friend mentions sending our troops into Iraq without body armor. The war started in March of 2003. It was March 2004, March of this year, before all of our troops were provided with body armor. I ask, how many troops were unnecessarily wounded and how many lost their lives simply because of the incompetence of those at the Pentagon who sent them into battle without this protection?

Right tonight, as the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE), the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT), my friend the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) and myself stand here in this Chamber, there are soldiers driving around in Baghdad and in other cities in Iraq who are using Humvees that are not armored Humvees, and many of them are being injured by driving over roadside bombs, and, because those Humvees are not armored, they are being seriously wounded and in some cases losing their lives. Somebody ought to be held accountable for that.

If we are going to send our troops into battle, the very least we can do as a government is to make sure that everything we can do to give them adequate equipment and proper protection is done. For us not to do that is shameful.

Mr. DELAHUNT. That goes back to the issue of competence, and that is where, in addition to the issue of credibility, this administration, this White House, has failed miserably.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Can the gentleman yield, so I can tell him what Mr. Wolfowitz would respond, or how he responded today to the questions the gentleman is raising, and particularly what Mr. INSLEE has cited in detail. I quote from page 8 of his written statement given to the Committee on Armed Services today.

"Although the reconstruction plans first envisioned in the summer of 2002 and submitted by the Coalition Provisional Authority to Congress last July have undergone substantial changes, it has been the coalition's ability to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances that has brought us now to the transfer of sovereignty and the beginning of representative government in Iraq."

Mr. DELAHUNT. If the gentleman will yield, can the gentleman tell me and tell those that might be watching our conversation tonight, what has been the cost, not in terms of the lives of our children, but what has been the cost to the American taxpayers for this adventure?

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. The commitment is upwards of \$150 billion. That does not include the taxes that are now being imposed, and I use that with quotation marks around it because

that is how it is characterized, within the military itself.

The existing military budget is being taxed, money extracted from it for operational purposes. The capacity to expend construction funds of \$18 billion-plus are committed, but are not necessarily expended just yet. The plain fact is we are talking between \$150 billion and \$200 billion.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Already to date it has cost the American taxpayers \$200 billion to build roads in Iraq, to provide Iraqis with good health care, to clean up their environment and to stimulate their economy.

Mr. INSLEE. Reclaiming my time, there is an element of this expenditure that is grossly wrong, and that is the most polite sense I can say it. The General Accounting Office, the nonpartisan group that basically looks at the financial system of the country, concludes that the United States misspent, meaning this administration, misspent at least \$1 billion in Iraq in the Iraq war to date, and that was as of June 16. They made reference to multiple cases of the Halliburton Corporation misspending millions of dollars of taxpayer money.

Let me give you one very small example of how Halliburton Corporation misspent taxpayer money. Halliburton, of course, is the company that got a sole source provider bid; a company that the vice president just recently has been CEO of, they did not send it out to bid to any other corporations, gave a special deal to Halliburton, and look what Halliburton did with your money.

Before the war, a Kuwaiti firm had the contract to provide meals to troops at four bases in Kuwait. Just before the fighting started, and this is from the General Accounting Office, not some leftist group saying this, just before the fighting started, the Pentagon turned the job over to Halliburton subsidiary KBR, Kellogg Brown and Root. As part of the switch, the costs went up from \$3 a meal to \$5 a meal, for the cost, from \$3 to \$5.

So, here is just one small example that happened thousands of times where the American taxpayers got gouged \$1 billion, much of which went to the Halliburton company on a sole source contract.

If this does not smell like a mackerel in the moonlight, I do not know what does.

Mr. STRICKLAND. If the gentleman will yield further, can I say something? I know our time is coming to an end, but the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) talked about building roads and bridges and hospitals and schools in Iraq, neglecting our own domestic needs. If I can quickly share an example of how this administration seems to prefer Iraqis over Americans.

As we all have heard, Secretary Rumsfeld wants to compensate the Iraqi prisoners who were abused in the Abu Ghraib prison. I do not have any problem with that. But I do have a

problem with this: Seventeen American POWs that were tortured in that same prison, they were tortured with electricity, they were threatened with castration, they were threatened with suicide, their bones were broken, they went to court and sued Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi regime and a court gave them compensation. This administration appealed that decision, fought the American POWs, and a newspaper in my region read like this. They said it was the United States of America and Saddam Hussein versus American POWs, and the United States and Saddam Hussein won.

What is good for the goose is good for the gander. If Secretary Rumsfeld wants to compensate the Iraqi prisoners, the American ex-POWs deserve equal compensation.

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Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, we know, we know what the commander of the VFW, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, a highly-esteemed organization serving veterans in this country, had to say about this administration's submission of a veterans budget to the United States Congress. That commander called it a sham and a fraud. So this is not inconsistent.

If I could just leave my colleagues with one question. We have talked about we could not find the weapons of mass destruction. We cannot find the links, if you will, of the collaborative relationship between Saddam Hussein and al Qaeda.

Has anyone looked for the plans that were crafted by Saddam Hussein that indicated that he was prepared to attack the United States?

Mr. INSLEE. Well, yes. In fact, we have spent millions of dollars of taxpayers' money looking for that, but they apparently do not exist.

Now, let me suggest one thing that the President of the United States could have done to help his fellow Americans when we made a decision whether or not to go to war. He could have leveled with the American people. He could have told the American people that to the best of our knowledge there is no credible evidence that Saddam Hussein was responsible for the heinous, evil attack on America of September 11. He has talked to the American people probably six times a day for the last 2 years, and this President has never said that. This is wrong. We intend to maintain accountability for this administration.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues for joining me tonight for the Iraq Watch, which will continue on other nights.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GERLACH). The Chair will remind all Members that remarks in debate should be addressed to the Chair and not to the viewing audience. Also,

Members should not use first names of other Members in debate.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. CARSON of Indiana (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. SOLIS) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. LIPINSKI, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SLAUGHTER, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SOLIS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. MAJETTE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STRICKLAND, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. GOODLATTE) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. CHOCOLA, for 5 minutes, today and June 23 and 24.

Mr. SOUDER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, today and June 23.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, June 23, 2004, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

8705. A letter from the Acting Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Department of the Army, Case Number 00-01, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

8706. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act,

pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1351; to the Committee on Appropriations.

8707. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting an inclosure, previously omitted, from the original report to Congress on the Native Hawaiian Revolving Loan Fund (NHRLF) for Fiscal Years 2000 and 2001, pursuant to Section 803A(g)(1) of the Native American Programs Act of 1974, as amended; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

8708. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management, and Budget, Department of the Interior, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004 Pub. L. 108-199, the Department's Report to Congress on FY 2003 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8709. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, and the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum 04-07, the Department's Report to Congress on FY 2003 Competitive Sourcing Activities; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8710. A letter from the Assistant Attorney General for Administration, Department of Justice, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, and the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum 04-07, the Department's Report to Congress on FY 2003 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8711. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Administration and Management, Competitive Sourcing Official, Department of Labor, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Title VI of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Department's Report to Congress on FY 2003 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8712. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Department's Report to Congress on FY 2003 Competitive Sourcing Activities; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8713. A letter from the Attorney Advisor, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8714. A letter from the Director, Office of Management, Federal Housing Finance Board, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Board's Report to Congress on FY 2003 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8715. A letter from the Chairman, Occupational Safety and Health Review Commission, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, the Commission's Report to Congress on FY 2003 Competitive Sourcing Activities; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8716. A letter from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, and the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum 04-07, the Office's Report to Congress on FY 2003 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8717. A letter from the Office of the General Counsel, Selective Service System, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8718. A letter from the Commissioner, Social Security Administration, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, and the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum 04-07, the Administration's Report to Congress on FY 2003 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8719. A letter from the President, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, transmitting in accordance with Section 647(b) of Division F of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, FY 2004, Pub. L. 108-199, and the Office of Management and Budget Memorandum 04-07, the Center's Report to Congress on FY 2003 and 2004 Competitive Sourcing Efforts; to the Committee on Government Reform.

8720. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Energy, transmitting proposed legislation to amend Section 161k of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 to provide executive protection authorities for the Department of Energy (DOE) Federal protective force; jointly to the Committees on Energy and Commerce and the Judiciary.

8721. A letter from the Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, transmitting proposed legislation "To authorize appropriations to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for science, aeronautics, and exploration; space flight capabilities; and Inspector General, and for other purposes"; jointly to the Committees on Science, Government Reform, and Small Business.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. COBLE: Committee on the Judiciary. H.R. 218. A bill to amend title 18, United States Code, to exempt qualified current and former law enforcement officers from State laws prohibiting the carrying of concealed handguns; with an amendment (Rept. 108-560). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mrs. MYRICK: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 686. Resolution 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 (Rept. 108-561). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. RANGEL:

H.R. 4633. A bill to award a congressional gold medal to Ray Charles in recognition of his many contributions to the Nation; to the Committee on Financial Services.

By Mr. SESSIONS (for himself, Mr. BAKER, Mrs. KELLY, Mr. CANTOR, and Ms. PRYCE of Ohio):

H.R. 4634. A bill to extend the terrorism insurance program of the Department of the Treasury; to the Committee on Financial Services.