

fashion this commission's work would be curtailed, not be given the time or the documents necessary, this is a matter of our national security so that it will never ever happen again. This cannot be about people in various agencies of the United States Government covering their tail because of something they did or did not do that may have helped us detect that act before it happened or have us understand what we need to do in the future.

As I see that effort by the administration to curtail this, and now apparently it is going to go forward, they are going to get the 2 months, I am also deeply concerned that I see the administration involved in some dramatic rewriting of history. When David Kay came back from his search for the weapons of mass destruction, in his meetings with the House and the Senate he told the American public and these two bodies that we all had it wrong. I am not sure that is quite accurate, because there in fact is a whole body of evidence that has been developed within the Intelligence Community, within the international Intelligence Community, within the State Department, and elsewhere that was present at the time suggesting that in fact maybe many of the reasons and the conditions in which this administration said we are going to war did not exist. They certainly did not exist in the clarity that the administration presented them to the Congress or to the American people or to the international community. And now it appears that the President is trying to say because he got it wrong everybody had it wrong. That is just not the case. That is just not the case. And yet we now have commissions to look into that matter.

Tragically, this administration again is trying to curtail what those commissions can look at and not look at. The Senate may be allowed to look at one piece of evidence but not other pieces of evidence. The House may or may not have access. And then the President has his own commission which is supposed to investigate the administration but has been appointed by the administration. A little bit of a conflict of interest there. But these commissions are important, and these questions are important because, again, it goes to our national security.

And there is another set of families, just as there are the 9/11 families and those communities that suffer that tragic loss of those thousands of individuals, there is another set of families of those who have been sent off to fight in Iraq, over 500 that have been killed, thousands that have been wounded, so many that we have visited that are multiple amputees, that have lost their arms, lost their legs, lost the sight of one eye, that their life is changed forever. They are entitled to the answers and understanding how is it that this decision was set forth to go into Iraq when in fact we see substantial evidence suggesting, and as said by the

CIA Director, "We never said this was an imminent threat." The President wants to suggest that if we make that the test, the real threat against the United States, before we commit the lives of young men and women in this country, that somehow the only other option is it will surprise us. No, that is not the test, Mr. Speaker, but we will have more on this. But I think the American public ought to start to consider the level of interference that is being engaged in by this administration to keep these commissions, both congressional and civilian commissions, from getting to the bottom, to the real answers that are directly related to the future security of this Nation.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 58 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 (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: As we await the unveiling of spring's beauty, O Lord, we stand in the bright promise of Your presence.

Warm our hearts with sincere love and our efforts of reconciliation, that we may be ready to engage in the seasonal battles of justice and the work of restoration under law.

Guide the President and all the Members of Congress, that they may be Your instruments of renewal in the strength and security of this Nation.

We long for the full revelation of Your power and mercy, 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 her approval thereof.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. McNULTY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

COMMEMORATING THE 184TH BIRTHDAY OF SUSAN B. ANTHONY

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, this month we commemorate the 184th birthday of a great woman in the history of our great country, Susan B. Anthony.

Susan B. Anthony was one of the many exemplary feminist leaders who is now known not only for her fight to gain women the right to vote but also for her great courage in her stand against abortion. She saw abortion as a great offense against human dignity.

She recognized the incomparable worth of every person and realized that whatever goes against life, whatever violates the integrity of the individual, whatever insults human dignity is a poison to society.

Susan B. Anthony fought tirelessly to safeguard the dignity of motherhood, which she believed to be an inherent right for all women.

So as we honor Susan B. Anthony, as a pro-life feminist and suffragist, I ask my colleagues to remember those who have fought to respect, protect, love and serve life, every human life.

SCHOOL LUNCH STIGMA

(Mr. KELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to address an issue many low-income school children face every day as they go through the lunch line: embarrassment. Embarrassed that their parents cannot afford to pay for daily meals so they are singled out in the lunch line in front of their peers as participants in the free or reduced lunch program.

I was encouraged to see a program in one of my local school districts, Lake County, Florida, that uses technology to enable every child to go through the school lunch line without being identified as a free or reduced school lunch recipient. Regardless of family income, every child has the exact same debit card which either their parents deposit money into or is funded by the program.

Today, I am introducing the Pride in the Lunch Line Act, which will amend the National School Act to allow schools access to existing Federal funds to purchase technology like that used in Lake County. It will reduce the stigma for students, and it will reduce the paperwork for our schools.

I encourage my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation. Let us help children eat their lunch with pride.

PRAISING CONGRESSMAN KINGSTON

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, an economist once said that it is easy to spend money that you do not earn or for which you do not have to take responsibility. That seems to sum up the way we operate around here lately.

Last week, my friend, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), took a step to change that. After looking at requests, asking for as high as 30 percent increases from legislative agencies, requested from his subcommittee, he canceled hearings on their requests until they came to their senses. While the other agencies were facing cutbacks, the legislative branch thought it was Christmas morning.

If we are serious about being fiscally responsible, we need to start right here in this branch of government. If we cannot keep ourselves in check, how do we expect other agencies to do so? Fiscal responsibility should start right here. Either we have the courage to cut back or freeze here, or we will not have the courage to cut back or freeze at all.

While we all have a long way to go, the gentleman from Georgia's actions are a step in the right direction. We need to stop robbing from our children to pay for our addiction in spending.

A BUDGET VISION FOR ALL TO SEE

(Mr. DELAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DELAY. Madam Speaker, tomorrow the House Committee on the Budget will hold its Members Day hearings as the congressional budget-writing process kicks into high gear around here. As usual in election years, politics will play a decisive role in that budget debate.

This is not entirely a bad thing. Congress' annual priority-setting document is a good tool, a test Americans can use to judge the competing fiscal visions of the two parties. Unfortunately, only one party seems to have done its homework for this test.

The Republican majority, led by the gentleman from Iowa (Chairman NUSSLE) of the Committee on the Budget, is working to craft a conference-wide budget that embodies the shared values and priorities of our party.

The Democrat leaders, on the other hand, seem unwilling to go to all that trouble. Nobody seems to know. Rather than take hard positions on hard issues, the Democrat leadership appears ready to turn their backs on those issues and their constituents and leave the American people guessing as to their core values.

On the other hand, the Republican Party's values are clear to everyone who asks. They are the same values that have guided our party and our Nation through difficult times in the past: security, prosperity, and families.

Republicans believe the job the Federal Government is to do is to preserve, defend, and support these three great pillars of American democracy. They will all be there in our budget: resources and policies to fight and win the war on terror and defend our homeland; protect the economy from Democrat tax hikes on parents, married couples and working families, while anchoring discretionary spending; maintain the global competitiveness of the national economy and encourage companies to create jobs here in the United States; and protect and defend American families from a culture of violence and self-indulgence that creeps deeper into our society every day.

Whether people agree with us or not, Republicans will at least have the courage to lay our vision out for everyone to see; and as we move forward in this debate, we can only hope that the Democrats show the budget process and the American people the same respect.

A BETTER MEDICARE FOR SENIORS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, this past Friday, I had the opportunity to make presentations about the improvements made to Medicare with medical students at the University of South Carolina Medical School led by Mark Versnick and with seniors in the Low Country, where Darren Katz of the Health Leadership Council joined me. I informed them that last year the Republican-led Congress passed a historic bill that finally provides prescription drug coverage for our seniors through Medicare. This was a central issue of recent campaigns, and Republican lawmakers and President George W. Bush have proven that their promises are trustworthy.

The seniors I met with near Sun City at Hardeeville, South Carolina, were happy to learn that their benefits have not changed. Today's Medicare is better for seniors, meeting their needs while keeping costs sustainable. The new voluntary prescription drug benefit allows seniors to lead healthier lives, while preventing disease and avoiding unnecessary hospital visits that will keep costs down.

I am proud of the work we have done to improve Medicare, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to build on this historic success.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

TRIBUTE TO THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE HOUSE FLOOR SHOOTING

(Mr. CAMP asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CAMP. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Members of Congress injured in the 1954 shooting in the United States House of Representatives Chamber.

On March 1, 1954, four Puerto Rican nationalists entered the House gallery on the southwest corner of the Chamber. As then-Speaker Joseph W. Martin, Jr., concluded tallying the "aye" votes on a Mexican immigrant labor program, Puerto Rican nationalists stood up and began waving a Puerto Rican flag and firing at the floor. The terrorists eventually shot approximately 30 rounds before being apprehended.

As we face a new day of terrorist activity, it is important to remember and honor those who suffered as a result of this assault on the United States Congress. Representative Alvin M. Bentley, who was most severely injured in the attack, represented communities in Michigan that I represent now, such as his hometown of Owosso. I would like to take this opportunity to honor him, as well as the other injured representatives: George H. Fallon of Maryland, Ben F. Jensen of Iowa, Kenneth A. Roberts of Alabama, and Clifford Davis of Tennessee.

These five men were proud to serve their country and nearly paid for it with their lives. The simple passing of time should not diminish their memory nor the lesson we learn from that attack. Now more than ever, we must always remember that the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. I am, therefore, honored today to recognize those who have suffered and continue to fight terrorism on behalf of the United States Congress.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 1, 2004.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I have the honor to transmit a sealed envelope received from the White House on March 1, 2004 at 12:20 p.m. and said to contain a message from the President whereby he submits the 2004 National Drug Control Strategy.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHLL,
Clerk of the House.