

law are on the move. The Iraqi people are to be both congratulated and thanked: congratulated, of course, because they are going to be able to enjoy their success; thanks for the message they are sending throughout the entire world.

WHAT NEXT FOR IRAQ?

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, as I watched the people of Iraq cast their first ballots in 50 years, I was deeply moved by their courage, their rejection of violence, and their desire to define their own future. I salute the men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces who helped facilitate these elections. Their service will long be remembered by those who voted this weekend.

But what happens next? Iraq is no more secure today than it was last week. Iraqi insurgents and terrorist groups are no less determined to wreak havoc across Iraq. Our troops are no more protected today than they were last week. And the American people still have no clue about when the President plans to bring our troops home.

It is time, Mr. Speaker, for the President to change course, to level with the American people, and tell us how he is going to end this war and when he is going to bring our brave men and women home. No more extended deployments of our Guard and Reserves. No more multiple deployments of our active duty forces.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for George Bush to end this war. It is time to start the process to bring our troops home.

IRAQI ELECTIONS

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

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, as we look back through history, there are shining examples of men and women removing a murderous tyrant's regime from power and in its place building a government that represents the will of a free people with the right to choose their own path and control their own future. Iraq is yet another shining example for other oppressed people throughout the world to look to for hope and encouragement.

History was made on Sunday, and the American people observed this, knowing that our efforts have created a society of hope and liberty, as well as new friends who share our vision of freedom. Two days ago, millions of ordinary people stood in line for hours for the opportunity to do an extraordinary thing we too often take for granted.

For weeks leading up to Sunday's election, terrorists threatened violence upon any Iraqi who defied their will and dared cast a ballot. And sure enough, as soon as the polls opened and the long lines formed, the terrorists

came calling. While the troops of our liberating coalition, working closely with newly trained Iraqi forces, sprang into action, capturing and killing the insurgents, the voters waited patiently in line, in humble defiance of evil. For 2 years, America's troops have been deployed abroad, and for 2 years they have served honorably and heroically. Sunday, that service was affirmed by 8 million Iraqis who took it upon themselves to take the next steps towards their freedom.

What has been proven in the United States, and now in Iraq, is that a free society will not and cannot be deterred by violence, nor will it be held hostage by the evil will of terrorists. Today the people of Iraq share a common bond with Americans. The experience of freedom and liberty that was born on American soil is taking root in Iraq.

But Sunday's elections will not end the violence, nor the sacrifices we will make to ensure the freedom and security of the Iraqi people. I will tell you what is next. Despite the violent days that still lie ahead and despite the partisan rhetoric now being spouted to undermine the significance of Sunday's victory for freedom, the free people of Iraq know the truth. Two years ago Iraq was ruled by a brutal dictator. Just 13 months ago, coalition forces marked the end of the beginning when they captured the brutal dictator, Saddam Hussein. Today, it is a free democracy, an ally in the war on terror, and a lesson to everyone suffering under the oppressive rule of a hostile tyrant.

Freedom and terrorism cannot coexist; and last weekend in Iraq, we learned the inevitable result of that conflict. Iraq is free, her people are free, and they will no longer be held hostage by evil men and evil terrorists. Sunday in Iraq history was made by the people who showed up; and by the courage of 8 million patient souls, terrorism was struck another blow.

Because of those souls, and all the Iraqi men and women who made Sunday possible, we honor their commitment to freedom and will continue to stand shoulder to shoulder with them.

CALLING FOR INVESTIGATION OF \$9 BILLION MISSING IN IRAQ

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I have called for a Federal grand jury investigation of the administration's Coalition Provisional Authority which, according to the U.S. Inspector General, lost track of \$9 billion in Iraq that it controlled over a period of 9 months, ending last October; \$9 billion, gone.

Was the \$9 billion stolen? Did it go to pay bribes? Do we have another Iran-Contra on our hands? We will not know until top U.S. officials under penalty of perjury are called before the grand jury to answer questions about the missing \$9 billion. The administration's response has been, Hey, it's Iraq, it's

chaos, it's war. I say, Hey, you can't account for \$9 billion spent over 9 months. That is \$30 million a day. And you want Congress to appropriate another \$80 billion for Iraq? I do not think so. Investigate Iraq-gate and the unaccounted-for \$9 billion.

IRAQI ELECTIONS

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, behind me you see a photograph that shows the true meaning of the Iraqi election. It is an Iraqi woman smiling, holding up the victory sign accentuated by the blue ink on her finger indicating that she had voted. That victory sign stands for victory over dictatorship, for victory over terror, victory for democracy, victory for freedom.

No wonder she is smiling. One voter remarked, and it may have been this woman, I moved to mark my finger with ink. I dipped it deep as if I was poking the eyes of all the world's tyrants.

I am so proud of all the men and women we have in uniform, because without their sacrifice, their service, their dedication to the cause of liberty, none of this would have been possible. They have once again spread freedom and in doing so have made America safer and more secure.

Some politicians have said that we should not overhype this election. Pardon me if I disagree. We should trumpet every victory for freedom from the highest mountaintops. Let freedom ring across the globe.

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ADMINISTRATION USE OF TAXPAYER DOLLARS FOR PROPAGANDA

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, it seems every day another conservative columnist or pundit is being forced to admit they were being paid by the Bush Administration to make its policies look better to the public.

First, it was talk show host Armstrong Williams, who was paid \$240,000 by the Education Department to promote the No Child Left Behind Act.

Then conservative columnist Maggie Gallagher admitted that she was paid \$21,500 by HHS to promote pro-marriage initiatives.

Then, last Thursday, we learned conservative columnist Michael McManus was paid \$10,000 to also promote the President's marriage initiative.

Mr. Speaker, last year alone the Bush administration funneled over \$88 million in taxpayer money to public relation firms, and if this is not a waste of the taxpayers' money, I do not know what is.

Republicans should join us in a call for a congressional investigation into the administration's blatant use of taxpayer dollars for nothing more than propaganda.

MISSISSIPPI BURNING REVISITED

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize three exceptional high school students in my District: Allison Nichols, Brittany Saltiel, and Sara Siegal. With the help of Barry Bradford, their inspirational teacher, what began as a National History Day project became an award-winning documentary entitled *We Are Not Afraid*.

These Stevenson High School students reexamined the Mississippi Burning case, the 1964 murders of three civil rights volunteers. In 1967, seven men were convicted on Federal conspiracy charges, but none were charged with murder. But, finally on January 6, 2005, a Mississippi grand jury indicted Edgar Ray Killen for the murders of these volunteers.

The efforts of these girls led me to cosponsor H. Con. Res. 457, which called on the Mississippi Attorney General to reopen the case; and I want to thank the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) for his leadership on this matter.

Mr. Speaker, this was a milestone for American justice. I could not be more proud of the interests and dedication of these young women, and I want to thank Mr. Bradford and the Stevenson High School team for their dedication to justice.

IRAQIS AHEAD OF THE CURVE

(Mrs. DRAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Iraqi people for their bravery, their courage, and their sacrifice along the road to self-determination and sovereignty.

As I contemplate the recent progress in Iraq, I am reminded of the fact that it was 13 years from the time we declared our independence until we elected our first president.

In Iraq, it has been a mere 13 months since Saddam's capture. In America, it took 132 years for women to have the right to vote, but in Iraq women voted in their very first democratic election. This election is only the beginning of democracy in Iraq.

As their newly elected leaders draft a constitution this year, America's commitment to Iraq's security is critical. We must ensure that democracy and freedom take root and begin to thrive in the hearts and the lives of the Iraqi people.

I also believe as more nations in the Middle East move towards freedom and

democracy, it will provide for a more secure and peaceful world.

RAISING THE MILITARY DEATH BENEFIT

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, it is impossible to declare these elections in Iraq anything but a success, and we Americans join the Iraqis in their celebration, and rightly so.

I have been in e-mail contact with some of the Iraqis that I have met during my visit there, and I heard from some of our men and women in uniform, and they are proud of what they have achieved, and they are ready to keep working hard.

But, Mr. Speaker, no discussion of the election success is complete without recognizing the active duty, Reserve, and National Guard men and women who have given their lives in this war on terror in the Middle East. It is their sacrifice that is putting terrorism on the run. We cannot forget them, and we must not forget their families.

That is why the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) and I have introduced the Blackburn-Wilson Honoring Our Families and Fallen Soldiers Act today. We are joining Senator ALLEN in this effort. I ask my colleagues to cosponsor the legislation to increase to \$100,000 the death gratuity benefit the family of a soldier killed in combat receives. Our bill would also make this benefit retroactive to October 1, 2001.

Mr. Speaker, it is the right thing to do.

PERSONAL RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in the next few days I will introduce the boldest Social Security plan, one that will provide people with security, control and choice. There will be absolutely no change for current or near retirees.

We need to strengthen Social Security now by allowing younger generations to invest all of the Social Security tax they pay, or 6.2 percent, in a personal retirement account. The employer's share of the tax would stay in the system to fund retiree, near-retiree benefits and transition costs.

These accounts would give all involved control of their personal retirement dollars. Congress cannot take this money away. Personal retirement accounts will help people build a nest egg to pass on to their loved ones.

This solution is about the future. We need to strengthen Social Security with big personal retirement accounts now.

CELEBRATING JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate the city of Jacksonville, Florida, which is the host for the 39th Super Bowl championship this Sunday. I think a lot of people were dismayed and a little bit surprised to read about a sportswriter, Tony Kornheiser, when he denigrated Jacksonville last week in a Washington Post article.

Let me give the Members some interesting history about Jacksonville. Because of its strategic Atlantic Ocean port location, Jacksonville has always been involved in conflicts, appropriate, Mr. Speaker, enough for a Super Bowl host. Wars with Spain, France, the Revolutionary War, the Seminole Indian Wars, and the Civil War all touched Jacksonville. Twenty-five World War I steamers were launched from Jacksonville ports. In 1942, German spies infiltrated but luckily were captured before blowing up Florida's essential railroad lines. And, finally, Mr. Speaker, during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, what was the busiest military port in this country? You guessed it. Jacksonville moved more supplies and personnel than any other American port.

I am proud to represent part of this historical, important city and welcome Mr. Kornheiser and other guests to this Super Bowl weekend.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

HONORING CONTRIBUTIONS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 23) honoring the contributions of Catholic schools.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 23

Whereas America's Catholic schools are internationally acclaimed for their academic excellence, but provide students more than a superior scholastic education;

Whereas Catholic schools ensure a broad, values-added education emphasizing the lifelong development of moral, intellectual, physical, and social values in America's young people;

Whereas the total Catholic school student enrollment for the 2004-2005 academic year is about 2.5 million and the student-teacher ratio is 15 to 1;

Whereas Catholic schools teach a diverse group of students;