

their manufacturing jobs in the last 6½ years. The States in blue have lost 15 to 20 percent of their manufacturing jobs. Now, again, those are numbers, but think about this. My State, and the State of my colleague, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR), has lost 217,000; and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND), who has joined us, has lost 217,000. The State of our colleague, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO), has lost 28,000. The State of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) has lost 224,000. My colleague over here, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING), has lost 32,000. Pennsylvania has lost 200,000; New York, 222,000; Michigan, 200,000; Texas, 200,000 jobs; and California, 353,000.

These are families who have lost their principal source of income. These are people living in school districts which have seen plants close and funding for education plummet. These are people who live in communities that have inadequate police and fire protection because the tax base in these school districts and in these cities and communities have been eroded when plants close. So it is clear that our trade policy simply is not working.

Now, the supporters of the Central American Free Trade Agreement love to say three things: they say that CAFTA will increase jobs in the United States; they say CAFTA will mean more production, more manufacturing in exports to other countries; and they say that CAFTA will increase, enhance, bring up the standard of living in each of these developing countries in Central America and the Dominican Republic. Well, Benjamin Franklin said the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and over and expecting a different result. Presidents always, President Clinton and now President Bush, always promise the same things, more jobs, more manufacturing exports, a higher standard of living in the developing world. It does not work.

They tell us that these CAFTA countries will buy more American goods; that we will manufacture more goods and export them to these six countries. But, Mr. Speaker, if you look at this chart that says "show me the money," look at the income levels. The United States income of the average person is \$38,000; in Costa Rica it is 9,000; the Dominican Republic, 6,000; El Salvador, 4,000; Guatemala, 4,000; Honduras, 2,600; Nicaragua, 2,300.

Guatemalans making \$4,100 a year are not going to buy cars made in Toledo, Ohio, the district of my colleague. Hondurans making \$2,600 a year are not going to buy software from the State of my colleague, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO). Nicaraguans making \$2,300 a year are not going to buy a prime cut of beef from Illinois or from Nebraska. El Salvadorans making \$4,800 a year are not going to be able to buy textiles and apparel from North Carolina and South Carolina and Georgia.

Mr. Speaker, this trade agreement does not work. Defeat this CAFTA and renegotiate a better trade agreement for all Americans and all of Central America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. NORWOOD addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PUBLIC HEALTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to talk on a subject which is not often addressed on the floor of the House, which is public health, particularly public health as relates to threats of bioterrorism or naturally occurring events.

Today, and I am a member of the Committee on Homeland Security, we had some rather disturbing revelations of the lack of progress with Operation BioShield, which seems to have done more to enhance the profits of the pharmaceutical industry, to engage in some exotic forms of research, to ignore some off-the-shelf remedies which could deal with very real and horrible threats, such as the potential for a nuclear device that could deal with the radiological aftermath and things of that nature.

Now, the Committee on Homeland Security will continue to investigate those areas and deliberate in those areas, and that is good, because we need to improve how we target those funds, how they are spent, and how we assess the threats to the people of the United States. More than \$12 billion was spent on smallpox and anthrax, the anthrax attack apparently perpetuated by somebody who perhaps stole that from Ft. Detrick, Maryland; and smallpox, of course, is not yet known to be a threat.

The administration, however, has ignored a very real threat to the American people. Many of us experienced the fact that last year there was not enough flu vaccine, because we have left it to the private sector, free markets, and competition to provide flu vaccine; and it is not working real well. This is not the first shortage in recent years, not the first series of price gouging for vulnerable people. It has become recurrent year after year.

Last year, I did not get a flu shot, as many other Americans did not, in order to give up our doses for those who might be more at risk.

□ 1930

The system is broken. We can only hope that the Bush administration will begin to take more definitive action and introduce legislation along those lines.

But even more threatening than the annual flu occurrence is the prospect of H5N1, the avian flu virus, mutating and becoming the next pandemic attacking people around the world. It is estimated that 30 to 70 million people could die, many here in the United States, similar to the 1917, I believe, epidemic.

The Bush administration has been charged, granted we have known about H5N1 for quite some time, and the Clinton administration did very little in this area, so there is blame to go around. But it has become more persistently reported. It has reached more epidemic proportions. There have been more human infections, more reports of possible human infections being concealed by the Chinese communist government, as they often do in these matters. And the Bush administration in the last year spent a total of \$110.3 million, \$70.5 million for vaccines, and \$15.6 million for antiviral drugs. Despite the fact that the World Health Organization tells us we should be stockpiling these drugs, the Bush administration is not stockpiling these drugs.

Mr. Speaker, \$15.6 million for antiviral drugs. That is less than half of what they spent on adolescent family life prevention projects. They spent nearly twice as much money on abstinence-only education money in America as on all flu vaccine spending.

A looming pandemic, and the Bush administration and Health and Human Services are off worried about abstinence-only education, as opposed to an extraordinary threat to millions of Americans.

This could become an incredible problem as early as this year, but this administration seems determined to just bumble along until the time when the pandemic begins, and then it will be too late. There is only one producer overseas. Other nations have lined up to buy their production. The United States of America has not. The pharmacies will run out quickly. We do not have adequate hospital surge capacity. We are vulnerable in so many ways, but the Bush administration thinks it is more important to spend money on abstinence-only education than preserving the health of the American people in the face of these deadly threats.

Hopefully they will begin to do better, and, if they cannot, perhaps the Republican leadership in Congress will allow us to move legislation that will force them to do better in the future to protect the American people.

OUTSOURCING MILITARY TO SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CONAWAY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, this evening, I would like to talk about a

cultural change occurring in the U.S. military that is very troubling to me. For those people who have served our country and continue to serve our country in the military service, the words honor, duty, God, and country mean everything. These timeless words have motivated hundreds of thousands of our patriotic citizens to enlist and serve in the United States military over the decades, and they inspire a calling to rise above one's own self-interest for the betterment of our Nation and her highest principles: Liberty, equality and justice.

Those high principles are in stark contrast to what the World Book Dictionary defines as a soldier of fortune, "a man serving or ready to serve as a soldier under any government for money, for adventure or for pleasure."

I could not help but think about this and read and reread that definition as I examine how pay and benefits provided to these private military personnel engaged in the Iraqi war dwarf what we provide our all-volunteer military. Guards for private security firms on average are earning \$400 to \$600 a day or \$144,000 to \$216,000 in a single year, and they are earning it tax free. That is right. These salaries and tax-free dollars are provided so long as the men remain in-country for more than a year.

The slain guards for Blackwater were earning nearly a thousand dollars a day for an astronomical salary of \$365,000 a year. Let us compare that to what we provide the men and women who have served in our military for 6 years, not even the 1 or 2 years that most personnel in Iraq are at. A military commissioned officer can expect to earn between \$100 and \$270 a day, for a paltry total of \$36,000 to \$96,000 a year. Enlisted soldiers, those who carry out the toughest assignments and are in the most danger and need the most support, earn \$36,000 in a good year. That is outrageous.

General Omar Bradley, the GI general himself said, "Leadership in the democratic Army means firmness, not harshness; understanding, not weakness; justice, not license; humaneness, not intolerance; generosity, not selfishness; pride, not egotism."

I thought a lot about those words as I am increasingly saddened as I watch what seems to be transpiring in the Iraqi war. As each day passes, a nonsensical strategy is unraveling in Iraq that threatens to transform many of our most important ideals into crash commercialism. The utter mismanagement of the war troubles me as I witness what I perceive to be the undermining of the honor code and the diminishment of the meaning of the words "service" and "duty" that have served as hallmarks of our military tradition from its inception.

Let me be clear. For those soldiers, both enlisted personnel and officers serving under the time-tested rules of engagement, I have no quarrel. They serve bravely. Their integrity is indis-

putable, their will resolute. No, my apprehension lies with the architects of war. Where I am growing increasingly uncomfortable and downright concerned is with the actions of the President and his role as commander in chief, his Vice President, and their Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld. Together, they are authorizing a strategy for the outsourcing of military functions that is unparalleled in scope and size in the history of this Nation. Never before have so many private contractors, an estimated 20,000 private military personnel and 100,000 civilian contractors, been utilized in such a function to perform critical security and military needs in theater, duties that heretofore had been under the direct purview of the regular military and its established chain of command beginning with the commander in chief and his joint chiefs of staff.

Mr. Speaker, no one in Congress has any idea of the exact number of private security contractors working and operating in Iraq. Last year, in response to a detailed request levied by myself and dozens of our colleagues, the Coalition Provisional Authority compiled a list of 60 different firms employing a total of 20,000 personnel back then, including U.S. citizens, Iraqis and third country nationals. No additional information, no specifics on the contracts awarded, just a list.

And so we watch the news, and we try to figure out what is actually happening over there. According to an excellent journalistic expose' on Frontline, and I quote, "Beforehand handing over power to the newly elected Iraqi government in January 2005, the CPA established Memorandum 17, a notice that called for all private security companies operating in Iraq to register by June 1 and established an oversight committee led by Iraq's Ministry of the Interior. According to Lawrence Peter, a former CPA official and the director of the Private Security Association of Iraq, as of June 21, 2005, 37 security contractors have registered with the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior. One is awaiting approval, and 18 additional security companies are in the process of registering."

Mr. Speaker, what on earth is going on in Iraq? How do we distinguish between soldiers of fortune and those of our own military who are committed to honor, duty, God, and country? Why can this Congress not get straight answers from the administration on this and a bevy of other issues? Why are we relying on thousands of contractors, including some from third countries, to provide backup and support to our regular military? Why is it perfectly acceptable to outsource war, and this under a veil of secrecy? I have hundreds of questions, and Members can rest assured I will refuse to stop asking them until the American people get real and substantive answers to those responsible.

What really bothered me was when I saw that Paul Bremer at the beginning

had guards around him that did not have military-issued uniforms nor U.S. Department of Defense weapons. I began to ask questions. I will continue to raise them, and I include for the RECORD some additional materials.

Honor, duty, God, country. These timeless words have motivated hundreds of thousands of patriotic citizens to enlist and serve in the United States Military over the decades. These words inspire a calling to rise above ones own self for the betterment of our nation and her highest principals—liberty, equality, justice.

General Omar Bradley (the GI General himself) said that "Leadership in the democratic army means firmness, not harshness; understanding, not weakness; justice, not license; humaneness, not intolerance; generosity, not selfishness; pride, not egotism." / General George Marshall, the architect of the Marshall Plan and one of the foremost General officers of his day is oft quoted as saying, "Morale is the state of mind. It is steadfastness and courage and hope. It is confidence and zeal and loyalty. It is élan, esprit de corps and determination." If only we were to heed the words of these two incredible men as we continue to engage in a costly and unpredictable war in Iraq.

Instead, I am increasingly saddened as I watch what seems to be transpiring in the Iraqi war. As each day passes, a nonsensical strategy is unraveling in Iraq that threatens to transform many of our most important ideals into crass commercialism. The utter mismanagement of the war troubles me as I witness what I perceive to be the undermining of the honor code—and the diminishment of the meaning of words "service" and "duty" that have served as hallmarks of our military tradition from its inception.

Let me be clear. For those soldiers (both enlisted personnel and officers) serving under the time tested rules of engagement, I have no quarrel. They serve bravely. Their integrity is indisputable. Their will resolute.

No, my apprehension lies with the architects of the War. Where I am growing increasingly uncomfortable and downright concerned, is with the actions of this President in his role as Commander and Chief, his Vice President, and their Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld.

Together they are authorizing a strategy for the outsourcing of military functions that is unparalleled in scope and size. Never before have so many private contractors (an estimated 20,000 private military personnel and 100,000 civilian contractors) been utilized in such a fashion—to perform critical security and military needs in theatre. Duties that had heretofore been under the direct purview of the regular military and its established chain of command—beginning with the Commander in Chief and Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Mr. Speaker, no one in this Congress has any idea of the exact number of private security contractors working and operating in Iraq. Last year, in response to a detailed request levied by myself and dozens of colleagues, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) compiled a list of 60 different firms employing a total of 20,000 personnel (including U.S. citizens, Iraqis and third-country nationals). No additional information. No specifics on the contracts that were awarded. Just a list.

My colleagues and I are forced to rely on the tabulation of news articles and press releases to keep on top of what companies are operating in theater, what duties they may or may not be performing and just how much money the United States government is paying them.

According to an excellent journalistic expose on the PBS program Frontline, "before handing over power to the newly elected Iraqi government in January 2005, the CPA established "Memorandum 17" a notice that called for all private security companies operating in Iraq to register by June 1 and established an oversight committee led by Iraq's Ministry of the Interior. According to Lawrence Peter, a former CPA official and the director of the Private Security Company Association of Iraq, as of June 21, 2005, 37 security contractors have registered with the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior. One is awaiting approval, and at least 18 additional security companies are in the process of registering."

Mr. Speaker—What on earth is going on in Iraq? Why can't this Congress get straight answers from the administration on this and a bevy of other issues? Why are we relying on thousands of contractors to provide backup and support to our regular military? Why is it perfectly acceptable to outsource war—and this under a veil of secrecy? I have hundreds of questions Mr. Speaker, and you can be assured that I refuse to stop asking them until the American people get real and substantive answers from those responsible.

Perhaps the problem is the constant replacement of theater commanders during an already tumultuous occupation. After the ground victory, the U.S. watched the architect of the rapid sprint to Baghdad—General Tommy Franks—retire early. When his photo appeared like a 12 inch high pin up on the cover of Cigar Aficionado Magazine in December of 2003, just months into the occupation, I wondered what Generals Joe Stillwell and Omar Bradley would think. In that interview, General Franks discussed the over-reliance on Reserve troops, and the types of jobs that U.S. military personnel were asked to handle. He said "We need to get people out of those jobs, get civilians in them, and get our military into the jobs that are the highest payoff in terms of the military skills." I thought to myself: "This is coming from a general who has left nearly 150,000 of his troops in theater, while at the same time feels that we are not allocating our resources in the best way possible." I couldn't think of a single precedent for such an action—to leave before relative calm was restored. Before the peace was won.

General Franks had it half right. We are getting civilians into thousands of jobs in Iraq with ease, but we're doing it in exactly the wrong way. We are filling critical slots with civilians who are paid far more money than regular U.S. troops, who have a much more cavalier attitude toward duty, justice and honor and who are simply wrong for the job.

My concerns grew exponentially during the first year of the occupation. It was quite a shock to see Ambassador Paul Bremmer on the front page of the New York Times guarded not by U.S. soldiers (in regular military uniform and carrying military issue weapons), but by private contractors in civilian clothing looking like something out of the NYPD undercover squad. To then learn their salaries were 5 to 10 times as high as our soldiers—who by the

way still can't get adequate body or vehicle armor—riveted my attention.

Then, on March 31, 2004, four Blackwater USA guards (again, private military/security forces) were ambushed by Iraqi insurgents while on escort-duty west of Fallujah. As recounted, "The guards were killed; a mob of Iraqis set their cars on fire and hung two of the bodies from a bridge. The families of the guards are suing Blackwater for wrongful death: They claim the company did not meet its contractual obligation to supply two SUVs with three guards per vehicle."

Those men went into Fallujah without notifying or seeking the approval of the U.S. Marine Corps, then responsible for the security of that sector. Tragically those men lost their lives and it is a miracle that our own military servicemen—who were ordered in to recover their remains—escaped uninjured. More importantly, the regional Marine commander was forced to alter his strategy for quelling the insurgency to not only recover the remains of the men, but deal with the heightened tensions caused by the incident.

Mr. Speaker, the World Book Dictionary defines a soldier of fortune as: "a man serving or ready to serve as a soldier under any government for money, adventure, or pleasure."

I cannot help but read and re-read that definition as I examine how pay and benefits provided to these private military personnel dwarf what we provide our all-volunteer military.

Guards for private security firms on average, earn \$400 to \$600 per day—or \$144,000 to \$216,000 in a single year. Tax-free. That's right Mr. Speaker, these salaries are tax-free providing that these men remain in-country for more than one year. The slain guards for Blackwater were earning nearly \$1000 a day for an astronomical \$365,000 yearly salary.

Let's compare that to what we provide the men and women who have served in our military for six years (not even the one or two years that most personnel are in Iraq). A military commissioned officer can expect to earn between \$100 and \$270 a day—for a paltry total of \$36,000 to \$96,000 each year. Enlisted soldiers, those who carry out the toughest assignments, are in the most danger and need the most support might earn \$36,000 in a good year. That is outrageous, Mr. Speaker.

In my hand I hold a solicitation sent to a police officer in my Congressional District in Toledo, Ohio. It is from DynCorp International LLC and promises an annual compensation of over \$120,000 to perform an "armed, plainclothes mission" to "help the Iraqi judicial system organize effective civilian law enforcement agencies."

This is what we are dealing with on a daily basis Mr. Speaker. As the U.S. attempts to secure the peace in Iraq, thousands of individuals are flooding into the country to perform armed, dangerous and complex tasks, often with little to no formal or military training.

A constituent of mine reports that her husband of more than 20 years, who moved to Kuwait last year to take a very high-paying job ferrying security personnel into (and out of) Iraq, is earning a huge salary and may not return to the U.S. He has decided to divorce her for a much younger Asian woman who has moved to Kuwait. Both intend to remain in the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, this is not honor. It is not duty. It is not God. And it certainly is not country. It is money. It is adventure. It is pleasure.

Mr. Speaker, we need to ask ourselves a fundamental question: what is a soldier and what is a mercenary? Why are we short-changing, under-supplying and selling out our own U.S. troops to pay private military companies hundreds of millions of dollars so that their professional warriors can earn exorbitant salaries?

I will be in the well of this House (every day if I must) asking these questions until they are answered in a satisfactory manner.

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REQUIREMENTS TO QUALIFY

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Annual pay package is \$120,632.00.

Resumes should detail specific experience, certifications, specialties, ranks, and assignments.

Apply today!

[From FOXNews.com, July 6, 2005]

HOW DO YOU LIKE YOUR CONTRACTOR MONEY?

(By Liza Porteus)

NEW YORK.—For three days, a group of 16 American contractors in Iraq feared they had stumbled into a different world—one where the U.S. military viewed them, and not Islamic extremists, as the enemy.

The ordeal began May 28 when a group of Marines suspected the contractors for Zapata Engineering (search) of shooting at them and Iraqi civilians in Fallujah. The Marines allegedly bound and roughed up the contractors, who were given orange jumpsuits to wear. They also received a prayer rug and a copy of the Koran (search) and were placed in a cell next to Iraqi insurgent suspects.

The contractors, eight of whom are former military men, wondered how the Marines supposedly could throw the idea of "Semper Paratus" out the window and treat fellow Americans so poorly.

"If we were terrorists, they would have extradited us so they could have charged us . . . once they cleared us, they should have let us go," Pete Ginter, one of the Zapata contractors, told FOXNews.com in a recent interview. "I think it's some personal vendetta they had against us."

Several of the contractors told FOXNews.com the gripe appeared to be financial, stemming from jealousy over the belief that contractors make more money.

"How do you like your contractor money now?" one Marine barked, according to those contractors interviewed.

On June 9, a statement from a Marine spokesman said that while detained "in accordance with standard operation procedures, the Americans were segregated from the rest of the detainee population and, like all security detainees, were treated humanely and respectfully."

The statement said the investigation will look into "all aspects of the incident, as well as the accusations made by the contractors."

Manuel Zapata, president of Zapata Engineering, released a statement soon after the incident saying he was "disturbed" by the allegations but acknowledged the root cause likely was a "misunderstanding by people who are living and working in an intense and stressful situation."

He added: "At the same time, we are also disturbed over reported accounts by our personnel of their treatment while in Marine detention."

'BLUE-ON-WHITE' ANTAGONISM

The Zapata crew was part of a community of about 120,000 private foreign contractors in Iraq, many working side by side with U.S. military personnel to rebuild a country virtually destroyed by 30 years of neglect and war.

These contractors say they wholeheartedly stand behind President Bush and the U.S. military in the mission to put Iraq on the road toward democracy. But they say a few bad apples aren't helping in those efforts.

"It seems there's a lot more American-on-American [conflict] right now—we call it 'blue on white'—but then again there's a lot of military people who are our closest friends . . . so it's a catch-22," said Robert Shaver, another detained Zapata contractor.

Among the contractors are about 20,000 who work for private security companies, some of whom have come under criticism for bad behavior. Witnesses have been quoted telling stories about caravans of intimidating contractors driving fast through Iraqi streets in their SUVs with guns hanging out the window.

Marine Col. John Toolan, who was the military commander of the area that included Fallujah when four private security contractors employed by Blackwater (search) were ambushed and murdered last year, told PBS' "Frontline" that the part of the problem is that the military and contractors have different motivations in a dangerous environment.

"We have a tendency to want to be a little bit more sure about operating in an environment," he said. "Whereas I think some of the contractors are motivated by the financial remuneration and the fact that they probably want to get someplace from point A to point B quickly, their tendency [is] to have a little more risk. So yes, we're at odds. But we can work it out."

Contractors who were once in the armed forces themselves, like Zapata's Ginter and Matt Raiche, say they went over to Iraq as private citizens to help pay the bills back home.

"I didn't want a dead-end job, I didn't want to live paycheck to paycheck" and live off loans, Ginter told FOXNews.com about why he became a contractor.

A CASE OF THEY SAID, THEY SAID

The Zapata contractors were detained in Fallujah (search) after the Marines said the contractors sprayed gunfire at them and a group of Iraqi civilians from an armored convoy twice earlier that day. The crew was in Iraq destroying enemy ammunition and explosives.

The contractors say they have proof that they weren't near the position where the Ma-

rines claim they were shot at earlier in the day and were actually dropping off ordnances at Camp Victory at the time. Several told FOXNews.com in interviews that sign-in logs can corroborate their story and they said they have receipts from a restaurant and other places they stopped at during the time in question. Plus, the contractors say the Marines' description of the convoy doesn't match the vehicles they were driving.

Ginter and Raiche say the problems began with a flat tire. Their group was changing a tire that blew out after their driver didn't make a turn wide enough to avoid a spike strip when a group of Marines came out and said they wanted to go back to their compound and talk.

The Marines said two rounds of ammunition had hit near where they were stationed. When the Zapata crew asked to see exactly where the rounds hit, they said they couldn't get a straight answer.

The contractors said they fired warning shots into the ground—standard procedure—to prevent a suspicious vehicle from approaching their convoy but that they never aimed at Marines or civilians.

The Marines eventually brought the Zapata contractors to a compound where they were put in 6-by-6 foot concrete cells. When they asked for an attorney, they were told to "shut up," the contractors claim. They were detained there for three days.

"I know for a fact with our situation, the first 36 hours we were detained, there was a lot of tension in the air and a lot of animosity toward us contractors for the money we make," Shaver, who is now back in the United States and living in upstate New York, told FOXNews.com.

Ginter claims that on his way back from being escorted from the bathroom, one of the Marines "physically forces me on the ground, banged my knees on the ground . . . he kicked my ankle into the cross position," and took off his cross necklace. He also claims the Marine squeezed his testicles "so hard I almost puked" and threatened to unleash a dog on him if he moved.

"Seriously, I thought someone had died, I thought some way they had connected a death to us and I thought . . . maybe it was a joke, maybe it was training and we didn't know about it," Ginter added.

Raiche said he had his wedding ring and jewelry removed and was also threatened with the dog. He also said he heard one Marine heckle, "how does it feel to make that contractors' money now?" A female Marine was taking pictures of the proceedings, they said. The contractors had blacked-out goggles placed over their heads when they were put on a bus from the original detention site to another one near Fallujah, where Iraqi insurgent suspects are also kept. Ginter said there was a small slit in the goggles that he could see out of.

"I watched as my fellow brothers were thrown to the ground, physically abused . . . knees, necks, tossed to the ground with the female taking pictures," Ginter said. "It was like going into the Twilight Zone."

Ginter and Raiche said only five or six members of their group were interviewed when investigators from agencies like the FBI showed up. They said they asked for a lawyer, to make a phone call, to contact the Red Cross, Amnesty International and others but were denied such requests. They claim about four Marines, however, were in "total awe—they could not believe what was happening," Ginter said.

INVESTIGATING THE INVESTIGATIONS

Neither Ginter nor Raiche have been questioned by military investigators since they returned from Iraq. Mark Schopper, the Nevada-based lawyer for some of the contrac-

tors in question, said he doesn't believe anyone in the group has been. The Justice Department also reportedly is looking into the incident.

Gail Rosenberg, a public relations consultant for Zapata, told FOXNews.com on Thursday that the internal investigation from Zapata Engineering is still ongoing. Rosenberg added that "there has been no direct contact" between Zapata and the government on the investigation since the original Zapata statement was released after the incident.

The military has had little to say about the incident since it first happened. Lt. Col. David Lapan, a Marine spokesman, issued a statement saying the Naval Criminal Investigative Service would handle the investigation.

Lapan suggested that the Marines were following procedure in how they handled the contractors. And while Lapan said all charges would be investigated, he added "thus far we have seen nothing to substantiate the claims."

When contacted by FOX News for an update on the investigation last week, Lapan said in an e-mail exchange: "No new developments on the military side. The investigation continues."

So far, even though some of the Zapata contractors say they haven't been contacted by the NCIS, investigators have spoken to personnel with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

"As far we know, it's still ongoing, we don't have anything new" on the investigation, said Kim Gillespie, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center in Huntsville, Ala., which specializes in ordnance and explosives and administered the Zapata contract. "They didn't give us any indication as to when they're going to wrap this up . . . I will assume we will be made aware when this investigation is complete."

Coincidentally, Gillespie said Zapata's contract for the explosives work it was doing in Iraq expired Thursday; that contract date was predetermined a year ago, however, and has nothing to do with the alleged incident involving the Marines.

GETTING ON WITH LIFE

After the Fallujah incident, the military gave each of the 16 contractors a letter barring them from further operations in Al Anbar province in western Iraq.

"The contractors clearly, without doubt, experienced physical and psychological abuse and have suffered serious monetary damages," Schopper said. "They lost their jobs, some of them their careers. . . . There are serious, serious civil rights violations."

Schopper said that since he went public with information regarding credit card receipts and time logs that show his clients weren't in the area of the first shootings at the time in question, the Marines have changed their story as to who they think shot at them.

He has not yet filed any formal complaints with the military because, "until we get a better feel of what's going on, it doesn't behoove us to show any of our cards."

"We're hoping in fact that this is cleared up without any legal action and hopefully the investigation, if they are in fact doing one, is in fact legitimate and will clear our guys," Schopper added.

Until then, several of the contractors said their lives have been at a virtual standstill.

"There's not much we can do" so far as work is concerned, Ginter said, noting that many government jobs he's qualified for involve high-level security clearances, which involve background checks. "Right now, with this blot on my background, it ruins everything, even if I was to work for the post

office . . . unless I want to work at McDonald's in a job."

Raiche, a former firefighter before heading to Iraq, said he couldn't even get that job back, nor a job in law enforcement, until his name is cleared.

"I have guys in the military right now who were personal friends of mine," Ginter said. "I have no resentment toward the military. I want this off my record."

URGING LOBBYING REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today in the Washington Post, we found out that a key adviser to President Bush on the Intelligence Advisory Committee has been instrumental in helping China and the Chinese oil company put together their bid to purchase Unocal.

The other day, the Center For Public Integrity disclosed that big drug companies spent \$800 million in the last 7 years to influence the Congress, the Senate, and the legislation and the policies we have here; and then just last year we passed a pharmaceutical prescription drug bill that ended up producing or will produce \$132 billion in additional profit for the pharmaceutical industry.

The tobacco industry donated over the last few years \$40 million to the Republican Party, and then they get a sweetheart deal by the Department of Justice for just pennies on the dollar when it came to settling a lawsuit. They settled for 8 percent of what they had originally gone in for, \$10 million versus \$130 million. USA Today points out that corporate donors have given more than \$120 million to Republicans during the last election, and now they are receiving their reward. For some businesses, invest a little now and get a larger return later. That has been the motto.

Just take energy prices. Big oil and big energy companies has been a major contributor to the majority party, the Republican Party. Oil is at \$60 a barrel, approximately, and yet we talk about giving a \$8 billion taxpayer give-away so big oil can do what? Drill for oil. I thought that was their business plan. So what we are asking the American taxpayer to do is pay once at the pump and again on April 15. Why? Because big oil is a more influential player here in Washington.

Special interests have attached themselves to Congress, and this parasitic relationship is having a corrosive effect on our Nation of and for the people. When the Speaker's gavel comes down, it is intended to open the People's House, not the auction house. And lately when we look at the tobacco industry, the energy industry, the pharmaceutical industry, those who lobby on behalf of major interests like Chinese oil companies, we can see something that is happening as it relates to the People's House.

The relationship between lobbyists and lawmakers has become far too cozy and close. Professional lobbyists and the lobbyist profession have become a back office for Congress, serving as travel agents, employment agencies, and authors of legislation. In fact, in the past 6 years, lobbying expenditures have more than doubled to \$3 billion annually. Yet while the number of professional lobbyists and their fees have increased, only one in five lobbyists actually register as required. Of the 250 top lobbying firms, 210 failed to file one or more of the necessary documents.

The special interests have benefited from the weak reporting, nonexistent oversight and toothless penalties while the credibility of the United States Congress suffers. We have had a debate about campaign finance reform here in this Congress, a debate that ultimately put some distance between donors and candidates. Now we need a similar debate as it relates to lobbyists and Members of Congress.

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We tell, in this institution, corporate America how to clean up their act. We tell professional sports teams how to clean up their act. Yet when it comes to our business, how we clean up our house, we are not very good at that. We think business as usual is just fine.

It is time we updated our laws to reflect the explosive growth and increasing influence of the professional lobbyist community. It has been 10 years since we have done anything. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN) and I have introduced the Lobbying and Ethics Reform Act. Our bill creates a code of official conduct for Congress. In the coming days, we will have a Senate bill, itself, introduced by a colleague of ours. This code of conduct would close the revolving door by requiring former Members and staff to wait a minimum of 2 years after they leave Congress before becoming lobbyists to work back here influencing legislation and trading on their knowledge. The bill would end the practice of lobbyists serving as congressional travel agents by arranging lavish junkets for Members of Congress. We also require lobbyists to disclose their past connections, previous Hill employment and financial activities on a public database.

The Meehan-Emanuel bill increases the penalties for failing to comply with the Lobbying Disclosure Act. It also creates a bipartisan House task force to recommend ways to reinvigorate ethics oversight and enforcement. And it would require the Government Accountability Office to report twice a year on the state of oversight and enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, the gavel should mark the opening of the People's House, not the auction house, and that is what the American people now see this Congress doing. Unless we reform the relationship between the lobbying community and Members of Congress, we cannot

restore the public's faith in the People's House. We are suffering from a systematic problem requiring an institutional solution. We need more sunlight, more transparency, better oversight and stiffer penalties. The Meehan-Emanuel bill provides that transparency. And let me add that this is not a partisan issue. I hope that Members of both parties will join us in working together to pass these important reforms.

Mr. Speaker, we have a duty to ensure that the voices of the American people are not drowned out by the professional lobbyists working the halls of Congress. Only through lobbying reform can we return the People's House to the American people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CONAWAY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MEEHAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MEEHAN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. INSLEE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BLUMENAUER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IN MEMORY OF CONGRESSMAN JAKE PICKLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. EDWARDS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, I did not just like Jake Pickle; I loved Jake Pickle. Congressman Pickle was one of the finest public servants to have ever served in this House, and he was a true Texas treasure. He was a kind, decent, caring human being who spent his entire life making life better for others. Whether it was helping a veteran receive health care, bringing research dollars, and he brought many of them, to his beloved University of Texas or saving the Social Security system in 1983, Jake was always dedicated to helping others.