

world have been the Socialist and Communist countries.

Only free market systems generate the excess funds to do the good things for the environment that all of us want done. Anger and name-calling and biased hearings will not solve any serious or legitimate problems.

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

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

HONORING TERRY MILFRED

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

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Terry Milfred upon his retirement as superintendent of the Weston School District. Terry is a dedicated public servant who has earned the respect and admiration of the teachers, staff and over 300 students under his supervision.

Most recently, Terry is revered for his efforts in comforting and uniting the local community after a tragic shooting last fall at Weston High School that took the life of a dear friend to Terry, and the schools well-respected principal, John Klang.

One hundred twenty-five students were left stunned on September 29, 2006, when a fellow classmate opened fire on faculty members and peers. Fortunately for the students of Weston High School, Principal John Klang, in the most unselfish act one person can do for others, sacrificed himself to protect his students and his faculty.

Terry Milfred and the dedicated members of his staff took immediate action and displayed steadfast leadership, establishing a safe environment in consoling the students and the faculty. In an effort to recover from this tragedy and the loss of an incredible principal, others in the administration, such as Tom Andreas and Melissa Nigh, stepped forward to ensure that students and faculty received the support that they needed.

Together, Tom, Melissa and Terry summoned leaders from around the State, forming a crisis management team to address the specific needs of each individual impacted by this tragedy. The students of Weston High School should also be commended for the courage and selflessness they displayed in overcoming this hardship and uniting as a student body.

As a husband, father, grandfather, and role model to students, parents, and members of his staff, Terry has bettered the lives of numerous individuals. He has risen to the challenge of protecting those in his care and mentoring those dearest to him. Prior to

the unfortunate incident last fall, Terry served as an adviser to Principal Klang. While much of their time was spent conversing in school hallways and cafeterias, Terry and John had a relationship and respect for one another that extended beyond the classroom door.

Principal Klang was a dear friend to many and he will be greatly missed.

In memory of Principal Klang and in an effort to prepare others if such an unfortunate incident should occur in their community, Terry has dedicated countless hours addressing school groups and educators on methods to handle school violence.

Although Terry Milfred is retiring from the superintendent position, he will remain a visible actor in the lives of students and teachers at Weston School District. His advocacy and community work will leave a lasting legacy for the entire community, and the area will continue to benefit from all that he has done.

On behalf of the students and faculty of Weston School District, I would like to thank Terry for his many years of tireless service and for bringing hope in the shadows of tragedy and despair.

I wish Terry a very long and a very happy retirement.

□ 1645

BLUE DOG COALITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I rise on behalf of the 44-member strong fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition.

Mr. Speaker, as you walk the Halls of Congress, you will notice these Blue Dog Coalition posters along the hallways which signify that you are walking by the door to an office of a fellow Blue Dog Member. And the reason you will find these posters scattered across the Cannon, Longworth and Rayburn House Office Buildings is because we are committed to restoring common sense and fiscal discipline to our Nation's government. And it is important to us, Mr. Speaker, that we remind every Member of Congress, as well as the general public that walk these Halls, that our Nation is in debt. In fact, the U.S. national debt, as of today, is \$3,721,415,192,294. And we ran out of room on the poster, Mr. Speaker, but 43 cents. Our national debt, \$3,721,415,192,294.43. That is a big number. What does it mean?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I will tell you what it means. For every man, woman and child living in America, including those children being born today, their share of the national debt is \$29,093.20. It is what we refer to as the debt tax, D-E-B-T. That is one tax that cannot be cut, that cannot go away until we get our Nation's fiscal house in order.

Why is it important? Because our Nation is borrowing about \$1 billion a day. But, Mr. Speaker, before we borrow \$1 billion a day, we are going to spend a half a billion dollars paying interest on the debt we have already got. And many of America's priorities in the area of education, veterans benefits, health care, roads, many of America's priorities continue to go unmet and they will until we get our Nation's fiscal house in order.

As members of the Blue Dog Coalition, which is just another name for fiscally conservative Democrats, we are concerned about this. But, Mr. Speaker, our concerns do not end with the debt and the deficit. We are also concerned about accountability, and this Democratic Congress is going to restore accountability to this Chamber, to this administration, and, yes, to the Government of the United States of America.

The Constitution clearly gives Congress, not only the power and the authority, but it is our constitutional duty to provide oversight of this administration. And yet this Republican Congress that we have had for the past 6 years has been nothing more than a rubber stamp for President Bush and his administration.

It is time that Congress did its job. It is time that Congress put the rubber stamp in the drawer and pull out the Constitution and read it and understand that we have a duty, a constitutional duty, to provide oversight to this administration and to this government. We are going to do that. And we are doing it in many areas, including providing for accountability for how the hardworking people of this country's tax money is being spent in places like Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, you ask a hundred different people what they think about this Iraq war policy, you will get about a hundred different answers. And by the way, very few or none of them are going to agree with the direction that President Bush is currently going. If you ask fellow Blue Dog members, you will get different answers as well. I, personally, am opposed to the surge. Others may not be. That is something that we believe each Member must make a decision on and speak from their heart and represent their constituency.

But one of the things that we are united on as Blue Dog members is restoring accountability for how this money is being spent in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I want to show here a couple of numbers that are very important. One is the cost of the Iraq war. They spent \$2.5 billion pre-invasion in 2001 and 2002. In 2003, \$51 billion was spent. In 2004, \$77.3 billion was spent. In 2005, \$87.3 billion was spent. In 2006, \$100.4 billion. 2007, to date, we are getting ready to vote on another supplemental appropriation bill for the war, but to date, \$60 billion. That puts the total cost to the taxpayers of America at nearly \$400 billion, \$378.5 billion.

Now, what does that mean? That is a lot of money. How do you break it out? The total cost for 2006 alone, \$100.4 billion. That is \$8.44 billion per month of your tax money, Mr. Speaker, going to Iraq.

Another way of putting it, \$275 million a day, or about 11 or \$12 million per hour. And yet there has been a lack of accountability on how your tax money is being accounted for and how it is being spent in Iraq.

So we, Mr. Speaker, have what is called House Resolution 97 that we have filed as members of the Blue Dog Coalition. And it is a resolution to provide for Operation Iraqi Freedom cost accountability. And let me just get to the meat of it. Basically, the resolution says this: that within 30 days after the adoption of this resolution, and every 90 days thereafter, the Department of Defense Inspector General and the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction shall prepare and transmit to Congress an unclassified report with a classified annex, if necessary, that would contain, one, a detailed accounting of how military and reconstruction funds in Iraq have been spent thus far; two, a detailed accounting of the types and terms of contracts awarded on behalf of the United States, including the methods by which such contracts were awarded and contractors selected; three, a description of efforts to obtain support and assistance from other countries toward the rehabilitation of Iraq; and, four, an assessment of what additional funds is needed to complete military operations and reconstruction efforts in Iraq, including a plan for security of Iraq, a detailed plan for how any future funds will be spent and a statement of how those funds will advance the interests of the United States and Iraq.

If either Inspector General fails to submit a quarterly report, the Government Accountability Office shall conduct an audit and report to Congress. Sanctions shall be imposed against contractors who have engaged in fraud or abuse or war profiteering. Congress should create a Truman-like committee to conduct an ongoing study and investigation of the awarding and carrying out of contracts by the United States to conduct activities with regard to Operation Iraqi Freedom and make such recommendations to the House as the Select Committee deems appropriate.

Funding requests for Operation Iraqi Freedom in fiscal year 2008 and beyond must come through the regular appropriations process and not be hidden through these so-called emergency supplementals. In furtherance of the partnership that is critical to success in Operation Iraqi Freedom, the administration should firmly condition further American financial, military and political resources upon steady improvement in Iraq, assumption of principal responsibility for internally policing Iraq.

In other words, Mr. Speaker, this resolution says that it is time for this ad-

ministration to be accountable for how the hardworking people of this country's tax money is being spent in Iraq, no more rubber stamps for this administration. We will fulfill our constitutional duty of providing oversight.

And it also says, Mr. Speaker, that the President should do all he can to get Iraq to take responsibility for their own actions and to take the lead on trying to restore order to that country.

And it also says that this administration must be held accountable for how your tax money is being spent, that there should be transparency to the process, and full disclosure of who is getting paid to do what in Iraq when it comes to private contractors, and to make sure that this war profiteering in Iraq by private contractors comes to an end. That is basically what the resolution says.

Mr. Speaker, every one of us in the Blue Dog Coalition, and I think every one of us in this Congress, Democrat and Republican alike, supports our troops. We can't do enough for our troops. And I can tell you, as far as I am concerned, as long as we have men and women in uniform in harm's way, I am going to do my part to ensure that we provide them the resources they need to get the job done as safely as possible.

But it is also important that this Congress fulfill its constitutional oversight responsibility and demand that this administration be accountable for how your tax money, some \$275 million a day, is being spent in Iraq. And there are reports that indicate that at least 20 percent of the money going to Iraq cannot be accounted for.

Think what we could do to provide health care benefits, housing benefits and other benefits for our veterans. And in Iraq and Afghanistan we have got a new generation of veterans coming home, and we have got to be there for them as a country. We cannot do enough for our men and women in uniform. We cannot do enough for our veterans. We have got to be there for them.

We have also got to be sure that this money, some \$100.4 billion in 2006 that this administration is sending to Iraq, is accounted for and that it is being spent in support of our soldiers and that we have the resources to take care and to honor our veterans, including a new generation of veterans coming home today from Iraq and Afghanistan.

A number of fellow Blue Dog members will be joining me this evening as we talk about providing for Operation Iraqi Freedom cost accountability. And one of those who has joined me is a fellow Blue Dog member, someone that is very active in the Blue Dogs, was a member of our nominating committee for officers earlier this year, and that is the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. CHANDLER). And I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to be here this afternoon to join the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr.

Ross) to talk a little bit about what is obviously a very, very important subject to the American people, the subject of accountability.

Now, Mr. Ross talked a little bit about the national debt. He had a sign up which, as he said, Blue Dog offices all over the Capitol have up, showing what the national debt of this country is, and the fact that each and every American citizen owes over \$29,000 just to pay off the national debt.

Now, I don't usually, or very often, come down here to join Mr. Ross in what I do think is a worthy goal, and that is educating the American people on our financial situation in this country. But I could not resist today. Being a former State auditor in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, I am a little bit familiar with the issue of accountability. And you talk about this debt, the fact that it is as large as it is, the fact that our people owe, each and every one of them, over \$29,000 to pay it off, well, your next question is well, what are we going to do about it? What are we going to do about this debt?

Well, one of the very first things that we can do about this debt is demand accountability in the spending. And one of the glaring examples that we have got is the lack of oversight, the lack of accountability in the spending on the war in Iraq. The numbers are huge; almost \$280 million a day is what we are spending in Iraq.

Now, the Blue Dogs have made a decision to have a resolution which will show our interest in making sure that this war and the government of this country is accountable for the taxpayer dollars spent in this war. What we have done is, as Mr. Ross laid out, proposed a resolution that is called the Operation Iraqi Freedom Cost Accountability Resolution. And the resolution focused on several crucial points in demanding fiscal responsibility in Iraq.

The main points, the most crucial, I think, are, one, a call for transparency on how Iraq war funds are spent. I think another important point is the need to fund the Iraq war through normal appropriations, through that process, rather than through emergency supplemental. The third point that I believe is crucial, and one that I want to touch on a little bit today, is the creation of the Truman committee to investigate the awarding of contracts.

Now, what we want to do, the Blue Dogs, what we are calling for is the creation of a modern-day Truman committee for this war, for expenditures in this war in particular, because, in my opinion, you cannot talk about accountability in this war without talking about the need for this kind of committee, a Truman committee.

Now, in 1940, Congress prepared for the eventual involvement of the United States of America in World War II by allocating \$10 billion in defense contracts. Early in 1941, stories of contractor mismanagement reached the desk of, at that time a Missouri Senator, a future President of the United

States of America, Harry S. Truman. Truman, when he saw this information, decided to take action and find out for himself if this mismanagement of funds was, in fact, true. He took a 10,000-mile tour of military bases and discovered that certain contractors were getting a greater share of contracts available and that other contractors were getting paid full price for work that was either poor or inefficient. In short, what he discovered was rampant waste and mismanagement in government war contracts.

□ 1700

Does that sound familiar?

Well, as a result of his findings, Harry Truman went back to Washington and called for a special Senate committee to investigate. They got a lot of criticism. Many immediately criticized the Missouri Senator saying that his efforts might hurt war morale, while others thought that President Roosevelt ought to welcome this committee since it was being headed by a member of his own party and, therefore, would not be used for political gain.

Well, by unanimous consent on March 1, 1941, the Senate created what has proved to be the most famous and, in my judgment, the most successful committee of its time. The Truman Committee, with a budget of a mere \$15,000 at the time, saved our country in excess of \$15 billion; and in the early 1940s, \$15 billion was real money. Up here some of the people don't think it is these days, but it was big money to be saved.

Now, don't you think that we could use a Truman Committee today? It seems pretty obvious to me.

The United States has allocated some \$50 billion to private contractors for reconstruction in the rebuilding efforts in Iraq since the beginning of the war, and despite this \$50 billion expenditure on these contracts, we hear a lot of reports of mismanagement or certainly of inefficiency and not getting the job done that we expected to see done.

For instance, only 25 percent of Iraqis have access to clean water. And prior to the war the Iraqis had electricity for an average of 16 to 24 hours a day, now that number is down to about 4.3 hours per day.

\$17 billion of the \$50 billion that has been given in contracts has been given through no-bid contracts to Halliburton, just to one company.

There were over 14,000 weapons by the United States of America, bought by our taxpayers and intended for Iraqi troops. Those 14,000 weapons are now missing.

And in addition to that, over \$8.8 billion of Iraqi reconstruction funds are simply unaccounted for by the Coalition Provisional Authority.

Mr. Speaker, we desperately need a modern-day Truman Committee to bring some accountability to this war. We have got to stop the bleeding. We have got to stop this expenditure from

continuing to be wasteful. We have got to find out firsthand what is going on with the spending in Iraq. We owe it to the taxpayers of this country, we owe it to the troops who are fighting this war.

We owe it so much to the troops. This is money that the troops need for their welfare in Iraq that is being diverted through the wasteful spending of those who are going to be financing this war. We owe it to them to stop the mishandling, stop the mismanagement of money in Iraq.

I strongly support this Blue Dog effort to have a cost accountability ethic relative to the war in Iraq because it is past time, way past time to hold the leaders of this country accountable for the money they spend in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time to the gentleman for Arkansas, and I thank him for all of his efforts on behalf of accountability to the taxpayers in this country.

Mr. ROSS. I thank the gentleman from Kentucky, former State auditor, former State attorney general for his leadership within the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, and someone who played an important role in helping us draft this resolution, House Resolution 97. And I certainly thank him for helping sponsor this resolution that, hopefully, we will get through the House to demand accountability, fiscal responsibility and accountability for how this administration spends billions of tax money, Mr. Speaker, in a place a long way from Arkansas and a long way from America, and that is in Iraq.

And I couldn't help but think when the gentleman from Kentucky was talking about accountability, I think it is important to note that Congress has appropriated over \$25 billion to various departments and agencies for reconstruction projects that are intended to improve the lives and living standards of the Iraqi people, and, yes, to endear them to our way of life; and yet we find that only half the projects have been completed.

For example, the Special Inspector General for Iraq reconstruction reported that funds allocated for health care projects, health care projects, are more than 65 percent expended—that is, the funds—but fewer than 36 percent of the projects have been completed. Funds were allocated for construction of 142 primary health care clinics and only 20 were completed.

Likewise, the Inspector General reported that a contract was made to construct 20 rehabilitation hospitals, and only 12 were completed.

A New York Times report found that thousands of weapons intended for Iraqi forces, the good guys in Iraq, our allies in Iraq, are missing. This study investigated 19, count them, 19 contracts that totaled \$133 million for more than 370,000 weapons. No one knows where these weapons are. Three hundred seventy thousand weapons in Iraq, bought with U.S. tax money, are

missing, and no one can account for them.

We need accountability in Iraq.

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. ROSS, do you have any idea why this situation has occurred? Do you know why? Do you have answers? Do any of you have answers at this point?

Mr. ROSS. Because this Republican Congress for the past 6 years did not fulfill its constitutional duty of providing oversight of this administration and the Department of Defense. There was no oversight. It was rubber stamp after rubber stamp, and more money after more money, and no accountability.

Mr. CHANDLER. It doesn't matter, in my view, which party is in control. If we had a Democratic President, I believe that a Democratic Congress ought to hold that administration accountable just like Truman did in World War II. We have had a Republican Congress that simply has not held this Republican administration accountable. That is just simply a loss for the taxpayers. That is all you can say.

Mr. ROSS. The gentleman is right. It shouldn't matter if it is a Democratic Congress or a Republican Congress, the American people are sick and tired of all the partisan bickering. What the American people want is for us to provide leadership and accountability on how their tax money is being spent. And I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that as members of the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, we are going to do our part to hold this administration accountable to find out where in the world this \$133 million of your tax money, Mr. Speaker, that went to purchase 370,000 weapons, what happened to them.

It doesn't matter if there is a Democratic President or a Republican President, the gentleman from Kentucky is absolutely right, what matters is being accountable and being good stewards of the tax money of the people of this country.

I yield to the gentleman from Kentucky.

Mr. CHANDLER. It is the least that we can do for the people of this country.

Mr. ROSS. And for the troops.

Mr. CHANDLER. And for the troops.

You mentioned a very important word, and that word is stewardship. That is what we owe to the people of this country, we owe them stewardship. We must be good stewards. And job one is to take care of their hard-earned resources that they send up here to Washington. And in this case, we are sending an incredible amount of those resources over to Iraq and nobody is watching what is happening with them. Nobody is holding that process accountable.

And I want to thank the gentleman from Arkansas for his efforts to bring light to this subject. I think it is very, very important. We need to continue to talk about this until something is done.

I am glad to see my colleague here from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT), who I know has come down here on a number of occasions to talk about this subject. He is a fine, fine member of our coalition. I am glad to be here with Mr. SCOTT, and I know he has a word or two to say about this also.

Mr. ROSS. I want to thank the gentleman from Kentucky for joining us today. And, Mr. Speaker, if you have any questions comments or concerns for Mr. SCOTT or any of us, you can e-mail us at BlueDog@mail.house.gov.

And it is a pleasure for me to be joined by a real leader within the Blue Dog Coalition, someone that demands fiscal responsibility and accountability, someone who is helping us with this House Resolution 97, a cosponsor of it, someone that helped author it, and a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. CHANDLER, and that is my friend, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you so much. And thank you for those kind words you said about me. I appreciate it. And I would have called my mom, because she would have loved to hear those words, too.

You know, over this weekend, I did a couple of things when I was home. One was that I really got into the Constitution of the United States. I really got into that section in article I, section 8, that clearly gives us the exclusive responsibility as Congress to raise and support armies.

It is clear as a bell there. It gives it to us, it does not give it to the White House or the President or the executive branch. It gives it to Congress. And up until now we have failed the American people. The large measure of this—you touched upon it earlier, Mr. ROSS, but this Republican-led Congress has just completely rolled over and allowed this President to fund this war on emergency supplementals, which means that we in Congress cannot conduct the constitutionally required oversight to do what the Constitution wanted us to do.

Now, that is why we are in this situation we are in, and I would like to talk for a moment on two points.

When I was home, the other thing I did was I got around and I had some great interaction with my constituents out in Cobb County and Douglas County and in Clayton County and in Henry County. We all had town hall meetings, we had my office open. I mean, we had Chamber of Commerce annual dinners.

That is a great opportunity for folks to just come up to you and let you know exactly how they feel. And I can tell you, Mr. ROSS, they are proud to see us on this floor, offering this bill. This is not just a resolution that is nonbinding. We are going to have those that voice our opinion about this war, they are going to be voted on up or down.

Everybody knows my personal feelings about the mistake of this surge, but this resolution that we have car-

ries a tremendous amount of weight. That is why I care about it so much. And I want to share with the American people exactly what it is in this resolution that we are doing and why it is needed and why, finally, this resolution provides a direct link and connection with what the Founding Fathers wrote in article I, section 8, of the Constitution over 200 years ago that we have the exclusive right to determine how we will manage.

Now, why do we need that?

The other thing I did over this weekend was, I read my home newspaper, the Atlanta Journal Constitution. And in there there was an extraordinary article by the Associated Press that I would like to make a part of this RECORD because this article points out the very need for this measure that we in the Blue Dog Coalition are pushing.

This article in the Atlanta Journal Constitution was written John Heilprin with the Associated Press. The title of it was this: Contractors Investigated After Army Fraud Alleged. Just listen to this, America. "From high dollar fraud to conspiracy to bribery and bid-rigging, Army investigators have opened up to 50 criminal probes involving battlefield contractors in the war in Iraq and the U.S. fight against terrorism."

□ 1715

What an opening sentence, what a declarative issue we have here.

It goes on to say, senior contracting officials, government employees, residents of other countries, and in some cases U.S. military personnel themselves have been implicated in millions of dollars of fraud allegations. "All of these involve operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait," Chris Grey, a spokesman for the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command, confirmed just this past Saturday. "The agents will pursue leads into truth wherever it takes us. We take this very seriously."

Here is the point. Battlefield contractors have been implicated in allegations of fraud and abuse since the United States invaded Iraq in the spring of 2003. Any wonder why this has happened? Because the Congress did not apply the oversight, because this Republican Congress just simply rubber-stamped everything.

The Special Inspector General's Office, focusing solely on reconstruction spending, has developed cases that have led to four criminal convictions. The problems stem in part from the Pentagon's struggle to get a handle on the unprecedented number of contractors now helping run the Nation's wars, and these contractors are used in battle zones to do nearly everything but fight. But they can war-profiteer, they can commit fraud, they can commit bribery, and they can abuse the taxpayers' money on the backs of our good, brave soldiers that are putting their lives on the line for much less than what these contractors are making.

They run the cafeterias, the laundries for the troops. They move supplies, run communication systems and repair weapons systems.

Special agents from the Army's Major Procurement Fraud Unit were recently dispatched to Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait where they are working closely and sharing information. One case involves an Army chief warrant officer accused of taking \$50,000 in bribes to steer a contract for paper products and plastic flatware away from a government contractor to a Kuwaiti company, according to an indictment.

The Government Accountability Office reported in December that the military has been losing millions of dollars, and contractors are being investigated because it cannot monitor industry workers in far-flung locations. It summarizes this way: Commanders are often unsure how many contractors even use their bases or even require the food and housing protection, according to one report. One Army official quoted said, "The service estimates losing \$43 million each year just on free meals that are provided." That is why this bill is important.

Let me just mention specifically how this bill will help prevent and address this glaring situation that was reported in the Atlanta Journal Constitution by the Associated Press, John Heilprin, who I commend for doing an excellent job. Our bill will require, within 30 days of passage, that every 90 days hereafter the Department of Defense Inspector General and the Special Inspector General for Iraqi Reconstruction shall prepare and transmit to Congress an unclassified report, but with a classified annex, if necessary, that will contain the following:

One, a detailed accounting of how military and reconstruction funds in Iraq have been spent thus far;

Two, a detailed accounting of the types and terms of contracts awarded on behalf of the United States, including the methods by which such contracts were awarded and contractors selected;

Three, it will require a description of efforts to obtain support and assistance from other countries during the rehabilitation of Iraq;

Four, an assessment of what additional funding is needed to complete military operations and reconstruction efforts in Iraq, including a plan for security of Iraq, a detailed plan for how any future funds will be spent, and a statement of how those funds will advance the interests of the United States in Iraq.

If either inspector general fails to submit a quarterly report, the Government Accountability Office shall conduct an audit and report to Congress. Sanctions will be imposed against contractors who have engaged in fraud or abuse or war profiteering, and we will create the Truman Committee that Mr. CHANDLER spoke to earlier.

Funding requests for operations in Iraqi Freedom in fiscal year 2008 and

beyond must come through the regular appropriations process and not through these emergency supplementals that are explicitly designed to bypass oversight. That is why we have the problems we have here; and also, that is why there was not enough money put in the budget when we sent our Armed Forces over there 3 years ago, as you recall, the news reports where many of our soldiers were digging in dung heaps and landfills trying to get body armor for them.

No. No more. This Blue Dog resolution addresses that, and I would expect an extraordinarily large vote in getting it passed.

And it is so good to be on the floor with my good friend, Mr. ROSS, and also my good friend, Mr. ISRAEL from New York, who we serve together, both as cochairs on our Democratic Group on National Security. And we have been addressing these issues. So it is just a pleasure to be on the floor with you. I hope with this story and this Associated Press Atlanta Journal Constitution report, it will show the American people why we need the specific legislation and the importance in getting some accountability passed concerning our war funding.

Mr. ROSS. I thank the gentleman from Georgia, a fellow Blue Dog member, a member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, for joining us to discuss the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition's House Resolution 97 that provides for Operation Iraqi Freedom cost accountability.

The Constitution clearly gives Congress oversight authority, and this Congress, this new Democratic Congress, is going to provide oversight of this administration, of this government, and fulfill our constitutional duty and demand that our troops get the money they need to get the job done as safely as possible; but also demand that it be done in a way to where this administration is held accountable for how, Mr. Speaker, your tax money is being spent in Iraq.

I recently received an e-mail from a soldier from my hometown. He wrote to me in an e-mail from Iraq, and there are a couple of points I would like to point out. I am quoting this soldier now in Iraq. "Needless to say, war profiteering is high, and disgusting to witness as a taxpayer." This is a citizen soldier, this is a soldier that comes to us from the Army Reserve. He has now been in Iraq 7 months. And in his e-mail to me he said, "Needless to say, war profiteering is high, and disgusting to witness as a taxpayer."

He goes on to say, "And the black market thrives over here as well. For example, much of the fuel never reaches the military; it ends up in the wrong hands through a complex network of interconnected relationships that truly reminds me of the Mafia."

Another example from a soldier on the ground in Iraq that has been there 7 months about the need for accountability for how tax money, some \$400

billion so far, some 20 percent of that \$400 billion is unaccounted for, according to the most recent reports.

As members of the Blue Dog Coalition, we are offering up a resolution to demand that this money, your tax money, Mr. Speaker, be accounted for in how it is being spent in support of our soldiers in Iraq. And you know what? We might just find enough waste, fraud and abuse in Iraq that we could take that money and invest it in veterans' benefits, to ensure that our men and women coming home from Iraq and Afghanistan are properly cared for.

With that, I yield to a gentleman that knows a lot about this subject, a gentleman that is not only a very important member of the Blue Dog Coalition, but someone who served on the House Armed Services Committee, someone who now serves on the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, and that is the gentleman from Long Island (Mr. ISRAEL).

Mr. ISRAEL. I thank my good friend for his leadership in the Blue Dogs, his leadership in the Congress, and my good friend from Georgia who, as he noted, cochairs with me the Democratic Study Group on National Security, which is intended to ensure that this Congress and Democrats in Congress continue to lead the fight on behalf of our troops, to lead the fight on behalf of our national security. We were founded in the acknowledgement that we need a robust, muscular military to protect us from the threats that are out there.

I think this topic is critically important, the topic of war profiteering. And who pays the price for war profiteering? Our taxpayers pay the price, our troops in Iraq, Afghanistan and around the world pay the price. But there is another group that is paying the price, and I would like to address that this evening, our National Guard units at home.

This morning there was a report in the National Journal's Congress Daily. It was headlined, National Guard May Lack Needed Gear to Deal With Domestic Crisis, GAO Says. And the report raises questions about whether the State-run National Guard units have adequate supplies to respond to disasters and emergencies on U.S. soil. It says it will remain unclear whether the Guard is equipped to respond effectively to the consequences of a large-scale terrorist attack or natural disaster.

The article in the National Journal states, "Over the last several months, many State Guard leaders have complained that their unit took their best equipment with them when they deployed to Iraq, leaving the personnel at home short of trucks, radios and other equipment needed for domestic missions. Indeed, Lieutenant General Steven Blum, chief of the Pentagon's National Guard Bureau, told Congress last year that at least two-thirds of his

units in the United States are not combat ready."

Now this, to me, is just incredible that Halliburton made money, that these contractors made money. In my view, they gouged the military, gouged our taxpayers, marked up the services they provided, and National Guard units at home are short of the equipment they need.

I represent a district on Long Island. The World Trade Center was 40 miles from my hometown. We know what terrorism is like. We needed our emergency responders when that happened. We are likely to need them again, the gentleman from Georgia knows that very well. But when two-thirds of their equipment is sitting in Iraq, that creates a very serious problem. That is the cost of war profiteering.

Now, I understand the exigencies of war and I understand that when you go to war, you know, you have to make sure that your troops have everything they need, and there are all sorts of funding issues; but my goodness, Secretary Rumsfeld said, You go to war not with the Army you want but with the Army you have. You have got to budget for that Army. You never send people into war unequipped, underfunded, underequipped without the right number of coagulant bandages, without the right number of night vision goggles and up-armored Humvees.

If they found the money to pay these contractors that ripped us off, they can find the money to make sure that our National Guard units have the equipment they need. If they found the money to pay the excessive bills of these contractors so that they could raise their bottom lines, they could find the money to raise the equipment that the National Guard needs for the mission-critical equipment that will be required—not just in an act of terrorism, by the way, but when we have a major hurricane as we did with Katrina.

Long Island stands a very good chance of suffering a Category 3 hurricane or more. And it is going to be very difficult for me to explain to my constituents that they didn't have the National Guard equipment resources that they were depending on to respond to a Category 3 hurricane because that equipment was in Iraq; but Halliburton got what it wanted, its CEO got the salary increase he needed.

This isn't very complicated. We are short-funding our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan; we are undersupplying our National Guard units at home. The big corporations who are contracted as part of this war are making more money than ever. And there are still companies in the United States that can register their international headquarters at a P.O. Box in Bermuda so they can avoid their fair share of taxes at home. That is a disgrace.

It is time for accountability. It is time for oversight. It is time to put our money where our mouths are. It is time to quit talking about funding our

troops here and abroad and then not giving them the resources they need.

The Blue Dogs believe in fiscal accountability. We take second place to nobody when it comes to supporting our troops and supporting our military, to nobody. But we also understand that you can't say you are doing that; you have got to actually do it. You can't fight a war abroad, short-fund our troops there and be left with degraded National Guard units at home. It is time for accountability, for oversight. It is time for a different direction, and that is precisely what the Blue Dogs are going to insist on.

I thank the gentleman for recognizing me.

Mr. ROSS. I thank the gentleman from Long Island for his insight on this resolution to put an end to war profiteering and demand accountability on how the American people, the hard-working American people's tax money is being spent in Iraq.

I yield back to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. SCOTT).

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. I want to build on the point that my good friend from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) talked about.

It was very important when James Madison wrote into the Constitution the words, "Raise and support the Army is the exclusive domain of the Members of Congress."

□ 1730

There was a reason for that. The reason was because Members of Congress, unlike the President, unlike the Senate, my good friends in the Senate, it is the Members of Congress that are closest to the people. Every other year we must run, and that is why they put it in there that if we are going to war, yes, we will spread this authority, some of that as Commander in Chief to the executive branch, but we must have a check and a balance. They put that in the bosom of the Congress, which has to go back before the people every other year and be accountable.

I am here to tell you the people of the United States are looking to this Congress. They are looking for us to bring some accountability to it. They are looking for us to be fair and understand what is at the core of this.

You know what is at the core of this is the soldier. When is somebody going to look at this war from the standpoint of that soldier that we are sending to Iraq now and placing in the cross hairs of a civil war, a questionable gambit at best?

The President of the United States does not have to run again. He can have all the surges he wants. He can do everything he wants. His concern now is building his legacy. He has his right to do whatever he wants to do, but the one thing he does not have to do, he does not have to go and face the American people again. We do. That is why Madison gave us the arbitrary decision to raise and support the military.

So when the Bush administration made the decision to use large numbers

of these private contractors that were talked about on the battlefield in Iraq, it now has had somewhat of a perverse effect of incentivizing highly trained special operation force personnel to leave the Armed Forces. They are there voluntarily, in order to work as some of these contractors for much higher pay.

There is so much just built into this for war profiteering, but here is a statistic that we have got to be concerned about. We have got to look at this hardship on the soldier. These are not 21,500 other soldiers just sitting over there waiting. These soldiers are going, many of them, on their third and fourth tour of duties. We have a situation where we are running the military in the ground, and no more pointed example of that is this startling, disturbing and tragic information that has been handed to me by the National Security Advisory Group. Listen to this:

Between 2001 and 2004, divorce rates among active duty Army officers tripled and rates among Army enlisted soldiers grew, divorce rates by 50 percent, as deployments lengthened and with increased frequency as they are doing now. These divorce rates have served to underscore the severity of the strains on the active duty personnel and their families, and similarly, incidents of domestic violence increased over the same period. There is wear and tear not just on the equipment that we talked about, not just on not having the bulletproof vests or the Humvees riding around; it is wear and tear on the hearts and souls of our soldiers. It is too much of a strain, and we have got to correct this situation.

These and other warning signs have caused some commanders to fear that personnel who were willing to undertake successive deployments as part of, and they use these words, part of the surge cannot sustain this tempo of operations over the long term. If they do so, it will be at the adverse impact on their families.

How much more do we want to ask of our soldiers? I would tell you one thing, this Blue Dog resolution is dedicated to giving our soldiers the respect that they are due. We are going to make sure that the money we appropriate in here goes to them, and we are going to make doubly sure that we can end this situation in Iraq quickly and bring our soldiers home to their families.

Mr. ROSS. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his heartfelt comments.

This war has had an impact on just about every family in America; and my brother-in-law, who is in the United States Air Force, career, is now in Kurdistan, which is one of the entry points to Afghanistan.

My first cousin, his wife, gave birth to their first child while he was in Iraq, and it has had a tremendous toll on the families, and not only for the military but also the citizen soldier, those who

serve as members of a National Guard and as a member of an Army reserve.

When the President talks about a surge, when the President talks about adding another 21,500 troops to Iraq, that is code for calling back up the National Guard and the Reserves. Many folks in the National Guard today have been sent out of country at historic levels. In many instances, the citizen soldiers, those in the Guard, have been called up more times than some soldiers that are in the full-time military as a career. It has a tremendous toll on the family, the families that are left behind, and a huge increase in the number of divorces that occur when they come back.

The bottom line is we are creating a generation of veterans in Iraq and Afghanistan, and we can sit here and talk about being patriotic and supporting our soldiers all night long, but what is important is that we cast our votes in a way that honors them and ensures that they have health care and the things they need when they come back so hopefully we can minimize the number of divorces. We cannot do enough to thank our men and women in uniform for their service to our country.

One of the ways I think we can honor them is by demanding accountability for how tax money is being spent in Iraq, not only in the rebuilding efforts but also in support of them, making sure those men and women in uniform have the resources they need to stay safe while they are there.

Mr. Speaker, if you have got any comments, questions or concerns for us, I would encourage you to e-mail us at bluedog@mail.house.gov. Again, that is bluedog@mail.house.gov.

The gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. CHANDLER) was talking about Halliburton earlier. Let me just make this quick point and I want to yield to the gentleman from Long Island, but last year, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction reported that the Coalition Provisional Authority could not track over \$8 billion it had transferred to Iraqi ministries and that CPA officials left millions of dollars in cash unsecured in their offices.

Halliburton failed to complete required work under its oil infrastructure work, leaving distribution points unusable. Auditors in one region found that contract managers could not account for \$97 million disbursed from the development fund for Iraq.

Under its no-bid contract to rebuild Iraq's oil infrastructure contract, Halliburton overcharged by over 600 percent for the delivery of fuel from Kuwait. An audit of programs designed to train guards to protect Iraq's oil and electrical infrastructure concluded that U.S. agencies could not provide reasonable assurance that \$147 million expended under these programs was used for its intended purpose.

In one case, the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction found that a company which was awarded a security management contract worth

hundreds of millions of dollars could provide no assurance that it was providing the best possible safety for government and reconstruction personnel as required by the contract and could not even show that its employees, authorized to carry weapons, were trained to use those weapons.

Halliburton tripled the cost of hand towels, hand towels at taxpayer expense, by insisting on having its own embroidered logo on each towel, and Halliburton employees dumped 50,000 pounds of nails in the desert. Why? Because they ordered the wrong size, all at taxpayer expense because it was a cost-plus contract.

Halliburton double charged tax payers for \$617,000 worth of soda and charged taxpayers for services that it never provided and tens of thousands of meals that it never served our soldiers.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, we have filed H. Res. 97 to demand accountability on how tax money is being spent in Iraq, and I yield to the gentleman from Long Island.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I would just close with one point.

I want to echo what the gentleman from Georgia has said. This soldier comes first. If you go into fight a global war on terror you better make sure the fighters have everything they need. Do not ask them to stand in line behind the corporate executives at Halliburton. Do not ask them to stand in line behind the CEO of Exxon Mobil who got a huge tax cut on top of his bonus, on top of his huge salary. Do not ask them to stand in line behind the big pharmaceutical companies that also got a windfall from the government in the Medicare part D program, despite their record-breaking profits.

The gentleman from Georgia and the gentleman from Arkansas and I believe more than anything else that our primary obligation in this place, in this House, is to support our Armed Forces and to keep this Nation safe. That takes the right priorities.

In the past, the priorities have been wrong. How do I know? Two-thirds of our National Guard units do not have the equipment they need to respond to an emergency or an act of terrorism at home because the equipment is sitting in Iraq because we did not fund the war fight properly.

It is time to put our soldiers first, not just in our rhetoric but in our budgets; and to do that, you need accountability.

Mr. SCOTT of Georgia. The final analysis of what we are saying is what the American people spoke to in November. They spoke to warning this Congress to stand up and demand accountability and be good stewards of their tax dollars, and that is the core of our Blue Dog resolution. I believe that and I hope that within the next couple of months we will have this resolution passed.

Might I ask for the benefit of our audience if I could ask Mr. Ross if we could give the number of our House

Resolution in the event that there might be some individuals who are in the C-SPAN audience who might want to give us a little helping hand here to help us get this bill passed.

Mr. ROSS. H. Res. 97, providing for Operation Iraqi Freedom cost accountability, and it is quite simple. We want this administration to be accountable for your tax money, Mr. Speaker, that is being spent in Iraq, number one.

Number two, we want a Truman-like commission to put an end to war profiteering in Iraq.

And, finally, we want this administration to stop playing games and asking for emergency supplementals to hide the true cost of the war and ask for the money the way that all other funds are appropriated by this Congress, through the normal process.

One hundred point four billion dollars was the cost for 2006. Over \$400 billion has been spent since this war began. That is \$8.4 billion a month. That is \$275 million a day, and that is nearly \$12 million an hour of your tax money, Mr. Speaker, and the tax money of every hardworking man and woman in this country; and it is time to restore commonsense, fiscal discipline and accountability to our government. That is one way, Mr. Speaker, that we believe we can honor our men and women in uniform.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Speaker would remind Members to direct their comments to the Chair.

WHAT IS GOOD FOR AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege and the honor of being recognized to address you on the floor of the House of the United States House of Representatives, the people's House, this people's House and this new day, this new dawn that was pledged to come to this 110th Congress.

As you may or may not know, Mr. Speaker, I spend many hours here on the floor in these Special Orders and in debate on bills and in 1-minutes and in 5-minutes as we engage in this dialogue and raise the issue of what is good for America.

□ 1745

One of the very important things about determining what's good for America is to have a process for America that is conducive to the right result, and the right result in most cases, we will agree, I believe, would be the will of the people: the will of the people properly informed, the will of people properly educated, and the will of the people that have access through the first amendment rights to all the information and all the knowledge possible.

But, then, I would point out that we do not live in a democracy. As much as I have said about the reflection of the voice or the people here in the people's House, each one of us does have an obligation to listen carefully and attentively to our constituents, to the people in this country, and not just confined within our districts, but to listen to the Nation as a whole and focus on the interests of our district. But sometimes we have to put the Nation ahead of, sometimes, the will of our district.

But this is a constitutional Republic that we serve in, not a democracy. I point out that our Founding Fathers had a significant concern, and I will say even a literal fear of democracies.

On one of my earlier trips out here to Washington, DC, quite some years ago, I visited the National Archives on my first visit. As I waited in line to go around and be able to stand there and gaze upon the Declaration of Independence, upon the Constitution, upon the Bill of Rights in their original form, the original documents that our Founding Fathers placed their hands to and pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor, as I waited to view that for the first time, on display at the National Archives was a display of Greek artifacts.

The Greek artifacts that had come from 2- to 3,000 years ago in the era where the closest thing that there has been to a pure democracy from the standpoint of the Greek city-states, where of-age males would gather together, and they would debate; they would debate the issues of the day. They had a number of things they put in place for stopgap. One of the things they found out was, you will recognize the term "demagogue."

"Demagogue" is a term that we use occasionally in our vernacular, perhaps here on the floor reluctantly, but also throughout our dialogue across the country. There is not a lot of history on demagogues. It is hard to Google demagogue and to become an expert, to look under amazon.com and to come up with real books that are written on real facts that identify demagogues in the Greek era. They are almost nonexistent in this Nation's literature, at least so far as I have been able to identify.

But what the Founders knew and what young Americans growing up today and, really, all of its citizens should have an understanding of is that in that purer form of democracy in the Greek-city state, they had Greek demagogues who had such an oratorical skill that they could stand up in front of that small coliseum, so to speak, and make their pitch in such a passionate, logical and rational way that it would move the emotions of the Greeks within that city.

They would not necessarily analyze the information behind that debate. They would not necessarily analyze the data, the calculations. They maybe were not even thinking for themselves. But what they would do is, they would