

expenditures of over \$1.5 trillion, we are losing patience with Iraq. Americans feel justified, given the sacrifice of our military and the expenditure of so much money, to lecture Iraqis how they need to get their act together, forgetting they didn't attack us, we attacked them. And then, we proceeded to eliminate their security, all their police, border patrol and army after Saddam, to add insult to injury, had already let out of jail all the criminals throughout Iraq.

One U.S. politician after another berates the Maliki government and the Sunni, Shia and Kurds for their intransigence and failure to work out their differences and find common ground. I can't help but wonder, who are we to talk? When was the last time Republicans and Democrats, House and Senate, White House and Congress, worked together on any major piece of legislation facing our country? The Senate, once again, has only now begun to pass any of its 11 appropriations bills necessary to fund the government. And by the way, the new funding should be done, but won't be, by October 1. We can't even agree in this Chamber on what to do in Iraq. The irony of that is mind-boggling. We blame Iraqis for not agreeing. And we can't agree.

So what about us? When it comes to Iraq, the former Republican Congress was blatantly partisan. The new Democratic Congress has returned the favor. And a very opinionated press, rather than encouraging Republicans and Democrats, the White House and Congress to come together, has picked sides and marshaled the facts to fit their own conclusions.

It is hard to know, I might add, with a press that is accountable to absolutely no one, where you can go to get the unadulterated facts. The reality is we went into Iraq on a bipartisan basis with two-thirds of the House and three-quarters of the Senate supporting the resolution to use force. The only way we are going to successfully bring most of our troops home is if we come together, find common ground, and compromise.

But I don't think this is likely to happen in the near future since both sides of the aisle seem captive to their so-called party's base. The Republican religious right and the Democratic anti-war impeachment left leave most Americans wondering, who is speaking for us? In this highly intense, politically charged environment, the answer is, practically no one.

The largest number of Americans aren't on the right or the left. The bell curve is pretty much in the middle of the political spectrum. In the past Presidential election, 42 percent of the American people said they were neither red nor blue, Republican nor Democrat, but purple. This leaves Republicans and Democrats with just 29 percent support each. Why is this relevant? The majority of Americans are not being heard or represented.

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The extremes focus on ideology and berate the fact that, according to them, the Republicans and Democrats are no different from each other. So they keep pushing extreme positions. But the American people are still in the middle of the political spectrum. They want solutions, not ideology. They want problems solved, not ignored. And they are getting neither.

Our Constitution was created by men who knew the meaning of compromise. During their time together, they grew to trust and respect each other. In the process, they gave up hardened views. They allowed themselves to be drawn to the middle of the political spectrum. In the process, they created the United States of America where the people rule and have ruled for 218 years.

The question that confronts all of us today in Congress is, do we have this same capacity, like our Founding Fathers, to grow to trust and respect each other, give up hardened views and find solutions to the plethora of inconvenient truths that confront us? Of this we can be certain. Now is not the time for Congress and the White House to do nothing. There are so many inconvenient truths we must confront, but we won't successfully address any of them until we have honest debate and until compromise and coming to the middle becomes something Americans value again.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for spending your time with us, and I thank the staff for allowing Members to address this Chamber tonight.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today after 6 p.m.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and until 6 p.m. on September 27.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

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

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

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WATERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SPRATT, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, October 2.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, October 2.

Ms. FOXX, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CONAWAY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at her own request) to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. MALONEY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

BILL PRESENTED TO THE PRESIDENT

Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House reports that on September 24, 2007 she presented to the President of the United States, for his approval, the following bill:

H.R. 3528. To provide authority to the Peace Corps to provide separation pay for host country resident personal service contractors of the Peace Corps.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, September 26, 2007, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

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

3448. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Management and Budget, transmitting a copy of proposed legislation that seeks to bring the funding structure for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) into line with the funding of other Federal financial regulators by establishing a fee on the settlement of commodity futures and options contracts overseen by the CFTC; to the Committee on Agriculture.

3449. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Limitations on Tiered Evaluation of Offers [DFARS Case 2006-D009] (RIN: 0750-AF36) received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

3450. A letter from the Director, Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement; Reports of Government Property [DFARS Case 2005-D015] (RIN: 0750-AF24) received September 12, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

3451. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's Joint Improvised Explosive Device Defeat Organization second quarter report as required by section 1402 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2007; to the Committee on Armed Services.

3452. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes in Flood Elevation Determinations — received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

3453. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes in Flood Elevation Determinations [Docket No. FEMA-B-7730 and B-7729] received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

3454. A letter from the Chief Counsel, FEMA, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting the Department's final rule — Final Flood Elevation Determinations — received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

3455. A letter from the Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Government National Mortgage Association: Mortgage-Backed Securities (MBS) Program—Payments to Securityholders; Book-Entry Procedures; and Financial Reporting [Docket No. FR-5063-F-02] (RIN: 2503-AA19) received September 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

3456. A letter from the Northern California Habitat Supervisor, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's comments on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's preliminary analysis of the Tuolumne River Fisheries Study Plan for the New Don Pedro Hydroelectric Project; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3457. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs, transmitting a copy of a draft bill, "to enhance the functioning and integration of formerly homeless veterans who reside in permanent housing, and for other purposes"; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

3458. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Determination of Housing Cost Amounts Eligible for Exclusion or Deduction for 2007 [Notice 2007-77] received September 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3459. A letter from the Branch Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Treatment of Certain Nuclear Decommissioning Funds for Purposes of Allocating Purchase Price in Certain Deemed and Actual Asset Acquisitions [TD 9358] (RIN: 1545-BC99) received September 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3460. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Section 7508.-Time for Performing Certain Acts Postponed by Reason of Service in Combat Zone or Contingency Operation (Also Sections 6081, 7508A; 11 U.S.C. 507, 523, 727.) (Rev. Rul. 2007-59) received September 10, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3461. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Section 1045 Application to Partnerships [TD 9353] (RIN: 1545-BC67) received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3462. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Disregarded Entities; Employment and Excise Taxes [TD 9356] (RIN: 1545-BE43) received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3463. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue

Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Expenses for Household and Dependent Care Services Necessary for Gainful Employment [TD 9354] (RIN: 1545-BB86) received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3464. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Tier 1 Issue: Government Settlements Directive #2 [LMSB Control No.: LMS-04-0707-050] received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3465. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Transaction of Interest — Contribution of Successor Member Interest [Notice 2007-72] received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3466. A letter from the Chief, Regulations and Publications Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Extension of Transition Relief for Indian Tribal Government Plans [Notice 2007-67] received August 14, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3467. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Weighted Average Interest Rates Update [Notice 2007-68] received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3468. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Elimination of country-by-country reporting to shareholders of foreign taxes paid by regulated investment companies [TD 9357] (RIN: 1545-BE09) received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3469. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Transition Relief Regarding the Active Trade or Business Requirement for Certain Transactions [Notice 2007-60] received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3470. A letter from the Chief, Publications and Regulations, Internal Revenue Service, transmitting the Service's final rule — Section 807.-Rules for certain reserves (Also 812) (Rev. Rul. 2007-54) received September 17, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Ways and Means.

3471. A letter from the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting copies of two proposed bills to collect certain fees under the Toxic Substance Control Act (TSCA) and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA); jointly to the Committees on Agriculture and Energy and Commerce.

3472. A letter from the Board Members, Railroad Retirement Board, transmitting the Board's budget request for fiscal year 2009, in accordance with Section 7(f) of the Railroad Retirement Act, pursuant to 45 U.S.C. 231f(f); jointly to the Committees on Appropriations, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Ways and Means.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ: Committee on Small Business. H.R. 3567. A bill to amend the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 to expand opportunities for investments in small businesses, and for other purposes (Rept. 110-347). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Ms. SLAUGHTER: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 677. Resolution providing for consideration of the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 52) making continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 2008, and for other purposes (Rept. 110-348). Referred to the House Calendar.

Ms. SUTTON: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 678. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2693) to direct the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to issue a standard regulating worker exposure to diacetyl (Rept. 110-349). Referred to the House Calendar.

PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

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

By Mr. RANGEL (for himself, Mr. STARK, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. POMEROY, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. EMANUEL, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mr. PASCRELL, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MEEK of Florida, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. RAMSTAD, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. ANDREWS, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. MALONEY of New York, Mr. SPACE, and Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts):

H.R. 3648. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exclude discharges of indebtedness on principal residences from gross income, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

By Mr. FILNER:

H.R. 3649. A bill to require mercenary training to be conducted only on Federal Government property; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. HUNTER, Ms. BERKLEY, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. POE, Mr. FORTUÑO, Mr. ROYCE, Mr. MCCAUL of Texas, and Mr. TANCREDO):

H.R. 3650. A bill to provide for the continuation of restrictions against the Government of North Korea unless the President certifies to Congress that the Government of North Korea has met certain benchmarks; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

By Mr. BISHOP of Utah (for himself, Mr. MATHESON, and Mr. CANNON):

H.R. 3651. A bill to require the conveyance of certain public land within the boundaries of Camp Williams, Utah, to support the training and readiness of the Utah National Guard; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

By Mr. CONYERS (for himself, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Mr. NADLER, Mr. COHEN, Ms. SUTTON, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, and Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia):

H.R. 3652. A bill to amend title 11, United States Code, to improve protections for employees and retirees in business bankruptcies; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BILIRAKIS (for himself, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. WOLF, and Mr. MCCOTTER):

H.R. 3653. A bill to hold the current regime in Iran accountable for its human rights record and to support a transition to democracy in Iran; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.