

do not oversee Blackwater in the Congress; we oversee the administration, and we should be looking at their reports, we should be looking at what they have done, and we should be in fact reforming anything that is wrong in the administration.

So I trust that today's hearings will be watched by many people, Mr. Speaker. I trust that Members of this body will view this as what it is, a witch hunt, because they can't go after our men and women in uniform.

#### ACKNOWLEDGING IRAQIS AT RISK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning-hour debate for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there is fierce debate and dissension on this floor and in Congress and around the country about the war in Iraq. This disagreement runs deep. It is profound. I believe it to be sincere. But there is one thing that everybody will agree on regardless of whether they think this war is merited or not, regardless of whether they think it has been prosecuted in a reasonable and efficient manner or not. They can acknowledge the debt and obligation that the United States has to over 4 million Iraqis who have been forced to flee their homes. This is a humanitarian crisis that rivals Darfur. It is the worst ongoing humanitarian crisis in the world at this point.

Over 2 million Iraqis have fled their country. And while there is debate over the precise numbers these days, whether it is an additional 25,000 a month or 50,000 a month, whether it is going up or going down, no one disputes that they are still fleeing their homes by the thousands.

I first became involved with the problem of the Iraqis who are at risk because they help the United States, guides and translators, when I started working with a group of high school students in Portland, Oregon, at Lincoln High School, who were working in turn with some Oregon National Guard members who had returned to Oregon but were trying desperately to save the life of a young woman who had served as their translator. Because she had helped the Americans, she was targeted. She and her family were targeted by extremists. It took months. Time doesn't permit going through all the hurdles that we encountered. Luckily, that young woman is safely in the United States now going to college and she is no longer at risk, although afraid to show her face or to be identified specifically for fear that her family would in turn be targeted. I made a commitment to those young people in the high school and in the Oregon National Guard that we would work to introduce comprehensive legislation to make it easier to meet the obligation to those who took America at its word, who helped our brave soldiers, and who in turn now have their lives imperiled.

We have introduced comprehensive legislation that would increase the allowable number that could come, that would put somebody in charge of this responsibility, make it possible to actually be processed in country.

It is ironic that we have the largest embassy in the world in Baghdad, and yet the Iraqis have to leave the country to seek refugee status. They can't go to the green zone and this vast embassy. They have to leave the country in order to apply for asylum.

I frankly was encouraged that last week our colleagues in the Senate made important progress by passing an amendment to the Senate defense authorization bill that would start to address the crisis by including some of the elements in the comprehensive legislation that I have introduced. It is an important first step, but it is only a first step. It is time for the United States to do the right thing for these people whose lives are imperiled.

When we started this process at the beginning of the fiscal year, the United States was going to allow 7,000 people in the country. A small number, actually, by comparison to what little Sweden, for example, was willing to do, a country a fraction of our size, and they aren't the country who engineered this war nor are occupying Iraq. Well, in a few months that goal of 7,000 was reduced to 2,000. As the fiscal year ended this last weekend, we fell short even of that reduced goal: Only 1,600 of these Iraqi refugees were brought into this country.

Our failure to step up is having serious operational consequences. Ambassador Crocker in a memo that has been I suppose leaked but widely published, widely disseminated here in Washington, DC, points out that the failure to help these people who are helping us actually undermines the ability to have other guides and interpreters and people working with us. We risk leaving a legacy of despair, undermining our credibility in the Middle East, to say nothing of the thousands of people whose lives are at risk.

I urge my colleagues to join me in passing comprehensive legislation that will deal with this humanitarian crisis, at least for the people who are most at risk for having put their trust in the United States as they worked to help us.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 13 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

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#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN) at 10 a.m.

#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Divine teacher and source of ageless wisdom, keep within Your vision all students, teachers, school administrators, and providers from families, business and government who are engaged in education across this vast and varied land.

Fan into flame, Lord, the desire for knowledge and the ability to make good decisions in Your people of all ages. Help the young to use their energy and imagination in all intellectual pursuits. Guide committed students to adjust to the needs of our times and look beyond self-interest to serve the broader community with global perspective.

Confirm professionals and the elderly with educational opportunities which will draw upon their experience and offer greater wisdom.

May educational possibilities flourish in this Nation so that growth in technology, science and human understanding may create an exciting future for Your people and give You greater glory founded upon solid reasons for faith and love, both now and forever.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

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

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. PITTS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### CHILDREN'S HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAM

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

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, President Bush, having vetoed fewer bills than almost any President in American history, is now talking about vetoing many bills. One of these is the children's health insurance bill, the so-called CHIP or SCHIP piece of legislation.

To veto this bill would be a big mistake. One reason is the Senate has already demonstrated it has the votes for an override, and I think in the House it's just a question of time until we have the votes to override.

But the key point is this: It's a good bill. And I don't say that lightly. I

voted against the first version of the SCHIP legislation that came through the House. I thought it was unaffordable, and over half the bill wasn't for kids at all; it was for senior citizens.

This bill is tightly focused on poor children. Poor children, only up to 200 percent of poverty, not the \$80,000 you may have been hearing about on talk radio. These are the Tiny Tims of the United States. President Bush should not want to play Ebenezer Scrooge in this play.

#### IN MEMORY OF HARRY SHULER DENT

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Harry Shuler Dent passed away Friday. The Charleston Post and Courier recognized him as the father of the present-day South Carolina Republican Party and White House southern strategist.

Lee Bandy of Columbia's The State outlined Harry Dent's successful career as a journalist, chief of staff for Senator Strom Thurmond, State Republican Chairman, White House Deputy Counsel, and founder of a multinational lay ministry.

I was grateful to see firsthand Harry's achievements. Under his leadership, the South Carolina Republican Party grew in the 1960s from no officeholders to having majorities in the State legislature, congressional delegation and Statewide offices. In Romania I watched his ministry take action and provide medical equipment to a local hospital.

His greatest achievement was to marry his high school sweetheart, Betty Francis Dent. In their 56 years of marriage, they produced four outstanding children, Harry, Jr., Jack, Dolly and Ginny, along with nine grandchildren.

As a political adviser, mission director and dedicated family man, Harry Dent has made an extraordinary difference to the people of South Carolina.

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

#### PRESIDENT BUSH'S VETO THREAT ON SCHIP

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, during a speech at the 2004 National Convention, President Bush made a promise to cover America's uninsured children. The President said, "In a new term we will lead an aggressive effort to enroll millions of poor children who are eligible but not signed up for the government's health insurance program."

Last week, both this House and the Senate passed a bill to reauthorize the State Children's Health Insurance Program, or SCHIP, which provides health coverage for children in low-income families who would otherwise be uninsured. This bipartisan bill will allow 4 million children who are currently eligible for SCHIP, but not yet enrolled, to now receive coverage. In fact, it does just what President Bush said he would do if America reelected him. But despite this election year promise, President Bush is now threatening to veto the bipartisan SCHIP reauthorization act.

Mr. Speaker, if the President vetoes this much-needed legislation, he will be breaking his election year campaign promise to enroll millions of currently eligible but uninsured children in the SCHIP program. I hope the President will reconsider his veto threat and instead hold to his promise to strengthen the SCHIP program.

#### BURMA

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the peaceful protestors in Burma deserve our support, and the brutal generals in charge of the SPDC must be held accountable.

Reports on the number of deaths ordered by the dictatorship range from hundreds to thousands. It's difficult to get specific numbers, particularly as other reports detail the regime burning dead bodies so that no one can get an accurate count of the dead and disappeared.

One new image shows the badly bruised and semi-dressed body of a Buddhist monk floating face down in the Rangoon River.

The regime has also no respect for journalists. A Japanese journalist was shot point blank by the dictator's troops, and the regime detained other journalists.

One senior Burmese intelligence official is claiming that thousands of protestors are dead, and the bodies of hundreds of executed monks have been dumped in the jungle.

We must do everything possible to press the regime to stop the killing and detentions. This includes sanctions against the regime, specifically freezing bank accounts of members of the dictatorship.

The people of Burma deserve to live in peace and freedom.

#### WHAT KIND OF NATION ARE WE?

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

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, what kind of Nation are we? And is anyone really listening?

Forty-seven million citizens have no health care coverage at all. Zero. And

the costs, the costs for care are simply impossible to pay. People cannot afford to pay for their pills, for their doctor bills, for their hospital tests and treatments. They can't even afford their cancer treatments. And why? It's simple. They don't have the money.

And what kind of Nation are we when, in Shawano County in Wisconsin at the courthouse, 19 out of 20 families going bankrupt do so because they can't pay their medical bills?

We need a uniquely American solution to this crisis and we need it now because my patients can't hold their breath any longer.

Mr. Speaker what kind of Nation are we? Let's all agree here, right now and right here to change this situation. This is a national disgrace. My constituents are listening and so are yours. Let's end this national nightmare and guarantee access to affordable care for everyone everywhere in these United States.

#### THE BACK DOOR IS OPEN

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Government Accountability Office is in the border crossing business. Like the illegals, drug dealers, smugglers that cross both our southern and northern borders at will, GAO investigators recently crossed undetected from Canada into the United States in three different areas with, get this, red duffel bags of radioactive material, detonators and narcotics. They crossed with no problem, and no border agent was anywhere in sight.

On the 5,000-mile Canadian border, there are no more than 250 border agents on duty at any given time according to a deputy chief of the Border Patrol. It sounds easy to slip back and forth unnoticed across the border.

A GAO investigator said that "there were substantial vulnerabilities on the northern border to terrorists and criminals entering the United States undetected". While America's watching the front door to illegal crossing at the southern border, the back door is wide open to unwanted illegal guests on the northern border.

Homeland Security needs to get serious about homeland security and shut the open doors to our homeland.

And that's just the way it is.

#### REAL AND MEANINGFUL CHANGE IN CONGRESS

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

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to be a Member of this Congress which has delivered to the American people real and meaningful change. We are fiscally responsible. We have instituted pay-as-you-go rules and deficit reduction discipline.

Where our majority has made real progress is by creating greater opportunity and a chance for prosperity for