

For 12 years our colleagues on the other side blamed Republicans for every ill under the sun, and now that it is their time to govern, they hide behind bumper sticker and press release politics. Never before has such an enormous amount of taxpayer money been spent so quickly, over \$400 billion in one hour.

If our friends on the other side of the aisle truly desired to clean up earmarks and bring greater transparency to our spending, why would they then make this their first act? Their actions simply don't match their rhetoric. The American people expect more than a wink and a nod that they have gotten so far from this Democrat majority. Democrat doublethink does a disservice to our Nation.

In George Orwell's 1984 Doublethink Newspeak, he said that the lie always was one step ahead of the truth; but the American people are catching up, Mr. Speaker. Just saying something doesn't make it so.

IT'S TIME FOR A NEW DIRECTION IN IRAQ

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 debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor with some observations about Iraq, but I must comment on the presentation I just heard from my friend from Georgia.

You know, Mr. Speaker, independent observers agree that Democrats have moved quickly and aggressively to implement what we said we were going to do in the first 100 hours. I find it disingenuous that our friend was talking about somehow the Democrats not dealing with its commitment on earmarks, and mentioning the rain forest in Iowa. Mr. Speaker, again, independent observers agree that Mr. OBEY and Mr. BYRD did bring forward a clean continuing resolution that didn't have any new earmarks. It killed the earmarks that had been set aside in the failed budget of the Republicans in the last session of Congress.

What my friend is talking about, the rain forest in Iowa, was an earmark from several years ago, a Republican earmark, I might say, from several years ago. And now he is suggesting that as we have moved forward to clean up the budget mess left by the Republicans, failing to meet their commitments to produce budgets in a timely fashion, that we didn't go back and surgically remove earmarks that they had scattered throughout the budget for years. Well, I'm sorry. With all due respect to George Orwell and my friend from Georgia, I think that is doublespeak. We did what we said we were going to do. The CR has come forward without earmarks, and we have put in place a much more transparent process so people will know who is doing what on whose behalf.

But, Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor today to make a few comments about the situation in Iraq. There is much ado in the other body to work to catch up with the reality on the ground in Iraq and where the American public is. This is not the time just to oppose escalation of more troops in Iraq. We find that the 21,000 that the President referred to is actually going to mean 50 additional thousand when you put all the support in. It is time for Congress to deal in a comprehensive fashion with what we need to do to make the best of this tragically mismanaged situation, a war of choice that we didn't have to do, sadly mismanaged by the administration. It is time for Congress to rediscover our war powers with Iraq, and even more important, the saber rattling that is directed now towards Iran. It is time for us to rediscover the power of the purse, not provide an open-ended bank account, but tighten down the resources that are provided by Congress to the administration, and to rediscover oversight where there are daily reminders in every major newspaper of where Congress in the last few years has frankly been missing in action.

To be able to advance those goals in a comprehensive fashion, I have introduced new directions for Iraq. It sets forth goals for United States policy, supporting the Iraqi people, preventing greater violence, reestablish our international credibility and military readiness, and focusing on real national security threats. It calls not for escalation, but prohibiting the escalation without specific congressional approval, and for the redeployment of troops from Iraq to be completed in approximately 1 year.

It calls for the United States to forswear the establishment of permanent bases in Iraq, as well as U.S. control over Iraq's oil infrastructure and economic policies. It redirects United States reconstruction funding from large foreign contractors to Iraqi-owned businesses to help create jobs in Iraq. It instructs the President to nullify contracts where any company has not fulfilled an Iraq reconstruction contract, and to recover lost funds.

We ought not to just stop the fraud in terms of the contracting, but we ought to aggressively punish war profiteering, encouraging Congress to investigate and the Attorney General to aggressively prosecute profiteering and fraud.

It requires a regional diplomatic initiative because ultimately it is going to require diplomacy on the part of the United States and all of the surrounding countries to be able to turn this around.

I strongly urge my colleagues to look at the New Direction For Iraq Act of 2007 as a comprehensive way to change the situation in Iraq.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair

declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 43 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order at noon.

PRAAYER

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

Creator of the stars in the heavens and all upon Earth, the winter sun You let shine upon our Nation is a great gift for which we give You thanks.

In the midst of cold winds and uncertain and sometimes disastrous weather patterns, the consistent warm rays of light fall upon the good and the bad, the believers and unbelievers alike. Gradually, the days are already growing longer but like the movement of Your grace often unnoticed.

Lord, You are ever-present, especially to those most in need. Show Your mercy to the most vulnerable, the children, the poor, the elderly, the homeless. We command them to You now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. WALDEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon 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.

PRESIDENT BUSH UNDERESTIMATES NUMBER OF TROOPS AND AMOUNT OF MONEY NEEDED FOR TROOP ESCALATION PLAN

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, last week, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office released a report saying that President Bush is understating the number of troops and the amount of money needed to move forward with his troop escalation plan.

While the President claims he plans to send 21,500 troops to Iraq, the Congressional Budget Office says the number will be as high as 48,000. As any soldier like myself knows, that to put a

combat unit on the ground you need substantial support forces, including personnel to staff headquarters, serve as military police, provide communications, provide mess facilities, engineering and other services.

The Congressional Budget Office also said that the President has seriously underestimated the cost of troop escalation. While President Bush claims it should not cost any more than \$5.6 billion, the Congressional Budget Office says a 4-month deployment will cost between \$9 and \$13 billion, 12 months between \$20 and \$27 billion. This is a 400 percent underestimate.

Madam Speaker, this is a serious report that cannot and will not be ignored. President Bush cannot expect Members of Congress to support his troop escalation plan when he is not telling us the whole story on the number of troops and the funds involved to make it happen.

CONGRESSIONAL INACTION JEOPARDIZES HOOD RIVER COUNTY SEARCH AND RESCUE

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

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, the failure of Congress to reauthorize the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act amounts to a breach of faith to the almost 600 forested counties across America and 4,400 school districts.

Hood River County, Oregon, is my home and hosts two of Oregon's icons: Mount Hood and the powerful Columbia River, both attractions for outdoor recreation and the dangers that come with it. Surely you remember the December search for the mountain climbers lost on Mount Hood? This event unfolded just miles from my home.

The county paid for this rescue and recovery effort entirely with county payment funds. This included the airplanes, snowcats and equipment for volunteers, radios and medical supplies.

County Sheriff Joe Vampler says, "We will do search and rescue on Federal lands and waterways no matter what but the Nation must share this cost."

County payments also fund many other vital services like the County Health Department's vaccination program for children.

County Commission Chair Ron Rivers says, "The loss of these funds will have a significant impact on all services, including those provided to protect our most vulnerable citizens."

Congress must keep the Federal Government's word to timbered communities and pass H.R. 17. Time is running out.

CREATION OF A U.S. DEPARTMENT OF PEACE

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my strong support for H.R. 808, as it would create a U.S. Department of Peace.

The importance of peace in the world today is often overlooked due to the severity of constant conflict, but, as a mother and lawmaker, the reality of war concerns me for the future of our Nation and this planet. The promotion of peace, not violence, should be number one on our agenda.

For years, I have worked to raise awareness in the women within our society, and around the world, so that they can spread the word of peace and build a culture of peace in this world.

Women in themselves are a powerful entity, and I believe by working together we as a society can stop the escalation of violence. We can prevail by joining together and building a U.S. Department of Peace. War is not the way, but peace is.

I am proud to support this resolution, creating a U.S. Department of Peace and urge my colleagues' support.

SUPPORT REPUBLICAN SENATORS

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in disbelief at the actions of the Democratic Senators' resolutions against the United States efforts in Iraq. These very same Senators voted unanimously to confirm General David Petraeus. It is unbelievably hypocritical to undermine the efforts of the very man they confirmed, along with all the brave men and women who serve with him.

The actions of these Senators will simply encourage the terrorists and undermine the U.S. efforts to succeed in Iraq and the war on terror. Republicans want to debate this issue, yet the Democrats only want to pass a resolution. It is time to take a real stand on the issue. If the Democrats want to end the war, then they should stand up and call for it.

The hypocritical actions of the Democrats are wrong. They have offered no plan for success in Iraq and are interfering with the President's powers to execute a war that the Congress has already approved. Democrats must realize there is only one commander-in-chief, and it is his job and responsibility to manage the war as he sees fit.

Mr. Speaker, I support my Republican colleagues in the Senate who want a real debate on this issue and victory in the central front on the global war on terror.

NEED TO SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, soldiers don't choose to go to war. Soldiers do not allocate funds for which they use

to fight the war. Soldiers may face danger, soldiers may risk their lives and sometimes lose their lives, but the least a Nation can do that sends a young person into harm's way is to fully support, fully equip and fully allow that young person to be successful to protect their own lives.

And yet this administration has not done that. We failed in the early part of this war to provide Kevlar. This administration has failed to provide Humvees that were fully armored for our young people, and now what we see is tens of billions in backlog on maintenance so that the equipment that young people are relying on to protect their lives and to fully do their duty is unavailable.

This is wrong, and we must call attention to this wrong, and we must do something about it now.

NO END BUT VICTORY

(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, as debate continues surrounding President Bush's new way forward in Iraq, I hope all sides are heard.

I am a 31-year veteran of the South Carolina Army National Guard. I have four sons serving in the military, the eldest of whom served for a year in Iraq. I sit on the Armed Services Committee, and I have visited Iraq six times and Afghanistan twice. I am committed to my family and our Nation's survival and prosperity, all of which will be threatened should we not triumph in the global war on terrorism.

As elected public officials, Members of Congress have an obligation to debate war strategy and exercise congressional oversight. If by conscience they disagree with the President's direction, they have a responsibility to put forth an alternative plan.

Political posturing in the form of nonbinding resolutions, however, brings nothing to the debate regarding the protection of American families.

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

HONORING THE MEMORY OF POLICE OFFICER SHAWN JOSHUA DEAN WILLIAMS

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

Mr. SHULER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the memory of Police Officer Shawn Joshua Dean Williams. Officer Williams died while responding to a fellow officer's call for assistance last Thursday night in Old Fort, North Carolina. He was only 23 years old.

I offer my condolences to his wife, Shannon Kirby Williams; his young daughter, Rye-Lee Alexis; his parents, Max Suttles and mother Holly Williams; and all of his family and friends.