

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HALLIBURTON

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, yesterday in the afternoon on a bright Sunday, one of my constituents, my corporate constituents, decided to offer a press statement to indicate that they were relocating to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates.

We know that many American companies do have their offices in Dubai, and we know it is a thriving metropolis of business. But Halliburton is one of the largest corporate government contractors in the United States; and, unfortunately, their offices located in the 18th Congressional District have had an impact on the employees who work there.

It is unfortunate that the arrogance of this company would suggest that they could make announcements in the brightness of sunlight on Sunday and not engage their local community leaders, their employees, and others who might be vested in the relocation of corporate headquarters.

So I ask the leadership of this company to come forward and answer a number of questions which I will be sending to them. And I express my own personal outrage that a company would move its corporate headquarters without the full discussion of those who are stakeholders and work every day paying their taxes as employees of this company.

I look forward to the light of day being shined on Halliburton.

VILLAINS HALL OF SHAME

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, there is a new candidate for the "Villains Hall of Shame." What began as a Sunday morning journey to church for Rose Morat of Queens, New York, ended up in ambush, robbery, and 4 days in the hospital.

Ms. Morat is 101 years old. She was leaving her apartment complex when a shameless woman-beater pretended to help her out the door, but smashed her three times in the face, breaking a cheekbone. He stole her purse; then he threw her to the ground and hit her again. And after making his getaway, this dastardly menace struck again 30 minutes later. This time he beat up an 85-year-old lady and stole her purse.

New York Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly has made it a priority to capture this outlaw. Angry New Yorkers are already flooding the airwaves with suggestions for punishment for this criminal that would make the hanging of Saddam Hussein look mild.

Madam Speaker, even in our current culture of tolerance, there are some things you just don't do, some things we just don't tolerate. No one beats up elderly grandmothers, or they will face the wrath of the public and the long arm of the law.

And that's just the way it is.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. McCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. McCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

FORMER U.S. BORDER PATROL AGENTS RAMOS AND COMPEAN

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

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, today is the 55th day of an injustice. This injustice began on January 17 of 2007 when two U.S. Border Patrol agents entered Federal prison.

Agents Ramos and Compean were convicted last spring for shooting a Mexican drug smuggler who brought 743 pounds of marijuana across our border into Texas.

These two agents were doing their job to protect the American people. They never should have been sent to prison. There are legitimate legal questions about how this prosecution was initiated and about how the prosecutors proceeded in this case.

To prosecute the agents, the U.S. Attorney's Office granted immunity to a known drug smuggler. Homeland Security officials promised Members of Congress certain information about this case, but they could not provide the information. Reports have also indicated that the prosecutors may have withheld crucial evidence from the defense. The Drug Enforcement Agency reports revealed that the Mexican drug smuggler brought a second load of marijuana, 752 pounds, into the United States. But this information was kept from the jury and the public.

Madam Speaker, over the past 6 months, dozens of Members of Congress have asked President Bush to listen to the American people and pardon these agents.

I want the two agents and their families to know that we have not forgotten them and we will not forget them. Members of Congress will come to the floor to defend these agents, and we

will continue to do so until they are pardoned.

On February 7, 2007, Senator DIANE FEINSTEIN wrote Judiciary Chairman PATRICK LEAHY to request a committee investigation of this case. She wrote, and I quote the Senator:

"I strongly believe that the sentences in this case are too extreme given the criminal nature of the smuggler and his possession of large quantities of drugs and given the fact that he physically resisted at least one attempt by Agents Ramos and Compean to bring him into custody.

"In addition, to my knowledge, neither of the agents had prior convictions or any other aggravating circumstances to warrant particularly harsh treatment under the law. Yet these men were given sentences that some individuals who are convicted of murder would not receive."

Madam Speaker, this is not a Republican or a Democratic issue, but it is an issue of fairness and justice. Chairman LEAHY has already approved Senate hearings in this case. On February 23, 2007, I sent a letter to House Judiciary Chairman JOHN CONYERS asking for hearings on this case on the House side. I hope Congress will soon hold these hearings because it is time for justice to prevail over an injustice.

Madam Speaker, before closing, I want to say to the White House and to the President, please listen to the American people. Please assure the American people that two agents who have done their best to help protect America will not be forgotten in prison, because they have no business being in prison. They should receive justice, not injustice.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

□ 1930

CONDITIONS AT WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

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

Mr. CARTER. Madam Speaker, I want to rise today before this House to talk about something that weighs on the conscience of every Member in this House, a news story that broke very recently that has upset us all, the conditions at Walter Reed Hospital. Many Members of Congress have gone out there and looked at these conditions, and we are shocked by them.

Every Member that I have spoken to is as concerned as I am. I am particularly concerned because I am from a district that I would argue has probably put more fighters in this war than any district in America, having Fort Hood, Texas, a two division post, the only two division post in the Army in my district. The 4th Infantry Division and the 1st Cavalry Division, along with the 3rd Corps, have deployed now to Iraq on three separate occasions each. The 3rd Corps and the 1st Cavalry are over there right now as we speak and the 4th Infantry Division is gearing back up to go back.

Our soldiers have given a lot of their blood, sweat and tears to this war. They believe in their mission and they go to their mission as heroes, as far as I am concerned. And to learn that someone, whoever they may be, from whatever post in America or around the world, would have substandard conditions at what is supposed to be one of the two or three premier medical facilities for our Army in the country, shocks me and concerns me.

I would think it concerns every Member of this Congress, whether they are for this war or whether they are

against it. But for me in particular, having 50,000 soldiers that depend on me and other Members of this Congress to make sure that we have an adequate facility that gives the absolute best medical care that we can give, that we have that, is important. It is very important. It is actually lifesavingly critical.

Now, first, to get the right picture, I have been to Walter Reed. I have been there on multiple occasions. I have visited one patient as he cycled through there a 9-month period of time, maybe even longer than that.

I will tell you that the emergency care, the intensive care that was given in that unit, I can't say enough good about the doctors, the nurses, the orderlies and everyone who was doing the work there. I think that they gave outstanding service, the kind of service we would expect for our soldiers.

The trauma medicine that is developing and has developed in the military today, from a medical standpoint, and I am no doctor, but I have sat in a courtroom and heard an awful lot of medical testimony, the trauma treatment that we have for our soldiers today is, quite frankly, state-of-the-art in what they can do to save lives, and we, by the procedures we have set up for our soldiers, are saving a lot of lives.

But then we learn that people who are there as holdovers, who are at the recovery side of their phase through Walter Reed, are being housed in substandard housing, where there were rodents and infestations of insects, where there was black mold, which I happen to have personal firsthand experience with, having been moved out of my house for a little over a year because of stachybotrys, black mold, and having had my house totally wrecked to get that stuff out of it. I am very familiar with the health hazards that are claimed for that mold.

To know that soldiers who have given their hard work and suffered an injury of some sort on our behalf are being required to stay in substandard housing such as that, or substandard facilities such as that, it is appalling. Quite frankly, if it turns out that is what the black mold was that they found there, that has health implications that affects the breathing of every human being, and it is very critical that we be concerned with that.

So this is an issue where the light of day needs to shine on it, and we need to talk about it. I hope some of my colleagues will join us later here so we can discuss this matter, because I think it is important. I think it is important, and the American people expect, as I expect, that we will give the best quality health care from beginning to end for every soldier and veteran in the United States.

It is Congress' responsibility to ensure that these medical facilities are providing the best possible care. The buck stops here. We have that responsibility.

I think overall we are very proud of the medical care that is provided for our soldiers. But we can only hope to expend much more time and, if necessary, much more resources to make sure that what is going on at Walter Reed is corrected and that we look to see if there is anything we need to do at every hospital in America.

I want to applaud the Army for getting on this deal right away. They have dispatched officials to inspect the quality of care at 11 hospitals, and they are doing that this week and next. Of course, the President immediately acted and appointed Bob Dole and Donna Shalala to head a bipartisan commission to look into the solution to this problem. I think that is commendable, and I think that clearly shows how much the President and the White House care, as we care, about the health care of our soldiers.

Because I have a major hospital in my district, at Fort Hood, I went this weekend out to Carl Darnall Army Medical Center in my district. This wasn't my first trip there. I have been there on numerous occasions. This hospital serves approximately 50,000 active duty soldiers and airmen, approximately 56,000 family members, and over 40,000 retirees and surviving annuitants. This hospital, quite frankly, we have been working very diligently and we are very hopeful that we will expand Darnall so that it can be bigger and better.

I was not concerned from what I had seen on multiple visits in the past that we would find problems at Darnall. But it seemed like to me that in light of the fact that we had this issue at Walter Reed, which by my visits to the intensive care unit at Walter Reed, I certainly did not see these conditions that are being described at Walter Reed, that I should make sure to talk to the folks, to go look at the hospital, to look at where we are housing our medical holdovers, and just see exactly what is going on at Darnall, too.

I am happy to report, Madam Speaker, quite frankly, I was very impressed. In fact, I went into the rooms where some of our holdover medical folks were. Most of them were Guardsmen. They are living in dormitory-like rooms, dormitory barrack rooms, two to a room, occasionally one to a room, the kind of room I checked my boys into when I checked them into Texas Tech University to go to college. They were the kind of room you would put your child in, you would be happy to put your teenager or young adult child in while they were going to school; clean, well-established, well-furnished, kitchenette-type rooms.

I visited some of the soldiers and asked them how things were working, were things working well there at Darnall. They were pleased. I went into more than one room and dropped in to visit with these folks.

I want to say in defense of the people in the Army Medical Corps, these folks do care about our soldiers. I don't