

know, the only thing we did was modify, consistent with an agreement with the administration and the Senate, the provision that the administration vetoed the bill on. So my expectation is it will pass whole.

Now, as the gentleman observes, there is an interest I think perhaps on both sides of the aisle in considering the provision that was modified and essentially a part of it taken out of the bill. There is interest in considering that bill. That has been discussed with Mr. SKELTON, and Mr. SKELTON and the committee are looking at that.

I believe, and I don't have confirmation of that, that there were Members who have talked to me who are in fact introducing a bill to speak to that particular point. I say "I believe" because, again, I don't have confirmation that that bill has been introduced, but I know that there were Members very focused on that, very concerned. As you know, this provision dealt with the ability of some of our former soldiers, in particular marines, injured by, tortured by the Saddam Hussein regime and being compensated for that to which they had been subjected. I know there is a lot of concern about making sure that litigants who have gotten judgments have an opportunity to execute on those judgments. The President was concerned about that.

So I think the short answer to your question is it either has been introduced, or going to be introduced maybe next week. Mr. SKELTON has indicated that he will look at that.

Mr. BLUNT. I appreciate that information. I also appreciate the way we are able to work through that problem, get the DOD authorization bill on the way back to the President's desk, get that remaining half a percent of pay increase for military personnel taken care of. I don't know on this side of the aisle of any interest in addressing that. Certainly it is a debate that we could have, but it does seem to me that we have already reached a bipartisan consensus on that, and we may or may not want to pursue that. But I had heard those same things and wanted to ask in that regard.

Mr. HOYER. If my friend will yield.

Mr. BLUNT. I would.

Mr. HOYER. When you indicate we reached bipartisan agreement, what we reached bipartisan agreement on was, obviously, that the bill, as you point out, had many important provisions, not only the pay that you refer to, the wounded warriors, treatment of veterans medically, as well as meeting our defense needs, all of which we did have an agreement on and we passed that bill. There was bipartisan agreement that if we were going to pass that bill with all those important provisions in it, that it was necessary to consider the matter that the President was opposed to separately and apart, and take it out, which was done.

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But certainly all of the Members on my side did not believe that the Presi-

dent's veto was appropriate. So I don't want to mislead anybody that there was a bipartisan agreement that his veto was appropriate in that sense and that there was a consensus on that. There was disagreement on that.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for that. I believe I understand the point that you just made that the procedure there certainly was a procedure that, frankly, we could have spent a lot of time debating. By doing that, we could have slowed down this pay increase, and I think we wisely did not do that.

I suppose that if the greater issue of individuals that were harmed by the Saddam Hussein regime comes to the floor, we can debate that at the time. And I just would suggest right now, if there was some way to reach the personal or family assets of Saddam Hussein, that is one thing. I think we hamper the efforts of this new government if we continue to hold the new government responsible for whatever bad things a government did that was virtually universally held in the lowest possible regard by the Congress. And I think we are universally glad that government is gone, no matter how we feel about the other issues in Iraq. I think that is really the point at the end of this one part of that debate. The government is gone. I suppose we can debate that. I think the arrangement we made in the bill handles other countries appropriately and also gives the President the proper waiver authority for dealing with this new situation in Iraq. But I suppose today is also not the day to debate that, unless my friend wants to comment on that.

Mr. HOYER. I understand the gentleman's point, but as the gentleman well knows, there are opposing views to that point. But certainly now, as the gentleman observed, is not the time to debate it. I think the answer to your question is that it may well be before us again.

#### HOURLY MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow, and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 22, for morning-hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

#### DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

#### HOPE VI AND DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION

(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 we revisited the question of the Defense Authorization bill. I think it is important to remind my colleagues that in our appropriations bill that was passed and signed by the President, we took care of a number of issues dealing with our soldiers, including an increase in their compensation, including a recognition of traumatic brain injury, and a number of other concerns.

This bill yesterday was a disappointment because it continued to include money for Iraq, and it is time to bring our soldiers home.

I also want to commend the debate today on HOPE VI, another issue that addresses the issue of homelessness and those who are without homes. This legislation was provocative and important because it is an economic stimulus when you provide housing for those in public housing who cannot be housed.

It is innovative because it suggests we should have green buildings, meaning more efficient, and it is innovative because it protects the elderly who may have those young people in their homes who have had some run-in with the law, that those individuals go but not the elderly who would be evicted.

This is a good piece of legislation. I supported HOPE VI. I am disappointed I could not support the Defense Authorization bill.

#### EARMARK REFORM

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

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, we have always been fortunate to have in this body of legislators Members who, for lack of a better term, are called "institutionalists." These are Members on both sides of the aisle who understand and appreciate the fact that this institution will outlive all of us and that we should try to ensure that when we leave the Congress, we leave the institution better than we found it.

Madam Speaker, we desperately need these institutionalists to stand up today and play a role in reforming the practice of earmarking that is beneath the dignity of this great institution.

It is almost a daily occurrence that we wake up to newspaper articles detailing questionable earmarks that coincide with large campaign contributions, earmarks that face little or no scrutiny in this body, earmarks that were more intended to garner votes or contributions than to address legitimate needs.

We have also seen little inclination on the part of those currently in the

position of leadership on either side of the aisle to address this issue in a meaningful way. We have changed the parties in charge, but we haven't changed the practice.

So the mantle falls on the institutionalists among us to foster this change, those who deep down know that we owe more to this institution than we are giving it.

It is time to stand up and be counted.

#### 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.

#### POLITICAL PRISONERS FOR ONE YEAR

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, today it is cold in Washington. It is snowing. They say it may snow some more. But there are two places in the United States that are colder than in this city, and they are in separate places. They are two prison cells, Federal penitentiaries, where two border agents, now, today have spent one calendar year in confinement for doing their job on the Texas-Mexico border.

Madam Speaker, it seems as though border agents Ramos and Compean have been punished for doing what we hired them to do. Because, you see, when they were patrolling the Texas-Mexico border, a drug smuggler came into the United States bringing almost a million dollars worth of drugs into this country. They had a confrontation with this drug dealer. They both believed him to have a weapon. Shots were fired, and he disappeared in Mexico, leaving his load of drugs in this country.

Unbeknownst to them, they shot the drug smuggler. A few months later, our Federal Government relentlessly went and found this drug dealer, brought him back to the United States and gave him immunity from his crimes to testify against the border agents for, get this, a civil rights violation against him, the drug smuggler. They were tried and they were convicted and sent to the Federal penitentiary for 11 and 12 years.

But what the jury in that trial did not know was that the U.S. Justice Department, the Attorney General's Office, hid evidence in that case from the jury, because Madam Speaker, they not only made a deal with this drug smuggler not to prosecute him for bringing in a million dollars worth of drugs; while he is waiting to testify at the trial, he brings in another load of drugs. And then our U.S. Attorney's Office had the audacity for months to deny that ever occurred.

But now the truth has come out. Now we know. Now the whole world knows that that evidence was hidden from the jury. The Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals has heard this case on appeal. We are waiting to see if they reverse the case because the U.S. Attorney's Office hid evidence that the jury should have heard because, you see, the star witness, the witness that the U.S. Attorney's Office made a backroom deal with, brought in other drugs. The jury should have known that to judge the credibility of the witness. And this is not the first time the U.S. Attorney's Office has done this.

In the year 2000, another border agent by the name of David Sipes came in contact with a human smuggler. He had a fight with him in the Rio Grande River as the human smuggler was bringing in people. And then David Sipes was prosecuted for, yes, a civil rights violation for assaulting the human smuggler.

In that particular case, the U.S. Attorney's Office did the same thing. They hid evidence from the jury. They hid from the jury that this human smuggler was given \$80,000 as a settlement, that he was allowed to cross back and forth between the United States and Mexico, that he was given a Texas driver's license, a U.S. Social Security card. And also in that case, yes, that human smuggler, while waiting to testify, brought in another load of illegals into this country.

But in that case, the U.S. Attorney's Office was caught. A new trial was ordered because they hid evidence, and that jury in that case found David Sipes, border agent, not guilty because the U.S. Attorney's Office was not seeking justice but convictions.

It makes us wonder what our U.S. Attorney's Office is doing and what side of they border war they are on. They are supposed to be protecting Americans. They are supposed to be protecting the border agents. But yet they seem to prefer protecting human smugglers and drug dealers. That makes us wonder whether the Justice Department needs to be investigated as to their priorities, because this ought not to be.

Yet two border agents are still in prison 1 year today. They have served time, and they should be released. The President should pardon them, and hopefully the Fifth Circuit will do the right thing and order a new trial in this case.

Our government needs to be on the right side of the border war and support our border agents and make people understand that you can't bring drugs and illegals into the country without being prosecuted.

And that's just the way it is.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF HRANT DINK

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to solemnly remember the life of journalist and activist Hrant Dink.

On January 19, 2007, Mr. Dink was gunned down by a Turkish ultranationalist outside his newspaper office in Istanbul, Turkey.

Hrant Dink was a man who called for tolerance, peaceful dialogue, and greater civil rights for all Turkish citizens. He was a fierce defender of freedom and believed all people have equal rights under the law. He believed that everyone should have the right to know the truth about their Nation's past, however dark that past may be.

Hrant Dink had been prosecuted by the Turkish Government under penal code 301, a law that bans free speech and was used to suppress a wide range of dissenting opinion, from criticism of Turkish Government institutions to opposing official Turkish denial of the Ottoman campaign of genocide against its Armenian population. Under the all-encompassing phrase "insulting Turkishness," a citizen in Turkey can receive a prison sentence of up to 3 years with the offense being increased by 50 percent if the so-called offense is committed abroad.

Nearly 100 journalists and intellectuals have been prosecuted under article 301, including Nobel Prize author Orhan Pamuk. Many informed observers believe Hrant Dink's prosecution under article 301 opened him up to a campaign of harassment and death threats from ultranationalists, which eventually led to his murder. To this day, citizens of Turkey live under threat of this gag law, with Hrant Dink's own son prosecuted under this law because he reprinted his father's newspaper articles.

This is not the action of a true democracy. It is reflective of how a totalitarian state would behave, and this is not the Turkey we, the United States of America, have aligned our country with.

Amnesty International has called for a complete repeal of this punitive legislation. The European Commission has repeatedly asked for its repeal.

Unfortunately, indications now suggest that the Government of Turkey is only tinkering with changes, making this gag rule even more ambiguous. Today, I ask the House to support calls for the Turkish Government to immediately repeal article 301.

One year ago, Members of Congress, their staffers and several members, and members of several communities, came together to watch "Screamers," a film about genocide in the last century, featuring, among others, Hrant Dink. Here, in the Halls of Congress, we watched as Hrant Dink discussed the problems of article 301.

Just 2 days after the film's premiere, Hrant Dink was shot dead, a man who only wanted to speak the truth about historical facts as he saw them, a man who wanted every citizen to be treated equally, a man we should applaud here