

VOICES OF CRITICISM

(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, this week has reminded us that war is serious business. Each day we see our brave soldiers on TV making great progress against Saddam Hussein and his brutal regime. Now, more than ever, the troops need our support and encouragement.

Mr. Speaker, we should stay united behind our troops. Our troops do not need to hear criticism of their mission from this body or this Capitol. When their Nation's leaders question their mission, I can tell you, as a combat veteran, it is discouraging. It is tough to stay focused when the leaders you look to for strength are not in your corner.

Most people disregard professional protestors, especially when they see their placards saying "capitalism is the problem." But when they hear their leaders criticizing their mission to liberate the people of Iraq from a brutal tyrant and his thugs who rule by terror, that is disheartening.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to stop making our Capitol building a platform to criticize the war and our troops. That only hurts our troops in the field.

"PORKER OF THE WEEK" AWARD GOES TO DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Energy recently hosted a flea market. They sold 23 trucks worth \$448,000 for 17 cents each, a \$9,000 copier for a nickel, and a drilling rig for \$50,000. The sales also included motor homes, laboratory equipment, and cranes.

The sales were made under a Federal program intended to promote economic development in communities around Energy Department sites by selling surplus property to nonprofit organizations. But they sold all of this property to one single organization, the NTS Development Corporation of Las Vegas, which bought the drilling rig, paid a subcontractor \$71,000 to inspect and clean it, and then sold the rig for \$248,000 to an equipment broker in Texas. The equipment broker now has the rig listed for sale for \$3.9 million.

While it is certainly a worthwhile endeavor for the Energy Department to promote its host communities, it is an appalling lack of judgment to sell pieces of equipment for millions of dollars below market value. The Department of Energy gets my "Porker of the Week" Award.

HONORING CRAIG DURFEY FOR HIS FIGHT AGAINST AUTISM

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Craig Durfey for his tireless work in the fight against autism.

Craig is the founder of Parents for the Rights of Developmentally Disabled Children. As a father of children with autism, he knows firsthand the difficulties that come with dealing with this dreaded disease.

Today autism is a national crisis that affects nearly 1.5 million children. According to recent studies, as many as one in every 250 children born today will be diagnosed with autism. Autism costs the Nation between \$20 billion and \$60 billion annually, and the projection for the next 10 years will be that it will cost \$400 billion.

Autistic children go to doctors three times more often than normal children, and many times families must travel hundreds of miles to see a knowledgeable doctor that understands autism.

Craig has been working tirelessly to provide funding for programs in my community and in the Nation that would train social service and law enforcement personnel on how to identify children with this type of disability.

I applaud Craig for his efforts, and I will continue to work on his behalf with my colleagues in the Congressional Coalition for Autism Research and Education to increase funding for ideas like Craig's and to find a cure for autism.

REMEMBERING OUR AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

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

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, as our collective attention and focus is on the war in Iraq, it is critically important that we remember our troops who are prisoners of war. Allow me to read the names of these brave men and women who are now enduring life as a POW:

Patrick Miller, age 23, from Park City, Kansas;

Ronald D. Young, Jr., age 26, from Lithia Springs, Georgia;

David S. Williams, age 30, from Orlando, Florida;

Joseph Hudson, age 23, from Alamogordo, New Mexico;

Shoshana Johnson, age 30, from Fort Bliss, Texas;

Edgar Hernandez, age 21, from Mission, Texas; and

James Joseph Riley, age 31, from Pennsauken, New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, these soldiers are again proving that freedom is not free. May we all as Americans remember these brave men and women and pray for

their families, their safety and their rapid return.

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SUPREME COURT TO RULE ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

(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. Mr. Speaker, there is not a morning or a day, in light of the raging winds of war that our young men and women are facing in faraway places, that one sometimes may wonder about the importance of the work of this body. So I rise this morning to again ask our Nation to be reminded of those brave young men and women, those who are fighting, as well as those who tragically have now lost their lives and their mourning families and, as well, the POWs who are waiting to return home to their loved ones.

It seems almost that we should step aside from issues dealing with ordinary life. But I might ask, Mr. Speaker, that as our brave troops are fighting for freedom, and we respect and honor them, that on April 1, 2003, the Supreme Court will hear what I believe will be the most challenging civil rights argument in the last 50 years. Many of those troops are impacted by this argument, and that is the decision of whether or not to make affirmative action unconstitutional.

Affirmative action, as we know, is not a handout or a quota, but simply an opportunity to outreach to the many wonderfully diverse communities in this Nation so that our young people can sit in classrooms where they might learn from each other.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed in the administration for its position on affirmative action, and I believe as well that we must stand and be counted for the civil rights for all Americans. I hope the Supreme Court will respond accordingly.

HONORING OUR TROOPS

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

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to our men and women in uniform. Thousands of miles from home in an unfamiliar land, these men and women fight for a cause much larger than themselves.

The men and women of the United States Armed Forces fighting in Iraq do so for freedom. They fight to protect the freedoms of their fellow Americans and to gain freedom and liberty for the tired and the poor and the downtrodden masses that have lived under the shadow of Saddam Hussein's tyrannical reign for decades.

As the President said about Hussein's reign this past Tuesday, "We are fighting an enemy that knows no rules of