

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

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

DEBT RELIEF FOR IRAQ

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

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2482, the Iraqi Freedom from Debt Act, but first I would like to respond to the gentleman's statement that Democrats want to raise taxes. That is not true. The Kerry-Biden bill calls for a repeal of only the top 1 percent. This would result in \$600 billion, and this would pay for the \$87 billion for the challenge in Iraq. Some Democrats support that. I am one of those, but I disagree with the statement from the gentleman who preceded me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise really in support of one of the administration's spokesmen, Mr. Paul Bremer, and he said that it would be a mistake to lay any more debt onto the backs of the Iraqi people, and he wisely added that there would be no way that the Government of Iraq will be able to pay Iraq's current debt. Mr. Bremer estimates that Iraq owes over \$100 billion to other nations as a result of Saddam Hussein's irresponsible borrowing, and how can we expect Iraq to begin paying on this debt when the challenges of funding reconstruction are so steep? The Financial Times reported: "Even assuming a resumption of oil exports at 2 million barrels a day, Iraq's debt-to-export ratio would exceed 700 percent, the highest in the world. Clearly, Iraq cannot rebuild its economy, establish conditions for growth and development and," also, "service all its outstanding debt."

It is impossible to imagine that the people of Iraq will be able to reconstruct a future if they are forced to pay for their own oppression by paying back odious debt accrued by this regime for his 34 palaces and other expenses that helped his immediate family and circle and not the people of Iraq.

We learned from World War II reconstruction that the most effective way to ensure regional security and facilitate a friendship with the people of a once-hostile nation was to provide debt cancellation and new aid for reconstruction. We learned this lesson the hard way after World War I when Hitler campaigned for his election on a platform that included working towards the cancellation of the debts Germany accrued during reconstruction after the First World War. The allies did not want to repeat that mistake after World War II, and let us learn from this history and provide the same support to Iraq by urging for creditors to cancel Iraq's debt.

The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are priority creditors, creditors that will be paid first, and leaders in the creditor community. It is our responsibility as key stakeholders at the World Bank and IMF to encourage these institutions to take the first step for debt cancellation for Iraq. The IMF and World Bank are owed relatively little by Iraq, only about \$150 million. So while it would not be a burden on the institutions, because \$150 million to these organizations is not a lot of money, this act of generosity could leverage reduction of the debt of Iraq by other creditors.

The IMF and World Bank are meeting at this moment in Dubai discussing Iraq and the debt of the most impoverished countries in the world. Join me in calling on these institutions to take action on Iraq's debt by cosponsoring H.R. 2482, the Iraqi Freedom from Debt Act. It is a bipartisan legislation that I introduced with the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), and it states that the U.S. should work within the IMF and World Bank to encourage the institutions to reduce debts owed by Iraq. It also contains a "Sense of Congress" urging countries around the world to reduce debt. Without reducing Iraq's debt, our investment of aid and loans in Iraq will simply be recycled into debt service payment to other creditors.

When Ambassador Bremer spoke before this Congress, he supported this legislation and this effort, and when I joined with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) in Iraq, visiting Baghdad and Tikrit and Mosul, we met with Ambassador Kennedy, his deputy. He likewise supported this legislation as a step in the right direction.

In order to rebuild Iraq, we must forgive this debt, most of which is odious, for purposes that did not help the Iraqi people. So I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Iraqi Freedom from Debt Act and work towards rebuilding Iraq.

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

QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE WAR WITH IRAQ

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

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, recently Senator EDWARD KENNEDY of Massachusetts took the floor of the other body and made the observation that the stated reasons of the President for going to war in Iraq were a fraud, that the war in Iraq had nothing to do with the war on terrorism and certainly nothing to do with the specific attack

on the United States of September 11. Rather, his observation was that the President's reasons for going to war in Iraq were political, and partisan political reasons at that.

Senator KENNEDY's observations were correct and courageous. Since September 11, for almost 2 years, the President has inferred that there was a direct relationship between the attack on the United States by the al Qaeda network of September 11, 2001, and the Government of Iraq; that there was a direct connection between those two. Just recently the President had to admit that there was no evidence whatsoever associating either Saddam Hussein or the Government of Iraq in any way with the attack on our country of September 11.

The President has alleged that the other reason for going to war in Iraq was that Iraq possessed substantial so-called weapons of mass destruction, chemical and biological weapons. He made that statement repeatedly, and that statement was made also by Secretary Rumsfeld and Vice President CHENEY. In fact, statements were made at certain points that they knew precisely where those so-called weapons of mass destruction were located and that they could find them very easily. That, too, has proven not to be an accurate statement.

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The reasons that we have gone to war in Iraq have nothing to do with terrorism, nothing to do with the attack on the United States of September 11 and nothing to do with the presence of so-called weapons of mass destruction. They have not been found.

The administration has got to answer a basic question: Why? Why did we engage in a preventive war against another sovereign country? Why have more than 200 Americans lost their lives? Why have more than 70 Americans lost their lives since the President declared victory in Iraq? And why, because of the destruction that was caused in that war, are we now about to spend in the neighborhood of \$200 billion or more for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of that country?

The President most recently has asked this body for \$87 billion. That expenditure would have been unnecessary had this war not taken place.

So there is much that this administration has to answer for, and the American people, and specifically their representatives in this body, have the profound obligation to answer those questions.

If the leadership of this House was discharging its responsibilities, it would begin a series of hearings to get to the bottom of the rationale behind the administration's actions in Iraq. Why was this preventive war engaged in, and why have we lost so many lives? Why have so many Iraqis been killed? And why are we spending so much of our treasure in Iraq, when our needs here at home are so substantial

and significant and those needs are not being addressed?

These are serious questions, they need to be asked, and that is one of our most important duties as Members of the House of Representatives, to raise these questions. Why is the leadership of this House not raising these questions? Why are we not engaged in those hearings? Why are we not trying to get to the bottom of this matter? That is the responsibility of the people who operate this House of Representatives.

I call upon the leadership to engage in a concerted and directed effort to find the answer to this question: Why did we go to war? Why did we engage in this so-called preventive war, when the President now has admitted there was no connection between September 11 and the government in Iraq, when no so-called weapons of mass destruction have been found. Therefore, the stated reasons of the administration for engaging in this war have been shown to have absolutely no legitimacy, yet the costs of this action are substantial, in human life and in treasure. We must get to the bottom of this.

THE COST OF THE WAR IN IRAQ

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, it has been a year since the President began pressing to invade Iraq. At the time, many of us pressed the President to fully account for the cost of his planned war. Most Americans would agree that if the issue of Iraq was important enough to start a war over, it was important enough to pay for.

For a year, Congress has asked for hard numbers on the cost of occupying and rebuilding Iraq, and for a year the President has given us nothing but blandishments and pie-in-the-sky forecasts. At the time, experts, including the President's own chief economist, predicted the war and reconstruction would cost as much as \$200 billion. But the President and his aides actively downplayed those numbers, saying it would only cost around \$50 billion.

Well, guess what? Last week the President finally admitted that he had low-balled the cost of the war when selling it to Congress a year ago. The President is now asking for an additional \$87 billion, billion with a B, to extricate our troops from what is beginning to look like a quagmire.

Let me be perfectly clear: The current situation in Iraq should not have come as any surprise to anyone in this administration or in this Congress. Last fall, the Chief of Staff of the United States Army, General Eric Shinseki, told Congress that it would require close to 300,000 troops to secure Iraq after toppling Saddam. Today, only about half that number are in Iraq. As the toll of American soldiers killed in the occupation of Iraq rises,

our young men and women in uniform are paying the price of trying to wage war on the cheap.

I was just reading a news report referring to a young man from Micronesia, Hilario Bermanis, II, and how he was injured in Iraq. He has lost an eye, an arm and both legs. He is being honored by being made an American citizen. And a few weeks earlier, the proposal was made to reduce veterans' services. I cannot understand that.

This additional \$87 billion comes on top of the \$78.5 billion Congress gave the President just 5 months ago, bringing the grand total so far to \$165 billion, and we would cut the cost of veterans' services.

If that sounds like a lot of money, hold on to your hat for this piece of information: A recent analysis by the Committee on the Budget shows that the entire cost for rebuilding Iraq could rise to as much as \$400 billion over the next 5 years.

Now, this new \$87 billion alone is a big number by itself. That is a number most people will never encounter at any point in their lives. So it is important to put these numbers into context.

Eighty-seven billion dollars is more than twice what the President requested to protect the United States from the terrorist attack that might come at any time. Eighty-seven billion dollars is about three times what the request was for highway and road construction across the country next year. Eighty-seven billion dollars is about twice the net worth, not annual income, but total net worth of America's wealthiest man, Bill Gates. Eighty-seven billion dollars is almost six times the profits of America's largest corporation, General Electric. Eighty-seven billion dollars is more than \$300 for every man, woman and child in the United States of America. That is a lot of money to spend on a country halfway around the world, when our local schools, hospitals, fire and police departments are struggling to make ends meet.

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

(Mr. WYNN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extension of Remarks.)

TRIBUTE TO JOHN H. JOHNSON

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, America is indeed a land blessed with many treasures and foremost among them are people. Some countries, for example, such as Japan, have formal programs to honor citizens which they classify as "national treasures." We have no such formal program, but I take this opportunity to acknowledge such an individual.

This evening I want to highlight one of America's great national treasures who lives in my district, John H. Johnson.

John H. Johnson was born, a descendant of slaves, to extremely modest circumstances in Arkansas City, Arkansas, in 1918. John's father died when he was very young. His mother, Gertrude Johnson Williams, worked as a domestic and levee cook.

It was a time when Jim Crow law defined life in the South. Arkansas schools did not permit African Americans admittance to high school and, under normal conditions of the day, John Johnson's education would have ended with the eighth grade. However, Gertrude Johnson would not accept normal circumstances, and moved with her family to Chicago in 1933.

John enrolled at DuSable High School and became an honor student, class president, student council president and editor of the school newspaper and the yearbook. He taught himself public speaking by standing in front of a mirror at home. Among his classmates at DuSable were Nat King Cole, Redd Foxx and William Abernathy.

He won a scholarship to attend the University of Chicago at night while working for the Supreme Liberty Life Insurance Company, owned by African American businessman Harry Pace. His job at Supreme Liberty came as a result of his public speaking talent after Pace heard him speak at an Urban League event.

One of his tasks at Supreme was the collection and organization of news of the African American community into a weekly digest. The black press of the day, such as the Chicago Defender and the Pittsburgh Courier, was a kind of national nerve system, transmitting information to every corner of every community where African Americans lived.

John appreciated the value of the news he was collecting and, in 1942, he launched his first magazine, Negro Digest. The \$500 he used as seed money for his new venture came from his mother, who pawned their furniture. The first issue sold 3,000 copies. Within one year, circulation hit 50,000.

By 1945, he launched his second magazine, Ebony, which highlighted the achievements of African Americans. Six years later he began publishing a news magazine of African American politics, entertainment, business and sports: Jet.

Today, Johnson Publishing is headquartered in an 11-story building, located at 820 South Michigan Avenue in Chicago's Loop. The last time I looked, Johnson Publishing had annual revenues of some \$425 million and more than 2,000 employees. Ebony now has a readership of more than 11 million, and Jet enjoys a readership in excess of eight million. Together, it is estimated these periodicals are read in half the black households in America.

Today the book division of Johnson Publishing is home to such authors as