

Then, finally, there is Ahmed al-Barak, a member of the Ruling Council, very prominent, who became unpopular with this administration, although previously had been very favored by them, when he said the savings could be a factor of 10 if the Iraqis did their own work. Basically, where they spend \$1 billion, we would spend a hundred million.

So I offer the 10 percent solution to this administration. Two point three billion dollars is still a lot of money where I come from, but it is a lot better than \$20.3 billion, and the Iraqis could do it for that price. We could do the reconstruction, whatever we are really obligated to because of the destruction of the war, but we do not need to give them exotic things they never had before.

I have heard we have to rebuild the electrical infrastructure. We have kind of got a failing one here, and the reason was they have got boilers from the 1950s and 1960s. Guess what? Our war did not install boilers from the 1950s and 1960s, so why is it the American people have to borrow the money to give them brand new boilers or new high-efficiency turbines to generate electricity when we could use that money here at home to put Americans to work? If we spent \$20.3 billion on real infrastructure projects that are underfunded by this administration in the United States of America, we could put one million Americans to work.

So, no, to the gold-plating, maybe a 10 percent solution if that is justified, but we should not be borrowing in the name of the American people \$20.3 billion and indebting generations of Americans to pay for the gold-plated war profiteering in Iraq.

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

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

#### EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. OSBORNE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the gentleman from Michigan's (Mr. SMITH) time.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1630

#### PARTISAN STRIFE WEAKENS NATIONAL RESOLVE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. OSBORNE. Madam Speaker, I am relatively new to Congress. When I

first came here 2½ years ago, I was surprised and somewhat disappointed by the partisanship that I encountered. I was from a competitive arena, and yet I had really never encountered anything like it. And then 9-11 came, and for 2 or 3 months I saw Congress function as it could. What we saw was unity of purpose. Welfare of the country was the primary priority. Partisanship, personal ambition was set aside.

Now here we are 2 years later and it seems as though we are drifting toward and have drifted toward business as usual. We are told that this is an election year that is coming up. Partisanship is escalating and some people say, well, we really cannot get much done next year because this is going to be an election year. Yet I would submit that the threat to our Nation is just as great as before 9-11 at this time. The battle lines are more clearly drawn. The stakes are higher. And still the internal dissension intensifies.

To me, this is a little bit mystifying. The great majority of people I have gotten to know, both sides of the aisle here in Congress, are genuinely good people. Yet that is really not the image that we project. Most people in my district are totally turned off by the discord they see. They do not seem to understand it; and they dismiss it as, well, that is just politics.

Certainly not all Democrats are tax-and-spend liberals with no moral compass. Certainly all Republicans are not heartless pawns of big business. And yet many times that is the way we portray each other. Certainly the President of the United States has not started a war to boost his approval ratings. Those types of comments are alarming, and they are very disturbing.

Unfounded congressional comments impugning motives and denigrating character only give substance to the belief we have no national resolve or unity. Where there is unity of purpose, the whole exceeds the sum of its parts. And I saw that consistently in athletics. If people were committed to a common goal, they pulled together and the dissenting factors tended to fall away. But where there is a lack of unity, the whole is less than the sum of its parts. Sometimes I feel that that is what characterizes this body as we get fragmented, as we throw rocks at each other.

It is critical at this time in our Nation's history that both parties pull together, that civility is exercised. As far as I am concerned, we are at war. It is a different type of war. At a time of war we cannot afford partisan strife that weakens national resolve.

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

#### THIMEROSAL

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. Madam Speaker, as we approach the flu season, many of my colleagues will visit the doctor's office here on Capital Hill and receive a flu shot. And before they go, I think all my colleagues ought to know that that flu shot contains mercury, which is a substance that is toxic to the human brain. That is not to say you should not get your flu shot if you want to, but there is a lot of neurological disorders that have been caused by mercury, and I think everyone should know there is mercury in that vaccine.

That is not the only vaccine that contains thimerosal. From anthrax to hepatitis, from lyme disease to DTaP, which is given to infants to protect against diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough, numerous vaccines exist that contain mercury, a harmful preservative. And parents around this country, I am sure, would be very upset if they knew that.

Scientific evidence continues to accumulate regarding the biologically-plausible connection between mercury and thimerosal, autism, and other neurological developmental disorders. Yet several well-known and firmly established pharmaceutical companies continue to put mercury into vaccines as a preservative, and it has never been tested. That is very interesting. Although the U.S. Food and Drug Administration asked vaccine manufacturers to begin removing the mercury-latent thimerosal from vaccines in 1999, they did not order them to do it. So the pharmaceutical companies continue to put that in our vaccines.

During my tenure as chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform and Oversight, a myriad of scientists testified at a series of hearings before the committee that mercury in vaccines is a contributing factor to developing neurological disorders, including Alzheimer's disease and autism in children. Fifteen years ago, one out of every 10,000 children were autistic. Now it is one out of 150. And many scientists believe that is because of the mercury in vaccines.

In May of this year, the California Department of Developmental Services released a report entitled "Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Changes in the California Caseload: 1999 to 2002." And the findings are very alarming. California's autistic population has nearly doubled in 4 years, from 10,360 cases in 1998 to over 20,000 cases in 2002.

This growth rate represents a 97 percent increase in just 4 years and a nearly 100 percent increase in California's case law since 1999. And they are not alone. The rate of growth in the population of persons with autism across this country is really horrible, and it is very bad in States such as Georgia, Minnesota, and Massachusetts. We have an absolute epidemic on