

Halliburton issued a subcontract to import gasoline from Kuwait into Iraq that was awarded without any competition. Who received the subcontract and why was the subcontract awarded without competition?

Who within the U.S. government and the Coalition Provisional Authority reviewed and approved the subcontract to purchase and transport the gasoline from Kuwait into Iraq?

Did any official within the U.S. government or the Coalition Provisional Authority direct Halliburton to use a specific subcontractor to purchase and transport gasoline from Kuwait into Iraq?

As you know, the Administration has requested \$900 million for fuel imports in the latest emergency supplemental request. In light of this pending request, we ask that you respond to these questions immediately.

Sincerely,

HENRY A. WAXMAN,
*Ranking Minority Member,
Committee on Government
Reform.*

JOHN D. DINGELL,
*Ranking Minority Member,
Committee on Energy and
Commerce.*

THE COST OF GASOLINE

	<i>Price per gal.</i>
From Turkey:	
Fuel	\$.89
Transport22
Other02
Markups11
	1.24
From Kuwait:	
Fuel	\$ 1.17
Transport	1.21
Other02
Markups24
	2.64

Source: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (November 17, 2003).

H.R. 3490—GPO “BUY OUT” BILL

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2003

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to the House's attention H.R. 3490, a bill introduced by the distinguished chairman of the Joint Committee on Printing and the House Administration Committee, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY), and me to repeal a requirement that the Government Printing Office make certain payments to the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund in connection with voluntary separation incentive programs, or “buy-outs.”

In a buy-out, an agency seeking to trim its workforce offers employees cash incentives to leave the rolls voluntarily, saving the agency and the taxpayers money. In 1998, Congress authorized buy-outs at GPO for 3 years, later extended through fiscal 2004. The new Public Printer, Bruce James, has used this authority for the first time this year. To defray the GPO program's cost, Congress provided \$10 million in the fiscal 2004 Legislative Branch Appropriations Act.

Similar to buy-out provisions applicable throughout the executive branch at the time, the GPO-specific buy-out legislation requires the agency to pay 15 percent of the value of the salaries of those participating in the buy-

out to the Office of Personnel Management, to be credited to the civil-service retirement fund. The 15 percent requirement necessarily raised the cost of buy-outs to agencies and discouraged their use. Last year, in the act establishing the Department of Homeland Security, Congress repealed the 15 percent requirement for the entire executive branch, leaving the Government Printing Office unaffected. A similar requirement on the General Accounting Office will expire next month.

Mr. Chairman, the Public Printer asked the Committee on House Administration for the provision that became H.R. 3490, and I believe the House should enact it. I know of no reason that, having repealed the 15 percent requirement for the executive branch, Congress should not repeal it for GPO as well. The Public Printer expects to save \$21 million annually from buying-out 312 employees under the law as it now stands, a sizeable sum. By relieving GPO of the 15 percent requirement, the Public Printer could offer approximately 100 additional buy-outs, saving up to \$7 million more, for a total of \$28 million a year.

I want to thank the Public Printer, Bruce James, for bringing this matter to the committee's attention so promptly and thereby providing us the opportunity to realize these additional savings. It has been a pleasure to work with him and especially with his Director of Congressional Relations, Andy Sherman, to bring this proposal forward before the end of this session of the 108th Congress. While I am disappointed that we were unable to enact this bill before adjourning, I am hopeful we can do so shortly after the second session of the 108th Congress convenes.

THANKING NURSE MARGARET
MARY MCHUGH O'NEILL

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, December 15, 2003

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, as this session of Congress draws to a close, the entire congressional family in the House of Representatives must confront the impending retirement of one of our most beloved members, Nurse Margaret Mary McHugh O'Neill. While we are happy for Margaret as she draws to a close her career in Federal service, those of us who bid her farewell are doubtless more than a little worried about how we will make do without her.

Irish by heritage, a New Englander by birth, and a saint by temperament, Margaret has surely touched the lives of countless men and women all over the world as she has worked in her chosen profession, nursing. As the proud wife of an Army officer, Margaret accompanied her husband Michael, and later their beautiful daughter Kathleen, around the world, setting a shining example of the best that the nursing profession has to offer. During her peripatetic career, Margaret has left her mark on the Army, the Red Cross, and elsewhere. Most recently, for the last dozen years Margaret has looked after the health and welfare of Members and staff of the House as an Occupational Health Nurse, posted in the Attending Physician's Health Unit in the Longworth Building.

Upon my arrival in the House in 1999, I had no idea how fortunate I was to draw a room assignment in the Longworth Building. But I quickly realized how lucky I was, and remain to this day. Shortly after being sworn in, my Administrative Assistant took my wife Leslie and my sick daughter Laura down to Nurse O'Neill so that Laura could be treated. Later that first year, he also took me down to visit the nurse. I have to say that my wife and I, as well as our children, were charmed by Margaret's wit and soothing disposition. My family, the staff in both my personal and House Administration Committee offices, and I have sought Margaret's wise counsel, in far more than just medical matters, more than she can ever know, and I am sure we are not alone in this respect. Always there to minister to the physically sick and injured, as well as to salve an occasional bruised ego, or even merely to offer a cheery moment's respite from the many pressures of Capitol Hill, the effects to Margaret's toils on behalf of the rest of us over the years have been nothing less than miraculous. If you don't believe me, ask anybody who has ever visited her office. On most days, her office has more closely resembled a delicatessen, as the door opened and closed dozens of times an hour as her many patients sought her help and advice.

I dare say sometime ago Margaret really should have installed one of those “take-a-number” dispensers so her patients could know how far down the queue they were. Of course, I use the word “patients” in the technical sense; the more correct term would be “admirers,” “confidants,” or perhaps most simply, “friends.” I am certain that in a long career of public service, Margaret has not grown rich in the material sense. But in the practical and spiritual sense, I am confident that Margaret is among the richest women on earth, blessed by the admiration, friendship, good wishes and prayers of the thousands of lucky persons whose good fortune it has been to have known and worked in her midst through the years.

While Margaret's congressional career may be drawing to a close much to our dismay, in truth, Margaret is merely expanding her horizons in search of others to serve professionally and spiritually. Margaret intends to continue her good works into her next career ministering to the needs of parishioners of St. Peter's on Capitol Hill, and studying theology. My staff and I find it comforting to know that Margaret will be nearby, where we can continue to seek her advice and counsel. Of course, being nearby, we hope and pray that she will visit us often, so we can continue and strengthen our friendship in the months and years ahead.

Mr. Speaker, all of us in the House family are privileged to know Nurse Margaret O'Neill. It has been a joy to work with Margaret, and all of us here in the House have been truly fortunate to benefit from her countless good works over these years. Please join me in thanking our dear friend Margaret for her tireless efforts in our behalf, and in wishing her, Michael and Kathleen the best as Margaret changes careers and duty stations yet again. May Margaret always look back fondly upon her days with the House, as we surely will.