

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, today is Earth Day, and the President is coming to my home State of Maine to speak about the environment.

Unfortunately, the administration has taken us backward in protecting the environment, and Maine is worse off because of it. In August, the EPA rolled back pollution controls for coal-burning plants in the Midwest and just recently announced plans to allow more mercury to be emitted into the air, just as we find that many parts of Maine do not meet quality air standards.

This is not just bad for air. It is bad for jobs. When the EPA rolled back mercury regulations in August, hundreds of pipe fitters were laid off because the pollution-control equipment they installed was no longer needed.

Protecting our air is not a partisan issue. Clean air improves public health, saves money, and can create jobs for Americans. The administration cannot just "outsource" the responsibility for protecting our environment to another country.

JOHN KERRY AS COMMANDER IN CHIEF?

(Mr. CUNNINGHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, Colonel Bud Day, former Vietnam prisoner of war for over 6 years, recalls in his book on how Jane Fonda, Ramsey Clark, and JOHN KERRY energized the enemy through their accusations and hurt them as prisoners of war.

Mr. Speaker, I was shot down over North Vietnam at that time. I can remember the anger and the disparaging remarks that JOHN KERRY made about our service. I remember the rage in all of us from his slander.

I am proud of the men and women that I served with in Vietnam and those that are serving us at great risk today in Iraq and Afghanistan and all over the world.

Even today, JOHN KERRY votes against defense, the military, veterans, and intelligence bills that would enforce the safe return of our men and women. We do not need someone that would vote like a Jane Fonda as commander in chief.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members that personal attacks on Members of the Senate do not comport with the rules of the House.

JOHN KERRY'S ACCUSATIONS AGAINST AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN VIETNAM

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

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, when Americans watched U.S. troops take Baghdad through embedded media, they saw the American GI in his true character. They saw a GI who was compassionate, who was honorable, and who had great courage. In a way they saw also the GIs of Vietnam because in many cases those were the sons and grandsons and granddaughters of people who had fought in Vietnam, people who had the same character, the same honor, the same courage.

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Yet we have had a person who is running for President, Senator JOHN KERRY, describe those people as having murdered 200,000 people in Vietnam, being stoned on pot 24 hours a day, that is he said 60 to 80 percent of them, and ravaging the country in a Genghis Khan-like fashion.

I think Americans have a choice. If you feel that your son or daughter did those acts in Vietnam, if that was a true characteristic of American GI's in Vietnam if you served in Vietnam, if you think your husband conducted himself in that fashion, perhaps you want to vote for JOHN KERRY. If you think that is a wild-eyed, nutty statement that is not an appropriate statement for somebody running for President of the United States, vote against JOHN KERRY.

TROUBLING REMARKS BY JOHN KERRY

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today also to highlight some very troubling remarks by JOHN KERRY, who is now seeking the Presidency of the United States, our Commander-in-Chief.

In 1971, KERRY testified before a Senate committee that communism was not a real threat to the United States. He went so far as to say that the U.S. was "reacting under Cold War precepts which are no longer applicable."

Mr. Speaker, that was 1971. I think we can all agree the Cold War was very much applicable and continued to be for the next two decades.

Now JOHN KERRY has the gall to compare our efforts in Iraq to Vietnam.

Mr. Speaker, as a veteran of Vietnam War, I take great offense to Mr. KERRY's statements, then and now. Our efforts in Iraq have liberated millions of civilians from a brutal dictator that has used weapons of mass destruction against his own people.

The world is a safer place without Saddam Hussein in power, and the United States is a safer place with President Bush as Commander-in-Chief.

KERRY PLANS TO ELIMINATE SMALL BUSINESS FEDERAL CONTRACTS

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, the Nashville Business Journal recently ran an article entitled "Kerry Plan Would Cut 100,000 Government Contracting Jobs." This was reporting on JOHN KERRY's plan to eliminate 100,000 private sector contractor jobs. Apparently, he does not feel that the private sector provides much bang for the taxpayer buck. His solution is bigger government, less competition.

According to the Professional Services Council, small businesses would bear the brunt of KERRY's return to big government. Last year, small businesses competed for and won \$63 billion in government contracts, equaling more than 25 percent of the Federal Government's contracting budget.

Study after study has shown that contracting with our Nation's small business sector reduces the cost to taxpayers, conserving taxpayer dollars. That should trump favors to special interests and big business any day.

Mr. Speaker, those of us in touch with folks outside the Beltway know small businesses make this country run.

DISPARAGING THE HONORABLE SERVICE OF VIETNAM VETERANS

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago a Vietnam veteran went to the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and he delivered a stinging indictment of our American troops, all of the American troops serving in Vietnam. He stated that murders and other crimes were "not isolated instances, but crimes committed on a day-to-day basis with the full awareness of officers at all levels of command."

That individual who alleged that our military openly and systematically violated the Geneva Conventions more than any other body is now running for President, and that is Senator KERRY.

Many of these charges rose from the Winter Soldier Investigation, where activists gathered to describe these war crimes. It was later learned that many of those who confessed these war crimes never served near a battlefield. It was a fraud.

Senator KERRY disparaged the honorable service of all the countless veterans who served in Vietnam with these charges, and he should apologize for what he said against his fellow veterans.

IN DEFENSE OF JOHN KERRY

(Mr. LARSON of Connecticut asked and was given permission to address