

assets test required for the low-income benefit that will take effect in 2006.

We ask the President, why give low-income seniors help now and then pull the rug out from under them in 2 years, give them the help before the election, and after the election, the help's not there? If the Federal Government acknowledges those seniors need assistance, why are we excluding them after the Presidential election?

Ohioans can save, we found, almost 50 percent by importing prescription drugs from Canada, same drugs, same dosage, same manufacturer, from what the price is in the United States. With the cost of popular drugs rising at triple the rate of inflation, we are asking the President how he can deny seniors and all Americans access to these safe, more affordable drugs from Canada and France and Germany, when all over the world people are paying so much less.

The law creating the discount card program expressly prohibits the government from negotiating prices for prescription drugs, but the VA's price negotiation system has proven effective. We asked the President, why are America's seniors being denied the benefit of the government's buying power to leverage for lower prices?

We pretty much know the answers to these questions because this drug discount card simply will not work. The more we know about it, drug prices go up 25 percent in a year. The discount card will give maybe 10 or 15 percent. That is not price savings. That is really an insult. When we look at this, it is pretty easy to understand why.

This prescription drug bill, the Medicare bill, was written by the insurance companies and written by the drug companies for the insurance companies and for the drug companies. President Bush brought the drug and insurance companies into the Lincoln Bedroom or into the Oval Office or somewhere in the White House and let them write this legislation. It is now the law of the land that now hurts our seniors, and there is not a real surprise there when the drug industry's already given President Bush tens of millions of dollars for his reelection. The word on the street in Washington is the drug industry will donate \$100 million to the President's reelection campaign. The insurance industry is not quite as wealthy, not quite as generous, but will donate and has already donated millions of dollars to the President's reelection campaign. So it should come as no surprise that this is the kind of drug bill we get.

Then to add insult to injury, the gentleman who wrote the language in the bill dealing with the discount drug card is, number one, a friend of the President's; and, number two, he has a discount drug card company. So we have got the drug industry writing the drug bill. We have got the insurance industry helping the drug industry write the drug bill, and now we have the discount card company writing the language for the discount cards.

That is why America's seniors feel betrayed, because this Medicare bill is not for America's seniors. It is for President Bush's reelection campaign, for his fund-raising, and for those companies that are so powerful in this city.

ABUSE OF IRAQI PRISONERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, as the chairman of the House delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly and currently the president of the assembly, I have frequently had to reassure parliamentarians that the outrageous and false allegations they had heard about the way detainees were being treated by the U.S. at our Guantanamo detention facility were not true. Since I had been part of a small number of Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence members to visit Guantanamo, actually the first congressional delegation to visit, since the HPSCI members and staff have made several such trips and have given oversight to this interrogation and detention facility, and since I am a former military intelligence officer, I knew I could conscientiously give such an assurance.

Now, however, from Abu Ghraib prison, and perhaps from elsewhere, we have reports, with photographs, graphically telling and showing outrageous abuses of Iraqi detainees by U.S. military personnel and possibly by military contractors. The international damage to the credibility and reputation of our country and our military absolutely cannot be overstated, especially in the Arab and Islamic communities. The alleged actions by at least a few members of our military, already confirmed by very recent disciplinary action, makes the job being done by our dedicated and courageous military personnel in Iraq and Afghanistan just that much harder and much more dangerous. The extraordinary gravity of this matter, the insensitivity and the degrading abuse which has apparently been visited upon Iraqi detainees call for swift and just accountability.

What has allegedly happened is so foreign to our country's principles and traditions and those of our Armed Forces that these people conducting or condoning such abuse do not deserve to be called Americans. If the use of such tactics of physical abuse and sexual humiliation is not dishonorable conduct, I do not know what is. If supervisors of such military personnel were inappropriately unaware or unconcerned about such conduct, then this is a clear case of dereliction of duty; and this accountability should apply several levels up the chain of command. If military contractors were involved, at a minimum the contract with the firm which employed them should be immediately terminated.

Mr. Speaker, it is hard to imagine a more politically damaging set of actions, hopefully by just a few individuals, for American and for coalition efforts to replace the brutal regime of Saddam Hussein and to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. We must have swift accountability, just accountability, and a demonstration that the American people repudiate such conduct and will not let it continue or happen again.

Mr. Speaker, I include an editorial at this point from this morning's Omaha World Herald.

UGLY AMERICANS

When U.S. soldiers at Baghdad's Abu Ghraib prison (and, some documents suggest, elsewhere) abused and humiliated prisoners of war, they committed two serious wrongs.

First, in sheer human terms, there is a code to be followed for prisoners' treatment. It exists for good reasons, starting with simple decency and progressing to the hope that rules observed by one side will be observed by the other. These soldiers trashed such considerations.

Second, they did immeasurable harm to the goals of America and its allies to bring about a peaceable and effective transfer of limited self rule to Iraqis. They rendered considerably more dubious the prospect of inculcating a stable, beneficial democracy in the Middle East. (If this is what democracy brings, who would want it?)

The six men who engaged in the actual acts (pyramids of naked detainees, false electrocution threats and more) face criminal charges. They should. In addition, six supervisors will receive a reprimand that can end their careers by rendering promotions impossible. A seventh will draw a lesser penalty.

An internal Army report in February pointed to flaws in the command structure at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere. For one thing, an intelligence officer whose duty was eliciting information from the prisoners was effectively put in charge of their day-to-day jailers—a dangerous practice, as events have shown. Additionally, the military policy responsible for the prisoners appear to have had little or no training in proper handling of detainees.

Such flaws cry out to be remedied, and apparently that will now happen. But that still leaves the question, what happened to common sense? America, for all its good intentions, is already regarded with suspicion by many in the Middle East and in Iraq in particular. Who could suppose that when knowledge of these abominable acts leaked, as was bound to happen, it would do anything less than throw gasoline on an already smoldering fire?

The United States needs to find some way to make clear in Iraq that this is not the norm, and that Americans, too, are repelled by what they saw. This isn't supposed to happen. We're the good guys. But try telling that today to the average Iraqi

THE CREDIBILITY GAP AND LEADERSHIP PROBLEMS OF PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, there is a new section in