

when he wrote the '91 memo. He declined to be interviewed.

The memo was sent to Dr. Gordon Douglas, then head of Merck's vaccine division and now a consultant for the Vaccine Research Center at the National Institutes of Health. Douglas also declined to comment.

The memo stated that regulators in several countries had raised concerns about thimerosal, including in Sweden, where the chemical was being removed from vaccines.

"The public awareness has been raised by the sequential wave of experiences in Sweden including mercury exposure from additives, fish, contaminated air, bird deaths from eating mercury-treated seed grains, dental amalgam leakage, mercury allergy, etc.," the memo said.

It noted that Sweden had set a daily maximum allowance of mercury from fish of 30 micrograms for a 160-pound adult, roughly the same guideline used by the FDA. Adjusting for the body weight of infants, Hilleman calculated that babies who received their shots on schedule could get 87 times the mercury allowance.

The Swedish and FDA guidelines work out to about four-tenths of a microgram of mercury per kilogram of body weight. A stricter standard of one-tenth of a microgram per kilogram has been adopted by the Environmental Protection Agency and endorsed by the National Research Council.

These standards are based on methyl mercury, the type found in fish and airborne emissions from power plants. Though toxic, the ethyl mercury in thimerosal may be less hazardous than methyl mercury, some scientists say, because it is more quickly purged from the body.

"It appears essentially impossible, based on current information, to ascertain whether thimerosal in vaccines constitutes or does not constitute a significant addition to the normal daily input of mercury from diverse sources," the memo said.

"It is reasonable to conclude" that it should be eliminated where possible, he said, "especially where use in infants and young children is anticipated."

In the U.S., however, thimerosal continued to be added throughout the '90s to a number of widely used pediatric vaccines for hepatitis B, bacterial meningitis, diphtheria, whooping cough and tetanus.

It was added to multi-dose vials of vaccine to prevent contamination from repeated insertion of needles to extract the medicine. It was not needed in single-dose vials, but most doctors and clinic preferred to order vaccine in multi-dose containers because of the lower cost and easier storage.

The Hilleman memo said that unlike regulators in Sweden and some other countries, "the U.S. Food and Drug Administration . . . does not have this concern for thimerosal."

A turning point came in 1997 when Congress passed a bill ordering an FDA review of mercury ingredients in food and drugs.

Completed in 1999, the review revealed the high level of mercury exposure from pediatric vaccines and raised a furor. In e-mails later released at a congressional hearing, an FDA official said health authorities could be criticized for "being 'asleep at the switch' for decades by allowing a potentially hazardous compound to remain in many childhood vaccines, and not forcing manufacturers to exclude it from new products."

It would not have taken a rocket science" to add up the amount of exposure as the prescribed number of shots was increasing, one of the e-mails said.

While asserting that there was no proof of harm, the U.S. Public Health Service in July 1999 called on manufacturers to go mercury-free by switching to single-dose vials. Soon after, Merck introduced a mercury-free

version of its hepatitis B vaccine, replacing the only thimerosal-containing vaccine it was still marketing at the time, a company spokesman said.

By 2002, thimerosal had been eliminated or reduced to trace levels in nearly all childhood vaccines. One exception is the pediatric flu vaccine made by Aventis and still sold mainly in multidose vials.

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

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

SMART SECURITY AND THE CASE FOR LEAVING IRAQ, PART 5

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, people around the world were greatly moved by the courage of millions of Iraqis who braved death to cast a ballot on January 30, Iraq's first democratic elections in over 50 years. The Iraqi elections, however, did not justify this destructive war, neither the lies used to sell it nor the incompetence with which it has been managed.

The elections will not bring back the 1,500 American soldiers who have been killed or heal the over-10,000 American troops who have been wounded, and they certainly cannot bring back the untold thousands of Iraqis who have lost their lives. These elections will not reimburse the American taxpayers nearly \$200 billion spent over the last 3 years, and the elections will not stop the vicious insurgency that is terrorizing Iraqi communities.

But the elections do demonstrate that Iraqis are prepared to manage their own affairs. That is why I believe that now is the time to develop and implement a plan to bring our soldiers home and end the U.S. military presence in Iraq absolutely as soon as possible.

Together with 27 cosponsors, I have introduced H. Con. Res. 35, calling for a plan to end this military mishap. Earlier today I wrote to the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on International Relations, asking them to hold hearings on this matter.

The Bush administration spared no superlative in talking about the significance of the Iraqi elections. Such a momentous watershed event, however, would seem to demand a shift in our thinking about Iraq. But not for President Bush. He actually has become more emboldened by the election. He sees this as a mandate to keep our soldiers in Iraq as long as he wants. He and his surrogates are even engaging in provocative saber-rattling in the direction of Iran.

The Iraq elections did not vindicate the doctrine of preemptive war, and they do not undo all the death and destruction that has occurred as a result. They demonstrated that the Iraqis can and should take control of their own destinies. Leaving will not be sufficient to defeat the insurgency, but staying absolutely will intensify it.

What is fueling the insurgency and what gave rise to it in the first place is our continued military presence in Iraq. Our troops, whom the administration assured us would be embraced as liberators, are the focal point of anti-American extremism, making them sitting ducks.

Let me be clear: I am not advocating a cut-and-run strategy. It would be irresponsible for the United States to abandon the Iraqi people. What we must do is play a role in facilitating their transition to stable democracy. We ought to work with Iraq's elected officials, the United Nations and the Arab League to create an international peacekeeping force that will keep Iraq secure. Much of the money we are spending on this military campaign should be diverted to infrastructure projects that will improve Iraqis' lives, such as road construction, new schools, water processing plants and more.

Up to this point, Iraq's economic development has been scandalously mismanaged by the Bush administration, as billions of dollars appropriated by Congress have not actually been put to work on the ground. All future investments must be made with the needs of Iraqis being paramount, not the United States Government contractors and not other war profiteers.

Mr. Speaker, I believe a focus on developmental and humanitarian aid in Iraq would be a model for a radically new approach to national security. We need what I call SMART security, which is a Sensible, Multilateral, American Response to Terrorism.

Instead of resorting to the military option and spending needlessly on weapons systems, the SMART security plan that I propose calls for building multilateral partnerships, partnerships that enable us to foil terrorists and stop weapons of mass destruction proliferation.

A SMART security plan would address the conditions that led to terrorism in the first place: poverty, hopelessness, despair. Instead of troops, we should send scientists, educators, urban planners and constitutional experts to the troubled regions of the world.

It is time, Mr. Speaker, for the United States to play the role of Iraq's ally and partner, not its occupier. It is time to give Iraq back to its own people. It is time to truly support our troops by beginning to bring them home. The first step is for the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on International Relations to hold hearings on this matter now.

The Iraqi elections, however, will never justify the destructive war, and