

House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I hope the gentleman from Illinois will be helping his seniors sign up for this program. It is a good program, and my constituents in Texas are benefiting from it.

But I came tonight to talk a little bit about the President's pandemic plan from a legislator's perspective. The past is prologue. We saw in 2003 the beginnings of an outbreak of an illness called SARS. SARS ended up killing 800 people which is a significant number of deaths, but nowhere near as high as it could have been.

Did we defeat SARS with an antiviral, no. Did we defeat SARS with a vaccine, no. In fact, we did not get a vaccine for SARS even though the CDC and the NIH very quickly came up with the genetic sequencing for the DNA on the SARS virus. But SARS was beaten the old-fashioned way, by carefully epidemiology sleuthing and quarantine.

I had a radio host ask me the other day, he thought SARS was perhaps a sham. He kind of dismissed the idea, but the reality is that this disease was contained by those old-fashioned methods, and in fact, it never materialized to the threat we thought it would be. In fact, ask the good people in the tourism business in Toronto if they felt that SARS affected them in that area.

But as we move on to the discussion of avian flu, I am a Republican. I believe in limited government. So do we need a big government solution to the pandemic profile that we may be presented? Well, I have also believed in empowering the individual and believe there is a degree of inertia in big government that hampers the ability to respond to a rapidly evolving crisis. Look at what happened down at the gulf coast with the hurricanes.

But there is a role for government in this situation because the potential for human death and destruction is so vast. It is going to involve the public sector, the private sector, and academia, and all of those areas will need to be on their best game in order to defeat this virus.

What can Congress do and what should Congress do and specifically, what should the House of Representatives do? Well, we hold hearings and we do that pretty well. We have held several hearings in Energy and Commerce about the problem of the pandemic flu. They have educated Members.

Congress can certainly travel. We do that well. In fact, several Members have traveled to other areas in Asia. I know Secretary Leavitt from HHS traveled to Southeast Asia to see what is happening with the virus in birds in that part of the world, and I know several Members who are planning travel in the future. That is a good thing.

We can communicate and talk to the press and talk to the media and talk to each other. We can educate each other and make certain that we are all individually educated about this threat

and that we communicate with our State departments of health and our local health departments. This has the potential for being such a big issue that 1 to 2 million Americans dying is so significant that it requires a commitment. It requires reform. It requires change, and I would like to add that it requires a promise.

Under commitment, we have got to commit the money for research and development on vaccines and technologies. We have to streamline the regulatory process at the FDA. The FDA is very close to approving a vaccine for the current bird flu. But the reality is if the virus becomes active in humans, it will change. It will do that through mutation, and this virus may not be effective against the vaccine that is being developed.

So if the virus mutates, there has got to be a way to quickly get that approval through the FDA for the new vaccine.

The distribution network. We are still seeing areas of the country that cannot get the current flu vaccine to distribute to their citizens, so the distributive network for this vaccine is going to have to be significantly improved.

Most importantly, these manufacturing facilities are going to have to be sited within the United States. With all due respect to the former speaker, and wanting to get drugs from Canada and other areas, can we count on the good people in Belgium to give us the vaccine if we need it when their citizens need it as well? This vaccine will have to be manufactured within our shores.

We have to improve the science on producing vaccines. We saw what happened last year with the egg-based vaccine for the flu vaccine: A bacterial contamination ruined a large batch and it was unavailable. We are going to have to progress to the cell-based system. It is time for vaccine manufacturing to come out of the 1950s and get into the 21st century. Our commitment of research and development money will help that happen, and when that happens, the time required to develop the vaccine and get it available to people will vastly improve.

Under the reform criteria, medical liability reform. The medical justice system has to be fair. We are going to need to provide some limits on liability for not just the vaccine itself, but adjuvants that might be added to the vaccine, preservatives that might be added to the vaccine. And what if the outbreak is so severe and the vaccine is in short supply, and it is required to dilute the vaccine. We need some degree of liability production, but at the same time, to ensure indemnification of those first responders who we are going to require to be on the front lines if this pandemic really picks up speed.

We need to change. There is going to have to be some degree of antitrust reform, and this Congress may have been called upon to do that. Some compa-

nies have been proactive in discussing what can be done to ramp up productions of vaccines or antivirals, such as Tamiflu.

And finally, a promise. The concept of guaranteed purchase or product or advanced purchase. We need to look to the future. We need to find a universal vaccine.

Mr. Speaker, The Los Angeles Times, on November 14, 2005, wrote, "Instead of being bamboozled by the flu virus' showy costume changes, scientists would pick dowdy, less prominent parts of the virus, the housekeeping features that do not change year to year and are common to all strains. Presenting these pieces to the human immune system would prompt the vaccinated person to recognize and fight off any influenza virus."

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4297, TAX RELIEF EXTENSION RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2005

Mr. PUTNAM, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-330) on the resolution (H. Res. 588) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4297) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201(b) of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2006, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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

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

CHENEY'S SCORCHED EARTH POLITICS

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO).

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

There was no objection.

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the White House is fast approaching a new low when it comes to smearing those of us who oppose the disastrous Iraq War. Before the Thanksgiving recess, Vice President DICK CHENEY declared that suggesting the administration deceived the Nation to justify the Iraq invasion, and I quote him, "is one of the most dishonest and reprehensible charges ever aired in this city."

Well, first of all, being called "dishonest" by DICK CHENEY is kind of like being told by Imelda Marcos that you have a shoe fetish. I thought it was

ironic that the Vice President made these remarks at an event sponsored by a group called the Frontiers of Freedom. Asking hard questions and demanding answers from your government is one of the very foundations of freedom, but DICK CHENEY seems to consider it borderline treason.

Well, shame on him and shame on him for implying that criticism of this war amounts to criticism of the brave men and women in uniform who are on the front lines. The fact is there was exaggeration, manipulation, and down right deception in the run-up to the war. There is report after report of the Bush administration ignoring or downplaying serious misgivings in the intelligence community about the weapons of mass destruction case.

It has been well confirmed that the Vice President himself visited CIA headquarters to lean on analysts and to make sure that they were reaching "right" conclusions.

Then there are the Downing Street memos, which claim the intelligence was being fixed around the policy. The Vice President claims that it is a few opportunists who are raising questions about trumped-up intelligence.

Well, guess what, Mr. Vice President, for more than half of the American people, there is a belief that the administration deliberately misled us into war. As the New Republic points out, that is not a few opportunists, more like a few million American citizens. Actually, more than 150 million who do not believe the President and his team told the truth.

What you are seeing is a desperate White House losing its ability to shape public opinion and consequently twisting the truth beyond recognition. This push-back is a clear sign that the wheels are coming off. By roughly a 2 to 1 margin, Americans have lost confidence in the Bush Iraq policy. A majority thinks we need to reduce our troop levels. Before Thanksgiving, 79 Senators voted for an amendment that indicates an interest in moving forward towards full Iraqi sovereignty in the year 2006, and demands more accountability from the administration on the conduct of the war.

And recently, my good friend and esteemed colleague from Pennsylvania, Mr. JACK MURTHA, a Marine Corps veteran with strong defense credentials, came out for bringing our troops out of Iraq.

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But instead of engaging in an honest dialogue with him, the first reaction from the other side of the aisle was to resort to fearmongering and character assassination. Representative MURTHA was subjected to the most vile and devious accusations. He was compared to a prominent al Qaeda terrorist. He was said to be emboldening our enemies. It was implied that he was a coward. And then the majority resorted to a gimmick, a cheap stunt distorting Mr. MURTHA's words in an attempt to gain

political advantage. I wish that those on the other side of the aisle were half as honorable as they are clever. The American people deserve better. Our troops deserve better than this. They deserve a thorough, substantive, honest debate on the war, not a bill that could not be amended, not a bill brought to the House floor for no other reason than partisan gamesmanship.

Mr. Speaker, a group of Democrats has written a discharge petition to bring the Iraq debate to the House floor, to bring it through legislation around a piece of legislation called Homeward Bound, H.J. Res. 55, to bring it to the House floor so that we can have the debate we need. This discharge petition will allow 17 hours of debate on the Nation's Iraq policy. And unlike the sham bill presented by the majority in response to Representative MURTHA's call to the end of war, it would be brought up under an open rule, a rule that allows amendments to be introduced. I urge my colleagues to sign the discharge petition, allow for a real debate.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 7, 2005.

The Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I have the honor to transmit herewith a facsimile copy of a letter received from Ms. Caren Daniels-Meade, Chief, Elections Division, State of California, indicating that, according to the unofficial returns of the Special Election held December 6, 2005, the Honorable John Campbell was elected Representative in Congress for the Forty-eighth Congressional District, State of California.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk.

BRUCE MCPHERSON, SECRETARY OF
STATE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA,
Sacramento, CA, December 6, 2005.

The Hon. KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. HAAS: This is to advise you that the unofficial results of the Special Election held on Tuesday, December 6, 2005, for Representative in Congress from the Forty-eighth Congressional District of California, show that John Campbell received 41,450 or 44.7 percent of the total number of votes cast for that office.

It would appear from these unofficial results that John Campbell was clearly elected as Representative in Congress from the Forty-eighth Congressional District of California.

To the best of our knowledge and belief at this time, there is no contest to this election.

As soon as the official results are certified to this office representing votes cast in all 268 precincts established for this election, an

official Certificate of Election will be prepared for transmittal as required by law.

Sincerely,

CAREN DANIELS-MEADE,
Chief, Elections Division.

SWEARING IN OF THE HONORABLE JOHN CAMPBELL, OF CALI- FORNIA, AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from California, Mr. JOHN CAMPBELL, be permitted to take the oath of office today. His certificate of election has not arrived, but there is no contest, and no question has been raised with regard to his election.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER. Will the Representative-elect please take the well.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter. So help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations, you are now a Member of the 109th Congress.

WELCOMING THE HONORABLE JOHN CAMPBELL TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, when our former colleague, Mr. Cox, was nominated by the President to become the chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission, it obviously created an opening in one of the most beautiful congressional districts in the entire country in Southern California; and we are very pleased that our new colleague who has just been sworn in, JOHN CAMPBELL, was elected.

JOHN CAMPBELL has an extraordinary history in California. As I look around the Chamber, Mr. Speaker, at our colleagues, very few of them actually have roots in California. The fact of the matter is JOHN CAMPBELL has roots that extend deeper than, frankly, anyone that I know. Our State is a little more than 150 years old; and yet in 1860, the year that Abraham Lincoln was elected President of the United States, JOHN CAMPBELL's great grandfather was elected to the California State legislature. So 145 years later, we have JOHN CAMPBELL now coming to serve in the United States House of Representatives, to me the greatest deliberative body known to man.