

the U.S. to stop interfering with efforts to form a new government, the President is going to stay the course.

The same rhetoric spoken after every wave of violence has really worn threadbare. It is time to set a course, and we have done that. It is time to lead the U.S. out of harm's way because that is what leaders do.

Another U.S. soldier died today in Iraq. The total number of U.S. men and women serving this country in Iraq who have died has climbed to 2,292. They have paid the ultimate sacrifice for Bush's folly. In my judgment, the price they paid was too high. These soldiers are heroes. That much we know. And that is of comfort to their families and this proud and grateful Nation.

But we owe these heroes more than comfort for their families. Many of these soldiers died saving other soldiers. We have to ask ourselves whether we are failing as a Nation because we know Iraq is not working, and yet we leave the soldiers in harm's way.

We have to ask ourselves whether we are failing as a Nation because we allow our government to act contrary to the wishes of the people. This is supposed to be a democracy. This is not about a war time when only the Commander in Chief can know everything there is to know, and we must place our trust in him or her. This is not the Invasion of Normandy.

The war in Iraq is nothing like that. We know what the President knows about the situation. There are no secret intelligence reports laying out the real Iraq story. We know it. We see it on television. We read about it in the newspapers, and we discuss it online. We are truly all in this war. Everyone, except the man who lives at 1600 Pennsylvania. There is not a shred of evidence or paperwork that he has that says repeating the line, "stay the course," is going to benefit the U.S. or the Iraqi people.

Why then are we doing it? It is time for the American people to demand that the President account for his actions and the lack of actions on the Iraq war. Iraq is reeling from its worst fear, the launch of a civil war.

U.S. soldiers are bunkered in their defensive positions. But why are they there at all? Many Iraqi leaders are beginning to blame the U.S. occupation for unleashing the evil, as they call it.

Every day that goes by, the reputation and credibility of our Nation bleeds a little more. That is nothing in comparison to the lost lives and shattered lives of thousands of U.S. soldiers and their loved ones. William Butler Yeats, the Noble Prize laureate who was a Senator in Ireland, said in a poem called "The Center Cannot Hold," it is the Second Coming. Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, the best lack all conviction while the worst are full of passionate neat intensity.

When will we learn? When will this government listen to the people? The soldiers in battle and the people at home, they know what Iraq is and is

not. But two people, or maybe only one, in the White House have yet to learn it. But until they do, Iraq will be a price for which we witness relentless chaos that can be turned loose upon the whole world. We cannot stay the course when there is no course. The best thing is to come home.

Mr. President, give us a plan.

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

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

DUBAI PORTS WORLD DEAL RISKS NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, my constituents in Minnesota and I are overwhelmingly opposed to the administration handing over day-to-day management of six U.S. ports to a company owned and operated by the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Speaker, this port management deal poses a very real risk to national security, as many experts have pointed out. As the former Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security, Clark Ervin, said last week, "It is true that our Coast Guard would remain in charge of port security. But that means merely setting standards that ports are to follow and reviewing their security plans. Meeting those standards every day is the job of port operators. They are responsible for hiring security officers, guarding the cargo and overseeing its unloading."

As another security expert put it, you cannot separate port security from port management. Our ports are on the front lines of our homeland defense, and terminal operators play a key role. It is undisputed that under the contract to manage the six U.S. ports, Dubai Ports World would handle shipping arrivals, departures, unloading at the docks, and many other security-related functions.

The UAE-owned company would be responsible for keeping cargo containers secure from the time they are unloaded from foreign ships until the containers are taken away on trucks. In addition, terminal operators work with port security plans that contain sensitive security information.

They are responsible for securing the perimeter of the terminals and they conduct security training for dock workers.

Mr. Speaker, the fundamental question is this: Do we really want a company owned by a foreign government that has been a home base for terrorists, do we really want that company in charge of these functions? I think not.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, we also know the United States Coast Guard conducted an intelligence assessment of Dubai Ports World and its owners in the United Arab Emirates. As a result of that December 13, 2005 intelligence assessment, the Coast Guard warned: "There are many intelligence gaps concerning the potential for DPW assets to support terrorist operations that preclude the completion of a thorough threat assessment of the merger."

The intelligence assessment also stated: "The breadth of the intelligence gaps also infer potential unknown threats against the large number of potential vulnerabilities."

Mr. Speaker, this Coast Guard assessment raises serious questions on the overall security environment at DP World facilities, the background of some personnel and foreign influence on company operations.

As a cosponsor, Mr. Speaker, of H.R. 4807, authored by Chairman Peter King of our Homeland Security Committee, I strongly support this critical legislation that would allow Congress to block the ports deal following the current 45-day investigation.

Mr. Speaker, the security of our homeland must be our highest priority. That is why we need to pass this important legislation.

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

(Ms. WATERS addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PROBLEMS WITH THE DUBAI PORTS DEAL

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong concern about the Bush administration's agreement to allow a United Arab Emirates company, Dubai Ports World, to manage operations at several U.S. seaports, including the Port of Baltimore in my home State of Maryland.

Let me first emphasize that the United Arab Emirates is a valued ally in the war against terrorism, and I sincerely appreciate their contribution to the war effort.

Unfortunately, some pundits and supporters of this deal suggest that bipartisan criticism of the port deal stems from racism or xenophobia or even political-year grandstanding. I reject these arguments. These are the same pundits who were quick to say that Congress was lax in its oversight and failed to connect the dots after a terrorist attack.

The sole issue here is national security and connecting the dots before the facts. Let me be clear. I do not oppose foreign ownership or operation of U.S.

ports, per se. However, I do think that in any case of foreign ownership or operation of sensitive U.S. assets, we need to scrutinize these deals that could threaten our national security.

That should have happened in this case. In cases involving foreign ownership and national security, the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States provides for a second-level 45-day security review.

Despite concerns expressed by the Department of Homeland Security and the Coast Guard, that did not occur. Only now, after this controversy has erupted, has the administration agreed to review the deal. Why are both Democrats and Republicans raising objections?

Here are the facts that give us pause: first, the United Arab Emirates honors an Arab boycott of Israel, thereby discriminating against a valued U.S. friend and ally. Second, al Qaeda used the bank system in the United Arab Emirates to execute the 9/11 and the 1998 African Embassy bombings.

Third, the United Arab Emirates was one of three countries that recognized Afghan's brutal Taliban regime.

Four, the 9/11 Commission reports indicated that Osama bin Laden regularly met with United Arab Emirates officials in the camps in Afghanistan. Reports suggest that bin Laden may have, in fact, been tipped off by friends in the United Arab Emirates.

Simply put, the United Arab Emirates' record on terrorism is in fact mixed at best, and serious questions need to be asked about whether this company should be allowed port management.

Let us talk about specific concerns. Last week Joseph King, a former Bush administration official at Customs, said in a Washington Post interview that people's national security fears about the deal are well grounded.

He goes on to point out that under the deal, this company would have carte blanche-like authority to obtain hundreds of visas to relocate managers and other employees to the United States. Using appeals for solidarity or even threats of violence, al Qaeda operatives could force low-level managers to provide these visas to al Qaeda sympathizers.

According to recent articles in a December 13, 2005, intelligence assessment of the company and its owners, the United Arab Emirates, by the Coast Guard warned: "There are many intelligence gaps concerning the potential for Dubai Ports World or P&O assets to support terrorist operations that preclude" the completion of a thorough threat assessment.

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"The breadth of the intelligence gaps also infer potential unknown threats against a large number of potential vulnerabilities." That should give us pause.

Additionally, the Department of Homeland Security initially objected

to this deal. What are these intelligence gaps? How big are they? Have they been resolved? All questions we cannot answer right now.

Let me say this. The administration's announcement of this deal is chillingly akin to the administration's prewar intelligence on weapons of mass destruction. There the administration selectively tailored intelligence to support the invasion that it desired from the very beginning. Here, the administration seems to be ignoring, deliberately ignoring, red flags and cherry-picking positive intelligence to support approval of a ports deal that it already wants.

Let me conclude. Thankfully, Congress has put the brakes on this deal. We will be taking a long, serious and hard look at this arrangement. Unfortunately, the Bush administration has already made up its mind to support the deal even before a serious review has begun, and that is not in the best interest of the United States.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICAN COMPANIES

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, this Dubai ports deal will probably go through even though these types of contracts should be given to American-owned companies. But the deal will probably be approved with Congress passing some meaningless, feel-good limitations or restrictions and increasing funding for port security.

The deal will probably go through because, one, it involves \$6.8 billion and it is almost unheard of to stop a deal involving big money like that.

Secondly, the President and the entire administration are pushing it as hard as they can.

Third, the columnists and commentators are all piling on using words like "overreaction, racism and bigotry." Even though this is name-calling, rather than discussing the merits, most elected officials are going to do anything possible to avoid being called a racist or bigot or even that they are overreacting.

There are legitimate national security concerns here. The United Arab Emirates may be a strong ally now, but these things change. Our government considered Saddam Hussein as an ally all through the 1980s and supported him in a big way monetarily and in other ways.

While I am concerned about national security, my main concern about this deal is economic. We have far too many foreign companies operating our ports. These are some of the best and most lucrative contracts we have. They should be going to American-owned companies. If we give all these lucrative, big-money contracts to foreign-owned businesses, most of the profits and most of

the top jobs will go to people from those countries. At some point we need to start putting our own businesses and shareholders and workers first. After all, the first obligation of the U.S. Congress should be to the American people.

It is also of some concern that this deal is not with a private company, but with an organization owned or controlled by the Government of the United Arab Emirates. Let me emphasize, I have nothing whatsoever against anyone from any foreign country. I am certainly not anti-Arab. I think it is sad that a British-owned company was running these port operations, and I am not anti-British. I think we should be friends with the Arabs and the British, and I believe we should have trade with all countries. But I would want foreign countries to be buying things from American companies and vice versa. And I would like to see American ports, which are some of the most important infrastructure assets we have, to be run and controlled by American companies and American citizens.

I do not believe the Chinese or the Japanese or many other countries would let us run their ports. And most of these contracts to operate businesses on these ports are not advertised widely at all. Most are sweetheart, insider-type deals. I believe there are many American business people who would jump at the chance to do this business if they just knew about these opportunities.

Let us start putting our own people first once again and stop giving all this port business to so many foreign companies or especially not to foreign governments.

SECURING OUR NATION'S PORTS

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

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me say that in committee today we had the U.S. Coast Guard, and I want to commend them because after 9/11, they were the first agency within minutes to be on guard, guarding our bridges. And, in fact, after Katrina they were there and they did a yeoman's job. In fact, out of Homeland Security, FEMA, and the other agencies, it is the Coast Guard that really does a good job.

The administration's decision to allow the state-owned Dubai Ports to take over six major U.S. ports has bought the issue of port security to the forefront of national attention. Since September 11, in fact, I have been lobbying the Bush administration for additional security funds for our Nation's ports and other areas of our Nation's infrastructure, such as freight and passenger rail, our subway systems, buses, tunnels and bridges. They also need security.

To me, this funding is particularly needed in my State of Florida whose 14