

of his election loss by members of the press, invited those gentlemen from the fourth estate to visit a “nether region” as he instead would head for Texas, as the gentleman from Texas remembers.

And again to be perfectly candid, Mr. Speaker, we would be less than human, we would be less than honest if at times during this difficult period of transition we were not tempted to offer the recommendations of Mr. Crockett to those, although I hasten to add to my friends from the Lone Star State I shan't be following them to Texas. And hopefully should I return to the media, Mr. Speaker, I won't be sent to those other nether regions, come to think of it.

There is a saying, Mr. Speaker, that we laugh to keep from crying, and it is not my intent to launch into an overly maudlin remembrance tonight in this valedictory. And while I appreciated my friend from Oklahoma talk about the principles of self-government, I fear that some will hear these remarks and say, well, you have got the first part right because it turns out being about self. Not entirely, but, again, it should be noted that those of us who come here and serve, Republican, Democrat or independent, from across this country do share one basic characteristic: None of us suffer from a shortage of self-esteem.

And during my time here, Mr. Speaker, I have seen incredible things. Yes, I will talk policy. I will get to that, but given my reputation according to Washingtonian Magazine as only the second biggest windbag in Congress, I am bucking tonight to go a little further afield. Now, in all sincerity, Mr. Speaker, I have seen on this floor and in this institution acts of incredible kindness. I have also seen acts of unspeakable pettiness. I have seen policies embraced with foresight and vision, and I have seen actions taken that have wreaked of the expedience of the nanosecond. I have seen the great and good. I have seen the bad and ugly. In short, Mr. Speaker, I have seen here in the people's House the full range of the human experience. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, that again reaffirms the genius of our Founders in naming this institution the House of Representatives, because just as so many have come from so many different walks of life, we have seen representative behavior that has been of incredibly high standards, and to be candid, we have seen other less desirable traits. But stop and think about what our Founders have wrought. Understanding, as my colleague from Oklahoma talked about, what separated this new experiment in this new world from the monarchies of Europe, from other governments instituted among men, the notion that our Creator endowed us with rights and we the people voluntarily conferred power, political power, on the government; that first God, through the freedoms granted us, gave us that ability to voluntarily confer power on this government.

And in this constitutional republic, Article I, Section 1, “All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States.” And in the initial inception of this particular institution, in the inception of our founders, one constitutional office directly accountable to the people, decided by popular vote, and given the fact that events could change a mechanism through a fairly short term of 2 years so that the body politic could make those changes representative of their change in priorities and their change in outlook. And despite all the flaws and the foibles and the pitfalls and pratfalls of the human experience, it has worked remarkably well. Whether the disappointment voiced by one Davy Crockett and others in other ways finishing second in elections, again, a euphemism for losing elections, we have put aside personal disappointment to give thanks that here we settle questions with balance, not bullets.

And as we reflect on all the talk that we have heard during the course of the campaign that there should be a new bipartisanship, a new nonpartisanship, for purposes of full disclosure, let us understand that many items and many actions pass through this institution through unanimous consent, but on major questions, it is inevitable that free people will have different perspectives. And it is well and it is good and it is proper for a free people to freely debate and discuss and advocate different positions, and here with this marvelous mechanism of representation, the people decide.

My friend from Oklahoma spoke of bringing the kitchen table in. Mr. Speaker, I would offer another room in the house. Mr. Speaker, in essence, this hallowed Chamber is America's living room. And here we gather to discuss the challenges we face as a people. And we have our arguments and we have our times of agreement, and despite many challenges and many disappointments, somehow we get it done.

Mr. Speaker, one word in closing. I would be remiss if I did not thank my family. My wife, Mary; my kids, Nicole, Hannah, and John Micah; my parents; so many who have given me much such support. My colleagues who join me here in this Congress with the new majority. But most of all, the people of Arizona, who for 12 years gave me the opportunity to represent them in the Congress of the United States.

I do not know what is next, but I do appreciate the words of the Prophet Jeremiah: “For I have plans for you,” sayeth the Lord, “plans to prosper you, not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future.”

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues, public service is not always defined by public office. And for all the American people, let us join in a prayer that the future of our republic will forever remain bright.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). The gentleman from Indiana has 30 seconds remaining.

Mr. PENCE. I would like to yield the balance of that to the new chairman of the Republican Study Committee, Mr. HENSARLING of Texas.

Mr. HENSARLING. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

All I can say, Mr. Speaker, is that God only made one J.D. HAYWORTH. And right now he is saying, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” What a powerful orator.

Mr. Speaker, tonight we celebrated the congressional careers of proud sons and daughters of the Republican Study Committee, proud sons and daughters of the Republican Party, proud Members of this body who have served their Nation well.

We thank you, Mr. Speaker.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 854. An act to provide for certain lands to be held in trust for the Utu Utu Gwaitu Paiute Tribe.

H.R. 1472. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 167 East 124th Street in New York, New York as the “Tito Puente Post Office Building”.

H.R. 4246. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 8135 Forest Lane in Dallas, Texas, as the “Dr. Robert E. Price Post Office Building”.

H.R. 4720. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Gateway Drive in Lincoln, California, as the “Beverly J. Wilson Post Office Building”.

H.R. 5108. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1213 East Houston Street in Cleveland, Texas, as the “Lance Corporal Robert A. Martinez Post Office Building”.

H.R. 5736. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 101 Palafox Place in Pensacola, Florida, as the “Vincent J. Whibbs, Sr. Post Office Building”.

H.R. 5857. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1501 South Cherrybell Avenue in Tucson, Arizona, as the “Morris K. ‘Mo’ Udall Post Office Building”.

H.R. 5923. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 29-50 Union Street in Flushing, New York, as the “Dr. Leonard Price Stavisky Post Office”.

H.R. 5989. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 10240 Roosevelt Road in Westchester, Illinois, as the “John J. Sinde Post Office Building”.

H.R. 5990. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 415 South 5th Avenue in Maywood, Illinois, as the “Wallace W. Sykes Post Office Building”.

H.R. 6078. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 307 West Wheat Street in Woodville, Texas, as the “Chuck Fortenberry Post Office Building”.

H.R. 6102. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 200 Lawyers Road, NW in Vienna, Virginia, as the "Captain Christopher P. Petty and Major William F. Hecker, III Post Office Building".

H.R. 6151. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 216 Oak Street in Farmington, Minnesota, as the "Hamilton H. Judson Post Office".

The message also announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

H.R. 864. An act to provide for programs and activities with respect to the prevention of underage drinking.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 4050. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 103 East Thompson Street in Thomaston, Georgia, as the "Sergeant First Class Robert Lee 'Bobby' Hollar, Jr. Post Office Building".

IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the well of the House today to address America's predicament in Iraq and I do so with the thoughts of my neighbor's son who tonight is serving in Baghdad as many of our proud men and women, sons and daughters, husbands and wives are serving. I am going to have his future in mind during my comments today. I know my colleagues, both Republicans and Democrats, share these views. They have their own kin and neighbors.

My neighbor was one who is the young man I watched growing up playing pee-wee football in Bainbridge Island, Washington. He was called to service in Iraq. He went. He served proudly for a year. He was ready to return. He was literally on the plane to return when he was called back to go back into Baghdad in the President's effort to send more troops into Baghdad. He has suffered two IED explosions, just about lost his ear in one of them. He is now in continual firefights in Baghdad. And I think of his 1-year-old son who is being raised by his grandparents since the mother is also serving in the United States Army in Iraq at this time. Their lives are in my mind, and Iraq is not an abstraction nor a partisan issue, it is a very personal one for many of us. And those are what my thoughts will be and I would like them to infuse some of my comments tonight.

The reason I have come, of course, is we have had this Iraq Study Group report. It is an amazing document. I hope people who are interested in Iraq will take some time to look at it. It is both accurate in some places and woefully

short in others, and I would like to address both places where it is stunningly accurate and amazingly candid and refreshingly real and the places where it falls short in what we really have to do to accomplish our true national interests in Iraq.

Before I do that, though, I think it is appropriate in talking about Iraq and our obligation to our soldiers there, like my neighbor's son, just for a moment to ask how we got in this current predicament in Iraq. We went into Iraq with two goals: One goal was to remove Saddam Hussein, a brutal dictator, from power, to give the Iraqi people the chance to restore some dignity and freedom to their country. That mission was accomplished through the incredible, efficient and courageous act of our military men and women in fairly short order. It was accomplished. It has been now accomplished for over 3 years. That is mission accomplished, truly.

The second reason we went into Iraq was to make sure that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Despite scouring Iraq with a fine-toothed comb and literally billions of dollars trying to find any scent, any hint, any fingerprint, any dust of WMDs, that has been eliminated as a threat because it did not exist in the first place. Our two national missions in Iraq have been complete now for some time.

We have had a third national mission in Iraq that comes not out of our self-interest as a Nation but out of our obligation as a fair country to lead the world in caring for our neighbors, and that is to give the Iraqis a fair opportunity to form a government and take control of their own destiny. We now have been at that mission for longer than we were fighting World War II. That mission is accomplished. We have given the Iraqi people every opportunity to form a meaningful government in Iraq at this time. Yet our sons and daughters are still there tonight with the administration still tonight committed to staying as long as the Iraqis decide we are going to stay.

The President has said that our people are going to stay there indefinitely unless conditions that are under control of the Iraqis will allow him to bring them home. I am here tonight to say we should not allow the Iraqis to control when our sons and daughters come home. That should be a decision of the United States of America. That position finds substantial support in the report I will allude to as well as our common sense as Americans.

Now, first I want to say I am glad this report has been issued. Before the election, we heard a President who was bound and determined to stay the course. He was bound and determined to never take off rose-colored glasses. He was bound and determined to stay with his Secretary of Defense, despite the fact that every living human being who had looked at Iraq has seen nothing but a continued evidence of failure

of leadership in the civilian ranks in the Secretary of Defense. He was bound and determined to have his Vice President say that we were dealing with dead-enders and that this was just a matter of a short period of time to roll up the opposition in Iraq. Every single one of those statements by the President of the United States was flat wrong.

Then we had Tuesday, November 7 came along and the American people gave a very strong verdict to the President's stay-the-course position. We hope that has been a sobering influence on the White House. Secondly, we had this Iraqi Study Group report come out. We hope that the combination of those two events will knock the White House off its pedestal into a position where it will work with the U.S. Congress to get our troops home. It remains to be seen whether or not those two events have that desired effect.

I would like to allude to this report now. There are things in this report that I think have not been in the news that I have reviewed, that I think it is important to realize in substantial detail, and the reason is that this report is the most categorical, clear, objective, bipartisan and well-reasoned rejection of President George Bush's assessment of the conditions in Iraq that you will find. It was bipartisan, as people know. It had people, I don't think any of whom had been against the Iraq war when it started, I don't believe, wiser heads who had been around policy for many years in this country, and unanimously they rejected the hallucinations of the White House that things were going okay in Iraq. And it is long overdue to have had a pronouncement from Washington, D.C. to that effect.

So, if I can, let me allude to what their conclusions have been. Number one, and I will quote:

"The situation in Iraq is grave and deteriorating. The government is not adequately advancing national reconciliation, providing basic security, or delivering essential services."

Iraqis have no electricity, they have no functioning police, they have no employment, they have no means to run their army, they have no functioning control over their borders. They have no functioning government. This is a government in name only.

Number two: "Iraqis have not been convinced that they must take responsibility for their own future. Iraq's neighbors and much of the international community have not been persuaded to play an active and constructive role." I want to just focus on that for a moment. Iraqis have not been convinced that they must take responsibility for their own future. Why is that? Why have the Iraqi politicians refused to make an agreement about disposition of oil? Why have they refused to make a disposition about employment practices in the Iraqi government? Why have they refused to make an agreement about how the ministries will be handled?