

know, the only thing we did was modify, consistent with an agreement with the administration and the Senate, the provision that the administration vetoed the bill on. So my expectation is it will pass whole.

Now, as the gentleman observes, there is an interest I think perhaps on both sides of the aisle in considering the provision that was modified and essentially a part of it taken out of the bill. There is interest in considering that bill. That has been discussed with Mr. SKELTON, and Mr. SKELTON and the committee are looking at that.

I believe, and I don't have confirmation of that, that there were Members who have talked to me who are in fact introducing a bill to speak to that particular point. I say "I believe" because, again, I don't have confirmation that that bill has been introduced, but I know that there were Members very focused on that, very concerned. As you know, this provision dealt with the ability of some of our former soldiers, in particular marines, injured by, tortured by the Saddam Hussein regime and being compensated for that to which they had been subjected. I know there is a lot of concern about making sure that litigants who have gotten judgments have an opportunity to execute on those judgments. The President was concerned about that.

So I think the short answer to your question is it either has been introduced, or going to be introduced maybe next week. Mr. SKELTON has indicated that he will look at that.

Mr. BLUNT. I appreciate that information. I also appreciate the way we are able to work through that problem, get the DOD authorization bill on the way back to the President's desk, get that remaining half a percent of pay increase for military personnel taken care of. I don't know on this side of the aisle of any interest in addressing that. Certainly it is a debate that we could have, but it does seem to me that we have already reached a bipartisan consensus on that, and we may or may not want to pursue that. But I had heard those same things and wanted to ask in that regard.

Mr. HOYER. If my friend will yield.

Mr. BLUNT. I would.

Mr. HOYER. When you indicate we reached bipartisan agreement, what we reached bipartisan agreement on was, obviously, that the bill, as you point out, had many important provisions, not only the pay that you refer to, the wounded warriors, treatment of veterans medically, as well as meeting our defense needs, all of which we did have an agreement on and we passed that bill. There was bipartisan agreement that if we were going to pass that bill with all those important provisions in it, that it was necessary to consider the matter that the President was opposed to separately and apart, and take it out, which was done.

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But certainly all of the Members on my side did not believe that the Presi-

dent's veto was appropriate. So I don't want to mislead anybody that there was a bipartisan agreement that his veto was appropriate in that sense and that there was a consensus on that. There was disagreement on that.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for that. I believe I understand the point that you just made that the procedure there certainly was a procedure that, frankly, we could have spent a lot of time debating. By doing that, we could have slowed down this pay increase, and I think we wisely did not do that.

I suppose that if the greater issue of individuals that were harmed by the Saddam Hussein regime comes to the floor, we can debate that at the time. And I just would suggest right now, if there was some way to reach the personal or family assets of Saddam Hussein, that is one thing. I think we hamper the efforts of this new government if we continue to hold the new government responsible for whatever bad things a government did that was virtually universally held in the lowest possible regard by the Congress. And I think we are universally glad that government is gone, no matter how we feel about the other issues in Iraq. I think that is really the point at the end of this one part of that debate. The government is gone. I suppose we can debate that. I think the arrangement we made in the bill handles other countries appropriately and also gives the President the proper waiver authority for dealing with this new situation in Iraq. But I suppose today is also not the day to debate that, unless my friend wants to comment on that.

Mr. HOYER. I understand the gentleman's point, but as the gentleman well knows, there are opposing views to that point. But certainly now, as the gentleman observed, is not the time to debate it. I think the answer to your question is that it may well be before us again.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10:30 a.m. tomorrow, and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 22, for morning-hour debate.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

HOPE VI AND DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, yesterday we revisited the question of the Defense Authorization bill. I think it is important to remind my colleagues that in our appropriations bill that was passed and signed by the President, we took care of a number of issues dealing with our soldiers, including an increase in their compensation, including a recognition of traumatic brain injury, and a number of other concerns.

This bill yesterday was a disappointment because it continued to include money for Iraq, and it is time to bring our soldiers home.

I also want to commend the debate today on HOPE VI, another issue that addresses the issue of homelessness and those who are without homes. This legislation was provocative and important because it is an economic stimulus when you provide housing for those in public housing who cannot be housed.

It is innovative because it suggests we should have green buildings, meaning more efficient, and it is innovative because it protects the elderly who may have those young people in their homes who have had some run-in with the law, that those individuals go but not the elderly who would be evicted.

This is a good piece of legislation. I supported HOPE VI. I am disappointed I could not support the Defense Authorization bill.

EARMARK REFORM

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, we have always been fortunate to have in this body of legislators Members who, for lack of a better term, are called "institutionalists." These are Members on both sides of the aisle who understand and appreciate the fact that this institution will outlive all of us and that we should try to ensure that when we leave the Congress, we leave the institution better than we found it.

Madam Speaker, we desperately need these institutionalists to stand up today and play a role in reforming the practice of earmarking that is beneath the dignity of this great institution.

It is almost a daily occurrence that we wake up to newspaper articles detailing questionable earmarks that coincide with large campaign contributions, earmarks that face little or no scrutiny in this body, earmarks that were more intended to garner votes or contributions than to address legitimate needs.

We have also seen little inclination on the part of those currently in the