

IRAQ AND TORTURE

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

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, Yogi Berra once told us that "When you arrive at a fork in the road, you should take it." Well, the United States has reached a fork in the road when it comes to torturing other human beings, and it is time we took it, once and for all.

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Senator JOHN MCCAIN has offered an amendment to the Defense appropriations bill clarifying that the United States Government, including the military and the CIA, does not condone the use of torture, putting the United States in a position to set an example for the rest of the world by clearly affirming our opposition to the use of torture as a military tactic.

Yet if the Bush administration has its way, Congress will reject this amendment, reserving its right to employ the use of torture in certain situations. That is right: The Bush administration has come out against an amendment that states for the record that the United States opposes the use of torture. Do they really want people to think we support torture?

For one thing, America's use of torture certainly has not helped us win any friends so far. It did not win us friends when it was revealed that the American military had abused prisoners at Guantanamo Bay. It did not win us any friends when thousands of photographs were released showing U.S. servicemembers torturing, beating, humiliating, and generally violating Iraqi prisoners of war. And it certainly did not win us any friends last week when it was revealed that the United States might possess dozens of top-secret military prisons in Eastern Europe for the sole purpose of viciously interrogating enemy prisoners. Never mind the fact that torture as a tactic does not provide accurate results. Individuals who are placed in unbearable situations will say just about anything to end the pain that they are suffering. Yet, even if torture produced positive results, it violates every single principle that our country stands for.

I am not the only one that understands this. Most Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle are opposed to torture. This weekend, Senator CHUCK HAGEL, who is no stranger to conservative politics, did not pull any punches when he said, "I think the administration is making a terrible mistake in opposing JOHN MCCAIN's amendment on detainees and torture." He said, "making a terrible mistake."

Yet, the President responds with the same tired talking points. Yesterday, he tried to justify his opposition to the McCain amendment by saying, our President, "We will aggressively pursue the enemy, but we will do so under the law." Then he went on to say, "We do not torture."

Mr. Speaker, does the President think he can paper over this problem and expect it to go away? If the President is so adamant that the United States does not torture, why does he continue to oppose the McCain amendment banning the use of torture? Unfortunately, this is just business as usual for an administration that has time and again taken the wrong path when arriving at a fork in the road.

Let us not forget that there were plenty of other options for the United States before the President made the decision to go to war in Iraq, a war that has subsequently cost the lives of nearly 2,100 American soldiers, uncounted tens of thousands of innocent Iraqi civilians, and caused grave injuries to another 15,000 American soldiers.

Now, the President and his administration have yet another choice. They ought to take the high road when it comes to permanently ending the use of torture, and they ought to take the high road in bringing our troops home from Iraq and returning Iraq to the Iraqi people.

The Bush administration can never take back the many mistakes that have been made over the past several years: A failed war in Iraq, heinous acts of torture around the world, and a shamefully cynical foreign policy that has put Americans at greater risk than ever before.

But we are at another crossroads, and it is not too late to take the right path. If we do not, we risk suffering another Yogi Berra prophecy: "Déjà vu all over again."

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BASS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

REPUBLICANS HAVE A PLAN

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have 5 minutes in place of the gentleman from North Carolina.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I did not plan to use these 5 minutes; but as we hear Bush-bashing and bashing of the

Republicans as you walk through the Halls of our Chambers here, I think it is appropriate that we do take a minute to respond.

We just heard more Bush-bashing about accusations of torture in Iraq. I wonder where some of these same people were when Abu Ghraib prison had the torture of thousands of innocent Iraqi civilians and other people in that society who had their limbs lopped off, who were taken to the precipice outside of the prison and lined up, to deal with prison-crowding. A former Iraqi prisoner told some of us Members of Congress they would line up the prisoners and then shoot them in front of a ditch and then bury them. One escaped who had been shot several times and he told us that story.

The Bush administration has wanted to stop the torture of people in that prison and the loss of life in that country. They do not want to talk about the 300,000 mass graves that we have uncovered in that country, the slaughter of his own people that Saddam Hussein conducted.

Then we heard the previous speaker talk about how bad things are in America under the Bush administration and Bush policy. They did not tell us that under the policy of President Bush we have actually, in just this last fiscal year that ended the end of September, we have \$100 billion in additional revenue into the United States Treasury. That is a plan of failure? In one year we have reduced the deficit, the projected deficit a year ago by some 25 percent, a sizable feat; we had unemployment before Katrina go to 4.9 percent, one of the lowest percentages on record, and even in the last quarter, with the incredible natural disaster that we faced in the gulf coast and in Florida, we had a remarkable 3.8 percent economic growth. They do not want to talk about the jobs that have been created under this policy.

So we do have a plan. We have a plan this week or soon to reduce some spending. We have balanced the budget before; we can do it again. We can bring about the reforms, and some of those are tough reforms, but we have a plan. It involves reform, and it will result in savings and we will see continued growth, economic growth in this country, and fulfill the dreams of Americans who want better jobs, who want lower taxes, less government regulation, and less litigation. All of those things, higher taxes, more government regulation, and litigation, we know drive jobs and opportunity out of this great Nation.

So Republicans have a plan. We will make reforms. They will result in savings and better opportunities for all Americans as opposed to the rhetoric that we have had here on the floor this afternoon. So I am pleased to present those items to the House in response to the rhetoric we have heard.