

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

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

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

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

UNANSWERED QUESTIONS REGARDING ADMINISTRATION PLANS FOR IRAQ

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, today, before the Committee on Armed Services, Secretary Rumsfeld, who has made up his mind, said that the President has not yet made up his mind about a preemptive war and an invasion and occupation of Iraq.

Now, when the Secretary was asked how he reconciled that with the rush to adopt a resolution authorizing the use of force here in the House if the President had not yet made up his mind and could not articulate the case, he really did not answer the question. To tell the truth, I was a bit put off by that, but that is a key question which needs to be answered.

On September 5, I sent the President a letter signed by 17 other Members of the United States House of Representatives. We were pleased that the President had recognized the authority of the Congress, the sole authority of the Congress for declarations of war and use and initiation of force, except in the immediate defense of the United States, as per the Constitution and the War Powers Act; but that we felt that the President had a number of very important questions to answer before Congress should even begin the debate on such a resolution.

I fear they are really putting the cart before the horse here. They want a resolution without making the case. The President gave an eloquent speech at the U.N. last week, but many of the things he talked about, the offenses of Saddam Hussein were in fact things that had happened during the Reagan administration, during the administration of Bush I, in fact, such as the horrible gassing of people within his own country and the U.S. aiding him in his war against Iran before we dropped our friendship and support of his horrible regime. Many of these things took place then.

Then he went on to make the case for the U.N. resolutions which have been violated. We agree there, that this is an odious individual. He is not worthy of leading any nation. He has gassed

and killed his own people, promoted religious and ethnic strife, murdered all his potential political opponents. I wish he could be deported to another planet, but right now, he is in power in his country. Hopefully, some people in his country will find a way to overthrow him and get rid of him.

But the question for us in the United States Congress is, should we authorize the first ever preemptive war in the history of the United States, and what is the immediate and serious nature of the threat that would have us break from all precedents in our history and all the precedents of international law? Those are the questions that are embodied in this letter.

Quite truthfully, thus far in both unclassified and classified briefings, and I cannot talk about what they did talk about in classified briefings, but I can tell Members what they do not talk about in classified briefings. They have not talked about anything in the classified briefings that we have not read in USA Today or heard on CNN, so they have yet to make an effective case that somehow he has been transmogrified from this reprehensible dictator in a mostly impoverished developing or Third World country to this incredible and immediate threat to the integrity of the United States of America.

They can find no links to al Qaeda, who is an immediate threat to the United States of America. In fact, I would say that we are being distracted, as are many of our allies and friends, and not-so-good allies and friends around the world, from the pursuit of al Qaeda and wiping out that threat by propping up suddenly this new threat.

I think a lot of this, unfortunately, is probably left over from his father's administration. Many of the foremost advocates of this preemptive war served in Bush's father's administration, and are aggrieved that they did not then so-called "finish the job."

But the same problems that confronted Colin Powell then confront us now. Probably his military is not that significant; maybe, maybe not. Maybe there will not be a lot of casualties. Maybe this can be done without a lot of civilian casualties. Sure, we can work through all of that. But then what? Then what?

I heard one Senator say that we are going to rule Iraq. We are going to rule Iraq, a country of more than 60 million people with an unbelievably fractious history, in the middle of the most volatile region on Earth, with the problems with the Shi'as and the Sunnis and the Kurds and the Turks and all those other things, and we are going to rule Iraq?

They have to have not only an entrance strategy and a rationale for this war, they need an exit strategy that they have to explain to the American people and this Congress before they should receive any sort of authorization to do anything in that area.

WAR WITH IRAQ

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, there is probably no issue that this House will deal with of the gravity of the one we are facing. Sending this country to war, putting our young people, men and women, in harm's way is a heavy responsibility. It cannot be done on the basis of misinformation.

Some of us who serve here served in the Vietnam era. I dealt with casualties for 2 years coming back from Vietnam. The young men and young women of the Seventh Fleet came to Long Beach Naval Station, where I was the chief psychiatrist. I saw what happens to people in war, so I do not come out here with an easy heart to say, well, let us go off and do this and do that. I think it has to be thought through very carefully what this country is doing, because if we put our people on the line, they have to know what they are doing.

If we say to the world that we can make a preemptive strike, we do not like what that person is doing, and we are not sure exactly what he is doing, but we are pretty sure we do not like what he is doing so we are going to take him out, when this country moves to that point, we are moving into a very dangerous period.

I want to read a quote. It was not said in this body, it was said on the other side: "I believe that history will record that we have made a great mistake in subverting and circumventing the Constitution of the United States. I believe this resolution to be a historic mistake. I believe that within the next century, future generations will look with dismay and great disappointment upon a Congress which is now about to make such a historic mistake."

Now, we went to war in Vietnam with a voice vote in the House of Representatives.

□ 1700

No recorded votes. In the Senate they had a vote. Two Members spoke against it and voted against it. One of them was this speech I just read by Wayne Morse of Oregon. Another Senator voted for it but asked a question. He said, "I do not want to do this because I think we are going to wind up with 500,000 troops on the ground." They went down and asked President Johnson and President Johnson called Gaylord Nelson and said, "Gaylord, for heaven's sake you know I am not going to do anything like that." He lied to him. He lied to him.

And when people tell me they have facts, that they know that there are weapons out there, there are nuclear weapons, that, oh, the United States is in grave danger, we knew what Saddam Hussein was doing with those weapons

when he turned them on the Iranians. We were encouraging him. We did not like this bunch over in Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini and all that bunch. So we said, Hey, Saddam, go get him and we will give you some weapons, and we knew what he was doing.

When this country decides they are going to take out a leader somewhere, one ought to look at history. There was a country called Iran, and the leader was a guy named Mossadegh. He had been elected by the people. He was the Prime Minister elected in Iran. The United States Government did not like him because his politics were kind of a little bit to the wrong direction, whatever that was. So they decided to take him out and install a king. They brought back the Shah of Iran and put him on the throne. So in 1979 things erupted there. Somebody said to me, Well, gee, Jim, we got away with 25 free years. Is that the kind of foreign policy this country wants to pursue? Do we want to say we are going to go to any country and we are going to take out whatever is there and put in our guy and then we will use him? The reason we did not like Mossadegh, the reason we do not like Saddam Hussein, it all has to do with oil, who has control of the oil. Mossadegh was talking about nationalizing. Saddam did. This is not an issue for us to do a regime change, simply on oil. We must be careful.

SEEKING PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PUTNAM). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I think that we all are in agreement that the world and the Iraqi people would be better off if Saddam Hussein were not in power, but I also think we all can agree on the fact that our world would be better off with a peaceful resolution to the current crisis and one which respects the rule of law and the role of the United Nations. That is why I rise tonight, Mr. Speaker, to urge this Congress and our country to renew our commitment to working with the United Nations and our friends and allies to advance peace and security in the Persian Gulf region. We need to act, but we do not have to rush to war. We have alternatives.

We have been told by President Bush and other members of the administration that we have to attack Iraq because our Nation is in imminent danger from Saddam Hussein. However, neither the Congress nor the public have been shown evidence of that or linking Saddam Hussein to 9-11. We have received no proof that Iraq has the means or intent to use weapons of mass destruction against us. We have not been told why the danger is greater today than it was a year or 2 ago or why we must rush to war rather than pursuing other options.

So tomorrow I will introduce a resolution offering a road map to such an alternative. This resolution emphasizes the importance of working through the United Nations to assure Iraq's compliance with U.N. Security Council resolutions and cease-fire agreements and to advance peace and security throughout the region beginning with full unfettered inspections.

During the 1990's, United Nations inspections teams succeeded in destroying tons of weapons in Iraq in spite of Iraq's attempts to obstruct their mission. They were on a search and destroy mission and they accomplished that. Today we need to renew that inspections process in the interest of our own security. We do not know the extent of Iraq's possible development of weapons of mass destruction and thus the extent of risk to us. That is why we need inspections. The President has called on the United Nations to assume its responsibilities. In fact the United Nations was established to deal with just such international crises. So let us work with them to make that happen.

But still on the other hand, the administration and others call for a preemptive first strike against Iraq. The cost of such action would be enormous, starting with a grave risk to American servicemen and women and to Iraqi civilians who will be caught in the crossfire. A preemptive first strike would also seriously damage our relationship with friends and allies, all of whom are strongly opposed to an assault. Statesmen such as Kofi Annan and Nelson Mandela have beseeched us to turn away from this disastrous course. Many Middle Eastern countries that supported the United States in the Gulf War will not support this attack and warn of long-term catastrophic consequences.

Such a war carries enormous cost. The Wall Street Journal estimates that it may cost as much as from 100 to \$200 billion. When we have no proof that Iraq was tied to 9-11 and no proof that we are in imminent danger, why would we rush to spend \$200 billion that could be invested in health care, education, housing, domestic security, and other vital needs here at home? Why are we rushing into a war with such a huge price tag for our foreign relations and our own budget when we have viable and many more effective alternatives? Why would we set such a devastating precedent?

There are what, eight known nuclear powers in the world? At least two of them, India and Pakistan, have long been on edge with each another. According to the doctrine of preemption, either of those countries could launch an attack because they are afraid of what the other might do. Is that the kind of world we want to live in? Is that the precedent that we want to take? We will be setting that. We will be setting this new standard.

President Bush laid out an axis of evil consisting of Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. Which dictator will be next?

Where does preemption end? So the resolution that I will introduce tomorrow resolves that the United States should work through the United Nations to seek a peaceful resolution to the crisis in Iraq through mechanisms such as inspections, negotiation, and regional cooperation. We do not have to go to war. We still have alternatives. It is up to us to pursue them.

Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to cosponsor my resolution and join us in taking this message to the American people.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS FOR AMERICAN SENIORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, there is a lot that is important to the American people that is being lost in the current focus on the situation in Iraq and the administration's plans for regime change and a military invasion. And I want to spend this evening talking about one of those issues that is getting less attention than it deserves.

I am talking about the fact that in my home State of Maine and all across this country, seniors who need prescription drugs in many cases simply cannot afford to buy them. In my office, my district office in Maine, people are coming in all the time, calling on the phone or stepping into the office and basically saying, What can I possibly do? I can no longer afford my prescription drugs.

People who have a Social Security check each month of \$800 to \$1,200 can wind up with \$400, \$500 a month in prescription drug costs, and the math just does not work. They cannot do it. People are, in fact, giving up food in order to buy their medicine or giving up their medicine in order to pay the rent or buy food.

We have been dealing with this problem for years. Back in 1998 I introduced a bill that would provide a 30 percent discount to all Medicare beneficiaries and the cost of all of their prescription drugs at no significant cost to the Federal Government. But the pharmaceutical industry weighed in, lobbied heavily, described the plan as price controls even though it is one that is widely employed by other industrialized nations and nothing has happened on that front.

The Democratic Caucus year after year has proposed a Medicare prescription drug benefit. That is a benefit for Medicare beneficiaries operating in the way that part B of Medicare does, the way doctors, the expenses for physicians is covered, that is, seniors would pay a certain amount per month and get a significant portion of their expenses covered, both by the amount they pay and by contributions from general revenues. Well, that is what we thought ought to appear here.