

murder and oppression that ever existed in Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, your country insists on turning a blind eye to the atrocities and breeding ground for terrorism that fail to occur near the borders of old Europe.

France's continued indifference to the plight of the Iraqi people, its neighbors and those who fall subject to Saddam Hussein's evil rule defies explanation. The atrocities perpetrated under Hussein's regime are well documented by organizations such as Human Rights Watch, the International Federation for Human Rights, Amnesty International, the Coalition for International Justice and even the United Nations. In fact, the former United Nations Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Iraq, Max Van der Stoep, stated that "the brutality of the Iraqi regime was of an exceptionally grave character, so grave that it has few parallels in the years that have passed since the Second World War. . . . It is to comparisons with the obscenity of the Holocaust and Stalin's mass murders that observers are inevitably drawn when confronted with the horrors of Saddam's Iraq. . . This is a state that employs arbitrary execution, imprisonment and torture on a comprehensive and routine basis."

The vile methods of torture inflicted upon Coalition prisoners of the Gulf War, Kuwaitis, Kurds, Sh'iit muslims, Iranians, Turkomans, and anyone else who dares to live a life contrary to the wishes of Saddam Hussein are well documented. Primitive executions, dismemberment, castration, hangings by barbed wire, the raping of women in front of family members and children, burning flesh with acid, finger and toenail extraction, boring holes into bodies with drills and the ignition of gasoline pumped into various orifices of the human body are routine measures employed by Hussein and his henchmen.

Yet France continues to make every effort to block Hussein's removal and protect a despot whose country has the highest number of disappearances and displaced persons in the World. You callously refuse to acknowledge the documented destruction of life and repeated offensive military actions against surrounding countries since the 1970's. Your actions condone the blatant disregard of United Nations resolutions since 1991, and repeatedly make it clear that international law should not be honored. The statements made today and your acquiescence may forever undermine the peaceful objectives that are the foundation of international law and serve to entice future evils.

America will not follow France's lead and remain content to concern ourselves solely with problems that border our country. We will not allow economic investments and resource dependency to impede our future judgments to alleviate the suffering of others. The American people and my colleagues in Congress will not soon forget the rank hypocrisy and blatant disloyalty displayed by your country today, and I am confident that the free people of the world will also refuse to follow your misguided lead.

Sincerely,

CURT WELDON,
Member of Congress.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 7, 2003.

Chancellor GERHARD SCHRÖDER,
Federal Republic of Germany, c/o Embassy of
Germany, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHANCELLOR SCHRÖDER: As a long time friend of the German people and a steadfast facilitator of inter-parliamentary cooperation between our nations, I am compelled to contact you. Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have hosted dozens of Bundestag members, served on the German Caucus and U.S. Congress-German Bundestag Study

Group, and endeavored to strengthen the relations between our great Nations. However, I was outraged today by your Foreign Minister's statements before the United Nations opposing the use of force to uphold the United Nations Charter and the sixteen multilateral resolutions written after the Gulf War cease-fire in 1991. Your government's words and actions have done serious, if not permanent, damage to the once unshakable foundations of the great transatlantic alliance that has served our mutual interests for so long.

Your continued opposition to the use of force to disarm Iraq without the full support of the United Nations is steeped in hypocrisy of such epic proportions, that your sudden reverence for the inviolability of the United Nations is laughable. When the dictator Milosevic threatened western Europe's back door, Germany was entirely content to bypass the United Nations Security Council and take military action. History will forever judge your use of NATO—championing the organization's first offensive action against a non-member—without any attempt to employ the global diplomacy of the United Nations. The actions of your Foreign Minister opposing the dedication of the United States stands in stark contradiction to the practices and motivations of your government in Yugoslavia. In fact, Minister Joschka Fischer himself characterized the Serbian actions as a "declaration of war against the policy of European integration. It is not only a question of morality or of human rights, it is a question of security and stability in Europe." Your opposition sends a disturbing message to future generations that international interference is no longer desired to end genocide, obstruct terrorism or aid a suffering people under a demonic regime. Even more disturbing, is that the efforts to remove the cancer of Slobodan Milosevic could not have been accomplished without the vast majority of coalition troops, air strikes and logistical support dedicated to your effort by the United States. In fact, Germany went to great lengths to have America commit our sons and daughters for this moral purpose, and we dutifully obliged.

I am quite sure that the Foreign Ministers of France and Germany slept soundly while the bombs fell on Kosovo without United Nations approval. Now, the people of Germany are roused to defend the sacred honor of the Security Council, the very same Security Council whose honor they flouted just five years ago. Convenience, not principle, seems to be Germany's guiding compass. Your constant opposition to America's efforts to remove a regime that has continually violated several, if not all of the human rights provisions within the United Nations charter and presents an increasing threat to democracies all over the world is nothing short of appalling. The dictatorship in Iraq far surpasses the practice of murder and oppression that ever existed in Yugoslavia. Nevertheless, your country insists on turning a blind eye to the atrocities and breeding ground for terrorism that fail to occur near the borders of old Europe.

Germany's continued indifference to the plight of the Iraqi people, its neighbors and those who fall subject to Saddam Hussein's evil rule defies explanation. The atrocities perpetrated under Hussein's regime are well documented by organizations such as Human Rights Watch, the International Federation for Human Rights, Amnesty International, the Coalition for International Justice and even the United Nations. In fact, the former United Nations Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Iraq, Max Van der Stoep, stated that "the brutality of the Iraqi regime was of an exceptionally grave char-

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Sincerely,

CURT WELDON,
Member of Congress.

HONORING NAPERVILLE CENTRAL WOMEN'S BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMMONS). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2003, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the Redhawks, the Naperville Central High School women's basketball team, who this weekend brought home the Illinois Class AA State championship.

Under the leadership of Head Coach Andy Nussbaum, the Redhawks on Saturday tipped Chicago Fenwick in overtime, 63-59, to capture the school's first State title and the number seven ranking in the latest national rankings as compiled by USA Today.

Who are the Redhawks? They are Rachel Crissy, Seanna O'Malley, Lauren Grochowski, Megan McNaughton, Britany Utrata, Liz Lawdensky, Tiffany Hudson, Courtney Peters, Erica Carter,

Denise Hill, Candace Parker, Megan Martin, Meredith Daniels, Christina Sahly, Molly Glanz, and Tara Hester.

Mr. Speaker, all of Illinois, and especially the city of Naperville, are proud of the girls' accomplishments, none of which is more impressive than posting an unblemished 35-0 record. This was the first perfect season for a Class AA women's championship team since 1998.

As many people in Illinois and across the Nation know, not so long ago the women Redhawks would not have had the chance to even lace up their sneakers. Thanks to the passage of title IX in 1972, young women and girls throughout America have come to benefit from the opportunities enjoyed for so long by young men and boys in America. It has enabled young women to participate in school sports, to learn the value of teamwork and competition, and to gain the self-confidence and skills that are so valuable in business and in other future careers.

Congratulations, Redhawks; and let me say, look out Redhawks opponents in 2004. Coach Nussbaum returns four starters, including the top junior player in the Nation, Candace Parker.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: "Lord, my refuge, my stronghold, my God in whom I trust."

When the winds of distress swirl around us, Lord, or unsettling times demand determination, Members of Congress, as any of us in America, want to take refuge. We may seek refuge in consultation as we look for support from others. Or we may be tempted to blame others for our troubles. Rather than take refuge in excuses or in the shadow of others, we need to stand resolutely ourselves, claim You, O Lord, as our sure refuge, and act responding to Your guidance.

When as a Nation or as individuals our security is shaken or our vulnerability revealed, we may, like Adam, want to hide. We may be tempted to think the firing power of weapons is our greatest strength, or the power of money will protect us. But in all the battles that are fought, You alone, O God, are a lasting stronghold.

So it is: in God we trust now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. TURNER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TURNER of Ohio led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ALTERNATIVE TO WAR

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, last week a Defense Department spokesman announced that the United States is preparing to use landmines in Iraq. What an insult to the 146 countries brave enough to sign the Landmine Treaty which forbids the use of landmines. Embarrassingly, the United States is not a signatory.

Landmines do not know the difference between a soldier and a child.

Instead of killing children, we need to educate them. Instead of seeding Iraq with explosives, we should plant seeds of peace and well-being worldwide. Instead of using landmines in Iraq, we should be cleaning up landmines in Afghanistan.

Madam Speaker, the use of landmines is a step in the wrong direction. There are alternatives to war. Our problem is we have not prepared for them.

HONORING PRISON FELLOWSHIP

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, in the 1990s we realized that tough sentencing for criminals reduced crime rates. But this year alone, roughly 600,000 of those prisoners will be released; and statistics show that over 60 percent of these parolees will return to prison within 2 years.

To combat this trend, Prison Fellowship, a faith-based group, was formed and began to offer job-skills training, drug treatment, and the opportunity to cultivate character and faith. The results have been dramatic. Just 8 percent of their participants have returned to prison within 2 years. It simply produces productive rehabilitated members of society.

But the forces of the left seek to undo the progress by suing Prison Fel-

lowship. Americans United for the Separation of Church and State have sued them because of this. The left needs to learn that faith-based programs work many times better than government programs. They are seeking to build a more healthy society.

UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FOR U.S. TROOPS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. ISRAEL. Madam Speaker, over the weekend I joined with hundreds of Marines in my congressional district as they prepared to deploy to the Middle East. Many of their families asked me whether the American people will support them. They asked whether the polls that they read about reflect a lack of support for those who may be asked to fight for our freedoms in the Middle East.

Madam Speaker, I support the use of force, but I understand that there is a diversity of opinion on this issue. In America we have the right to agree, the right to disagree, the right to remain silent; but let no one believe for a moment that there is any division with respect to supporting our troops. Republicans and Democrats will go and fight for our freedoms abroad and Republicans and Democrats will stand by them at home. We cannot forget our support of those brave men and women, and I know that this Congress will not forget that for a moment.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

RECOGNIZING THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE ADMISSION OF OHIO INTO THE UNION AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF OHIO RESIDENTS TO THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. TURNER of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 122) recognizing the bicentennial of the admission of Ohio into the Union and the contributions of Ohio residents to the economic, social, and cultural development of the United States.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 122

Whereas Ohio residents will celebrate 2003 as the 200th anniversary of Ohio's admission into the Union;