

VOICES OF CRITICISM

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, this week has reminded us that war is serious business. Each day we see our brave soldiers on TV making great progress against Saddam Hussein and his brutal regime. Now, more than ever, the troops need our support and encouragement.

Mr. Speaker, we should stay united behind our troops. Our troops do not need to hear criticism of their mission from this body or this Capitol. When their Nation's leaders question their mission, I can tell you, as a combat veteran, it is discouraging. It is tough to stay focused when the leaders you look to for strength are not in your corner.

Most people disregard professional protestors, especially when they see their placards saying "capitalism is the problem." But when they hear their leaders criticizing their mission to liberate the people of Iraq from a brutal tyrant and his thugs who rule by terror, that is disheartening.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to stop making our Capitol building a platform to criticize the war and our troops. That only hurts our troops in the field.

"PORKER OF THE WEEK" AWARD GOES TO DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, the Department of Energy recently hosted a flea market. They sold 23 trucks worth \$448,000 for 17 cents each, a \$9,000 copier for a nickel, and a drilling rig for \$50,000. The sales also included motor homes, laboratory equipment, and cranes.

The sales were made under a Federal program intended to promote economic development in communities around Energy Department sites by selling surplus property to nonprofit organizations. But they sold all of this property to one single organization, the NTS Development Corporation of Las Vegas, which bought the drilling rig, paid a subcontractor \$71,000 to inspect and clean it, and then sold the rig for \$248,000 to an equipment broker in Texas. The equipment broker now has the rig listed for sale for \$3.9 million.

While it is certainly a worthwhile endeavor for the Energy Department to promote its host communities, it is an appalling lack of judgment to sell pieces of equipment for millions of dollars below market value. The Department of Energy gets my "Porker of the Week" Award.

HONORING CRAIG DURFEY FOR HIS FIGHT AGAINST AUTISM

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Craig Durfey for his tireless work in the fight against autism.

Craig is the founder of Parents for the Rights of Developmentally Disabled Children. As a father of children with autism, he knows firsthand the difficulties that come with dealing with this dreaded disease.

Today autism is a national crisis that affects nearly 1.5 million children. According to recent studies, as many as one in every 250 children born today will be diagnosed with autism. Autism costs the Nation between \$20 billion and \$60 billion annually, and the projection for the next 10 years will be that it will cost \$400 billion.

Autistic children go to doctors three times more often than normal children, and many times families must travel hundreds of miles to see a knowledgeable doctor that understands autism.

Craig has been working tirelessly to provide funding for programs in my community and in the Nation that would train social service and law enforcement personnel on how to identify children with this type of disability.

I applaud Craig for his efforts, and I will continue to work on his behalf with my colleagues in the Congressional Coalition for Autism Research and Education to increase funding for ideas like Craig's and to find a cure for autism.

REMEMBERING OUR AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

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

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, as our collective attention and focus is on the war in Iraq, it is critically important that we remember our troops who are prisoners of war. Allow me to read the names of these brave men and women who are now enduring life as a POW:

Patrick Miller, age 23, from Park City, Kansas;

Ronald D. Young, Jr., age 26, from Lithia Springs, Georgia;

David S. Williams, age 30, from Orlando, Florida;

Joseph Hudson, age 23, from Alamogordo, New Mexico;

Shoshana Johnson, age 30, from Fort Bliss, Texas;

Edgar Hernandez, age 21, from Mission, Texas; and

James Joseph Riley, age 31, from Pennsauken, New Jersey.

Mr. Speaker, these soldiers are again proving that freedom is not free. May we all as Americans remember these brave men and women and pray for

their families, their safety and their rapid return.

□ 1015

SUPREME COURT TO RULE ON AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

(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. Mr. Speaker, there is not a morning or a day, in light of the raging winds of war that our young men and women are facing in faraway places, that one sometimes may wonder about the importance of the work of this body. So I rise this morning to again ask our Nation to be reminded of those brave young men and women, those who are fighting, as well as those who tragically have now lost their lives and their mourning families and, as well, the POWs who are waiting to return home to their loved ones.

It seems almost that we should step aside from issues dealing with ordinary life. But I might ask, Mr. Speaker, that as our brave troops are fighting for freedom, and we respect and honor them, that on April 1, 2003, the Supreme Court will hear what I believe will be the most challenging civil rights argument in the last 50 years. Many of those troops are impacted by this argument, and that is the decision of whether or not to make affirmative action unconstitutional.

Affirmative action, as we know, is not a handout or a quota, but simply an opportunity to outreach to the many wonderfully diverse communities in this Nation so that our young people can sit in classrooms where they might learn from each other.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed in the administration for its position on affirmative action, and I believe as well that we must stand and be counted for the civil rights for all Americans. I hope the Supreme Court will respond accordingly.

HONORING OUR TROOPS

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

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to our men and women in uniform. Thousands of miles from home in an unfamiliar land, these men and women fight for a cause much larger than themselves.

The men and women of the United States Armed Forces fighting in Iraq do so for freedom. They fight to protect the freedoms of their fellow Americans and to gain freedom and liberty for the tired and the poor and the downtrodden masses that have lived under the shadow of Saddam Hussein's tyrannical reign for decades.

As the President said about Hussein's reign this past Tuesday, "We are fighting an enemy that knows no rules of

law that will wear civilian uniforms, that is willing to kill in order to continue the reign of fear of Saddam Hussein. But we are fighting with bravery and courage."

Mr. Speaker, I believe today that there are no Democrats, there are no Republicans in support of our troops; there are only Americans, praying for their quick victory and their speedy return home to their loved ones.

Mr. Speaker, I thank them for their sacrifices in America's time of need.

REVIEWS IN ON FCC DECISION REGARDING RULES GOVERNING TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

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

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, the reviews are in on the February 20 FCC decision on the rules governing the Nation's telecommunications companies, and they are not good. Specifically, the reviews state that the requirements to make the RBOCs networks and systems available on an unbundled and subsidized basis are unsound.

For many Members of this Chamber, economists, and industry observers, the FCC's proceeding was an opportunity to provide clear rules and regulatory rationality to an industry sector that has tumbled in recent years with job losses and reduced capital investments, which has affected a manufacturer in my district.

Unfortunately, from these reviews on this decision, the FCC has failed miserably in their attempt to revitalize this necessary industry.

Has this industry not suffered enough? Two trillion dollars of market cap, half a million telecommunications jobs lost, and \$800 billion in debt have gone away. Hardware equipment and software manufacturers are stumbling.

The FCC has taken a mess and made it harder to clean up. Somebody has to fix this: Congress, the courts, maybe even a miracle itself from the FCC.

PRESIDENT SHOULD DEFER TAX CUTS

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

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, I want to make one appeal to the President and my Republican colleagues, and Democrats as well. We are a few days away, if not a few weeks away, from debating a tax cut bill that all of us wish and desire, for all of those here and those watching, could receive at home. We have one problem, though.

We have committed some 300,000 and, if the papers are to be believed this morning, an additional 30,000 troops will be deployed overseas. The President has his hands full, as does the national security team, in defining our

goals clearly in Iraq. Yet their domestic team continues to try to advance an enormous tax cut, which all of us again want.

The problem we face is we have States that are struggling, we have a budget that is out of balance, we have a war that needs to be paid for, and we have all of our domestic needs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the President in the most humble of ways: defer your tax cut, defer new spending. Let us do two things first: one, help the States; and, two, pay for this war. After that, all of the tax cuts and stimulus and spending programs that all of us may want, let us consider those things in that context.

I say to the President: defer your tax cuts, sir, and help our States.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). Members are reminded to address the Chair and not the President.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 1104.

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

There was no objection.

CHILD ABDUCTION PREVENTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). Pursuant to House Resolution 160 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 1104.

□ 1021

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 1104) to prevent child abduction, and for other purposes, with Mr. UPTON in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 22½ minutes; and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) and the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) each will control 7½ minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, sexual predators target America's children every day in

large cities, small towns, and even in cyberspace. Sexual exploitation of children, a prime motive for kidnapping, is on the rise. When it comes to abduction, rape, and murder of children, the United States must have a zero tolerance policy.

H.R. 1104, the Child Abduction Prevention Act, is comprehensive legislation that directly and forcefully addresses these heinous crimes. The bill is virtually identical to H.R. 5422, which overwhelmingly passed the House last October by a vote of 390 to 24. Like so many other meritorious bills sent to the other body in the last Congress, this legislation was allowed to die by the Democrat leadership.

An abducted child is a parent's worst nightmare. We must ensure that law enforcement has every possible tool necessary to try to recover a missing child quickly and safely. H.R. 1104 not only gets the word out after a kidnapping, but it also takes strong steps to prevent them from occurring in the first place. The bill strengthens penalties against kidnapping and aids law enforcement agencies to effectively prevent, investigate, and prosecute crimes against children.

Prompt public alerts of an abducted child could be the difference between life and death for that innocent victim. Recognizing this, the bill codifies the AMBER Alert program currently in place in the Departments of Justice and Transportation and authorizes increased funding to help States deploy child abduction communications warning networks.

For those individuals that would harm a child, we must ensure that punishment is severe, and that sexual predators are not allowed to slip through the cracks of a system and harm other children.

To this end, this legislation provides a 20-year mandatory minimum sentence of imprisonment for nonfamilial abductions of a child under the age of 18, lifetime supervision for sex offenders, and mandatory life imprisonment for second-time offenders. Furthermore, H.R. 1104 removes any statute of limitations and opportunity for pretrial release for crimes of child abduction and sex offenses.

Those who abduct children are often serial offenders who have already been convicted of similar offenses. Sex offenders and child molesters are four times more likely than other violent criminals to recommit their crimes. This number demands attention, especially in light of the fact that a single child molester, on average, destroys the lives of over 100 children. In response, H.R. 1104 provides judges with the discretion to impose lifetime supervision upon such offenders.

The bill also fights against an industry supporting one of the fastest growing areas of international criminal activity. The sex tourism industry obtains its victims through kidnapping and trafficking of women and children. These women and children are then