

the system a short time, using moneys from the general fund, and I think that is reasonable. We have got to have that kind of an insurance program. So part of their Social Security taxes are insurance. That part of the insurance that is spread across America to all workers should not be touched and should not be changed and, in fact, should be guaranteed, if necessary, for money coming out of the general fund.

Six principles of saving Social Security: protect current and future beneficiaries; allow freedom of choice, and that means that if they do not want to go into any private investment account, they do not have to. We can have a program that if they do go into those investment accounts, they can be guaranteed as least as much as Social Security would otherwise pay them.

Preserve the safety net. Preserve the safety net for beneficiaries, preserve the safety net to make sure that nobody in America is going to be impoverished and have less than they would have had under the old Social Security program. Make Americans better off, not worse off. We can do that if we start getting a real return on investment of that money coming in from Social Security and create a fully funded system and no more tax increases. If anything, let us start working at taking less money out of the worker's pocket to accommodate the Social Security system in this country, and we can do that. We can do that by getting a real return and a better return instead of taking all the surplus dollars that are coming in and spending them for other government programs.

I will be introducing my Social Security bill in 1 month when we come back, and that legislation is going to deal with some problems that we now have in Social Security. It is going to deal with more fairness to women. It is going to provide that women that decide to stay home with kids under 6 years can accrue benefits at the average of their total working career for those years that they stay home with children under six. It is going to provide an increase in benefits for surviving spouses that now are asked to live on one income instead of two incomes if their husband dies.

Several other provisions that we are looking at suggest that if they do have a personal savings account and they select the option to have a personal savings account, they would add what the wife makes in terms of 12.4 percent of her income that is allowed to be put in a personal savings account, add what goes into the personal savings account from the man and the wife and add them together and divide by two so each spouse has an equal amount in that personal retirement savings account.

Madam Speaker, I think the legislation is going to be interesting and challenging. I hope we can move ahead with real debate and not demagoguery.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2799, DEPARTMENTS OF COMMERCE, JUSTICE AND STATE, THE JUDICIARY, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. LINDER (during the special order of Mr. SMITH of Michigan) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-226) on the resolution (H. Res. 326) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2799) making appropriations for the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2800, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, EXPORT FINANCING, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. LINDER (during the special order of Mr. SMITH of Michigan) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-227) on the resolution (H. Res. 327) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2800) making appropriations for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2004, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

#### IRAQ WATCH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. HARRIS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. HOEFFEL) is recognized for half the time remaining before midnight as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. HOEFFEL. Madam Speaker, for 6 or 7 weeks a number of us have been coming to the floor to talk about our role in Iraq. We are calling ourselves the Iraq Watch, and we are back tonight. We are back with some of the challenges regarding Iraq fresh in the news. And I am joined by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) coming as well as part of our four Iraq Watchers, the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL). I believe there will be others joining us as well this evening.

We are dedicated to the propositions of asking questions, seeking answers about what is happening in Iraq, trying to suggest policy changes that would improve the situation and certainly reporting back information to the American people.

Two of us voted in favor of the military authority sought by the President last fall, myself included. Two of us did not. All of us, of course, were told, as were the American people and Mem-

bers of Congress, we were told with great certainty that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and was trying mightily to develop more. And there is no question that in the past Hussein had such weapons. He used them in murderous ways against his own civilians and against innocent Iranian civilians in the past. None of that is in any doubt.

But it is becoming more and more clear as time goes by that last fall there were those in the White House and in senior levels of the administration and the President himself who, in my opinion, exaggerated the threat of the weapons of mass destruction in order to win support in Congress and in the country for the invasion of Iraq.

It is now known that our intelligence agencies were reporting to the White House and to the Pentagon with significant uncertainty and with serious doubts about certain aspects of the weapons of mass destruction program in Iraq; notably, the September, 2002, Defense Intelligence Agency report and the October, 2002, National Intelligence Estimate, both of which have been discussed in the news. I have reviewed parts of both of those which are classified documents in the custody of the intelligence agency.

It is interesting to note that the administration itself declassified some of the National Intelligence Estimate last week to try to prove their point that there was a legitimate threat from Iraq, and most analysts have concluded that that release of that information actually pointed out once again how many doubts and how much lack of certainty was being expressed by our intelligence professionals, but that information being used by the White House and the Pentagon civilian leadership with no uncertainty, with nothing but certainty in terms of trying to sell their case.

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So let me just make a couple of quick points before yielding time to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT).

Because of the recent disclosures regarding the intelligence gathering by our professionals and the use that that intelligence was used for by the administration, I am joining others in calling for the creation of an independent commission, something the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) has talked about for weeks here on the floor, an independent commission, a nonpartisan or bipartisan commission, that would be above politics, to investigate both the accuracy of the gathering of intelligence regarding weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and the uses of that intelligence by the administration.

We clearly won an important military victory in Iraq due to the brave and courageous fighting of our young men and young women in uniform, but I do not think that our military mission is complete until we have a full