

General Washburn wrote, "There is daily crowded upon my vision so much novelty and wonder which should be brought to the notice of the world and which, so far as my individual effort is concerned, will be lost to it if I do not record the incidents of each day's travel, that I am determined to do so and omit no details."

Images like this, at the base of the Upper Falls in Yellowstone, bespeak the extraordinary glory and splendor that General Washburn experienced in his expedition, and my family certainly experienced in ours.

Of course, here are the geysers, not just Old Faithful, captured here memorably by my 11-year old son, but literally dozens of active geysers described by General Washburn as a geyser "exposed to the sun, whose sparkling rays fill the ponderous column with what appear to be the clippings of a thousand rainbows." So it was on September 19, 1870, and so it is today.

But my greatest memory came, as it does for many Americans, at a place called Inspiration Point. It is a place, perhaps the very best view of the falls and the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. It was there in August of 1870 that General Washburn wrote of this very picture and image, Mr. Speaker, "The place where I obtained the best and most terrible view of the canyon was a narrow projecting point situated two miles from the lower fall. Standing there, rather lying there for greater safety, I thought how utterly impossible it would be to describe to another the sensations inspired by such a presence. As I took in this scene, I realized my own littleness, my helplessness, my dread exposure to destruction, my inability to cope with or even comprehend the mighty architecture of nature." August 1870.

These visions inspired General Washburn's expedition, and they inspired the expedition of the Pence family this August and my young son, an amateur photographer.

But as I close, Mr. Speaker, in the words of General Washburn when he left Yellowstone he wrote, "We are all overwhelmed with astonishment and wonder at what we have seen, and we feel we have been near the very presence of the Almighty."

And so it is that as Americans in this generation, as in the past and in the future, because of the contribution of the National Park Service and its extraordinary stewards in the Yellowstone Park of Montana and Wyoming, Americans of this next century and every century, it is my hope, will be able to feel that same great presence amidst His great architecture of nature.

TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT IRAQ

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, 165 years ago in this House of Representa-

tives, John Quincy Adams came to the floor of the House to share letters from his constituents, letters which allowed him to speak about an issue that the House rules prohibited him from speaking about.

Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives in 1838, 1840, and 1842 passed a rule prohibiting, banning, a discussion of slavery, the biggest blemish in American history, prohibiting the discussion of slavery, banning the slavery debate from the floor of the House of Representatives. As a result, John Quincy Adams, former President, then Member of Congress in those years, came to the House floor and read letters from various constituents, organizations in his Massachusetts district and throughout the State of Massachusetts.

Today we see something perhaps not quite as serious, but pretty serious, and that is the questions of whether President Bush told us the truth about Iraq, about the weapons of mass destruction, about Saddam Hussein's and Iraq's links to al Qaeda, and the focus the President has lost from the war on terrorism by attacking another country, as bad as Saddam Hussein was, attacking another country and not 'fessing up to the American people the real story.

□ 1945

So because the President, this leadership, and this Congress will not let us really investigate what, in fact, happened, what the President said, what the truth is, I am reading letters tonight from constituents all over Ohio brought to us by an organization called MoveOn.org. MoveOn.org has received almost half a million signatures of people asking for this investigation. And about 100,000 of those petitioners to MoveOn have sent letters to the United States Congress, and I would like to share some of those letters from citizens in my State concerned about investigating how it is that we ended up in Iraq.

From Lorain, Ohio, in my district, a petitioner writes, "Our leaders must respect our democracy. If our leaders lie or mislead their own people to support military action and to make an immense change in foreign policy, this greatly undermines our country. Saddam Hussein was evil, to be sure. Maybe we should have gone ahead with this invasion, but that decision should have been based on accurate reporting by the leaders and not by deceiving the American people."

From Cleveland, Ohio: "United States citizens, particularly the families of soldiers in Iraq, deserve to know the truth about whatever intelligence did or did not exist regarding weapons of mass destruction in Iraq and support for terrorism by Saddam Hussein prior to the war and about whether or not that intelligence was falsely represented to Congress and the American people to make the case for war."

From Marion, Ohio: "It is time for the Oval Office to quit hiding behind

false and misleading information. We were wrong to invade Iraq. Please help to spread honesty in the Federal Government."

From Cincinnati, Ohio: "I am very concerned about what led our government to undertake war in Iraq. Clearly the threat of imminent danger to the U.S. and her citizens was trumped up. It is an extremely serious situation which has led to the loss of over 150 American soldiers and thousands of Iraqi citizens, mostly civilians."

From Cleveland Heights, Ohio: "There is no graver abuse of trust than a leader who deceives his fellow citizens into sacrificing themselves, their sons and their daughters in the name of protecting their liberty. These charges are too serious not to pursue until every question is answered."

From Loveland, Ohio: "This is a very important issue. Our credibility in the world is already at grave risk. We can restore it in part by taking this misinformation seriously and tracking down the process that led to erroneous statements by Colin Powell to the United Nations and by President Bush in his State of the Union address. I implore you to consider the image in a non-partisan light and support an independent investigation."

From Columbus, Ohio: "As a decorated combat veteran and the parent of a currently-serving member of the U.S. Navy, both status that is not shared with many administration officials or Members of Congress, I gather, I am particularly concerned that there be no hint that our military forces are being used primarily for political ends." That was from Columbus.

From Cincinnati, Ohio: "As a daughter and sister of veterans, I am appalled that soldiers may have been lied to about the reasons they were sent to Iraq. Please support an independent, nonpartisan investigation to get to the truth of the administration's call to arms."

From Granville, Ohio: "It was obvious at the time that the Bush and Blair administrations were playing fast and loose with the facts in order to drum up support for a war they had wanted to wage since September 11. It is time that the American people and British citizens, as well as people of the world, learn the facts."

Mr. Speaker, these are letters from constituents in Ohio.

TAX RELIEF PROVEN TO STIMULATE THE ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARTER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, in late July Congress recessed and the Republicans headed back to their districts amid a firestorm of criticism from the left for passing record levels of tax relief.

Democratic candidates for President issued blistering condemnations of tax