

enough. There was no mention of weapons of mass destruction. Bush continued to equate Iraq with al Qaeda terrorists even though there is no factual basis for the charge. Then he asked us for another \$87 billion to bail him out, and I am sure this is only the beginning. President Bush will be back asking for more.

How much is \$87 billion, Sue writes. For that amount of money, America could solve the school budget crisis in every one of our communities and provide health insurance for every uninsured American child for 15 years, provide food for all six million of the children who die from hunger around the world for the next 7 years. Sue from Elyria, Ohio.

Ted from Lorraine, Ohio, where I live, asked about the \$87 billion more for the invasion of Iraq. He writes, What happened to the \$69 billion he spent already? Was it all given to Haliburton, the "no bid" contractor and friend of the President's? Why does not Congress write into the law giving him money that no contracts be let without fair and open bidding? His concern for the people of Iraq is heartwarming, but what of us, Americans who pay him and are suffering from a terrible loss of jobs and income? What of our schools and our roads and our bridges and constitutional rights under the Bill of Rights? Not a word from the President on that.

Jack from North Royalton, Ohio, writes, I believe that we, the American public, were manipulated by misleading statements by President Bush in order to gain support for a war in Iraq. This war is costing the American people billions of dollars. More importantly, it is costing the lives of American military personnel. This war has cost America the friendship and respect of law-abiding Nations. This is a sad period for America and for Americans. The Bush administration should be held accountable. President Clinton's lies were about a personal sexual matter. President Bush's lies are about an international issue.

Matt from Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, writes, The costly war, which has not ended, has cost thousands of civilian lives and hundreds of American military lives. It has not improved national security. It has weakened it. It was evident, Matt writes, as the administration danced around looking for reasons to attack Iraqi men, women and children that there were conflicts of interest between members of the administration and the possible reasons for going to war.

These are five or six of the literally the thousands of letters, hundreds of thousands around the Nation that we are receiving questioning what we are doing in Iraq, wanting a plan on how we are going to get out.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would like to remind all Mem-

bers to avoid personally offensive references to the President of the United States.

#### REPORT ON IRAQ

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago I had the privilege of visiting Iraq with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS), the Committee on Government Reform chairman. I am not a member of that committee, but he kindly let me accompany them.

Mr. Speaker, when I returned to this country I will have to tell my colleagues I wondered if I had gotten off a plane on the wrong planet or if my jet lag was particularly bad. I turned on the evening news and listened to one of the national news anchors, and his comments about Iraq were such that I did not recognize the country that I had just left.

Mr. Speaker, I want to tell my colleagues tonight about what I did see while I was there. It is a good story, and it is a story the American people need to hear, and unfortunately, it is a story the American people are not hearing as we have heard evidence tonight by the comments on the other side.

General Conway of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force in Babylon told our group that what has happened in Iraq is a vivid success story. The Iraqis are not concerned that we will stay too long; they are more concerned that we will leave too soon.

Mr. Speaker, when we flew into Baghdad that first morning, I was struck by how normal life is in Baghdad. The markets are full. There are cars on the street. In fact, we encountered a couple of traffic jams. Satellite dishes have appeared on the rooftops of the apartments and houses in Baghdad, and Mr. Speaker, bear in mind that 4 or 5 months ago, possession of a satellite dish was punishable by a year in prison, and now 25 to 30 percent of the homes have satellite dishes. These are people who are hungry for knowledge, who are hungry for information.

The schools completed their school year. Agriculture in this country, in spite of the combat phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Just at the end of August, they had completed the wheat harvest up by Tikrit, an area that looks very similar to Kansas for all I could tell. Perhaps the Kansas of 150 years ago, but nevertheless it looked very similar to Kansas.

From a military standpoint, the combat phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom was prosecuted brilliantly, and Mr. Speaker, I would point out probably more humanely than any other military exercise in the history of the world. There is no remaining strategic threat, that is to be sure Iraq is still a dangerous country, but the Iraqi military is not going to reconstitute under Saddam Hussein and attack our forces.

Stabilization is currently the goal of our military operation, to find, contain and kill those who would hurt our troops or harm innocent Iraqi citizens.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to point out a picture that I took while I was over. This was actually taken in Tikrit in one of Saddam's old palaces. The men and women of the 4th Infantry Division, that is a Fort Hood division out of Texas, had this graphic up there to illustrate how 42 of the 54 most wanted of the former Iraqi regime are no longer a threat to the Iraqi people or the American people: Saddam's regime is gone and will not be back, can you hear me now.

Mr. Speaker, as far as the police force in Iraq is concerned, we are just now 2 years and 5 days after the 9/11 disaster, and many of us got to know Bernard Kerik on our TV screens, the police commissioner from New York City who presided over the New York Police Department during 9/11. He has been a miracle worker in Iraq. He has gone from zero to 35 precinct stations in a mere 14 weeks' time. He has stood up 37,000 Iraqi policemen and expects to have 65,000 more by next May.

Mr. Speaker, to sum up, I would like to just illustrate the 90 days of progress that have happened in Iraq. The schools have completed their academic year and completed testing and indeed will be starting, if they are not already started, a new school year this September. Over 90 percent of the major cities and towns in Iraq have functioning city councils and town councils. Over 500,000 Iraqis are contributing to their own security and border security. Prisons are on the verge of reopening, and the judicial system is up and functioning. Food distribution occurred throughout the combat phase and afterward. No humanitarian crisis grew as a result of the combat in Iraq.

Hospitals remained open and functional. To be sure, they leave a lot to be desired, but nevertheless, they remained open and most importantly to me, four and a quarter million children have been immunized since last May.

Mr. Speaker, I would point out in this 90 days of progress, none of these things were in place in Kosovo a full year after that major military operation ended.

I would like to point out some of the things that I saw within the health care industry in Iraq, which was particularly important to me as a physician. There has been no health care infrastructure improvement in Iraq for over 30 years. Pharmaceuticals manufactured in Iraq were useless, and we juxtapose this with the opulence of the palaces and the poverty of the hospitals. Mr. Speaker, this was a man who needed to be removed and deserved to be removed.