

may have voted against the ruling popular party in the belief that its support for the Iraq war was responsible for Spain being targeted by al Qaeda.

If, indeed, as this Member believes, al Qaeda carried out these terrorist attacks just 3 days before a national election in order to affect the results of the election, it would be an extremely troubling development. We already know that al Qaeda aims to kill our people and cripple our economies. It is, furthermore, extraordinarily disturbing that this group seems to be targeting governments friendly to the United States in order to bring them down.

An editorial in the Omaha World-Herald yesterday declared that, "The Spanish voters, in their sorrow and anger, have broadcast exactly the wrong signal: terrorism works."

Mr. Speaker, if anyone in Europe believes that standing on the sidelines will somehow protect them from al Qaeda, they are wrong. Europe was a target of al Qaeda even before 9/11 and the Iraq war, and it remains a target of al Qaeda. The response to terrorism cannot be a quest for neutrality. It cannot be the pursuit of a nonaggression pact or a *modus vivendi* with al Qaeda. This is not possible.

The only response can be a reaffirmation of a commitment to strenuously work together within Europe and within the Atlantic Alliance to root out the terrorists in our midst and to destroy their ability to operate throughout the world.

Fortunately, we see indications from our European allies that this will be their response. Already officials in European countries and in the European Union are stepping up their efforts to improve cooperation against terrorist groups and strengthen legislation against terrorism.

However, that inclination, apparently, is not shared by Romano Prodi, the President of the European Commission, which is the executive bureaucracy of the EU. On Monday, Mr. Prodi said, "It is clear that using force is not the answer to resolving the conflict with terrorists."

This outrageous, wrong-headed comment is the worst thing an EU official could have said in response to the terrorist attacks in Spain.

Instead of vowing to redouble efforts to defeat al Qaeda in the mountains of Afghanistan, the head of the European Commission advocates appeasement and surrender to those who orchestrated the massacre of innocents in Madrid.

If the terrorists were encouraged by their apparent success at influencing the Spanish elections, they must be ecstatic that high-ranking officials like Mr. Prodi want to pursue a separate, dishonorable accommodation with terrorists.

In an article in yesterday's Washington Post, Robert Kagan offered a withering critique of Mr. Prodi's comments.

Mr. Kagan wrote, "Al Qaeda seeks to divide Europe and the United States not just in Iraq, but in the overall struggle. It seeks to convince

Europeans that not only the use of force in Iraq was mistaken, but that the use of force against terrorism in general is mistaken and futile—just as Prodi is arguing. Are Europeans prepared to grant all of al Qaeda's conditions in exchange for a promise of security? Thoughts of Munich and 1938 come to mind."

And Mr. Kagan recognizes that the policy of weakness advocated by Mr. Prodi will only encourage the terrorists. "Responsible heads in Europe must understand that anything that smacks of retreat in the aftermath of this latest attack could raise the likelihood of further attacks," Mr. Kagan wrote.

Surprisingly, a more realistic European assessment of the motivations and goals of these terrorists came from the French newspaper *Le Monde*.

Never known for sharing a worldview with the Bush Administration, *Le Monde* on Monday noted that these terrorists "attack democratic societies because of what they are: open, flexible, respectful of the rule of law," and for them "the only measure of success is killing as many people as possible."

Mr. Speaker, America must stand by our Spanish allies and all of our European allies in this struggle against terrorism. We extend our sympathy to the families of those killed in the Madrid bombings, to those injured, and to the Spanish people. And we reaffirm our commitment to work together to defeat the perpetrators of this terrible crime.

Mr. Speaker, at this point I will insert into the RECORD the Omaha World-Herald article.

[From the Omaha World-Herald, Mar. 16, 2004]

WRONG SIGNAL

Spain's change of leadership can be viewed as saying that terrorism works.

The surprise is not that Spain's prime minister-elect figures on pulling his nation's troops out of Iraq. He had made that pledge during the campaign. The surprise is that he was elected.

Spaniards have a long history of bravery verging on stubbornness. So it is unsettling to see them give at least a surface appearance of knuckling under to terrorism. Prior to last week's death-dealing bombings aboard Spanish trains, national polls had strongly suggested that Mariano Rajoy, candidate of the incumbent Popular Party, would be elected prime minister.

Then evidence increasingly pointed to the likelihood that Islamic fundamentalists—quite possible al-Qaida—were responsible for the bombings. After that, enough popular votes shifted to swing the Socialist Party into the parliamentary majority. That will make José Radríguez Zapatero prime minister.

In campaigning, Zapatero vowed to make fighting terror his "most immediate priority." He has a strange way of showing it. The signal being sent here, intentionally or not, is that radicals can gain advantage by murdering hundreds of innocent people.

There may be some wiggle room in all this. What Zapatero has specifically said is that he will pull out his nation's troops on June 30 unless, by then, the United Nations has taken charge in Iraq. That brings to the forefront what is meant by "take charge."

The occupying forces intend to hand political control of Iraq to an interim government on July 1, and there is ample evidence that the United Nations will embrace that change. Moreover, substantial U.N. involvement in peacekeeping would be widely welcomed. But expecting the international body

to actually run the show is unrealistic. It isn't staffed to handle the task.

Spain's withdrawal from Iraq would be symbolic, in that its troops number less than 1 percent of international forces there. But in such matters, symbolism is important. It's true that about 90 percent of Spaniards opposed their nation's involvement in Iraq. But that opposition appears to have taken on added weight after the bombs went off.

The world weeps with Spain, which suffered a terrible blow. But the Spanish voters, in their sorrow and anger, have broadcast exactly the wrong signal: Terrorism works. It's enough to make you wonder what nation might be next.

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

(Mr. MOORE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

WASHINGTON WASTE WATCH

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

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to offer an update from the Washington Waste Watch. Every year the Federal Government wastes billions of dollars as a result of overpayments of government agencies, misuse of government credit cards, abuse of the Federal entitlement programs, and the mismanagement of the Federal bureaucracy. The waste exists in every program in every agency, in every Department of the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, let me share a few examples with you. Accounting errors prevented the Department of Agriculture from being able to account for \$5 billion of its receipts and expenditures. The Department had no way of knowing where the money came from and where it had gone.

The Department of Defense spent \$41 million to develop a system to track its ammunition, but 8 years later no system had been created or was close to completion.

Individuals defaulting on their student loans cost the Department of Education \$4 billion in 1999 alone. An audit of the Department of Energy discovered that the Department had incorrectly listed \$900 million in assets instead of liabilities and could not account for \$56 million in missing funds.

That is not all, Mr. Speaker. A 2000 audit of the Department of Labor discovered that 35 percent of the recipients of dislocated worker benefits were ineligible for the program.

More than a quarter of the IRS's earned income credit payments were improper. The error rate is consistently between 27 and 32 percent of the total claims. In 1999 alone it cost the American taxpayers \$8.1 billion.

The Veterans Affairs Department continued to pay the daughter of a veteran \$78,000 in benefits after the veteran had died.