

from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) tomorrow night and many of us try to help the President through this, remind him of the mistakes that he has made, we also have an obligation to talk about what we should do. And what we should do with this economy, we can talk about these mistakes, but what we should do is we should first of all extend unemployment compensation, second we should pass the Crane-Rangel bill, which gives incentives for those corporations that actually produce manufacturing jobs in the United States instead of rewarding those companies that ship jobs overseas.

The President's mistakes can be fixed. We need to fix them by doing some of the things I just talked about.

PRESIDENT BUSH'S MISTAKES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, if and when the President has another prime time press conference, and if the President is asked again to consider the mistakes that he has made, I have a suggestion: he might mention the thousands of soldiers in Iraq who have and are now risking their lives without appropriate body armor and other life-saving equipment.

We are finding out now that the President and his advisers and Cabinet were thinking about this war in Iraq for a very long time. And yet here is an AP story from March 26 of this year. It says soldiers headed for Iraq are still buying their own body armor. In many cases their families are buying it for them despite assurances from the military that the gear will be in hand before they are in harm's way.

Last October, last October, that is 8 months after the war started, it was reported that nearly one quarter of American troops serving in Iraq did not have ceramic-plated body armor which can stop bullets fired from assault rifles and shrapnel.

□ 2000

The military says the shortfall is over and soldiers who do not yet have the armor soon will.

"Nancy Durst," I am still quoting from the AP story, "recently learned that her husband, a soldier with an Army Reserve unit from Maine serving in Iraq, spent 4 months without body armor. She said she would have bought armor for her husband had vests not been cycled into his unit. Even if her husband now has body armor, Durst says she is angry he was without it at any time." Her husband also told her that reservists have not been given the same equipment as Active Duty soldiers. "They are so sick and tired of being treated as second-class soldiers," she said.

That is from the AP story. No wonder she is mad about it. This armor costs about \$1,500. And I hope the President

will support legislation that will reimburse the soldiers and families for this expense. Clearly this was a mistake. And so if asked about a mistake, the President could not only say that it was a mistake, but maybe he would like to support H.R. 3615. The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) has a bill that would reimburse the families for the expense of buying their own body armor.

According to the Enlisted Association of the National Guard, as of November 30, 2003, the Army National Guard lacked \$11 billion of the \$40 billion in military equipment and training it needed to go to war. Among the missing crucial equipment components were nearly 11,000 Humvees, 20,000 radios, 156,000 night vision goggles and 148 Black Hawk helicopters that are required to meet modernization requirements.

That seems to me to be a mistake. Our troops were not properly equipped. Currently we are told that every member of the National Guard is being provided with body armor once they are in Iraq, but many of the soldiers are not even given an opportunity to train with the modern equipment before deployment.

On November 2, 2003, an Illinois National Guard Chinook helicopter was downed. This helicopter was not equipped with the latest automatic antimissile blocking system. I met the aunt of one of the soldiers who went down in that Chinook, who died because of that accident. I think she would like to tell the President that was a mistake, the cost of life of her nephew.

We know that soldiers coming home on R and R were being asked to pay to get to their homes once they came to the United States. Now, that was a mistake. The President could say that that was fixed, but is he going to support legislation introduced by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD) to reimburse the families for their travel?

How about the fact that soldiers, wounded soldiers in the hospital, were being charged every day for their food? Well, we have corrected that, thank goodness, but that is something that the President might think about as a mistake that was clearly made and affected our troops.

Now for the latest report that I heard of from my State of Illinois. This was on CBS local news today, I believe. The 333rd Military Police Unit in Freeport, which just had their tour in Iraq extended, may not be adequately supplied for battle. That is because everything they owned was shipped back home. The 333rd is presently sitting on the Kuwaiti border awaiting orders, but they have since surrendered their equipment such as radios and armored vehicles to the troops who replaced them. But now since the 333rd is going to remain in Iraq, they are without any supplies. Even their personal belongings were sent home, including spare

uniforms, boots and toiletries. The soldiers only have what they are wearing and are being forced to purchase new uniforms and some equipment out of their own pockets. Military families have been receiving their soldiers' footlockers the past few days and are now frantically repacking boxes and sending all of this gear back at their own expense. This has angered families who did not believe the military thought this redeployment through.

Let me just say that the DOD has responded to these families, saying that they are looking into whether they will be reimbursed for sending equipment back.

A few mistakes. I will forward this to the President. Maybe he would like to use it at his next press conference.

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

UNHAPPY EARTH DAY FOR EPA

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

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to mention another mistake that President Bush has made: His mistake in forgetting that protecting our environment is a bipartisan effort that for 30 years has put people over polluters and public health over profits.

President Bush forgot that both Earth Day and the Environmental Protection Agency were born in 1970, created from the bipartisan resolve to clean up and protect our environment. As we prepare to mark Earth Day on April 22, the unhappy consequences of the President's mistakes are clear. The Bush administration is undermining EPA's years of hard-won achievements in carrying out and enforcing our Nation's bipartisan environmental laws.

EPA's mission is to protect human health and safeguard the natural environment, air, water and land. The Bush administration is retreating from EPA's mission and instead making politically driven decisions that benefit polluters at the expense of the American public. At a time when we should be strengthening our environmental protections, the Bush administration has taken steps to weaken our environmental protections and the enforcement of our existing environmental laws.