

picture of a hooded, wired prisoner, which one commentator described as an eerie throwback to drawings from the Spanish Inquisition, has become the new image of the U.S. occupation of Iraq.

And this hooded image may be one of the kinder and gentler images to have yet seen the light of day. A highly critical report completed by the Pentagon in March paints a much more graphic and disturbing picture of prisoner abuse. The report outlines a number of intentional abuses, and I will quote partly from it: "videotaping and photographing naked male and female detainees; forcibly arranging detainees in various sexually explicit positions for photographing," and "a male MP guard having sex with a female detainee; sodomizing a detainee with a chemical light and perhaps a broomstick; and threatening male detainees with rape."

Yes, we are all sickened and outraged by the photos and the reports. The President, his cabinet, military leaders, and the Secretary of Defense have all lined up to say that this is not what America is about; it is just the unfortunate handiwork of a few bad apples, and they will be held accountable for their actions. Perhaps. But as Philip Kennicott writes in today's Washington Post: "These photos show us what we may become as occupation continues, anger and resentment grows and costs spiral. There's nothing surprising in this. These pictures are pictures of colonial behavior, the demeaning of occupied people, the insult to local tradition, the humiliation of the vanquished."

Should it be surprising, however, that these events have occurred under the watchful eye of an administration that prizes secrecy and loyalty above all else?

Mr. Speaker, the prisoner abuse scandal demonstrates that the United States is on the precipice of a major foreign policy disaster. Our standing in the world has been lowered to the point that the United States has been isolated in the court of world opinion. President Mubarak has stated unequivocally that the United States is the most hated Nation in the Middle East. Ouch, that hurts. And sadly, even in other parts of the world, we are no longer viewed as peacemakers but instead as the principal threat to world peace.

To date, the war has cost the taxpayers over \$150 billion. Now we are being told that the war will cost more and that 135,000 U.S. troops will remain in Iraq through 2005. Billions of dollars have been spent to enrich private corporations such as Halliburton and Bechtel. Private contractors are running around even interrogating prisoners with what appears to be less than optimal supervision. Congress has failed thus far to exercise its proper oversight of the war. What additional scandals and outrages are lurking just around the corner?

Mr. Speaker, now is the time to change course in Iraq. The principal architects of the war in Iraq, Secretary Rumsfeld and Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz, have presided over a failed policy. It is past due time for them to leave their posts and submit their resignations. The security, safety, and prestige of our Nation is at stake, and we will not win the hearts and the minds of Iraqis, the Arabs, and the rest of the world with blood in the sand.

□ 2000

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. WATSON. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I simply would like to say that while I disagree with the final conclusion that the gentlewoman has just drawn, the outrage that she began stating in her comments is outrage with which we totally agree; and we have been working over the last couple of days since this news came out to bring forward what we hope will be a bipartisan resolution from this House tomorrow. We are going to be meeting, it appears now, possibly early in the morning in the Committee on Rules to report out a resolution which will state our strong condemnation of the actions that we have seen taking place in the treatment of these Iraqi prisoners.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding me time so I could clarify this.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL ALLERGY AND ASTHMA AWARENESS MONTH AND ALLERGY AND ASTHMA AWARENESS DAY

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

Ms. MILLENDER-MCDONALD. Mr. Speaker, this month we are celebrating National Allergy and Asthma Awareness Month. Yesterday was Allergy and Asthma Awareness Day.

Last night, while attending the Allergy and Asthma Network Mothers of Asthmatics Awards Recognition Dinner, I had the pleasure of meeting two dynamic young people who suffer from asthma and yet are doing amazing things to raise awareness about this respiratory disorder.

Evan Mungan of Arnold, Maryland, and Rachel Lambin of Gardenerville, Nevada, were the recipients of the AANMA Creative Kids Sunny Awards, which highlights drawings, paintings and writings by children who share their feelings about asthma.

Mr. Speaker, Evan won an award for his drawing entitled "Good Day/Bad Day," which is here on the floor, which illustrates the difference between a healthy lung and a lung with asthma.

Rachel wrote this original composition, "When I Can Breathe," which is here on the floor, which expresses her

feelings when the weight of asthma has taken its toll on families.

Asthma is the most common chronic disease of childhood; and, unfortunately, the number of children and young people with asthma is increasing. About 17 million U.S. citizens have asthma; 5 million of these are children under the age of 18. About one in 13 school-age children has asthma. Health care costs related to asthma are estimated at \$14 billion annually.

Both Rachel and Evan joined me on the floor today, Mr. Speaker, and they had the opportunity to be on the floor with their siblings, John Henry and Anabel, to take part in meeting Members and shaking their hands. They really did enjoy that.

But, Mr. Speaker, the faces of asthma sufferers are the faces of all of our children, and I believe we have a duty to help them. Earlier this Congress, I introduced the Asthma Awareness and Treatment Act of 2003. This legislation allows the HHS Secretary to award contracts for a national media campaign to inform the public and health care providers on asthma, allergies and related respiratory problems, especially in children, and provides research into whether there is a causal relationship between air pollutants and the occurrence of asthma, allergy and related respiratory problems.

I am also proud to cosponsor H.R. 2023, the Asthmatic Schoolchildren's Treatment and Health Management Act of 2003. This legislation would give funding preference to those States that protect students' rights to carry and use prescribed life-saving asthma and other medications.

I would like to thank the AANMA for all of their hard work in making this 7th Annual Asthma Awareness Day on Capitol Hill such a resounding success. I joined with my colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON), to cochair this year's day on Capitol Hill.

TIME TO GET OUT OF IRAQ

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart, but my conscience is clear. I am so sick and tired of seeing so many of our young men and our young women die in Iraq.

Why has our Commander in Chief led them to their deaths in this unnecessary war? What will we tell the parents who will never see their children again? What will we tell the children longing in vain for their mothers and fathers to come home? Why did they die? Why?

After the atrocities we have committed against the Iraq prisoners of war, after the physical and psychological damage we have inflicted on the people of that nation, we can no longer truthfully say we are leading Iraq to freedom. Before the war, we were told that we would be welcomed as liberators.