

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, despite the national media's best efforts to minimize the news, I am here to report, as the United States military confirmed in Iraq on Monday, weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq in the form of two separate artillery shells containing sarin and mustard gas, shells that had been used by insurgents to create roadside bombs. A 155 millimeter shell found last week included nearly a gallon of a deadly gas, a drop of which would kill a human being. Not that we should be surprised. Saddam Hussein killed or injured over 70,000 Iraqi Kurds using sarin gas munitions in 1988.

Where are the WMDs? We have been asked again and again. Mr. Speaker, they are where they have always been, hidden in Iraq, within the reach of terrorists, a threat to the Iraqi people, U.S. soldiers, and the world.

THE HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP'S MISPLACED PRIORITIES

(Mr. EDWARDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, American military families will be disappointed to find out what the House Republican leadership is doing today. Unbelievably, during a time of war, they will pass this afternoon generous tax cuts for Members of Congress but put a freeze on military children's education funding and a freeze on the most important military housing improvement program in American history.

It is shameful that the House Republican leadership is saying that we can afford to give Members of Congress and families making up to \$250,000 a year a new \$1,000 tax credit per child, but we must freeze education funding for our military kids and put a 1-year hold on military housing improvements for 24,452 military families.

The House Republican leadership's misplaced and self-serving priorities make a mockery of the principle of shared sacrifice during time of war. Military families, and Americans who respect their sacrifices, have a right to be outraged.

□ 1145

TRIBUTE TO AGUSTIN VELASCO

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Agustin Velasco, a valued Member of our South Florida community. Agustin's contribution to our community dates back over 4 decades, serving as a leader, entrepreneur, and an example of determination to succeed.

Agustin is currently the president and original founder of the Inter-Amer-

ican Bank, a bank with humble beginnings, now proudly celebrating its 25th anniversary of service to the people of South Florida.

After fleeing Communist Cuba in 1961, Agustin sought refuge in Miami and quickly became a dynamic and flourishing member of our community. Joining the ranks of thousands of very hard-working Americans, Agustin became the realization of the American dream.

A father of two and a grandfather of five beautiful girls, I invite my colleagues to join me in congratulating Mr. Agustin Velasco and wishing him continued success.

Felicidades, Agustin.

CHANGE AND A NEW DIRECTION NEEDED FOR AMERICA

(Mr. EMANUEL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, last night the House passed a \$2.3 trillion budget, leaving a \$500 billion hole and deficit, and showing that it is impossible to finance three wars with three tax cuts and get a different result.

In the 2000 election, President Bush said he was against nation-building. Who knew it was America he was talking about?

Let us look at the results of their economic program. An additional 2.5 million Americans are now unemployed since he has taken office; 44 million Americans without health care; 2 million more middle-class families have entered the rolls of poverty from the middle-class; we have the worst and most anemic wage growth since World War II at this time; and nearly \$1 trillion worth of corporate individual assets have been foreclosed on.

We have spent nearly \$112 billion in Iraq at this point, and we will vote today on another \$25 billion. With this budget, the administration is telling the American people they have two values, two principles, two sets of books; one for Iraq and one for the United States.

Mr. Speaker, we need a change, a new direction, to balance our values and our budget priorities for America's future and our children.

WE WERE NOT AT WAR IN 2000?

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, one of the distressing things about this partisan election year is to hear our friends on the other side politicizing national security. One of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle said that we were not at war when President Clinton was in office, suggesting that it was President Bush's fault that we are at war today.

I would like to ask, what would you call it then in the 1990s when terrorists

attacked our country, not once, but four times? In 1993, they killed innocent Americans at the World Trade Center; in 1996, they killed Americans at the Khobar Towers; in 1998, they attacked two U.S. embassies in Africa; in 2000, they attacked a U.S. Naval vessel, the USS *Cole*, again killing Americans.

Terrorists have been at war with us for years. We failed to admit it, despite the body bags.

Then in 2001, 9/11 happened.

We were at war long before President Bush came to Washington. All President Bush did was muster the courage and moral vision to admit it and fight back.

These political games only cloud the true issue that we are at war, and the more we hesitate to fight it, the more aggressive our enemies become.

CHALABI A CORRUPT ALLY

(Mr. MCGOVERN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, this morning we learned U.S. military personnel and Iraqi police raided the home and party headquarters of Iraqi Governing Council member Ahmed Chalabi.

I am not surprised. Chalabi's past is riddled with allegations and convictions for fraud and corruption. That he may now be under investigation in Iraq for corruption or other crimes is hardly unexpected. Chalabi has always been a favorite at the Pentagon, even though the State Department sees him as divisive and untrustworthy.

Under the Iraqi Liberation Act, the Pentagon has fed him a steady stream of money in return for information. It was Chalabi who was the principal source for the false intelligence about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. When Saddam fell and the U.S. flew Chalabi and his cronies to Iraq to take up positions of power, it was he who championed the plan to rid Iraq of all Baath Party influence, including civil servants, a policy that angered many an Iraqi and deprived the coalition of experienced workers.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to distance ourselves from this man once and for all. Cut off his money. The taxpayers deserve a refund.

BENEFIT OF HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS AFTER JUST 6 MONTHS

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, this weekend we are going to mark the 6-month anniversary where we in this House passed the conference report to modernize Medicare. Since that time, in 6 months' time, we are now on the threshold of having the Medicare prescription drug discount card, which will come to us June 1, and that will

make a user-friendly database available to seniors across the country. For the first time, seniors will be able to comparison shop for their prescription drugs, just like they do for cruises, shoes and other necessities.

Also, since that time, we have seen the growth of Health Savings Accounts that were part of that legislation. There are some interesting figures about Health Savings Accounts. Almost half of the people signing up for Health Savings Accounts earn under \$50,000 a year, hardly a program that just benefits the rich, but we hear that over and over again.

Fifty-six percent of the people that have signed up for Health Savings Accounts are under 40 years of age. Sixty-two percent are families, as opposed to just individuals, and there are comparable benefits after the deductibles are met.

The most important thing, though, Mr. Speaker, is this is money that patients own and they control. It is their accounts, not the government's.

HELPING HARD-PRESSED FAMILIES IS CRITICAL

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, helping hard-pressed families is a valuable activity here on the floor of the House. We have an opportunity to do it today. Yet my Republican friends are advancing a fundamentally flawed proposal.

For two families each with three children, one making minimum wage, the other over \$300,000 a year, my Republican friends propose a new benefit for the family that makes over \$300,000. They will however slam the door on the family at minimum wage earning \$10,300; no benefit for them.

I keep hoping my Republican friends will show the same compassion for the people who need our help the most as they shower new benefits on those who need our help the least.

NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURGESS). Pursuant to House Resolution 648 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 4200.

□ 1152

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4200) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2005 for military activities of the Department of Defense, to prescribe military personnel strengths for fiscal year 2005, and for other purposes,

with Mr. LAHOOD (Chairman pro tempore) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. When the Committee of the Whole rose on Wednesday, May 19, 2004, a request for a recorded vote on Amendment No. 14 printed in House Report 108-499, offered by the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) had been postponed.

Pursuant to the order of the House of that day, the amendments numbered 29, 30, 31 and 32 are in order as though printed in the report and Amendment No. 13 is modified.

It is now in order to consider Amendment No. 7 printed in House Report 108-499.

It is now in order to consider Amendment No. 8 printed in House Report 108-499.

REQUEST TO INCLUDE MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF AMENDMENT

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that the name of the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER) be added as a cosponsor of the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. While a Member may not designate a co-offeror of an amendment, the RECORD will reflect his request.

AMENDMENT NO. 8 OFFERED BY MR. KENNEDY OF MINNESOTA

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 8 offered by Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota:

Strike section 2821 (page 514, beginning line 19) and insert the following new section:

SEC. 2821. PREPARATION OF REPORTS AS PART OF 2005 BASE CLOSURE ROUND REGARDING FUTURE INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ARMED FORCES.

Section 2912 of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of 1990 (part A of title XXIX of Public Law 101-510; 10 U.S.C. 2687 note), as added by section 3001 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2002 (Public Law 107-107; 115 Stat. 1342), is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(e) INFRASTRUCTURE-RELATED REPORTS.—

“(1) REQUIRED REPORTS.—The Secretary shall prepare the following reports related to infrastructure requirements for the Armed Forces:

“(A) A report containing the Integrated Global Presence and Basing Strategy of the Department of Defense, including the location of long-term overseas installations, installations to be used for rotational purposes, and forward operating locations, anticipated rotational plans and policies, and domestic and overseas infrastructure requirements associated with the strategy.

“(B) A report describing the anticipated infrastructure requirements associated with the probable end-strength levels and major military force units (including land force divisions, carrier and other major combatant vessels, air wings, and other comparable units) for each of the Armed Forces resulting from force transformation.

“(C) A report describing the anticipated infrastructure requirements related to expected changes in the active component

versus reserve component personnel mix of the Armed Forces.

“(D) A report describing the anticipated infrastructure requirements associated with the so-called ‘10-30-30 objective’ of the Secretary to ensure that military forces are capable of deployment overseas within 10 days in sufficient strength to defeat an enemy within 30 days and be ready for redeployment within 30 days after the end of combat operations.

“(E) A report containing the results of a complete reassessment of the infrastructure necessary to support the force structure described in the force-structure plan prepared under paragraph (1) of subsection (a) and describing any resulting excess infrastructure and infrastructure capacity, which were previously required by paragraph (2) of such subsection. The reassessment shall be based on actual infrastructure, facility, and space requirements for the Armed Forces rather than a comparative study between 1989 and 2003.

“(F) A report describing the anticipated infrastructure requirements associated with the assessment prepared by the Secretary pursuant to section 2822 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2004 (Public Law 108-136; 117 Stat. 1726), in which Congress required the Secretary to assess the probable threats to national security and determine the potential, prudent, surge requirements for the Armed Forces and military installations to meet those threats.

“(2) TIME FOR SUBMISSION OF REPORTS.—The Secretary shall submit the reports required by paragraph (1) to the congressional defense committees at the same time as the Secretary transmits the recommendations for the closure or realignment of military installations under section 2914(a).”

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 648, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KENNEDY) and a Member opposed each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. I yield myself 3 minutes.

Mr. Chairman, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the amendment I am offering with my friend, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER). The Kennedy-Snyder amendment repeals the 2-year BRAC delay that was included in the Defense Authorization Act reported out by the committee.

Our amendment also requires DOD to report to Congress on our overseas basing posture and other issues raised by the committee in March of 2005 when DOD transmits its base closure and realignment recommendations to the BRAC Commission.

Under the terms of our amendment, Congress would have 6 months to consider the report before a potential vote to disapprove the recommendations of the BRAC Commission. This would give the House ample time to hold hearings and decide if DOD paid attention to such important issues as our overseas basing structure. Furthermore, estimates show that the 2-year delay of BRAC could waste as much as \$16 billion in lost savings.

Mr. Chairman, this is money that would be better used to modernize our weapons systems and improve the quality of life for our service men and women.