

went into prevention benefits. Here is where the money went.

They neglected to mention that the Bush Medicare law creates a \$23 billion slush fund for the HMOs. These are bonus payments for an industry, the HMO industry, which already saw their profits go up 50 percent last year. They can use these bonuses to lure seniors out of Medicare's reliable, equitable, traditional program.

Interestingly, the benefits do not take effect until 2006. Seniors actually cannot get the Medicare benefit until 2006, but the payout to the insurance industry to pay back for the contributions the insurance industry frankly made to my colleagues on this side of the aisle and to the White House began in March of 2004. In other words, the insurance industry as a whole got checks from the Federal Government totaling \$290 million in March, \$290 million in April, \$290 million in May, \$290 million in June, all the way through this year, all the way through next year, \$290 million a month. The benefit is not available to seniors until the following year.

They also forgot to tell us, in addition to this slush fund the insurance industry paid for out of seniors' premium increases, they forgot to tell us that the Bush Medicare law actually goes out of its way to prohibit the Federal Government from negotiating with the drug industry for fair prices to bring the cost of prescription drugs down, which go up at double-digit increases every year.

They did not tell us that the Bush Medicare law will increase drug industry profits, already the highest industry profits of any industry in America, they will increase industry profits, not gross income but industry profits, by \$180 billion, that is with a B, \$180 billion over the next 10 years.

So that insurance industry got huge subsidies, the drug industry got record profits, the Bush administration got huge campaign contributions, tens of millions of dollars from the drug and insurance industries, and seniors were stuck with a 17.4 percent premium increase. It is wrong. The increase was five times larger than it should have been. That is an outrage.

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask to speak out of order and to address the House for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

FOLLOW-UP TO REMARKS GIVEN TO CONGRESS BY IRAQI INTERIM PRIME MINISTER AYAD ALLAWI: QUESTION TO THE ADMINISTRATION—WHERE IS THE PLAN?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the remarks and the message of Interim Prime Minister Allawi, and in fact, as someone who opposed this war as being misdirected and procedurally and constitutionally unsound, inasmuch as the Congress did not follow the Constitution and declare war, this resolution simply authorized the President to look at the option of militaries as one option.

But even in spite of my opposition to the initial beginnings of this war, I welcomed the remarks of Prime Minister Allawi and certainly welcomed his optimism and his desire to tell the American people that there is an end, there is a future in Iraq.

The whole idea of beginning to work with this process of rebuilding Iraq is clearly a circumstance that requires telling the American people the truth, and even though I think that the Prime Minister was eager to engage us in the optimism of Iraq, the one thing that he could not answer for us is simply where is the plan. Where is the plan of this administration, and what do we say to the men and women who are now on the frontlines of Iraq who wear the American uniform?

I just mention and show this gentleman who happens to be a face that has been utilized by one of my colleagues, and I am sharing that with my colleagues tonight, but it reminds us of the Americans who are on the front-line, reminds us of the families who are longing for them to return, reminds us of those troops that I visited in Afghanistan and Iraq who are committed to their duty. But they want to know when they can return home, what is the ultimate plan and agenda for the survival of Iraq.

Prime Minister Allawi told us that things were getting better, that schools were opening, clinics were opening; but, frankly, I believe that in the backdrop of all of that, the violence is raging.

Let me cite for my colleagues words from Jessica Mathews who just returned from Iraq. She made this statement in an op-ed in the Thursday Washington Post: "To visit Iraq today is to be forcibly reminded of the obvious: there is no military solution to politically inspired violence by locals against foreigners. What was true for the French in Algeria, the British in Northern Ireland, the Russians in Chechnya and the Israelis in the West Bank is proving true for the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq. Notwithstanding a huge and impressive military effort, the security situation, at least for now, is worsening."

She said this over a year ago, and it is now true today. Since that time, some 700 Americans and probably at least 10 times as many Iraqis have died, and every single day they are dying. So although I rise to thank the Prime Minister for his carefully stated words, might I say to my colleagues that we still are languishing without direction.

So I ask the President to stand before the American people, present to us a plan of survival and existence and progress. Present to us a step-by-step methodical progress of being able to return our troops and honor the increasing utilization of Iraqi law enforcement and military and begin to answer the questions of some of those who we will hear in just a moment.

Maybe it should be Senator LUGAR, who, when asked the question over the weekend, why has a great part of Iraq not been rebuilt, he simply said without any qualms, and I guess he said it before he heard it, because the administration is incompetent. So we can see that statements are being made by a number of those on the other side of the aisle that are now coming together as Americans, pleading for some direction by the administration.

My words simply tonight as I close, Mr. Speaker, are this. We can hear from the leadership, the interim leadership, that elections may be coming, that we may be making this work; but the violence says something different. We are failing the Iraqi people, and we are failing the United States military because we do not have a plan.

We in Congress are grateful to His Excellency the Interim Prime Minister Allawi for his inspiring remarks on the floor. He very articulately laid out the important issues that are now attendant and that lie ahead for Iraq—they include "Military Strategy," "Iraqi Elections," "International Help," and "Freedom."

He spoke of the positive aspects of these issues; however, we in the United States must realize that there are very pressing issues to be addressed by this administration within our own borders as well as on the battlefield for our troops. To that end, I ask the question: "Where is the plan Mr. President?"

I was privileged to visit some of our troops when I traveled to CENTCOM in April. I learned of their experiences in Iraq and I heard the challenges that they faced. I continue to be impressed by how well those young men and women in uniform represent the United States. They perform their duties and meet the demands of their positions every day despite the tough conditions and sometimes inadequate supplies.

The troops are fulfilling their duties, now it is time that the administration fulfills its duty by creating a real plan to create and keep the peace in Iraq. The administration must also jumpstart the process of rebuilding in Iraq. Clearly, the situation cannot continue. We are losing soldiers daily and families are being left heartbroken because peace has not prevailed in Iraq, not even in Baghdad where the administration said the United States military had a stronghold.

Worse yet, our allies are backing away from their commitments to join the effort to secure