

There was no objection.

□ 1830

SALUTING THE HOUSTON ASTROS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I know that we have spent the day on some very serious and very important issues.

Coming from Houston, Texas, however, I wanted to salute my team, even as they make their way to St. Louis to begin their journey and their trek that we hope will be a successful run at the World Series. The Houston Astros have given us a good run this season. It is not over. We had a challenging game last evening.

But I thought it was always appropriate to thank a team when it is on its way to making good. The Astros have played their hearts out. To Drayton McLane and family and to the Astros and their leadership, their coaches, their corporate office and all of the players and their families and all of the Houston fans, hold on and be strong.

Because we know that a good run and a strong play and the right kind of spirit will give us the opportunity to look down at Wednesday and Thursday for a better day. So thank you, Astros, for a season already done. And we look forward to a new day on Wednesday and Thursday.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained in my district. Had I been present, I would have voted, "aye" on rollcall vote 521, "aye" on rollcall vote 522 and "aye" on rollcall vote 523.

IRAQI ELECTIONS

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my enthusiasm about what the future holds for Iraq's women. This past weekend marked yet another courageous showing of women who are eager to live in a democracy, first in Afghanistan and now in Iraq.

The message is very, very clear that these individuals are ready, willing, and able to vote for a change. President Bush stated that our fight in Iraq includes promoting the rights of women everywhere. This fight is a very important one. Our society proves that when women are given the same rights and opportunities as men, the entire nation benefits greatly.

The constitutional referendum specifies equality regardless of sex and actually reserves 25 percent of the national assembly for women. Because of this provision, for the first time in Iraq's

history, women will have a voice in their country.

Currently, two-thirds of all Iraqi women are illiterate. Since our presence in Iraq, 2,400 schools have been renovated, 3,000 teachers trained. And this is resulting in 2 million girls back in school.

The progress that has been made for the women of Iraq is exceptional. During Saddam Hussein's reign, women were imprisoned, tortured and raped; and their attackers faced no recourse. There was no justice under this dictator of terror.

Today, injustice no longer is the rule. Iraqi women will no longer have to fear the terribly cruelty of their past because they will have control of their future.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

BRING OUR TROOPS HOME FROM IRAQ

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I did not see any purple fingers in this Chamber so far this week. We all remember how the Iraqi elections in January were hailed by the President's supporters as the turning point in Iraq.

Well, now there has been another election, a referendum on the Constitution. And what we are hearing from the pro-war forces is that we are still in for a long and deadly occupation in Iraq.

It was all going to be so simple, remember? We would march into Baghdad and depose Saddam Hussein. The grateful Iraqis would embrace the American presence, and a glorious democracy would spontaneously bloom. The Iraq situation was often compared to Germany and Japan after World War II where we were able to quickly fashion functioning democracy.

The New York Times cites Richard Armitage, Bush's former deputy Sec-

retary of State, who notes that those were homogeneous societies, whereas Iraq is a patchwork of rival ethnic groups. Armitage also points out that Germany and Japan, in 1945, were cowed populations, exhausted and deeply shocked by the war.

Iraqis, however, were unshocked and unawed. They simply want their country back. So 2½ years and 2,000 body bags later, we are spinning our wheels and the President who drove us into this ditch in the first place has no plan for getting us out.

Instead, according to a New York Times article on Monday, he seems to be preparing us for, and I quote, "a struggle of Cold War proportions." Does that mean we can look forward to a half century of American boots on the ground in Iraq?

One of the President's aids says in the article that this is a struggle of ideologies that is not going to end with one election or one constitution, or even a string of elections. Is this what the American people signed up for, a titanic ideological struggle with no end in sight? No, they were told Saddam Hussein had to be removed because he had deadly weapons pointed at American cities.

As he has repeated over the last few years, the President is mixing apples and oranges. The President is saying that there is a threat of Islamic terrorism which is real and must be addressed, and that is true. Though I would argue we need to use more diplomatic and fewer military tools in that struggle.

Then there is the war in Iraq, which is and was not a country of Islamic terrorists until we actually invaded that area and actually inflamed Muslim extremists and served as a recruiting tool for al Qaeda.

In a twisted way it turns out that the Bush administration was right. You cannot separate Iraq from the war on terrorism. What they did not tell us is that invading Iraq has helped the wrong side of the war on terrorism.

That same Times article quotes Kenneth Pollack, a scholar who initially supported the Iraq invasion. Pollack now says, and I quote him, "The theory that democracy is the antidote to insurgency gets disproven on the ground every day."

So if we cannot defeat the insurgents by continuing to hold elections, what can we do? There is only one answer. We can take away the one thing that animates the insurgency in the first place, that is, our perceived military occupation of Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I traveled to Iraq a few weeks ago to meet with our military and to learn more about their mission. I cannot tell you how impressed I was with their courage, their loyalty, their intelligence. From the officers down to the citizen soldiers of the National Guard, they are indeed the best America has to offer.

Unfortunately, they have been let down by their civilian superiors who

sent them to Iraq on false pretenses, on a poorly defined mission, without all of the tools they needed, and without a plan to get them out of there.

Our soldiers deserve better. They deserve a clear strategy from their President. They deserve a one-way ticket back home.

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order for 5 minutes.

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

There was no objection.

THE IRAQ WAR

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, supporters of the preemptive war against Iraq say it was justified by the unprovoked 9/11 attacks. They claim that Muslim hatred for our democracy, freedom, Western values, and prosperity inspired the 19 suicide terrorists who attacked us on that dreadful day.

Opponents of the war argue that al Qaeda radicals who planned the attacks were not allies of Saddam Hussein, and that Iraq posed no threat to our national security. They further argue that our occupation of Iraq now inspires a growing number of radical Islamists to join the ranks of al Qaeda and support its war against U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

But proponents of the war insist that our presence in Iraq is not what motivates al Qaeda to attack us, since we had no troops on Iraqi soil on 9/11; and yet al Qaeda attacked us anyway.

The enemy, they claim, is simply a group of radical Islamic fundamentalists who have hijacked the Muslim religion and declared war against our values for no legitimate or logical reason.

We should look at the facts if we want to understand why a growing number of Iraqis and Muslims worldwide are now motivated to join the insurgents in a guerrilla resistance that includes suicide terrorism. It is true that there were no U.S. troops in Iraq on 9/11, but it is also true that Saddam Hussein and Iraq had nothing to do with that attack.

In addition, we have been bombing Iraq since 1991, more than 10 years, on a regular basis. Stiff economic sanctions imposed on Iraq for over a decade by the U.S. and Britain caused extreme suffering and death of hundreds of

thousands of innocent Iraqis, many of them children.

Most military experts consider an economic blockade an act of war. We insulted and provoked millions of Muslims, especially fundamentalists, by keeping a military base in Saudi Arabia after the Persian Gulf War.

Osama bin Laden specifically expressed outrage at this policy in his writings. Throughout the 1980s, we allied ourselves with Saddam Hussein, a secularist in his fight against Iran and other Shiite fundamentalists.

We involved ourselves in this civil struggle within the Muslim community. For decades, we supported various secular Arab governments throughout the region, always in opposition to religious fundamentalists. The U.S. never wavered in its enthusiastic support of Israel over Arab-Muslim interests.

For decades Muslim fundamentalists have viewed U.S. policy as being driven by religious zealots because of the strong vocal support from many fundamentalist Christian leaders.

For literally hundreds of years, Europe has continually challenged Muslim and Arab domination of the Middle East. We have never, Europe or the United States, denied our interest in controlling Middle East oil. From Woodrow Wilson to the current neoconservative brand of foreign policy, the zeal for spreading democracy and Western values through force of arms has antagonized most Muslims.

□ 1845

If we continue to insist that our policy of foreign intervention has nothing to do with the ongoing war against an enemy we refuse to understand, we guarantee that this war will not soon end.

My suggestion is to change our foreign policy. Stop the war, bring our troops home, and stop the wasteful spending overseas. If we do not, the real security of our homeland will continue to be in jeopardy and the economic consequences will get worse and our freedoms at home will be further reduced.

It is time to say no to undeclared wars. It is time to say no to political and U.N. wars. It is time to say no to preemptive war. It is time to say no to nation building. It is time to say no to assuming it is our duty to make the world safe for democracy. It is time to say no to meddling in the affairs of others. It is time to say no to fighting countries that have never threatened our national security. It is time to stop financing extravagant war spending by printing more money. It is time to say yes to more sensible diplomacy.

The senseless death and suffering of so many with nothing to show for it must end. Peace is a far better goal to strive for than an undefined victory in a war that has no end.

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

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

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN).

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

There was no objection.

MAKE WISE BUDGET CHOICES

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, since the year 2000 this Congress has racked up more than \$3 trillion in new debt. Mind you, at a time in which in 2000 the American budget was running a surplus, but in that time we have run deficits on average a little north of \$400 billion and we have added \$3 trillion to the Nation's debt.

How did we do it? We have tried to fight two wars with four tax cuts; and this Congress has served as an ATM to the special interests, showering them with billions in tax breaks and handouts. The prescription drug bill is a classic example where we are now adding close to what the American people were once told would be a \$400 billion prescription drug bill, is now worth \$800 billion and \$139 billion in extra profits to the pharmaceutical companies over 10 years.

Yet, all of the sudden when it comes to rebuilding the lives of our fellow citizens in New Orleans and on the coast, we are talking about cutting education, health care, areas of environment and energy for the rest of America, \$50 billion; and all the while we are trying to do that this Congress under a Republican majority wants to shower the wealthiest 1 percent, those who earn over \$200,000, with more tax cuts and more debt. Yet, what are we saying to the rest of America? You are going to get cuts in education, health care, environment, energy, national security areas, homeland in the area of police.

Yet the interesting thing, while all of this is happening here in the United States we are trying to turn ourselves into a pretzel, trying to cut \$50 billion from our education and health care. What are we doing in Iraq at this time? What are we doing in Iraq?

We are actually renovating and building 110 primary health care centers, vaccinating 3.2 million Iraqi children, rehabilitating 2,700 schools, training 36,000 secondary school teachers in Iraq. We fund 3,120 community development projects in Iraq, and we have provided housing for tens of thousands of Iraqis. And what do we tell the American people in the same area,