

his face when he said he had read the report, and when he said that he found the acts to be terrible and horrific. But he also said something else. He said, "I promise you we will get to the bottom of this." That was yesterday, and here we are today saying a handful of individuals committed some acts that were so despicable.

The thing that is so amazing is that I do not even see how we could even have words like that in the resolution, because it does in fact say to all those people that may have been involved, say there are similar acts in Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay, other cell blocks in Iraq, well, it looks like we got off pretty easy this time. It looks like we will be okay. We got a little reprimand going on, and we will be fine.

So I want to thank the gentleman for his vigilance, for standing up for people that do not even know, perhaps, that we are standing up for them. They may not even know that those statements that we make today may very well save lives tomorrow.

Someone asked the question, they said to the Congressional Black Caucus, why is it that you stand up over and over and over again? Why is it that you stand up and so often you do not win? You may not win this battle.

But our response has been one of clarity, and it simply says that we may not win, but we will set the trend. We may not win, but we will stand up for what we believe in and know that somebody is listening. We may not always win, but we do know that by being silent it is far worse, because it appears that we go along with things as they are, and silence basically is giving consent.

So I want to thank the gentleman for yielding and want to thank him for his leadership.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman. I am glad he is here, and we appreciate his service.

We are going to continue to stand up on behalf of the American people, need it be defense, need it be education, need it be this issue dealing with Iraq. I thank the gentleman for being here tonight, and I thank the Black Caucus for continuing to do what they are doing.

Mr. Speaker, as I close, I just want to say that we must have the annals of this House and the annals of history here in the United States to reflect that pictures that continue to come out about the abuses of what took place in Iraq or what is taking place in other parts of the world, that we condemn them, and we salute our troops; but at the same time our response is imperative and needed to be able to continue this effort against terrorism and have friends in the world that are willing to be with us.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 2443, COAST GUARD AND MARITIME TRANSPORTATION ACT OF 2003

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Without objection, the Chair appoints the following conferees:

From the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for consideration of the House bill and the Senate amendments, and modifications committed to conference:

Messrs. YOUNG of Alaska, COBLE, DUNCAN, HOEKSTRA, LOBIONDO, SIMMONS, MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida, OBERSTAR, FILNER, BISHOP of New York and LAMPSON.

For consideration of the House bill and Senate amendments, and modifications committed to conference:

Mr. COX and Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi.

There was no objection.

□ 1730

TUTORIAL ON FEDERAL GOVERNMENT FINANCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I am going to give sort of a tutorial on Federal Government finances. This is the 195th birthday of Abraham Lincoln and, in his famous Gettysburg Address, he sort of indicated, can a Nation of the people and by the people and for the people long endure? Of course, the challenge of the Civil War was a huge challenge. But I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that a challenge even greater than the wars might be the willingness of the United States, the House and the Senate and the President, to deal with real financial problems and, of course, the financial challenge before us is overspending and overpromising.

This is a pie chart of how we spend Federal Government money. We see at the bottom piece of the pie is the 21 percent that is spent on Social Security right now. Then, as we go around, Medicare is 12 percent. However, it is interesting that Medicare is expected to be a greater piece of the Federal pie, if you will, a greater percentage of total Federal spending than Social Security within the next 25 years, because it is growing very quickly. Medicaid is 6 percent, also growing, and that is growing with the increasing number of seniors that are spending all of their savings, as they have spent \$40,000 or \$50,000 or \$60,000 per year on nursing home care, and then after all of their finances have been depleted, then they go on Medicaid and the Federal Government starts paying nursing home care.

Other entitlement programs, 10 percent. Entitlement means if you reach a certain age, if you reach a certain level

of poverty, you are eligible for additional help. If you are a business or an industry or a worker, you are entitled if you work, but do not make very much money, you are entitled to an income tax credit. If you are a farmer and the prices of the products you sell are low, you are entitled to a supplement to build it up, that income, a little more for those farmers to keep the farmers in business. This Congress and the United States has been very generous with other people's money. In fact, so generous that we are now facing the dilemma of a huge debt and huge promises that I call entitlements, unfunded liabilities.

The domestic discretionary spending that goes in the appropriation bills, along with defense, is 16 percent. Defense is 20 percent. With the Iraq and Afghanistan war, it has gone from about 19 percent up to 20 percent, and then interest, interest, interest on this increasing debt.

The interest cost for this country is now about \$300 billion a year to pay interest at a rate that is the lowest, almost the lowest in history, but a very low interest rate. Alan Greenspan, the chairman of the Federal Reserve, has now suggested that there is no question that eventually interest rates are going to go back up again, and that, compounded by the fact that we are increasing the amount of debt that we have to pay interest on, it is anticipated that within the next 20 years, interest on the debt will be one of the largest pieces of pie.

What does that mean to future generations? What does that mean for our kids and our grandkids. I am a farmer from Michigan, and the tradition on the farm has been you pay off some of that farm mortgage to try to give your kids a little better chance at a better life than you might have had. But in this Congress, what we are doing is going the other way. We are building up a debt, we are building up obligations because, somehow, we think the problems we have today are so great that it justifies us borrowing money from our kids and our grandkids and making them pay for the overspending that we are pushing on them today in this Congress.

Right now, we are in the midst of a budget decision in conference committee with the House and the Senate, trying to figure out a budget of what we are planning on spending for the 05 budget, that means the 05 fiscal year starting September 30, October 1 of 04, and going for 12 months until October 1 of 05, that is called the 05 fiscal year budget, and that is what we are working on, that is what we are arguing about.

This year, the good news is it is probably the most lean budget that we have had since 1996. But still, it is growing at between two and three times the rate of inflation in terms of the increased expansion of that spending, the increased size of government, taking money away from the people that have