

by President Bush, who dismissed the crisis facing tobacco farm families by saying the current tobacco system does not need to be changed.

Since 1997, tobacco farmers have seen their income cut by over half. Thousands of farm families have been forced out of business. The entire economic background of rural southeast America has been crippled, yet the President says nothing needs to be changed.

Senator KERRY supports a buyout to revitalize our corner of rural America. A buyout would create tens of thousands of jobs in rural America, which are desperately needed.

Time is running out for our tobacco farmers. I call on the Republican leadership in the House and the Congress to follow Senator KERRY's leadership and pass the bipartisan tobacco buyout and restore hope to tobacco country.

#### REFORMING CIVIL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN REGARD TO MEDICAL LIABILITY

(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, yesterday on the floor of this House, we passed legislation that will once again reform the civil justice system in regards to medical liability. Then the question came up last night during the hours of debate on this House as to how in the world is that going to lower the cost of health insurance for the uninsured.

Well, true enough, lowering the cost of liability insurance will not have a direct effect upon the cost of providing insurance for the uninsured, but certainly removing the embedded cost of the civil justice system and the embedded cost of defensive medicine from the medical justice system will go a great way towards alleviating the crisis in the cost of medical insurance.

It is estimated from a study done in 1996 that \$50 billion a year could be saved in the Medicare program if doctors were not practicing defensive medicine.

The fact of the matter remains, Mr. Speaker, we passed that bill in the House, it is awaiting action on the other side of the Capitol, we have a President right now who will sign that bill, and I think that is an important part for the American people to bear in mind.

#### STOP CALLING THOSE WHO ASK QUESTIONS UNPATRIOTIC

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, a quote: "I cannot support a failed foreign policy. History teaches us that it is often easier to make war than peace. This administration is just learning that lesson right now. The President

began this mission with very vague objectives and lots of unanswered questions. There is no timetable, there is no legitimate definition of victory, there is no contingency plan for mission creep, there is no clear funding program, there is no agenda to bolster our overextended military, there is no explanation defining what vital national interests are at stake."

Who said that? Not a Democrat, but the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), said that on March 28 of 1999.

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I say, end calling those people who ask questions unpatriotic. Read your own history. Read your own legacy. This is a disgrace, what you did in 1999, and then you accuse us when we ask a question. Read your own literature.

#### TRIBUTE TO JEREMIAH KIRK JOHNSON

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Today, a special service will be held at the National Peace Officers Memorial to honor those whose devotion resulted in the ultimate expression of Christ-like love: They sacrificed their lives for others.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to one who gave his life in the service of others. Jeremiah Kirk Johnson, who died in a tragic traffic accident while on duty for the Emery County Sheriff's Department, exemplifies the life of service which I wish to honor.

A devoted husband and father, he spent every spare moment around his children because of his great love for them. At the time of his death, he had been promoted to deputy sheriff in Emery County, and was instrumental in helping to set up the drug court which had the effect of getting drug offenders off the street. He was a giant of a man, yet gentle.

Jeremiah will be missed a lot. He cannot be replaced, but his example can be honored.

He was a model U.S. citizen. He devoted his life to service of our country, and he will be forever remembered as a hero, a son, a husband, and a father.

#### COVER THE UNINSURED AND SUPPORT KIND SUBSTITUTE

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, as the Congress and the country mark Cover the Uninsured Week, I add my voice to those who are ready to do something meaningful about the problem of the uninsured.

Nearly 80 percent of the uninsured are the working poor, and often work in small businesses. They have jobs and

are trying to do the right thing, but they cannot afford an insurance policy for themselves or for their families.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that association health plans are the answer, but more than 500 organizations representing millions of people oppose these plans, association health plans, because they know that they will compound the problem by creating an unlevel playing field that will likely lead to cherry-picking, adverse selection, and yes, increased costs for sicker individuals.

I urge my colleagues to support the Kind substitute, which will provide a tax credit to businesses that will pay for 50 percent of the premium for health insurance for their employees.

#### OFFICERS IN CHARGE IN IRAQ FAILED IN THEIR DUTY

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress, as a West Point graduate, and as a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves, I am saddened by recent revelations at Abu Ghraib Prison. I am sad and disappointed and feel personally attacked by an organization I hold in high esteem.

The Chaplain said today in his prayer that we seek justice, equity, and freedom. In this case, we failed.

A commander is responsible for all his unit does and fails to do. This is a basic creed of the United States Army.

As the criminal proceedings unfold and those involved receive the consequences of their actions, some officers in charge need to stand up and say, I was in command, and I failed.

#### IRAQ IMAGES

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the ship of state sails without a rudder.

Increasingly, the world sees our presence in Iraq as an occupation, not a liberation. Any talk of democracy has been replaced with images of brute and brutal force.

The President talks about a superb Cabinet Secretary, but America and the world reel in horror and shame over what was done in the name of defending our country.

If only the administration had paid attention. The Red Cross knew, but the administration would not listen. American leadership and credibility have cratered deeper and deeper, yet the administration remains deaf to what happened and the need to act.

The administration heaps praise on one of its own, even as it seeks to silence the images. They sent him to Iraq, I guess, to get him out of town, but the images have stirred the world. As it has for so long, the world looks to

America again today. But today, the world looks with eyes averted, because the images that today define America in no way resemble America.

**HONORING MONSIGNOR JOHN O'DONNELL ON HIS GOLDEN JUBILEE**

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Monsignor John O'Donnell of Immaculate Conception Church in Fort Smith, Arkansas. Monsignor O'Donnell is celebrating his Golden Jubilee this year, which marks his 50th year in the priesthood.

Born in Philadelphia in 1928, Monsignor O'Donnell was ordained on May 27, 1954. He is a man who is known for his faith, service, and dedication to his neighbors. It seems that everyone at Immaculate Conception has a story about how Monsignor O'Donnell has touched their lives.

Immaculate Conception is the most diverse Catholic church in Fort Smith. It is the perfect fit for Monsignor O'Donnell, who constantly highlights and celebrates the diversity of the parish.

Mr. Speaker, Monsignor O'Donnell has influenced the lives of countless Arkansans. I thank Monsignor O'Donnell for his 50 years of service and being an inspiration to all of us.

**WORKING TOGETHER ON TOP PRIORITIES FOR AMERICA**

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this morning we can refer to two pictures on the front of the Washington Post that show: the perplexity of General Taguba who tried to tell the truth, and the collapse of young Nick Berg's father when he heard of the tragedy that occurred. All of this falls at the feet of our administration, regardless of one taking a trip or not.

We need a full investigation which will include the Committee on the Judiciary, and we need it now. The American people and their values are owed this responsibility.

Let me change for a moment, Mr. Speaker, and talk about H.R. 4107, involving our firefighters, and say that this is a good first start, this bill, but we must make sure that the fire grant stays at the U.S. Fire Administration, and we must also recognize that firefighters have the rights of meeting and conferring and collective bargaining, and that should not diminish their service to the community. We welcome the volunteer fire agencies, but we also recognize that fire departments should control the work and the hours of their fire personnel so that all might be safe.

Let us work together to make H.R. 4107 a better bill, and let us have inves-

tigations so that the American people can have the answers on Iraq.

**IN HONOR OF DAN PARKER**

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

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, a constituent of mine, Mr. Daniel Parker, was struck down during his service in Iraq.

Mr. Parker, a dedicated Halliburton employee and retired teacher at a Border Patrol Academy in Charleston, was en route to Baghdad International Airport in a military convoy when an improvised explosive detonated near his vehicle.

Dan, a veteran of two tours in Vietnam, selflessly braved the perilous environment of a war zone and helped establish a peaceful and productive democracy in the Middle East. Civilian workers like Dan are the unsung heroes in pursuit of stability in Iraq.

With the deaths this past week of Dan and other civilians, we have been tragically exposed to the deadly hazards that these courageous American employees encounter during their daily work abroad.

Working alongside coalition troops and the Iraqi people, civilian contractors work tirelessly to improve the quality of life of strangers by helping to provide the simple resources that we in America most often take for granted: electric power, clean water, and public schools.

Dan Parker was an innocent victim of the treacherous conditions that Americans continue to endure in Iraq. His sacrifice and the sacrifice of others like him will not soon be forgotten.

My thoughts and prayers are with Dan and his family.

**FAILURE OF CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT**

(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, I am pleased that in 5 minutes, the House Committee on International Relations is going to have a hearing about the post-Iraq situation. Since there are only 48 days left until the transfer of power, it is about time. Sadly, it is about 2 years late. It is an example of the sorry declining of congressional oversight and leadership of what was supposed to be a co-equal branch of government. The abuse of Iraqis never convicted of anything is just the latest example of that failure.

While some would claim that asking hard questions is an example of lack of support for our troops, the real lack of support for our troops is not giving them adequate water, and food, proper equipment, to say nothing of the relief of adequate support for troops on the ground and relief to rotate them home.

To the shame of this congressional leadership, we have failed to do our job as congressional watchdogs and policy-makers. It has created problems for our troops in Iraq, it has created problems for the Iraqi people, and for the American public.

**SINS OF A FEW MUST NOT TARNISH GOOD WORK OF MANY**

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today for two reasons. One, of course, is to acknowledge the misconduct of a few American soldiers in the Iraqi prison, conduct we all abhor. Unfortunately, war is an ugly thing, and there will always be egregious behavior under the expediency of war.

But, Mr. Speaker, my other purpose is to implore that we do not forget the nobility and heroism with which our soldiers serve this country. Millions and millions of Iraqis have been liberated from a murdering, raping dictator, thanks to American soldiers. We cannot let the sins of a few tarnish the good work of the many.

Despite the current negative attention, we will not lose faith in the rightness of our purpose or the ability of our troops to be victorious.

**CONGRESS SHOULD PASS 5 MEANINGFUL INITIATIVES FOR AMERICA**

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

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, working families continue to suffer under the oppressive policies of the Republican-controlled White House and Congress. With a new low in cynicism, Republicans have made a mockery of the suffering of the jobless.

The Republican unit of dirty tricks, deceitful slogans, and tricky titles has launched a new HOW initiative; Hire Our Workers, they call it. But Republicans refuse to support any of the actions that will relieve the suffering of working families.

Instead of bombarding the Nation with new rope-a-dope slogans, Republicans should just do the right thing and support five basic actions: extend Federal unemployment benefits; end the current tax incentives for shipping jobs overseas; raise the minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour to at least \$7 an hour; enact a robust highway bill to create 1.8 million good-paying jobs; and invest more resources in key education and job training programs.

Stop swindling the poor with words. Pass these five initiatives without further delay.

**HONORING SISTER JEANNE O'LAUGHLIN**

(Mr. SHAW asked and was given permission to address the House for 1