

goods they need, but now they will have to pay higher prices, a difficult prospect when even doctors only make an average monthly salary of \$25.

Mr. Speaker, this is one more example of Castro's attempt to impose sanctions on the Cuban people, all while blaming the United States and essentially playing the martyr. This should be an example to all of my colleagues on why we need to continue the embargo. Opening our markets to a regime that uses its people as economic and political pawns and has no interest in a market economy, rather, works only to funnel money into the government and its wealthy leaders, is not an example of an honest business partner.

This, Mr. Speaker, is how Castro treats the average Cuban citizen. Let us not forget the countless situations Castro has committed against pro-democracy forces, throwing pro-democracy advocates in prison or independent journalists, many of whom have been jailed in the last year.

So I simply ask my colleagues to join with me and take notice of what happened with these dollar stores as an example of how Castro treats his people. And I think it also should make us reconsider whether we want American companies doing business with this kind of a regime. I do not think we should.

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

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

DESPITE THE WRONGS OF A FEW,
THE MISSION IN IRAQ MUST
CONTINUE

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I, along with many of my colleagues, had the opportunity to view the photographs of the prisoner abuses in Iraq this past week, and I have had many of my constituents calling me and questioning me about these issues. I certainly agree with all of those who express outrage to see this kind of abuse going on, perpetrated by Americans. However, I disagree strongly with many of those who look at these recent developments and assert we should never have gone into Iraq in the first place, considering these great problems that are developing over there.

I continue to feel very strongly the President did the right thing in using force against Iraq, and that Iraq was a serious threat from a terrorist perspective. And I think Tony Blair expressed this most clearly and most succinctly when he addressed the House of Representatives and the Senate in joint session right in this very Chamber. The

reason we went into Iraq was because if you ever had the joining of weapons of mass destruction with the terrorist elements of al Qaeda, instead of 3,000 dead, as we had on September 11, we could have 30,000 or 300,000 killed.

We went into Iraq for the right reasons. And to those who would say that the war in Iraq is unwinnable, I would assert that we have won the war in Iraq. The challenge that we face today is winning the peace. And clearly winning that peace is critically important.

By taking the war against terror into the Middle East, there are many of our detractors, supporters of totalitarian regimes in that part of the world who would like to see us fail in establishing democracy in Iraq and would like to see some sort of totalitarian regime re-emerge in that country.

I will say this. If we cut and run as some people are proposing, there will be tens of thousands of Iraqis who will die unnecessarily. I was in Iraq in November of last year, and many Iraqis are cooperating with us. They want to see a democratic institution established that can govern their country, and many of those people will be imprisoned, tortured, and executed if we see a regime resume in Iraq similar to Saddam Hussein's regime.

Now, many are questioning as to how this could have happened and are raising questions about Americans' character. How could it be that Americans are guilty of these kinds of terrible things? And, indeed, many of our detractors in the Middle East are trying to assert that we are no different from Saddam and his henchmen in that they torture people, and here we were, torturing people.

I think if we look at the brutal execution that we saw recently where an American was executed in front of video cameras, we can clearly see there is a difference between us and them.

The American people are rightly outraged, and they demand these abuses stop and that investigations be conducted. Well, in reality, the U.S. military responded appropriately months ago when they recognized this problem. Investigations have been underway for a while, and the abuses stopped long ago. Indeed, all we are seeing right now is a media and public reaction because the photographs were made available.

The American people are good people, the American people are a moral people, and we are reacting appropriately. The perpetrators of these deeds will be brought to justice. Indeed, as I understand it, court marshals are underway almost now as we speak. The real question is why could a small few be driven to such terrible deeds? And that is a legitimate question for us to ask.

Clearly, one important thing is a breakdown of command and control of authority, and we need to seriously investigate what happened here with the brigade commanders and the company commanders. How did we have breakdowns in our military intelligence op-

erations where standard Geneva Conventions were ignored? But those investigations were underway, and we will find out. And that is how America is different. That will play out in the eyes of the public.

To compare the United States to Saddam Hussein and his brutal regime, where this was business as usual, indeed it was official policy of the regime, is just totally inaccurate and totally distorted.

What struck me most about viewing these photos was the simple fact that many of these photos were pornographic. How could it come to pass that American servicemen and women are perpetrating these kinds of acts and recording them all on camera? Certainly we need to ask those questions in this country today. But I do not think we can escape asking the question of whether or not this is an impact of all the availability of pornography in our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, we have too much pornography in this country, and this body needs to act more and our court system needs to act more to try to stop it. We need to ask the questions of how could a small few carry out such morally reprehensible deeds.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

SMART SECURITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, the administration's war in Iraq has failed. It has failed to make the world safer from terrorism. And, actually, it has made the world less safe and more susceptible to acts of terror. Who should be held accountable for this mess?

The war is not going well. Over 740 brave American soldiers have already lost their lives as a result of this deadly conflict, not to mention the innocent Iraqi civilians who have been killed and the thousands of troops injured.

The Pentagon just released a report that 18,000 American troops have been evacuated from Iraq for medical reasons. That is 18,000, or one-seventh of the number currently stationed in Iraq. This speaks to a systematic failure of leadership, Mr. Speaker. And, sadly, examples of this failure are widespread and easily recalled: the failure to secure Iraq's borders; the failure to prevent postwar looting; and the failure to provide the security necessary for reconstruction.

In fact, the recent abuse of POWs at the Abu Ghraib Prison is yet another