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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RENZI).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

THE SPEAKER'S ROOMS,
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 21, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RICK RENZI to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) for 5 minutes.

THE FORGOTTEN WAR ON TERRORISM

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I think there is substantial agreement that the world, Iraq, the Middle East are better off without Saddam Hussein in power. But the question remains particularly as raised most recently and poignantly by General Zinni about the timing, necessity and the conduct of the Iraq war. No weapons of mass destruction, the push for model democracy and a vibrant capitalist free economy is not going so well, so the Bush administra-

tion has fallen back upon the idea that somehow there were substantial links between al Qaeda, 9-11 and Saddam Hussein.

Unfortunately, last week the 9-11 Commission, a truly bipartisan commission, came out with a statement in their most recent report, "We have no credible evidence that Iraq and al Qaeda cooperated on attacks against the United States." Yet, the administration insists on trying to put 9-11, al Qaeda, and Iraq and Saddam Hussein in the same sentence or run-on sentence and paragraph all the time.

Vice President CHENEY has been even more outspoken on this issue. Of course, Vice President CHENEY is the same gentleman who in a closed-door meeting 3 years ago told the Northwest Energy Caucus that there was no collusion, Enron was not manipulating energy markets in the western United States. These were purely market forces. We were just really stupid and we did not understand, but he did.

Well, of course, he was kind of wrong and maybe even this week Ken Lay will be in a criminal indictment as others from Enron have gone to jail, and the appalling tapes that have come out.

Then, of course, Vice President CHENEY also is fond of saying that deficits do not matter. We are just indebting future generations of Americans. Working and wage earning people will pay the bill, while the wealthy and the big corporations skate in the future world that the Bush administration proposes.

So he is not exactly infallible and, unfortunately, I believe the 9-11 Commission is more right than he is, with one exception. There is one really bad guy, Abu Musab Zarqawi. He has now been blamed for more than 700 terrorist killings including U.S. troops in Iraq.

Now, the interesting thing is that the United States of America before the war with Iraq knew exactly where Zarqawi was and they could have taken

him out. In fact, the Pentagon asked 3 times. Now, this is the President who was going to go anywhere and everywhere to take out known terrorist threats. This guy was a known terrorist threat. We knew exactly where he was. In fact, when Colin Powell made his famous presentation full of inaccuracies to the United Nations Security Council, the one accurate thing he did point to with a pointer was a terrorist training camp way up in Northern Iraq, inside the U.S. no-fly zone and protected by the Kurdish area, an area, in fact, that Saddam Hussein could not get to, and that is where Zarqawi was. And 3 times, 3 times the Pentagon asked to take him out.

The first time because they had good intelligence. The second time because they had intelligence that he was developing ricin and other chemical weapons. And then the third time they asked was after some of his cohorts were found with ricin in England.

They asked 3 times and 3 times the Bush National Security Council and the Bush administration turned down the Pentagon. This could have saved U.S. troops and lives and prevented a lot of the mayhem going on in Iraq today. But this administration was so distracted from the war on terror to the war against Iraq and Saddam Hussein that they let this guy go. They let him go. That is absolutely outrageous.

We have got to question whether the distraction from the war on terror, from Osama bin Laden, who is still out there plotting and planning and his second-in-command, who is still out there plotting and planning and this guy Zarqawi, who is out there plotting and planning, if we could have gotten them, if we had been focussed on the war on terror and following the principles that the President set out, instead of this obsession and this distraction and diversion into a war in Iraq where we pulled all of the intelligence

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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