

agents. The company, which employs 30,000 workers from 38 countries in support of the U.S. military, said it had been unaware of the workers' concerns until recently."

This is the kind of thing, Kellogg Brown, Halliburton, is always unaware of, workers problems, because they are too busy having their accountants going to work on the excessive profits they are making.

It brings to mind the work that was done by one Senator Harry Truman when, during World War II, he had his committee on a bipartisan basis looking into the question of excessive profit-making from World War II. This is not something that is invented for this time and place by members of the Democratic Party. This is something that was headed up by a Democratic Senator, who was in charge in the United States Senate, on a bipartisan basis, to see to it that profiteering does not take place at the expense of the American soldiers or the expense of the American taxpayer.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to note that the Democratic minority in this House attempted to add an enhancement of the penalties for fraud and abuse and profiteering, and yet the majority in this House and in the Senate denied that proposal.

I would like to conclude, and I will be very brief because I think we have got to go back to the initial question I think that was raised by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE), how did we get here?

If we are to believe Richard Clark, who led the anti-terrorism effort under both Presidents Clinton and Bush until his retirement 2 years into the Bush administration, if we are to believe the highly respected, again, Republican conservative, who initiated the term of this administration as Secretary of the Treasury, Paul O'Neill, it was one week, one week after the inauguration that there was a meeting of the National Security Council and what was discussed there was the need for regime change in Iraq. Nothing about terrorism. And again, 6 weeks later, according to Paul O'Neill, there was a meeting of the National Security Council where it was discussed how the oil fields in Iraq were to be divvied up and divided among nations and corporations. That is according to Paul O'Neill and that is according to Dick Clark.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. There is an important article that was written in Harper's Magazine by David Armstrong back just before the outbreak of the war. The title of the article was "DICK CHENEY'S Song for America." In there he goes back and talks about the concept for this plan being hatched by the then-Secretary of Defense and the two Under Secretaries which at the time were Paul Wolfowitz and Richard Perle. The goal was to be the lone force in the Middle East. The plan that was put forward was a bold one: To go forward and overtake Baghdad.

It was rejected at the time. It was rejected by Colin Powell. It was rejected by Bush the elder. It was rejected by the most outspoken people against this war back in 2002 in this invasion and that was Jim Baker, Brent Scowcroft and Eagleburger.

So as the gentleman said at the beginning, this is not a partisan effort. This is an understanding of the wrong turn the Nation has taken with respect to foreign policy. Again, I commend the members of the Iraq Watch for their vigilance.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. I want to indicate I think we are down to our last 2 minutes. I would yield to the gentleman from Washington to close.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to note getting back to the war on terrorism, where is Osama bin Laden? Where is Osama bin Laden? Why is the President not talking about Osama bin Laden, who is free tonight threatening our citizens where they live in our neighborhoods?

We found out last week that this administration is spending five times more money tracking people who travel to Cuba than they are trying to interdict the money going to Osama bin Laden, who is continuing a threat to this country.

This is one example of this administration taking their eye off the ball of the guy who killed almost 3,000 Americans. We are going to continue this discussion.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I believe we are down to our last minute or so. I do want to indicate to members of Iraq Watch that are here tonight that the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services in the previous hour indicated that he and perhaps other Members might be interested in having a dialogue with us and perhaps even combining hours, if that is acceptable under the House rules, perhaps this week or as soon as possible. And if it is okay with everybody, I wanted to pursue that, and I have indicated to the Speaker as we began the hour that that was contemplated and we will try to pursue that with the leadership.

□ 2200

Mr. Speaker, I believe we have come to essentially the end of our hour.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY). Members are reminded that it is not in order in debate to engage in personal abuse of the President.

THANKING MEMBERS INVOLVED IN IRAQ WATCH

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from Georgia for the oppor-

tunity to speak for 5 minutes. Two of our esteemed colleagues are en route here, and I would like to take this 5 minutes to further thank the Members who have been involved in the Iraq Watch.

I say so from the bottom of my heart because I think at the end of the day there has been a great discussion that has been going on within this body, but unfortunately, in so many respects, it has not fully reached the American people, or it has in drips and drabs; and I commend our colleagues on the other side of the aisle who were down here in the previous hour.

I think, as the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) has suggested, we need to have that kind of frank discussion and debate that all too often really does not take place on this floor. It is an important dialogue that the American public needs to hear.

I believe in the final analysis it is not the shock and awe of our military and the strength that it has that determines America's greatness, but rather, the strength of our ideas and our ability to express those ideas not only here on the floor but for citizens who are out there listening, for them to partake and ultimately put in their own words, with their own voice, from their own heart and head, their feelings about these issues.

So often I go back to my district and so many of them will ask why is no one speaking out about these issues, and not understanding the workings of the House of Representatives and not understanding that so many times meetings are actually going on in committees that do not happen to make it on to C-SPAN, but also wondering where the voice and conscience of the country is, and the Iraq Watch has done an outstanding job in terms of making sure that there has been this opportunity to reach out to the American public and inform them in a nonpartisan way about these issues and raise these questions that are so important for the American people to digest, especially as we face upcoming elections that will determine the fate and course of the Nation.

If we consider that in the previous election, less than 50 percent of the American people voted and understanding that in the aftermath of September 11 there has been a great outpouring of patriotism and citizenship, and what better way to express that than by going out and voting and immersing and involving one's self in the issues of the day, it is our responsibility as Members of Congress to make sure that we inform and educate the general public; but it is equally responsible that the public have an opportunity to express their concerns.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Connecticut for yielding, and I think he is so on the mark, if you will.

People are thirsting for respectful discourse about these issues because they are so profoundly important, and I want to thank the gentleman for the kudos. I know that each of us has benefited from appearing here on a weekly basis, having this conversation; and I think what has also amazed us is the level of interest, the response that we have received so that there is no doubt that there is a deep need out there for, again, the kind of dialogue that goes on here, at least once a week, and that the gentleman from Hawaii (Mr. ABERCROMBIE) mentioned earlier even should be expanded so that there can be a variety of perspectives expressed, because it is important.

My colleague mentioned Ahmed Chalabi earlier. How many people in this Chamber, in this country, know of Ahmed Chalabi; and yet many, many in the world, in the intelligence community, believe that he is as responsible as any single individual for the faulty intelligence that led us into this war, a man, by the way, who is a convicted felon, who was an individual who was convicted of embezzlement in Jordan and reports now indicate is being investigated for the dissemination of sensitive information to a potential adversary in Iran.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts for his comments. I see that our time has expired and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) has arrived.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to come before the House of Representatives tonight and the American people and this great house of democracy that we serve in day in and day out. It is an honor to serve, and every day that we have an opportunity to serve it is important that we share important information with the American people and also with Members of the House.

Once again, our 30-something Working Group that consists of 14 Members on the Democratic side of the House, we come together to share with Americans things that are going good. We call it the good, bad and ugly; but at the same time, we work towards constructive change, and as my colleagues know, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) and I have been coming to the floor, along with other Members of this House, to address issues such as education, issues that are facing young Americans from the ages of 18 to 30-something. That covers a supermajority of individuals that are not exercising their right to vote at this particular time, but I believe now, because we are reaching out to those individuals, they will find a reason to go out

and register to vote or to use that voter registration card to work towards good for their family and also for their future.

There is a lot happening to young Americans now versus poor young Americans, and this is the 30-something hour that the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the minority leader, has organized. Those of us in the House that are living the 30-something right now or that recently went through 20-something come and give voice to those individuals on the floor, and I think this reaches out to even a larger demographic, a demographic of parents that are paying for their loved ones to go to college, a demographic of individuals who were not able to go to college immediately after high school or completion of a vocational training program. Some are in community colleges that are trying to make a way. Either they did not have an opportunity to go to college immediately after high school, one, they could not afford it; two, they had to help their family. Many Americans have to make that choice, and it is okay to make that choice.

It is about family. It is about values. It is about religion. It is about definitely individuals that have strong morals and outright patriots in our country that would like to see their children and grandchildren have a better opportunity than what they have.

I think it also addresses grandparents. I am not one, obviously. I have two children and a wife; and I would tell my colleague that I look forward, if God is willing, to allow me to become a grandparent one day. I am pretty sure my goal would be to make sure my children are able to provide for their children and that their children have a better opportunity than the generations that were before them.

So we come to the floor to be able to share with the American people and give response to some of their e-mails. We welcome e-mails to the 30-something group, and we will be giving that e-mail address out; and I will tell my colleagues week after week, we have received a number every week. We are receiving more and more e-mails. It is very encouraging.

Some Americans have questions that they need answered. We try to provide those answers to the best of our ability. Some Americans are saying, hey, it is great, I am a Republican, I am glad you are giving voice to the issue of student loans, and the fact that more people are graduating from college that are in debt now than it was in the previous generation and the opportunity for Pell grants that were promised, and even those who went through college in the early 1970s, I mean we have less of an opportunity for financially challenged individuals that work every day, individuals who did what we told them to do, go to high school, get that vocational training, that we will be there to be able to assist you. There was a commitment made by the Presi-

dent to raise the Pell grant commitment a little bit up to \$5,000, but he has not yet been able to do so. Not because the resources have not been there. It is because the priority has not been there, which then takes us back to being able to have individuals ready for the workforce, that small businesses and businesses need in this country; and it is so very, very important we pay very close attention to that because that is serious business, the business of making sure that we have a workforce ready to step up and meet the challenge to be able to make America strong.

If we are going to have these individuals graduating from college in debt before they can invest in the American dream of being able to buy a home, being able to invest in this economy, it is very important that we do not put them in debt prior to that opportunity.

Some believe in this Congress that we should have variable student loans. Well, one may argue, well, it is the lower interest payment now; but guess what, they will be forever paying those student loans. Being someone that was once on a college campus, offered a credit card, I will tell my colleagues I am a victim. I put my hands out. I was on my campus.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, pull it out.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, well, I do not want to pull my credit card out. I have a couple of credit cards here, but that is later on in the program. We have our whole David Letterman, Top 10 thing that we have to do, and we have to read some e-mails that we received in the previous weeks. We had last week off.

I can tell the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN), I missed him.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I missed my colleague.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. We come together. We have this thing here on the floor. We have special guests sometimes from the 30-something Working Group. I like the new haircut that the gentleman has going on there.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. My wife made me get it.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, let me tell my colleague, if it was not for our wives, I do not know where we would be, to be honest with him; and I thank God. Coming up October 12, it will be 13 years for me; and, amen, I got married young.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. August 22 it will be 1 year for me.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Is that not something? What a country.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. God bless.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. What a country. Let me just, if the gentleman would start, I started out with some opening comments, just to kind of share with the American people and the Members of the House our purpose for being here.

Once again, we pay all respect and opportunity to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the Democratic leader, that has made a commitment that young people in America