

However, in Najaf, security is not being provided by the U.S.-trained Iraqi troops, but by the militia of radical Shiite Muslim Muqtada Al-Sadr.

In Mosul, the President said 50 percent of the people voted. But 56 percent of those who voted, voted against the constitution that the Bush administration was promoting.

On May 1 of 2003, the President stood on the deck of an aircraft carrier and gave his "mission accomplished" speech. Last week he gave his "secret plan for victory" speech. Yesterday, he gave his "making progress" speech.

I think I know the problem here. Whoever has been writing the President's speeches owes him an apology. They badly mixed up the sequence over the last few years. First, he was to give his "plan for victory" speech, then he was to give his "making progress" speech, then he was to give his "mission accomplished" speech.

I have here a copy of his "get out of Iraq" speech.

CONGRATULATING ST. XAVIER HIGH SCHOOL

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, today I have the honor of congratulating Cincinnati's St. Xavier High School, one of Ohio's most athletically successful and academically accomplished institutions on its first Ohio High School Division I State football championship.

St. X defeated powerful Massillon Washington 24-17 in the final game, Massillon having previously won 22 State football championships. My wife, Donna, and I had the good fortune to attend many of St. X's games this year and last year since our son, Randy, is in the band.

St. X was great. They went 15-0 this year. USA Today in their national poll ranked them number nine in the whole country. I think they should have been number one.

Even more impressive, this is St. X's 36th State title in all sports, the most of any high school in the State. I am proud to say that this is the fourth consecutive year that Ohio's Division I football champs are from my congressional district. St. X joins Colerain and Elder high schools in making that possible.

Congratulations to Coach Steve Specht, his staff, the players, parents, alumni, fans, and of course the band. You were amazing. Go Bombers.

SUCCESS OF CLARK COUNTY'S INTER-SERVICE WALK AND KNOCK FOOD DRIVE

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

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday December 3, I was proud to join more than 4,350 volunteers to conduct the largest single-day food drive in the State of Washington.

Throughout Clark County, Washington, members of social service clubs and volunteers from all walks of the life gathered at 31 staging areas to canvass the entire county. I was pleased to join a young group of Brownies as we went door to door.

By 4 p.m. we had collected more than 114 tons of food at an approximate value of \$365,000. Collections will now continue through December 9, bringing the total to an expected 130 tons. In the 21-year history, Clark County Walk and Knock has collected more than 4.9 million pounds of food valued at \$6 million.

Walk and Knock is 100 percent volunteer, and 100 percent of any money donated by the public is used for the exclusive use of purchasing additional food. Organizers included members of the local Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, Optimist and Sertoma clubs, as well as members of the Clark County Amateur Radio Club and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America.

Local businesses donated valuable resources, and together we produced an incredible success. I am proud of the commitment of southwest Washington's citizens, and urge my colleagues to support their local food banks.

The organizers of Walk and Knock are members of local Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, Optimist, and Sertoma clubs, members of the Clark County Amateur Radio Club, and the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts of America. Additional donated services were provided by Longshoremen Union Local 4, The Columbian newspaper, and Burgerville USA. Supportive funding was provided by Riverview Community Bank, all of the Clark County Les Schwab Tire Centers, Fred Meyer, Weyerhaeuser, US Bank, Columbia Credit Union, and British Petroleum.

AMERICA NEEDS PENSION REFORM NOW

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, traditional pension plans, once the legacy of a lifetime of work, are crumbling. And with time running short on our legislative year, action by Congress is necessary to protect the retirement of hardworking Americans.

Large and small businesses need changes to current law in order to have greater flexibility to help their employees plan for their financial security. Recently, Verizon Communications, a large, vibrant company, froze its pension plan for 50,000 employees. These defined benefit plans have not adapted to the times.

They have used the same formula since their inception, number of years worked multiplied by a certain amount of money. This formula does not account for a changing marketplace and does not result in the most benefit for workers.

Today, a retirement plan must be as dynamic as our society. Flexibility for employers and employees is impera-

tive, and the Pension Protection Act is a step in the right direction; and Congress should pass it this year.

I urge my colleagues, Republicans and Democrats, to step up and help provide this needed reform now. Americans expect us to solve difficult problems, and pension protection is one that requires and deserves our attention.

THE CRISIS IN DARFUR

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, it is not often that we get everybody here in Congress to agree. But we do agree that Darfur's continuing nightmare is genocide. We have labeled it as such. We have all condemned it. The problem is we are not acting to stop it.

The foreign ops appropriations inexplicably dropped \$50 million in conference that would have gone to support peacekeepers from the African Union. We often use this opportunity here today to talk to the American people.

Well, today I am talking to the 8,000 men and women on Capitol Hill who make things happen in Congress. Do not go home unless you ask what your office, your committee, your boss, your Member of Congress is going to do to stop the murder, the rape, the destruction and the violence.

At the very least, work to restore the \$50 million in the defense appropriations so that 7,700 African Union peacekeepers can be on the job. 7,700 people for an area the size of Texas does not sound like too much. It is the least we can do as we enter the holiday season.

HOWARD DEAN'S COMMENTS ON IRAQ

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, Democratic Party chairman Howard Dean has taken his party's irresponsible rhetoric about our involvement in Iraq to a new low. In an interview earlier this week Mr. Dean said, "The idea that we are going to win the war in Iraq is an idea which is just plain wrong."

Dean's take on Iraq makes even less sense than his scream in Iowa. What does Mr. Dean think it does for the morale of our troops on the ground in Iraq when they hear the leader of one of their Nation's two major political parties say that he does not believe that they can get the job done.

Mr. Dean may not believe that our troops are up to the task in Iraq, but I and the overwhelming majority of my colleagues do. It is important our troops understand that. Our troops have freed 26 million Iraqis from the grip of a brutal and murderous dictator, set the stage for democratic elections in a country where this was once thought impossible.

Make no mistake, if the war against terrorism is lost, it will not be lost by our magnificent troops on the battlefield. It will be lost right here at home by politicians who lose their resolve.

AMERICA'S ECONOMY IS IN TROUBLE

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, the President would have us believe that all is well with our economy. But the American people know better. Despite finally receiving some good economic news, middle-class families in this country continue to fall behind as incomes remain flat or drop.

Gas prices fluctuate, health care costs soar, and home heating costs skyrocket. Americans this week are paying nearly 70 cents more per gallon on gas now than in the first year that President Bush came to office.

According to the National Energy Assistance Directors Association, the average family using heating oil or natural gas will pay nearly three times the amount families paid the first winter President Bush was in office.

For the past 5 years, health care costs have increased by nearly 60 percent, driving up the number of uninsured by 6 million since the beginning of the Bush administration. Under President Bush, college tuition has gone up about 40 percent, even taking inflation into account.

Meanwhile, real household income fell for the fourth year in a row in 2004. Together, America can do better than an economy in which middle-class families are seeing falling incomes in the face of rising prices. The American people know it and so should the President.

BORDER SECURITY AND PASSPORTS

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the 9/11 Commission report concluded: "Americans should not be exempt from carrying passports when they enter the United States, nor should Canadians or Mexicans. The 9/11 experience shows that terrorists study and exploit America's vulnerabilities."

Exempting anyone from carrying a passport when crossing into the United States is blatantly ignoring the commission's suggestions and is posing yet another serious vulnerability in our country's border security.

Neither Mexican nor Canadian visitors are required to show a passport to enter the United States, despite the fact that they rank number one and number four respectively as the largest sources of illegal immigration in the United States. Small wonder the governments of those nations oppose passports to enter America.

We need to do what is best for the United States, not what is best for Canada or Mexico. The 9/11 Commission stated that the United States is still at risk by not requiring passports to enter this country. Our border is seriously vulnerable. What is it going to take for us to figure this out?

Congress must make serious changes in our immigration policy before we lose the sovereignty of this Nation and become a Nation illegally colonized by other nations. That's just the way it is.

AMERICA'S WEAK ECONOMY

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, data released this Monday on productivity and wages show why the American people do not believe President Bush when he says our economic prospects are as bright as they have been for a long time.

Yes, productivity is strong, and the economy is growing. But the benefits of that growth are showing up in the bottom lines of companies, not in the paychecks of the American worker.

While productivity grew at a 4.7 percent annual rate in the third quarter, workers' pay, including their benefits, shrank at a 1.4 percent rate. Americans are working harder and harder and producing more and more, but they are getting paid less. This is not a bright economy.

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ANOTHER IRAQI MILESTONE

(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, I wanted to thank the Latvian government for extending their troop commitment to Iraq for another year. Last January, 8.5 million Iraqis voted. Last October, more than 10 million voted. In both of these elections, the Iraqi people refused to be cowed by terrorist threats.

A week from today, Iraqis will, once again, defy terrorists and go to the polls a third time this year. They will choose their first 4-year parliament since Saddam Hussein was removed from power.

More than 300 parties and coalitions are registered for this election, and even those who opposed the October constitutional referendum have organized for this vote.

In his speech last week, President Bush mentioned Marine Corporal Jeffrey Starr who died fighting in Iraq. In a letter found after his death he wrote, "I don't regret going, everybody dies, but few get to do it for something as important as freedom. It may seem confusing why we are in Iraq, it's not for me. I'm here helping these people, so they can live the way we live."

Mr. Speaker, it is because of soldiers like Corporal Starr that Iraqis will one

day live like we live, under freedom and democracy.

SWEET TRADE

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, well, just in time for the holidays, the Republicans have prepared a bevy of treats known as tax cuts favoring those who earn over \$300,000 a year. One of the most delectable is a 60 percent tax cut in the tax on stock dividends for millionaires. It costs \$13 billion in revenue foregone, unfortunately. But with new found concern about the deficit, the Republicans are going to pay for that tax cut for the millionaires by raising fees and interest rates on students who are struggling to get an education.

What a sweet trade. More tax cuts for billionaires as they trickle down on the students who are struggling to live the American dream.

AMERICAN ECONOMY FLOURISHES

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, workers throughout our country have over 4.25 million reasons to agree that the American economy continues to improve under Republican leadership.

Since President Bush signed the Jobs and Growth Act of 2003, the news about the economy has been overwhelmingly positive. 4.5 million new jobs have been created. The unemployment rate is lower than the average of the past three decades. The economy grew at 4.3 percent over the past 10 quarters. Tax receipts increased by \$274 billion in just one year after the tax cuts, the largest increase ever due to economic growth.

As the Republican Congress continues to pass legislation that will decrease the tax burden upon American workers and eliminate excessive government regulations, our economy will continue to flourish. We will work hard to ensure that the American people, not the Federal Government, have control over their hard-earned money.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, we will never forget September 11, and the lifetime of service of the late Governor Carroll Campbell.

ECONOMY NOTHING TO BRAG ABOUT

(Mrs. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, when I am here in Washington I hear the administration and the House majority brag about how great our economy is,