

Let us do what we encourage all of our children to do and save for the future. I encourage this Congress to take a strong look at the Blue Dogs' 12-point plan and establish a rainy-day fund.

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

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

A REMARKABLE DAY IN IRAQ

Mr. HAYES. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. HAYES. Madam Speaker, this has been a remarkable day in Iraq, and I would like to redirect our attention for a moment to the things that Mr. OSBORNE outlined. Remarkable, the accomplishments of Iraqi people today. More than 70 percent of their population went to the polls and exercised the right that they have never had before, the right to vote for a democratic government. That vote was courageous. It showed commitment. It showed the resolve of the Iraqi people to take control of their destiny and their future. It was a tremendous step forward for peace, stability in the future of freedom in the Middle East. So I would like to take a part of my time to salute and to call attention to the incredible things that the Iraqis have done today and have committed themselves to do in the future by voting for a free Iraq.

But more especially, Madam Speaker, I would like to call attention to the men and women in uniform from America and around the globe in the coalition forces, but especially tonight the American men and women who have made this election possible, who have spoken out, who have given, in many cases, their lives so that Iraqi men and women could vote today and determine their own future.

My most sincere thanks and the thanks of a grateful Nation is extended from every quarter today to these men and women who have performed so courageously and so remarkably and have made this day and this election possible. I do not know how we can thank them enough, but it is a privilege for me to stand before the people's House and call attention to these wonderful men and women who represent America and all we stand for: freedom, democracy, equal opportunity.

They did it today. What a tribute to them, but especially a tribute to their

families, the moms and dads, wives and husbands of those soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines whose lives have been lost in the quest for freedom for people around the world.

So as I close, Madam Speaker, thank you for allowing me to speak tonight on behalf of myself, the Eighth Congressional District of North Carolina, the home of Fort Bragg, the 18th Airborne Corps, the 82nd Airborne Division, and all the men and women in uniform. God has blessed America so richly by giving us these men and women who have stood and fought and won for democracy.

God bless them all.

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

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

IRAQI ELECTIONS

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, with the holidays upon us, some Members of this body have been working really hard to divert attention from much of the pressing issues that we should be working on in this Congress. They have been doing this by complaining about some kind of war on Christmas.

You can always tell when their poll numbers are down. That is when they reach into their bag of culture war tricks and gin up a divisive controversy that has nothing to do with Americans' real challenges and Americans' real aspirations. It is really interesting, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are very interested in preserving the symbols of Christmas. But the war they are supporting and the budgets they are passing, more Scrooge than Santa, demonstrate that they have forgotten the true meaning of Christmas, particularly the part about peace on Earth and goodwill towards all.

Besides, how many casualties have there been in this so-called war on Christmas? Here is a hint. Several thousand less than the war on Iraq. Today, without a doubt, we should congratulate the Iraqi people for what appears to be a successful, high turnout election. For the third time this year, courageous Iraqi citizens have enthusiastically exercised their democratic rights.

But successful elections do not, and cannot, obscure the devastating na-

tional tragedy that is the Iraq war. It does not change the fact that over 2,100 Americans have died for weapons of mass destruction that never existed. It does not change the fact that this war has turned Iraq into a hotbed of terrorist activity. It does not change the fact that our troops are sitting ducks for the insurgents who have been emboldened, not deterred, by our military presence in Iraq.

Now that the elections are over, the question is, What now? What next in terms of U.S. policy towards Iraq? Aside from trying to spin it and take credit for it, what is the President's reaction to this Iraqi election? All indications are that even with a modest reduction in troops, he will insist that we must stay the course. That means continuing with this bloody occupation that has killed or maimed thousands of our people, has cost us hundreds of billions of dollars and turned the entire world against us. Furthermore, he will not see the irony in celebrating Iraqi democracy while we use United States taxpayer money to manufacture propaganda and spread it in the Iraqi press. He will ignore the contradiction in praising Iraqi freedom while violating civil liberties at home by pushing for a more heavy-handed and invasive sequel to the PATRIOT Act.

Here is the bottom line: a successful Iraqi election should, at the very least, reinforce the imperative of bringing our troops home. If Iraq is truly able to self-govern, then we have no business occupying their country and meddling in their affairs.

I have argued all year long that it is time to restore Iraqi sovereignty and give Iraq back to the Iraqi people. If the election is a watershed moment, as the White House claims, then what is the continued justification for having our troops over there in harm's way?

Now is the time to enlist the support of the international community to establish an interim security force for Iraq. But that is just the first step. As I have written to the President in a letter signed by 61 other Members of the House, the United States must also launch a diplomatic offensive recasting our role in Iraq as a reconstruction partner, rather than a military occupier.

We must also lead the way in establishing an international peace commission to oversee the post-war reconciliation and coordinate peace talks between Iraq's various factions.

Madam Speaker, sometimes it seems like the only people who still support this war work in the big white building down Pennsylvania Avenue. There is barely any constituency left for our Iraq policy. The majority of the American people are not behind it; our global allies are not behind it. The Iraqi people are not behind it. Even Iraqi leaders, Sunnis, Shiites and Kurdish alike, who agree on practically nothing, have united around the call for the United States military to leave. With the Iraqi people having voted once

again, let us offer the ultimate vote of confidence in their democracy. Let us reward the self-sufficiency they have demonstrated by giving them their country back and bringing our American soldiers home.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. SCHMIDT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

U.S. AUTO INDUSTRY SUPPORTS UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE—IN CANADA

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Washington?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, as we spend our time here talking about Christmas and the war on Christmas, I think we have missed the whole point. At least the Republicans have.

My passion since I arrived in Congress has been that every American should have access to affordable health care coverage. It should be a right, not a privilege as it is today. Over 45 million Americans have no coverage at all, and millions more cannot afford to get sick because of inadequate or expensive coverage.

Democrats have made health care a top priority, but the Republicans have not. Christmas trees seem to be more in their order. I have repeatedly introduced H.R. 1200, universal health care legislation. My friend and colleague JOHN DINGELL has done the same. My colleague JOHN CONYERS has done the same. We have many proposals all approaching a universal solution to a problem for this country.

Dozens of Democrats have been willing to sign on to this bill. But the majority, the Republicans, have talked but done absolutely nothing. Instead, they have used every opportunity to disparage government and claim that solutions to everything always end in the words "incorporated," "privatized." Whether it is Social Security or Medicare or drugs or whatever, it always has got to be private.

Republicans claim government, the one they control, is incapable of addressing America's needs. They proved it down in Louisiana. They proved it themselves. Their tortured logic says that we can wage war, but we cannot solve the health care crisis.

Pick up the newspaper, and the conclusion is inescapable. There are no more tomorrows. The health care crisis is real and a present danger to the American people and the U.S. economy, much more than this war on terror.

Especially hard hit is the manufacturing sector. Employees throughout the country are bracing for plant closings or wage and benefit cuts. We came out here and did pensions again today. We continue to do it to the workers.

Companies like General Motors and Ford cite the cost of providing health care coverage as a major factor in their current financial crises. So quietly behind the scenes here on Capitol Hill, the domestic auto industry has been talking to lawmakers about a bailout. They are looking for tens of billions of dollars next year and say it is required to save the auto industry and thousands of family wage jobs.

I am a strong supporter of America's labor movement and a strong supporter of family wage jobs. And if a company treats its employees right, I strongly support them as well. That might make me a candidate for supporting an auto bailout. But it really makes me wonder why Republicans will not join Democrats and fight for its family from within, a health care system that is destroying people, business, and our way of life.

Republicans say, let the market fix it. Well, we have done that. And the special interests have said stay out of it because people like me want this Nation to guarantee health coverage for everybody. Lobbyists make a living in this town out of spinning the tale of us against them and how we have to do it individually, and we cannot do it as a country.

Well, I will enter into the RECORD a letter that sets the record straight and give us a chance to finally confront America's health care crisis. This letter was sent separately to the Canadian government by the Ford Motor Company, General Motors, Daimler Chrysler and the union representing auto workers in late 2002.

The so-called big three U.S. car companies put their full support behind publicly, publicly, funded health care in Canada. Let me read some excerpts. "Canada's publicly funded health care system provides essential and affordable health care services for all Canadians, regardless of their income. For both employers and workers in the auto industry, it is vitally important that the publicly funded health care system be preserved and renewed."

The letter sent by GM, Ford, and Daimler Chrysler, concludes: "In addition to reinforcing the quality and accessibility of health care for all Cana-

dians, these measures would also help to ensure the long-run success of the Canadian auto industry." There is a business reason to do it. That is the U.S. auto industry acting outside the United States. It is time for them to act inside the United States and for us to act.

H.R. 1200 provides universal health care with guidelines for Federal Government decisions by local government and health care by the private sector.

My Democratic friends have other ideas. There is more than one idea how to do this. We ought to get them on the table. It is time for the Republican majority to make health care a priority. It is time for the auto industry to support a solution that is morally responsible and economically urgent: health care. Every American has a right.

Madam Speaker, we have been talking about it, and we have not done anything. It is time to stop talking about Christmas trees and start talking about health care for all Americans.

SEPTEMBER 10, 2002.

Canada's publicly funded health care system provides essential and affordable health care services for all Canadians, regardless of their income. Publicly funded health care also enhances Canada's economic performance in several important ways.

The auto industry is Canada's most important export industry; it directly employs over 150,000 Canadians in high-wage jobs, supports hundreds of thousands of other spin-off jobs, produces \$90 billion worth of shipments per year, and generates billions of dollars in tax revenues for all levels of government in Canada. The success of this industry has been crucial to Canada's economic progress over the past decade. Canada's health care system has been an important ingredient in the auto industry's performance.

Workers in the auto industry, and in the many manufacturing and service industries which supply automakers, benefit directly from access to public health care services. Thanks to this system, they are healthier and more productive. Employers in the auto industry, meanwhile, enjoy significant total labour cost savings because most health care services are supplied through public programs (rather than through private insurance plans).

The public health care system significantly reduces total labour costs for automobile manufacturing firms, compared to the cost of equivalent private insurance services purchased by U.S.-based automakers; these health insurance savings can amount to several dollars per hour of labour worked. Publicly funded health care thus accounts for a significant portion of Canada's overall labour cost advantage in auto assembly, versus the U.S., which in turn has been a significant factor in maintaining and attracting new auto investment to Canada.

Canada's publicly funded health care system is now facing demographic, technological, and fiscal pressures. The erosion of publicly funded health care through measures such as the delisting of currently-covered services, the imposition of user fees, the failure of the public system to keep up with the changing nature of health care, and new costs such as prescription drugs and home care, will impose significant costs on automotive employers and undermine the attractiveness of Canada as a site for new automotive investment.