

or fraud and a government audit is inevitable.

A congressional committee might look into unaccounted expenditures of \$90 million, and we might read about it in the New York Times.

When \$900 million goes missing, corporations collapse, mergers are cancelled, contracts are terminated, inspectors general are appointed, contracts are sometimes banned or fined, and charges are brought to court and people usually begin to take notice.

I point all of this out to ask what should happen when we find out that \$9 billion is discovered by an official investigation to be missing in our contracting accounts for the reconstruction of Iraq relating to one corporation, Halliburton, and oil revenues. Apparently, this administration thinks very little should happen because there has been no further investigation, appointment of a special inspector, a charge against a person responsible, or even any penalty or ban on that corporation which continues to make massive profits from contracts with the U.S. military despite evidence of overcharging, minimal accountability for funds, incompetence, and abuses of international and civil rights.

And if that doesn't concern us enough to act, shouldn't we pause over recent revelations of an additional \$12 billion in unaccounted funding shipped as currency in \$100 bills directly to Iraq from the Federal Reserve? Worse yet is the story we are learning from the funds we can account for and how they have been spent or misspent, stolen or wasted, and how little they have improved the lives of the Iraqi people they are supposed to help.

The expenditures for the Iraq war continue to grow at a rate that is putting our country into levels of spending and debt never seen before. Don't the American people deserve a full accounting of where their tax dollars are going at a time when more money is being spent to allegedly improve the infrastructure and life-style of the people of Iraq than here at home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. HARRIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

CARIBBEAN-AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my time out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of my fellow Caribbean-Americans as

we celebrate the first Caribbean Heritage Month. I want to begin by commending the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) who I was privileged to join in introducing H. Res. 71, which expressed the sense of Congress that there should be established a Caribbean-American Heritage Month, and also to commend and applaud Dr. Claire Nelson and the staff and members of the Institute for Caribbean Studies, and to thank President Bush for making it official by signing the proclamation proclaiming June 2006 as Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

Mr. Speaker, I am a Caribbean-American, with family ties to Cuba, Antigua, the Virgin Islands and the U.S., and consider this achievement an important one. The contributions of the people of the Caribbean, which go back even before the birth of this Nation, span every field from sports to entertainment, politics, art and culture to labor organizing, and all are significant and need to be made known to all Americans.

One of the most important persons of Caribbean descent in the founding of this country was Alexander Hamilton, a general in the American Revolution and our first Secretary of State. He was born on the island of Nevis and raised in St. Croix.

In the struggle to end our enslavement, which I am sure was greatly inspired by the successful Haitian revolution, it is noteworthy that Denmark Vessey also came here from St. Thomas in the now U.S. Virgin Islands by way of the Guadeloupe to lead an unsuccessful, but the largest slave rebellion that was ever planned in this country.

The ongoing fight for emancipation and liberation, my fellow Virgin Islander Edward Blyden, along with George Padmore, Marcus Garvey and Claude McKay, were among the first West Indian Americans to become well known and well respected leaders in the African American struggle for racial equality.

Others from the Virgin Islands who also had their roots in other Caribbean islands, like Ashley Totten and Frank Crosswaith, who were born on St. Croix, helped to found some of the major labor unions still operating today. J. Raymond Jones from St. Thomas, also known as the Silver Fox, ran New York City politics in the 1900s, and those are only a few.

Other famous West Indian Americans include former U.S. representative and first female presidential candidate Shirley Chisholm; Franklin Thomas, former head of the Ford Foundation; Federal Judge Constance Baker Motley, the first black woman appointed to the Federal judiciary; activists such as Stokely Carmichael, Kwame Toure, Roy Innis, Malcolm X and Louis Farrakhan; as well as world renowned actor Sidney Poitier; civil rights activist and singer Harry Belafonte; Earl Greaves, philanthropist, businessman and publisher of Black Enterprise; and

now Colin Powell, the first black U.S. Secretary of State, all have made impressive contributions to this country.

Mr. Speaker, the small islands of the Caribbean also wield a cultural influence that have spread to the remote corners of the world. Our culture, notably the music, calypso, reggae, Afro-Cuban and their derivatives, which were created by and large by a people who were long considered marginalized, has spread far and wide and enjoys extensive popularity today.

But more than just our musical influence, Nobel prizes for literature have gone to poets St. Jean Perse of Guadeloupe and Derek Walcott of St. Lucia from among a number of highly regarded Caribbean writers.

Moreover, internationally admired painters Winfred Lam of Cuba and Leroy Clarke of Trinidad and Tobago and Haiti's "naive" artists took inspiration from a complex cosmology born from West African religions and Christianity. And Trinidad and Tobago's carnival was the basis for the breathtaking costumed parades designed by Peter Minshall of Guyana and Trinidad for the Barcelona, the Atlanta and the St. Lake City Olympics.

The most important contribution of all, however, remains the close ties between this country and the nations of the Caribbean. Those ties are not only ties of geography, but of history, and most important of the common ideals of freedom, justice and democracy which guides our nations.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed fitting and proper that we honor the contributions of the people of the Caribbean to our history and culture.

Indeed, if providence had not made it possible for our Founding Father, Alexander Hamilton, to New York from my home island of St. Croix to further his education and work in New York City, we might not be celebrating the founding of this Nation next week, and instead, have remained a colony of the United Kingdom even today.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleague who was here earlier, Ms. LEE, to pay tribute to the Caribbean-Americans who have given so much to this country, and to once again thank her and thank the members and the leaders of Institute for Caribbean Studies and to thank the President for the proclamation which named this month, June 2006, Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CORRINE BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

FORD PLAN IN MEXICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.