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ADMINISTRATION GETS TWO THUMBS DOWN

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, the holiday movie season usually begins each year around Christmas Day, but this year the holiday movie season has begun early. It began this week, in fact, when the administration premiered its new movie entitled, ''Iraq: The Sequel.''

As you will recall, the first Iraq movie began with the administration warning us about weapons of mass destruction and mushroom clouds. Then we invaded Iraq where we discovered that the weapons of mass destruction didn't exist. But the administration kept coming up with new reasons to keep the occupation going.

The American people gave this first Iraq two thumbs down, but that hasn't discouraged our leaders in the White House. They have been busy writing the same exact script for ''Iraq: The Sequel,'' which is all about Iran.

In this movie, the administration warns us about Iranian weapons of mass destruction, in this case a nuclear weapons program. Then it gives us new visions of mushroom clouds by warning us about World War III. Then we discover, as we did last week, that the nuclear weapons program does not exist. In fact, it was suspended back in 2003. But the administration continues to come up with new reasons to keep the crisis going.

Yesterday we were told that Iran was dangerous, Iran is dangerous, Iran will be dangerous. So the administration's drumbeat for war in general, and against Iran in particular, goes on. Before we go back to the dark days, Madam Speaker, the dark days of shock and awe, I have a few questions to ask.

First, why did it take 4 long years to discover the truth about the Iranian nuclear weapons program? Was this another example of intelligence being manipulated for political purposes?

Why did the administration warn us in October that Iranian nuclear weapons could start World War III when the Director of National Intelligence went to the White House in August to say that Iran's nuclear weapons system ''may be suspended''?

There is nothing, nothing more reckless and irresponsible than to terrify the world about World War III when there is no basis for it.

Why did the administration continue to use threatening language yesterday? Yesterday, when the truth was already known. Instead of looking for opportunities for peace, this administration continues to look for ways to keep tensions as high as possible.

My last question, Madam Speaker, is why does the administration seem so intent on wrecking America's credibility? By doing so, this administration has made the world a much more dangerous place and has undercut our own national security. We are like the boy who cries wolf. No one will believe what we say now, and that means we cannot lead the world effectively against terrorism and towards peace.

The movies of ''Iraq'' and ''Iraq: The Sequel'' have both bombed. We need a new plot, a plot that begins with responsible redeployment of our troops out of Iraq, which would be the essential, responsible first step.

When we do that, we can begin to bring together all the parties in the region that have a stake in keeping a lid on violence and reducing tensions. We must change course because that is the only way to regain the moral leadership. And we must reshape events, and we must reshape them in ways that are favorable to the United States and to peace around the world.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 1201

Mr. PICKERING. Madam Speaker, I would like to ask unanimous consent to withdraw my name as a cosponsor of H.R. 1201.

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

There was no objection.

EYE ON THE SUPREME COURT

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, last week hundreds of citizens stood in the first snow of winter in Washington, D.C. for 2 hours, hoping to get a coveted seat in the United States Supreme Court building to see the oral arguments on the case of the detainees in Guantanamo prisoner of war camp and what rights, if any, they have under our Constitution; however, the Supreme Court gallery has a mere 50 seats for spectators.

One of those would-be viewers was a lawyer on my staff, Gina Santucci. I wanted her there to find out more about the case and take notes. But she, like most of the people in line, never got in to see the arguments. There was no room in the room. Those that were allowed into the proceedings were only permitted to stay 5 minutes before they had to leave and make room for other people in the room.

Public interest in what takes place in the Supreme Court is a good thing. It is important that Americans are concerned about what occurs in the Supreme Court, and citizens want to observe the most powerful court in action anywhere in the world. But most Americans will never have this opportunity to see the questions asked by the Justices of the Supreme Court or to hear the arguments over the meaning of our Constitution or hear constitutional cases that will go down in history.

Earlier this year, I introduced H.R. 1299 to allow television cameras to televise Supreme Court proceedings. Since then, both the House and the Senate Judiciary Committees have heard arguments as to why cameras should be allowed inside the Supreme Court.

Last week, the Senate Judiciary Committee marked up Senator SPECTER's bill to allow cameras in the Supreme Court. Some Senators were concerned that the Department of Justice opposed this bill. Justice Department opposed this bill because they say they want to protect the ''collegial environment'' of the Court. I don't mean to intrude on what a ''collegial environment'' is, but what is it?

I thought the business before the Supreme Court is a matter the American people have an interest in, not just the college of lawyers that appear before the court.

We have cameras in these House Chambers, and I never thought about whether the camera here on the House floor affects the collegiality between the fellow representatives that we work with. Most of us hardly notice the camera at all. And today's cameras are so small and unobtrusive, they are not noticed. They don't affect our daily routine here in the House, but they allow Americans across the vastness of the fruited plain to tune in to see what their government is up to every day.

Now, I doubt if the Supreme Court TV channel will win the fall sweeps, but it will allow Americans who live in the 50 States to observe the oral arguments that take place. Some say they are against cameras in the courtroom because attorneys play to the camera and try to impress the viewing audience.

Madam Speaker, attorneys don't play to the camera, they play to the jury. I know because I played to the jury for 8 years as a prosecutor in Texas. However, there isn't even a jury to impress in the Supreme Court. In fact, there really isn't a time to grandstand in the Supreme Court. Oral arguments in the Supreme Court involve the best appellate attorneys in the country, facing a spew of questions from nine Justices who are asking a barrage of legal questions to these lawyers making them justify their legal positions on their case.

I only explain how the oral arguments work in the Supreme Court because most Americans are unaware of the proceedings and the procedures since they don't have the opportunity to view Supreme Court oral arguments personally. Unless there are cameras, Americans will never have the chance to see what takes place in a courtroom, the most powerful courtroom in the whole world, the Supreme Court courtroom.

I know cameras can be placed in a courtroom without disruption or distraction because I did it. For 22 years,