

delicate ecosystem, which has become engrained in the unique culture of the great State of Florida.

Athalie Range, Mr. Speaker, was another pioneer among the great women of Florida. Ms. Range was the former president of the Liberty City Elementary PTA in 1953. Ms. Range fought to eliminate the deplorable conditions of segregated public schools. She may not have been the only one to notice the disparity between white and black schools, but she was one of the first to do something positive about it. She stood before the all-white school board, which turned out to be no match for her fighting spirit. These segregationist policies, which seemed to be set in stone, were smashed beneath the weight of her mighty will.

In fact, South Florida is blessed with many remarkable women, and our chapter of RESULTS is cultivating distinguished, altruistic women like Betsy Skipp, Gale Neumann, and Kathleen Gordon. These women have devoted their precious time and their ample talents to this amazing organization that advocates solutions to raising the standards of living throughout the globe.

Their role within RESULTS has been to pioneer the use of microenterprise programs to empower even more women to pursue their dreams and achieve greatness of their own. These women are heroines. I admire them, and young girls in South Florida aspire to achieve even a fraction of what they have.

Every day I am thankful that my daughters will have the benefit of walking the road that these courageous women have paved for all of us.

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

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

VOTE "NO" ON NO-BID CONTRACTS

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

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, later this week we'll vote on whether to instruct the Ethics Committee to investigate the relationship between earmarks and contributions from the PMA Group, an organization that is currently under investigation by the U.S. Department of Justice.

Last week, I offered a broader resolution. This one is specific. At its core is the notion that the House should have a higher standard of conduct than whether or not a Member can be indicted or convicted. The broader resolution gained the support of 182 Members—a substantial number, but still short of passage.

Let me make an appeal to the newer Members of this body, those who have been elected in the past few election cycles: Most of you campaigned on principles of good government, that Congress should take its article 1 powers seriously, that we should be careful and deliberative stewards of the public purse.

I have some sobering news. It's now up to you to uphold the dignity and decorum of this institution. It's now up to you to ensure that those who view our proceedings from afar will have enduring respect for what is done here.

This duty would normally fall to the more seasoned Members of this body, particularly those who have been entrusted with leadership positions. One would assume that they would feel it their obligation to be the guardians of the reputation and the dignity of the people's House. But this is not the case.

For whatever reason, those who have been chosen to lead have chosen not to lead on this issue. While the Department of Justice investigations swirl around us, while some of our former Members sit in prison, we have opted for business as usual, insisting that campaign contributions do not constitute "financial interest," whistling past the Justice Department as we go.

Those who have been entrusted in leadership positions may tell you that securing no-bid contracts, even for those who give you campaign contributions, is simply an exercise of your article 1 authority under the Constitution. But you know better than that.

When the President stood in this body 1 week ago and called for an end to no-bid contracts, he received a standing ovation. We all stood and cheered. But the very next day we passed legislation that provided thousands of no-bid contracts, including several to clients of the PMA Group—a lobbying group currently under investigation by the Department of Justice.

So here we are. A privileged resolution has been offered that would ask the House Ethics Committee to investigate earmarks and campaign contributions related to the PMA Group. We will vote on that resolution on Thursday.

This resolution, or something similar to it, will eventually pass. We will eventually come to understand that it is beneath the dignity of this institution to continue to sweep this issue under the rug and pretend that no one will notice.

It simply isn't right to give no-bid contracts to those who give us campaign contributions. I believe that the overwhelming majority of this body understands that, regardless of what our leaders may tell us. I think an overwhelming majority of this body knows that we need a higher standard than we currently employ.

Madam Speaker, we owe this institution far more than we are giving it. Let us vote for this privileged resolution and give it the respect it deserves.

DEFENSE SPENDING

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, the President has announced we will soon be sending an additional 17,000 troops to Afghanistan, bringing our total there to approximately 55,000.

A few days ago, I read a one-line mention in a story that the Defense Department, which is now the Department of Foreign Aid, was going to spend \$100 million to build a new road in Afghanistan. I think our Founding Fathers would think we had flipped out or lost our minds to spend \$100 million to build a road in Afghanistan, especially since we are over \$11 trillion in debt and thus are spending money that we do not have. Of course, \$100 million is just a tiny drop in the bucket of the billions and billions that we have spent over there since 2001, in an impoverished country that is no realistic threat to us whatsoever.

Of course, every giant bureaucracy is doing everything it can to expand its mission and exaggerating its threats so it can get more money. That is what the war in Afghanistan is really all about—money and power instead of any real threat.

According to the Congressional Research Service, we have spent \$173 billion in Afghanistan since 2001, and as far as I'm concerned, it's pouring money down a rat hole. It is a complete waste. I think if there are any fiscal conservatives left in Congress, they should be horrified by the waste that is going on over there.

General Petraeus said in an article in the Washington Post a few days ago that the situation in Afghanistan, despite all of this money, has deteriorated markedly in the past 2 years. Those were his words. He said Afghanistan has been known over the years as the graveyard of empires, and if we're not careful, it's going to help be the graveyard of our empire as well.

Professor Ian Lustick of the University of Pennsylvania wrote recently about the money feeding frenzy of the war on terror and he wrote this: "Nearly 7 years after September 11, 2001, what accounts for the vast discrepancy between the terrorist threat facing America and the scale of our response? Why, absent any evidence of a serious terror threat, is a war on terror so enormous, so all-encompassing, and still expanding?"

"The fundamental answer is that Al Qaeda's most important accomplishment was not to hijack our planes but to hijack our political system.

"For a multitude of politicians, interest groups and professional associations, corporations, media organizations, universities, local and State governments, and Federal agency officials, the war on terror is now a major profit center, a funding bonanza, and a set of slogans and soundbites to be inserted into budget, project, grant, and contract proposals."

And finally, Professor Lustick wrote, "For the country as a whole, however, it has become a maelstrom of waste."

Now we have a national debt of \$11.315 trillion, an incomprehensible figure—and the GAO tells us in addition that we have over \$55 trillion in unfunded future pension liabilities.

It's just not going to be long at all before we're not going to be able to pay all of our Social Security and Medicare, veterans pensions, and all the things we have promised our own people if we don't stop spending money in ridiculously wasteful ways.

And, of course, what does the Defense Department tell us? Just as they always do: What they want is more money to spend in Afghanistan and more troops in every place else.

Bruce Fein, who was a high-ranking official in the Reagan administration, wrote just a few days ago in the Washington Times that it is ridiculous that we now have troops in 135 countries and approximately 1,400 military installations around the world. And he said we should redeploy our troops to the United States.

He said, "No country would dare attack our defenses and our retaliatory capability would be invincible. Esprit de corps would be at its zenith because soldiers would be fighting to protect American lives on American soil, not Afghan peasants."

And he wrote this: "The redeployment would end the United States casualties in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, it would end the foreign resentments or enemies created by unintended killing of civilians and the insult to pride excited by foreign occupation."

At the end of this column, he wrote: "The American empire should be abandoned and the republic restored. The United States would be safer, freer, and wealthier." And, Madam Speaker, I can tell you, I agree with him.

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FRAGILE X SYNDROME

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

Mr. HARPER. I come to you today to tell you a story, and it's my family's story that has great relevance to many of you, and many of you in this country.

My wife and I met and started dating when she was 15 and I was 17. We met at a great place to meet your spouse, church. We dated for 5½ years and got married. And we didn't really think we wanted children—we really wanted grandchildren, but could not figure out a way to get there. And we finally decided, after 10 years of marriage, that we would have some kids.

Our first son, Livingston, was born in 1989, and he is now 19 years old. As we went through his development in early years, we noticed that he was not doing

things as soon as we thought he should be. Everything that he did was in the very tail end of the late normal range; he did them, but it was delayed. Our pediatrician told us it was okay, that he would probably grow out of this, and we continued to go along with just normal life.

At one point, when he was about 19 months old, we went out of town on a trip, left him with one of the grandparents. And he got sick while we were out of town and had to go to the doctor. At that point, the next week the doctor called me and said I think that there's something wrong with your son; I don't know what it is, but we'll look, we'll try to figure out what it is. At that point, we were 4 months pregnant with our daughter. And we didn't know, we just started looking to see why he was developmentally delayed. We started going—and I say "we," my wife was the one who did the brunt of this work. There was speech therapy twice a week, occupational therapy twice a week, tests, trips to the hospital, to the doctor, all the things that you do, trying to determine what's wrong with your child.

That continued. We went through all types of tests; we went through genetic tests that came back normal, we went through other things. We were finally given a misdiagnosis of mild cerebral palsy and labeled a near miss on autism. That's what we dealt with for the next 2 years. So we did those things that you had to do to survive.

At some point in 1993, when he was almost 4 years old, our next-door neighbor went to an education seminar in Jackson, Mississippi, and went to a breakout session called Educating Children With Fragile X. Our next-door neighbor had never heard of Fragile X. And she goes to this session, watches the video, hears this parent speak, and her mouth falls open. And she comes home that night and tells us, I think this is it. At that point, we requested testing to be done specifically for Fragile X syndrome, and it was determined that, indeed, he did have that.

The things that led us to know things were wrong, he was rocking some when he would sit, he was doing a lot of hand flapping, and maybe chewing on some objects. And then he was late doing many things, speech and language and those type issues. So we got the diagnosis of Fragile X syndrome. We went to the Children's Hospital in Denver, Colorado, where he was evaluated by Dr. Randi Hagerman and her Fragile X team. It's been tough, but we have a wonderful son. He is a blessing to everybody that he comes across. And we're so thankful for our son Livingston.

Our daughter Maggie does not have Fragile X syndrome. But I wanted to mention this today because there are over 130 parents from across 35 States—all over the country—that are here today for National Fragile X Advocacy Day. And I want to commend them for the hard work that they're doing, the

things that they're doing to bring attention to this.

This is something that we can work on together here in Congress. It is a bipartisan effort. We can work to find the right things for research, things that will help on treatments, and things that will ultimately lead to a cure. And I'll tell you this, for all parents of special needs children, this is something you should never give up on, never stop fighting, never quit believing. Our son graduated from high school last year. He is now in a local community college. He works two nights a week.

I want to thank the National Fragile X Foundation for all their hard work.

KEEP GOVERNMENT OUT OF THE WAY AND EMPOWER THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. CHAFFETZ. Madam Speaker, I rise because I am concerned about the direction of this country and the fundamental and proper role of government.

I still remember reading and seeing the old films and seeing President Kennedy stand up and say, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country," and yet we seem to be moving in the wrong direction.

The furnace, the engine that is the United States of America, what makes America so great are the entrepreneurs, that entrepreneurial spirit. It is the American people who grab hold of things and make things happen; and yet at every turn I look and I see government getting in the way.

As I meet with entrepreneurs, as I meet with people who own businesses and employ people and have jobs, they don't sit back and say, boy, I wonder what the government is going to do to make my life better. The question that they ask is, what sort of hindrances are going to be in the way?

We've got to understand in this country that manufacturing is good; it's good to manufacture. We have to actually create and build things in the United States of America. We can't simply be a service-based economy. And yet at every single turn I see these radical environmentalists who want to get in the way and prohibit us from actually developing and creating something. I see this so-called cap and trade—I think it's more like a cap and tax, where we're going to simply tax our way out of our problems and say every piece of energy that we create in this country we're going to add a tax to it. That's not going to grow this country; that's not going to propel us forward.

We have created so many barriers to entry for the person who wants to start their own home-based business to the largest manufacturers that are in this