

the bottom of this. And if you make everything earmarked, it would be much better.

The definition of an earmark is very, very confusing. If you would vote to support the embassy, which came up to nearly \$1 billion in Baghdad, that is not called an earmark. But if you have an earmark for a highway or a building here in the United States, that is called an earmark. If you vote for a weapons system, it would support and help a certain district, and that's not considered an earmark.

When people are yelling and screaming about getting rid of earmarks, they're not talking about getting rid of weapons systems or building buildings and bridges and highways in foreign countries. They are only talking about when it's designated that certain money would be spent a certain way in this country.

Ultimately, where we really need some supervision and some earmarks are the trillions of dollars spent by the Federal Reserve. They get to create their money out of thin air, and spend it. They have no responsibility to tell us anything. Under the law, they are excluded from telling us where and what they do.

So, we neglect telling the Treasury how to spend TARP money, and then we complain about how they do it. But just think literally; the Treasury is miniscule compared to what the Federal Reserve does.

The Treasury gets hundreds of billions, which is huge, of course, and then we neglect to talk about the Federal Reserve, where they are creating money out of thin air, and supporting all their friends and taking care of certain banks and certain corporations. This, to me, has to be addressed.

I have introduced a bill, it's called H.R. 1207, and this would remove the restriction on us to find out what the Federal Reserve is doing. Today, the Federal Reserve under the law is not required to tell us anything. So all my bill does is remove this restriction and say, Look, Federal Reserve, you have a lot of power. You have too much power. You're spending a lot of money. You're taking care of people that we have no idea what you're doing. We, in the Congress, have a responsibility to know exactly what you're doing.

This bill, H.R. 1207, will allow us for once and for all to have some supervision of the Federal Reserve. They are exempt from telling us anything, and they have stiffed us already. There have been lawsuits filed over the Freedom of Information Act. Believe me, they are not going to work, because the law protects the Federal Reserve.

The Constitution doesn't protect the Federal Reserve. The Constitution protects the people to know exactly what is going on. We should enforce the Constitution. We should not enforce these laws that protect a secret bank that gets to create this money out of thin air.

So, the sooner we in the Congress wake up to our responsibilities, under-

stand what earmarks are all about, and understand why we need a lot more earmarks, then we will come to our senses, because we might then have a more sensible monetary and banking system, the system that has brought us to this calamity. So, the sooner we realize that, I think it would be better for the taxpayer.

CONGRATULATING CONGRESSWOMAN WOOLSEY

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

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today to join my distinguished colleague, Congresswoman LYNN WOOLSEY, and recognize her for her 300th Special Order, or 5-minute speech, on the ongoing war and the occupation in Iraq. I also stand here calling yet, again, for an end, and I mean an end, to this unjust war, and for the return of our troops and military contractors from Iraq.

Congresswoman WOOLSEY, let me just commend you for being such an unparalleled leader and a guiding light in Congress for peace, for smart security, and for justice. Congresswoman WOOLSEY, if you may remember, offered the first resolution calling for the withdrawal of our young men and women and the redeployment and bringing them home, and that was years ago.

Today, Congresswoman WOOLSEY, thanks to your leadership, I think we are closer to that first resolution, where you stepped out on faith but knew that that was the right thing to do. I think we are closer to that day.

Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, founder of the Out of Iraq Caucus, and Congresswoman WOOLSEY and myself cofounded the Out of Iraq Caucus in order to really amplify this important message and the call to action to end this war of choice. And that is what it is.

But Congresswoman WOOLSEY has been the one who's been down here representing us and representing the voices of peace in the entire country each and every day to make sure that she shone light on the untold hazards and costs of the United States military presence in Iraq.

As cochair of the Progressive Caucus, Congresswoman WOOLSEY has worked tirelessly to bring attention to these vital issues of global peace and national security. And so, today, 300 times, this is really an amazing milestone.

So, I am very, very pleased to be able to be with you today, Congresswoman WOOLSEY, and also just to say I am proud that you're my colleague and sister next to my district from the north.

It's really, though, with a heavy heart that I note next week that our country will enter into the seventh year of this unnecessary and immoral war in Iraq. Six years of unnecessary bloodshed in Iraq. We have wasted too

much American treasure, drained too much and too many of our American resources and, most importantly, Madam Speaker, we have, unfortunately, claimed too many American lives.

As of February 25, 2009, according to the Defense Department, 4,252 brave servicemen and women have given their lives, and more than 30,000 United States troops have been injured. This war has already cost the American people more than \$650 billion—this is \$10 billion a month—as the economy spirals further and further into crisis.

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The costs to the people of Iraq also have been far greater. Tens of thousands of Iraqi men, women, and children have been killed. More than a million Iraqis have fled their homes and live as refugees. Hundreds of thousands have been internally displaced.

As we have watched our Federal resources go toward the continuation of violence and strife in Iraq, Congresswoman WOOLSEY has reminded us over and over and over again, 300 times now, that these are dollars that are not coming back into our communities or toward vital programs to help our neighbors most in need. We have committed more than a half trillion dollars to an occupation that, yes, has undermined our standing and credibility in the world, the enormous costs of which will no doubt be exacted on the physical and economic security of future generations. Of course we know the simple truth, that no unjust war ever produced a just and lasting peace. We look forward to working with our new administration to continue our efforts to bring our troops and military contractors home.

I have to say again to Congresswoman WOOLSEY, thank you for your unwavering leadership and commitment. I am truly proud to serve with you in this body. When this unfortunate chapter in American history is written, especially the foreign policy chapter, your consistency and your courage and your resolve before this body will be long remembered. Moreover, your Special Orders should be acknowledged for their effort in rallying the American people to demand an end to this war and to finally bring our troops home.

So this is a milestone today. Hopefully we won't have too many more 300 times of your sounding the alarm, and that we can bring our young men and women home and begin to really move forward in seeking global peace and security.

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.)

EARMARKS AND 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, when most people think about earmarks, they think of the silly earmarks that we hear about like the one in the omnibus spending bill that will pass the Senate today, \$1.7 million to combat swine odor in Iowa. And there are a lot of earmarks like that. Or one for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, or one for a hippie memorial. That is typically what is on people's minds when they think of earmarks. But today there is a different type of earmark, and it is not your grandfather's earmark. It is something that has really come about in the last several years or really been perfected in the last several years. These earmarks are no-bid contracts to private companies.

Now, when the Federal Government spends money, there are stipulations in how they spend that money. It is very difficult for a Federal agency to award a no-bid contract. If they do, they have to jump through a lot of hoops. There has to be a national security exemption. There have to be other exemptions. It is difficult to do, and gratefully so.

President Obama announced the other day that he is going to try to make sure that there are no more no-bid contracts from Federal agencies. And that is a great move. But what hasn't been talked about are the no-bid earmarks, no-bid contracts that are in the form of earmarks that come from Congress that is congressionally directed no-bid contracts. And what it leads to is what I like to call circular fundraising, and this is what has been the subject of a few of the privileged resolutions that have been offered here in the House in the last couple of days.

What happens is you have money here that Congress has from the U.S. taxpayer. Earmark spending which will be some \$8 billion to \$10 billion this year, goes this way. It goes to the earmark recipient. Say it is a defense contractor. And in this case if a defense contractor is getting a no-bid contract to make some widget for the Navy or for the Army or something else, or to make a shirt or a pair of gloves for our Armed Forces, they will get that contract, a no-bid contract, and then what you will see is money will come right back to the Member of Congress who secured that earmark in the form of a campaign contribution. That is represented by the line that goes around there. And in some cases, in most cases now, those who secure the earmark for a no-bid contract receive campaign contributions from those who they got no-bid contract for.

Oftentimes the earmark recipient will hire a lobbying firm, and that lobbying firm will also make contributions to the Member. And then sometimes the lobbying firm will also have

a PAC, and that PAC will make contributions to the Member. So, in some cases, a Member of Congress will get what could be called the trifecta: They will get regular contributions from the earmark recipient, money from the lobbying firm, and also money from the lobbying firm's PAC.

For one defense contract, say, for a few million dollars, a no-bid contract, sometimes the Member of Congress can receive as much as \$50,000 to \$100,000 for one earmark, for what appears to be for one earmark. By the time the earmark recipient and the lobbying firm and the lobbying firm's PAC contribute to the Member, that is a lot of money that makes it back into the Member of Congress' hands. So what happens? It is easier then to earmark more spending the next year and to do more no-bid contracts.

This is the essence of the privileged resolution that was offered. There is a lobbying firm called PMA that has been raided by the FBI in recent weeks, or we learned of it in recent weeks. That lobbying firm contributed millions and millions of dollars to Members of Congress who had secured earmarks for the client of this lobbying firm. The lobbying firm's PAC had contributed millions and millions of dollars as well to those Members of Congress who secured earmark spending.

Madam Speaker, it simply isn't right for Members of Congress to get a no-bid contract for anyone, let alone those who turn around and contribute money back to that Member. It simply doesn't look right. There may not be a quid pro quo here, but it should not be allowed by the House to happen. The House should set a higher standard. We are charged with upholding the dignity and decorum of the House. And when you have circular fundraising like this happening and investigations swirling around, we simply can't allow this to continue, Madam Speaker.

I hope that the next time a privileged resolution is up that we will all vote to carry it to the Ethics Committee.

COMMEMORATING THE TENTH AN- NIVERSARY OF HUNGARY'S AC- CESSION TO NATO

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Madam Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the 10th anniversary of Hungary's accession to NATO. Hungary is the first former Soviet nation, followed soon thereafter by Poland and then the Czech Republic, to join NATO. I stand here today to express gratitude for that historical moment and being given the opportunity to witness it and to recognize Hungary's pioneering commitment to solidarity, freedom, and security.

Despite years of Soviet rule, Hungary maintained a posture that looked both east and west. She became one of the first countries to institute meaningful

political and economic reform after the fall of the Berlin Wall. And during the Cold War, Hungary struggled mightily not to let the door to her people close completely.

The country's exceptional acumen also boasts an impressive mathematical and scientific legacy that includes 13 Nobel Prizes, inventing the BASIC programming language, and even creating Rubik's cube. This is a nation of major measure.

When Hungary joined NATO on March 12, 1999, an enduring relationship was cemented between Hungary, Europe, and the United States. This partnership means more than a military alliance. It marked a rebirth of freedom with an end to oppression by the then Soviet Union. This historic achievement was celebrated from Budapest to Ohio, which boasts the largest Hungarian American population in our country according to the last census. This new era was marked importantly by our congressional district of Toledo that adopted two cities in Hungary, Szeged and its county, Csongrad County.

Hundreds of citizens since 1999 have been involved in cultural, educational, and political exchanges of extraordinary impact. And through the lifelong efforts of major leaders in our community, including now deceased Monsignor Martin Hernady, Ohio Representative Peter Ujvagi, the Hungarian Club of Toledo and its leader Mr. Andy Raikay, Holy Rosary, Calvin United and St. Stephen's Churches, Dr. Elizabeth Balint and Mr. Al Baldwin of the Great Lakes Consortium for International Training and Development, along with the University of Toledo, Bowling Green State University and Lords College, all are working together to build freedom forward.

Because of the new opportunities presented by NATO, the United States and Hungary were able to enrich our friendship. Our Ohio National Guard began an early partnership with the Republic of Hungary for the express purpose of demonstrating through the example of the citizen soldier the proper role of the military in a democratic society. Hungary's rich history, as well as its embrace of a new post-Soviet era governance, sets a strong example for other countries in the region that are still grappling with a meaningful identity as newly independent states. By working with our allies, America continues to nurture democracy and advance political freedoms in Eastern Europe and around the world.

An independent film that I was able to view last year, called Torn From the Flag, which has won all kinds of international awards, traces the history of Hungary from World War II through its current independence. I commend this film to all of our citizenry.

Tonight, I rise to pay tribute to Hungary, our great sister nation in liberty's cause. What a great joy it has been to get to know her people and her traditions in greater measure. And I