

happy to have Saddam Hussein removed.

I did not, and I still do not, believe that removing a foreign dictator is sufficient reason for the United States to invade another country. If it were, we would be invading dozens of countries. But the fact is that removal of Saddam Hussein was a gain for the Iraqi people and the United States for a short time had their gratitude. Now, that we have moved from being liberators to occupiers, that gratitude is fast drying up.

Our troops are not safe. Our leaders have gone to such lengths to identify nongovernmental groups like the Red Cross and Doctors Without Borders that they are not safe either, and they are leaving. The status quo is not sustainable. We need to plan what will replace the status quo.

What I fear is that in the absence of a plan, we will stumble down the path with a paper Constitution in December and an improvised election which will signal our withdrawal, and will leave Iraq in chaos because we did not bring the United Nations in to set things up.

□ 2030

Mr. Speaker, we need a plan. We need to know what the benchmarks are, what the goals are, what the test is about when we will leave. I think that the President's case for war was shoddy. I think the planning for the post-war period was shoddy or perhaps nonexistent. With body bags arriving in Dover virtually every day, we cannot afford a shoddy, years-long occupation. Americans are targeted in Iraq in a way that United Nations blue helmets would not be, in a way that a force from countries in the region would not be, in a way that we cannot sustain.

We have to plan to get out, sooner rather than later. It is the only chance for Iraq to have a fresh start, and it is the only chance for a lot of young Americans to come back alive. To fail to do this, to lay out the plan, what we are going to do and how we are going to get out so that the whole world can see, is the only hope of getting the Iraqis to stop killing our people. The failure to do that, the stonewalling by our President and taking the money we gave him, \$87 billion more to keep on doing what he is doing, we are in for a long siege.

[Published on HeraldNet.com, Nov. 5, 2003]

PARENTS WHO PROTESTED WAR MOURN DEATH OF SOLDIER SON
MAN WAS BECOMING SKEPTICAL OF U.S. SITUATION IN IRAQ

KENT.—As a boy, Benjamin Colgan marched with his parents in peace protests. Joseph and Pat Colgan, 62 and 60, respectively, whose activism dates from the Vietnam War, were surprised when their son enlisted in the Army. But they continued to support him, even as they opposed the war in Iraq.

On Monday, their worst fears came true. Colgan, 30, a second lieutenant, the father of two young daughters with a third child due next month, died Saturday when a roadside bomb exploded as he responded to a rocket-propelled grenade attack in Baghdad, the Defense Department said.

A U.S. flag hung outside the family's home Monday. Funeral arrangements were pending.

Word came with a knock on the door at the Colgans' home.

"I saw the cross on his lapel pin and I said, 'No, not my son! Not my son!'" his mother said.

"There will be many people experiencing the same thing," she added. "This war, it shouldn't be."

Benjamin Colgan was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Armored Division.

His parents were concerned when he gave a dim appraisal of Baghdad in an e-mail Friday.

"What raised a red flag was when he said, 'It's getting real old and getting real crazy,'" his father said.

As a young child, he had joined his parents on marches to protest nuclear weapons at Naval Submarine Base Bangor. Then, to pay for college, he enlisted in the Army after graduation from Mount Rainier High School in Des Moines in 1991.

"That was hard, but you support your children," his mother said.

She and her husband joined protest marches again against the war in Iraq this year.

They tied a yellow ribbon around the maple in their front yard, a tree they had planted when Benjamin Colgan was born. On Monday, they replaced it with a black ribbon.

Benjamin Colgan initially planned to become a medic, but joined the Special Forces and then Delta Force, the military's most elite and secretive unit.

He left to attend officer candidate school, was assigned to the 1st Armored Division in Germany after graduation, and hoped to return to Delta Force after earning his captain's bars, his father said.

His mother says his death has only strengthened her position against the war.

"People keep asking, 'Are the Iraqis better off?'" she said. "What we have to start asking is, 'Are we better off?' And we're not. We're losing our children."

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

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois 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 California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FILNER 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 California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California 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 North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POMEROY 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 gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

COMMEMORATING VETERANS' DAY 2003

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order tonight.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise with fellow Members of the Congressional Black Caucus and other Members of Congress to salute this Nation's veterans in commemoration of Veterans' Day next Tuesday. Mr. Speaker, it is a very special day for so many of our men and women who have given their blood, their sweat, and their tears to defend the lives that we live in this country. Many of them have given their lives standing up for what America is all about.

And so it gives me great honor to yield 20 minutes to my distinguished colleague from the great State of Missouri and the ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee, Congressman IKE SKELTON, for his remarks.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank my friend and colleague from Maryland for the honor of addressing the House at this moment. I much appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, recent press reports have indicated that the administration is planning to begin the withdrawal of American forces from Iraq in the spring of 2004. Based on recent visits to my congressional district in Missouri, I believe such a move would be very politically popular. Overwhelmingly, the

people want our troops brought home as rapidly as possible. I, too, want to bring them home.

However, if we have learned anything from recent history in Baghdad, it is that poor planning for the occupation has contributed to the dangerous and confused situation in which we find ourselves. I was concerned about planning for the occupation last year. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I wrote to the President on two occasions, first on September 4, 2002, and second, on the eve of the war, on March 18, 2003. My letters detailed the potential problems our forces might encounter during the postconflict occupation of Iraq, and I submit copies of those letters for the RECORD.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 4, 2002.

The PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: Thank you for inviting me to the briefing this morning. I share your concern about the continuing threat posed by Saddam Hussein and his efforts to produce weapons of mass destruction (WMD). I would like to offer my assistance as the administration considers how to deal with this threat.

Before Congress can authorize any military action that might be part of the administration's plan, we must have answers to more questions than were about to be raised at today's meeting. Our constitutional duty requires us to ensure that all implications of such action are considered in advance. The case has not yet been fully made as to what the threat is, why military force is an appropriate way of addressing the threat, and why action must occur now. In short, Congress and the American people must be clear on your strategic vision before we can authorize a specific course of action. I believe, like Clausewitz, that in strategy there is an "imperative . . . not to take the first step without considering the last."

Your strategy for dealing with Iraq must address the fundamental questions of the threat, the method of acting, and the timing. Furthermore, any strategy to eliminate Iraqi WMD must also address several component issues, each of which raises critical questions.

HOW TO MANAGE IRAQ'S TRANSITION TO A
STABLE POST-SADDAM REGIME

As I mentioned to you this morning, this is a critical question for administration strategy to answer in advance of any military action. I have no doubt that our military would decisively defeat Iraq's forces and remove Saddam. But like the proverbial dog chasing the car down the road, we must consider what we would do after we caught it.

As Sun-Tzu said in the classic strategic treatise, *The Art of War*, "To win victory is easy; to preserve its fruits, difficult." Military planners and political leaders alike knew this in World War II. Planning for the occupation of Germany and Japan—two economically viable, technologically sophisticated nations—took place well in advance of the end of the war. The extreme difficulty of occupying Iraq with its history of autocratic rule, its balkanized ethnic tensions, and its isolated economic system argues both for careful consideration of the benefits and risks of undertaking military action and for detailed advanced occupation planning if such military action is approved.

Specifically, your strategy must consider the form of a replacement regime and take

seriously the possibility that this regime might be rejected by the Iraqi people, leading to civil unrest and even anarchy. The effort must be to craft a stable regime that will be geopolitically preferable to Saddam and will incorporate the disparate interests of all groups within Iraq—Shi'a, Sunni, and Kurd. We must also plan now for what to do with members of the Baath party that continue to support Saddam and with the scientists and engineers who have expertise born of the Iraqi WMD program.

All these efforts require careful planning and long-term commitment of manpower and resources. The American people must be clear about the amount of money and the number of soldiers that will have to be devoted to this effort for many years to come.

HOW TO ENSURE THE ACTION IN IRAQ DOES NOT
UNDERMINE INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR
THE BROADER WAR ON TERRORISM

In planning for military operations in Iraq, we cannot ignore the lack of international support to date. Pre-emptive action against Iraq is currently vocally opposed by many of our allies and friends throughout the world and particularly in the Middle East.

When we are seen as acting against the concerns of large numbers of our friends, it calls into question the "humble" approach to international relations you espoused during the presidential campaign. More than that, it has several potentially damaging long-term consequences. First, it risks losing the large number of partners needed to prosecute the global war on terrorism. To ferret terrorist groups out of their many hiding places, we must have broad allied support. Second, it risks seriously damaging U.S. moral legitimacy, potentially providing states like India and Pakistan with a pre-emptive option that could drive long-standing conflicts beyond containable bounds.

Finally and perhaps most dangerously, actions without broad Arab support may inflame the sources of terrorism, causing unrest and anger throughout the Muslim world. This dynamic will be worse if Iraq attacks Israel—perhaps with weapons of mass destruction—and draws them into the conflict. Iran, which has the potential to seize a reformist path, may well move away from the United States in the face of attacks that could next be taken against them. Together, these dynamics will make achieving peace in the Middle East more difficult and may well provide the rationale for more terrorist attacks against Americans.

These concerns do not make military action in Iraq untenable. They do, however, highlight the depth and importance of the issues to be addressed before we strike. We need to ensure that in taking out Saddam, we don't win the battle and lose the war.

HOW TO ENSURE THAT THE UNITED STATES
CAN EXECUTE THIS OPERATION SUCCESS-
FULLY AS WELL AS ITS OTHER MILITARY
MISSIONS

As you are well aware, Mr. President, the consideration of military action against Iraq comes at a time when U.S. forces are actively engaged throughout the world in a range of missions. Given the operational pressures these forces currently face, we must ask what the risks and trade-offs will be of defeating Iraq, particularly if Iraqi forces mass in Baghdad for urban operations. How many casualties must the American people be prepared to take in a worst-case scenario? What will the impact of sustained operations be on so-called high-demand, low-density assets? What military operations might we have to forego because of continued demands in Iraq? Will we still be prepared for the range of other threats that might emerge throughout the world? With little allied support and contributions, will

we still be able to maintain military spending on transformational technologies and on sound quality of life for our forces if we are bearing a huge wartime cost alone? What will be the impact on the domestic economy of these resource drains and of the long-term costs of reconstructing Iraq? These questions must be answered before any military action commences so that the American people understand the risks and the sacrifices involved.

I ask these questions only to highlight the complexity of the undertaking and the need for Congress, the American people, and our friends around the world to understand exactly what is at stake and why we must act now. Only such a comprehensive strategic approach will ensure that we commit U.S. troops consciously and with full knowledge of the range of challenges we face—both in the initial campaign and in the long aftermath to follow. Even a strategy that has military action as its centerpiece will require great diplomatic efforts to ensure its success. I look forward to hearing the administration's answers and to working with you to find the best course of action.

Sincerely,

IKE SKELTON,
Ranking Democrat.

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 18, 2003.

The PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: This is a critical week for our nation and for the world. As you prepare to make the most difficult decision of sending our troops into combat, the thoughts and prayers of all Americans are with you. My colleagues here in Congress have many different views on the wisdom of action in Iraq and the severity of its consequences. But we are united in our support for all the men and women who serve this nation.

There is no doubt that our forces will be victorious in any conflict, but there is great potential for a ragged ending to a war as we deal with the aftermath. I appreciate the efforts that members of your administration have made to keep me informed about plans for the administration and reconstruction of Iraq following military conflict. Your team has thought about many of the things that will need to be done.

Secretary Rumsfeld frequently talks about the list he keeps of things that could go wrong in an Iraq war. I have kept my own list—of things that could go wrong after the war is over. The list below is indicative of this broader list. My hope is that this will be helpful to members of your administration as you continue to plan for all possibilities. These are not complete scenarios but rather a series of possible problems that could occur in some combination.

INTERNAL DIVISIONS AND EXTERNAL
INFLUENCES IN IRAQ

Without access to Iraq through Turkey, U.S. troops are not present in northern Iraq in large numbers. Turkey enters northern Iraq to establish a buffer zone and fighting breaks out between the Turks and Kurds. A significant U.S. military force is needed to separate the groups, complicating the governmental transition and international support.

An uprising in Kirkuk leaves the Kurds in control of areas of the city and surrounding area. This triggers a large Turkish invasion to protect the Turkmen minority and to prevent Kurdish control of oil resources. Again this would require U.S. military resources with all the attending effects.

In the event that Turkey crosses into Iraq, Iran may do the same, ostensibly to stem the

refugee flows from southern Iraq and to protect Shi'a interests.

Shi'a populations in the south rebel and undertake attacks against Sunnis. U.S. troops must step in to protect the Sunnis and restore peace. These tensions resurface during attempts to build a federal and representative government.

Urban fighting in the south brings Shi'a into conflict with Sunnis. The resulting devastation causes a refugee crisis as Shi'a make for the Iranian border. The results of Saddam's policy of forced Arabization of areas like Kirkuk yield dangerous consequences. Groups like the Kurds flow back into these areas seeking to reclaim their former homes and land, sparking conflict with Iraqi Arabs.

Attempts to fashion a federal government in Baghdad prove difficult. Iran is able to establish proxies for its influence among the Shi'a representatives. Once in Iraq, infighting breaks out among members of the former Iraqi opposition in exile. The United States is unable to transition the administration of Iraq effectively and has to remain in place, with significant military backing.

The war involves lengthy urban combat, particularly in Baghdad. Most infrastructure is destroyed resulting in massive humanitarian problems. The emphasis on humanitarian aid distracts from efforts to establish a new government. Once established the government faces massive political pressure from the sustained humanitarian crisis.

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Saddam uses biological and chemical weapons against advancing U.S. troops, but also inflicts substantial civilian casualties. Efforts to stabilize cities and to establish a government are complicated by the need to deal with the large number of dead and to decontaminate affected areas.

Saddam uses biological and chemical weapons directly against civilian populations or against another Arab country and seeks to affix blame for civilian suffering to the United States. Over the period of occupation, this resentment complicates U.S. efforts to maintain support for reconstruction efforts.

U.S. troops are unable to quickly find all of Saddam's capabilities, requiring a long, labor-intensive search and anxiety as to when the task is complete.

Regional leaders, for money or to gain influence, retain caches of WMD and transfer some to terrorist groups.

Saddam attacks Israel with missiles containing weapons of mass destruction. Israel retaliates. Arab countries, notably Saudi Arabia and Jordan, come under intense political pressure to withdraw their support from the U.S. war effort. U.S. forces are forced to reposition operational centers into Iraq and Kuwait, complicating reconstruction and transition efforts.

OIL RESOURCES

Saddam sabotages a significant number of wells before his defeat. Current estimates indicate he may already have wired up to 1,500 of these wells. The damage takes years to contain at great economic and environmental cost and removes a major source of reconstruction funding.

Internal groups, such as the Kurds, seize oil-rich land before American troops reach the area, causing internal clashes over these resources. Militant Shi'as seize other wells in the South.

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

The United States takes immediate control of Iraq's administration and of reconstruction. The United Nations can't agree on how involved to get given the divisions among the Security Council about the need for conflict. The lack of UN involvement in

the administration makes the European Union and others less likely to give. This situation delays reconstruction and puts more of the cost on the United States and a smaller number of partners.

U.S. reconstruction efforts that give U.S. corporations a great role at the expense of multilateral organizations and other participation—as was detailed in yesterday's Wall Street Journal—spur resentment and again limit the willingness of others to participate.

AMERICAN COMMITMENT

Stabilization and reconstruction prove more difficult than expected. U.S. troop requirements approach 200,000—the figure General Shinseki has mentioned—for a sustained period. This puts pressure on troop rotations, reservists, their families, and employers and requires a dramatic increase in end-strength.

Required funding reaches the figure suggested by a recent Council on Foreign Relations assessment—\$20 billion annually for several years. During a period of economic difficulty, the American public calls for greater burdensharing.

It is my hope that none of these eventualities comes to pass. But as you and all military leaders know, good planning requires considering the range of possibilities. It also requires advance preparation of the American people. You have regularly outlined the reasons for why the United States must disarm Iraq. I urge you to do the same in explaining why we must stay with Iraq for the long haul, even with the economic and military burdens this will entail.

As always, I am willing to help in any way I can to make this case to my colleagues and the American people.

Sincerely,

IKE SKELTON,
Ranking Democrat.

Mr. Speaker, I regret that my advice went unheeded. I believe that the poor planning for the occupation of Iraq approaches dereliction of duty. The looting and political chaos that resulted in the wake of the war was not adequately anticipated. The terrible shape of the utilities and of the Iraqi oil industry was misjudged. Our allies were not brought along adequately. Because of the rolling start of the war, not enough forces were on the ground. All in all, a painful lesson was learned, a lesson that many young military officers learn early in their careers: proper planning prevents poor performance.

It is imperative that any plans to withdraw our forces from Baghdad be properly planned. We must have a clear strategic goal, and specific steps must be identified that we must follow in order to achieve that goal. Moreover, those steps must be objective and must be measurable. An early exit means retreat or defeat.

For the administration to pull our forces out early for the wrong reasons, let us say for the sake of the upcoming Presidential elections, before we have achieved our objectives is irresponsible in the extreme. It risks creating a political vacuum with its resulting chaos. And into that vacuum, I assure you forces of terrorism and radical Islam will step. Our objective in going into Iraq was not only to eliminate weapons of mass destruction and to combat terrorism but also to plant the seeds for democracy and real change in the region. Mr. Speaker, that is a worthy

goal; but if we pull out early before Iraq is well launched toward democracy, we will have sown the seeds of chaos and defeat far worse than we can imagine. No one can predict the consequences of that chaos, except those consequences will not be good.

We have not seen the President's plans that will enable the military to begin to withdraw its forces. All we have seen are leaks about the Pentagon's plans to begin the withdrawal. We have, however, seen a series of statements by Ambassador Bremer with respect to the seven steps necessary for the return of "sovereignty" to the Iraqi people. Those are good steps, but in my opinion they do not go nearly far enough. First, they are directed only to the handoff of full governmental responsibility to the Iraqi people. Second, they do not address the conditions to make a successful handoff necessary. And third, they do not address a much wider range of deeper, long-term problems.

Here are the six steps that I believe the President should adopt as necessary measures to be achieved before our forces are withdrawn:

One, there must be a secure environment. Basic public services must be re-established. For example, there must be adequate Iraqi police and courts to deal with public safety concerns and criminal acts. Another key element is that there should be no appreciable presence of al Qaeda in Iraq. Saddam Hussein, remember him?, must be captured or we must know he is dead. If he is captured, we must be confident that the Iraqis have an adequate judicial system to deal with him and that he is no longer a threat to us or to the Iraqi people.

The Iraqi army must be reconstituted, at least insofar as necessary to provide for basic security needs and to secure Iraq's borders. Iraq must make certain that neither terrorists nor weapons of mass destruction come across its borders.

All weapons of mass destruction must be accounted for and the basic production facilities for weapons of mass destruction must be destroyed. In addition, the vast arsenal of conventional munitions, mortar and artillery rounds, small arms, rockets and missiles must be accounted for and either destroyed or secured.

Two, basic services. Much progress has been made in getting the lights and electricity back on, but much more remains to be done. Water, roads, sewers, bridges, indeed, the whole transportation network, needs to be repaired or well on its way to being repaired. The education system must be modernized, the universities reinvigorated. This does not need to be accomplished prior to our withdrawal, but we and the Iraqi people must be confident that progress is being made because in the absence of progress, there can be no confidence that democracy will take root and will succeed.

Three, the establishment of a new constitution. I agree with the procedures laid out by Ambassador Bremer. We must move as rapidly as possible to sponsor the drafting of a constitution that reflects the genuine aspirations of the Iraqi people. In that regard, I note that Ambassador Bremer did not call for the Bill of Rights for the Iraqi people. He did not call for essential internationally recognized human rights to be adopted as part of the constitution. Mr. Speaker, I believe nothing is more important than the adoption of these basic human rights, including respect for the individual, due process in courts, full political and economic rights for women, and freedom of the press.

Four, the basic elements of a government must be in place. The Iraqi Governing Council is a start, but the members of that body have been selected by us. We need to move rapidly to put in place a government that is respected by the people. I worry greatly that if we do not rapidly begin to give the Iraqis greater authority over their day-to-day affairs, hard-liner Islamic fundamentalists like Sadr with private militias of their own will try to take power. These militia are willing to use violence to pursue their political objectives to establish an Islamic state. We cannot let chaos reign and these Islamic fundamentalists take power.

In that regard, it is imperative that the new government be one that respects democratic institutions. For example, the army, police and security services must be ones that are accountable to their democratic leaders. Any former members of the Baath Party who take positions of responsibility must be properly vetted and be individuals in whom we and the Iraqis have confidence that they will respect democratic institutions.

Five, the economy. It is also imperative that major steps be made toward getting the economy going again. We did not adequately anticipate the terrible shape of the Iraqi oil industry, and oil revenues have been a disappointment. Progress is being made, but more needs to be made before we can be confident that the Iraqis can take over. Other areas of the economy are also in shambles, and much work must be done. Entrepreneurs in Iraq, in this country, and among Iraq's neighbors and our allies must be given the opportunity to move in as rapidly as possible and get the economy going again. An essential element of that, of course, is a secure environment and a functioning judicial system that is regarded as sufficiently open and fair as to encourage and support foreign investment.

Six, international support. We must ensure that there is wide support in the United Nations, among our allies, and with Iraq's neighbors for the rebuilding measures we have taken. They must be willing to commit forces where necessary and resources when available to help rebuild Iraq's infrastructure, sup-

port its government, and grow its economy. They must be committed to supporting democratic institutions as they emerge.

Mr. Speaker, if the President does not adopt a strategy of incorporating these six points, I believe a premature withdrawal of American forces would lead to a disaster. I want all the forces to come home as rapidly as possible, but I also want the mission to succeed.

Americans are fond of saying, "These colors don't run." Well, Mr. Speaker, I do not want to run before we have done our job. The sacrifices of all of our brave men and women who have died or have been wounded must not be in vain. The losses and sacrifices made by the Iraqi people must not be in vain. The stakes are just too great. We must accomplish our mission, and the President must lay out a strategy to achieve those objectives before he begins the withdrawal of American forces. To do otherwise is to sacrifice national security for political survival.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment to thank the gentleman from Missouri for his service and the position that he holds. We in the Congress, of course, look up to him as our ranking member of the House Armed Services Committee for his advice on our veterans and on military matters, and I appreciate his service.

Mr. Speaker, given that our country is currently engaged in a war in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the members of the Congressional Black Caucus feel compelled to pay homage to our soldiers at home and abroad.

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Our brave men and women continue to risk their lives in order that others may enjoy freedom. In fact, we have come to the House floor on numerous occasions to express our appreciation for the dedication, courage, and sacrifice of our Armed Forces. Tonight Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Black Caucus again stands before this House to honor those currently serving in the over 100 nations around the globe where the United States military has operations, and we especially pause to remember those who laid the foundation for our freedom.

Mr. Speaker, the United States military is among the most diverse institutions in our country; and it is this diversity in gender, ethnicity, skill, and talent that contributes most to our military's awesome strength. Throughout history, heroic citizens of our great Nation have transcended individual prejudice and intolerance to unite in the pursuit of liberty and in their valiant protection of our borders.

However, many of these same individuals have too often been unrecognized and forgotten once the final shot has been fired and the last drop of blood has been shed. So as my favorite theologian Charles Swindoll, who has penned these words that are imbedded in the DNA of every cell of my brain, Swindoll says "The greatest deeds

often performed are those that are performed by those who are unknown, unseen, unappreciated, and unapplauded." And we want to make sure that our veterans do not fall into any of those categories.

And it was the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS), my good friend, the ranking Democrat on our House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, who penned these words, and they are just so brilliant, I just wanted to repeat the gentleman from Illinois' (Mr. EVANS) words. He said, "50 million have held the venerable title of veteran. More than 1 million have died while wearing the uniform. It is this generation's responsibility, and that of every subsequent generation, to make sure the numbers have faces, lives that connect to them. We are losing 1,500 veterans a day. Each death represents a life, another rich, colorful, dynamic, dramatic, brutal, or heartening story. The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EVANS) goes on to say: "The only way this and future generations can hold dear to what our veterans have done, can understand the sacrifice, is to record and share their stories and to continue the traditions of honoring their service such as those observed on November 11. We must not lose their deeds to time or neglect. The greatest gift in return for what these extraordinary individuals have given us is to make certain their lives and experiences are perpetuated, to recount their sacrifices to every generation." Finally, he goes on to say: "War may begin over real estate, mineral rights, religion, or boundaries, but ultimately it is about people and lives. It is about one man or woman seeking to make certain that the next one can live freely and have a say in his or her own destiny. It is about sacrifices to ensure our Nation and world in which the rights of the individual are acknowledged, respected, and cherished."

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the wonderful gentlewoman from the great State of California (Ms. LEE), the daughter of a veteran.

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first let me thank the gentleman from Maryland, our chairman, for once again organizing this very important special order tonight recognizing the service of Americans veterans. Once again, let me just commend the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) for his leadership and for ensuring that our country understands and recognizes that the Congressional Black Caucus stands tall here in this Congress on each and every issue with which our country is faced.

Yes, I am a very proud daughter of a veteran, and I represent a State which boasts the highest veteran population, ensuring that veterans receive their benefits of course, and recognition for their contributions is, therefore, a major priority for me. We owe every veteran around this country an enormous debt of gratitude. And we here in Congress really do have the opportunity and the obligation to honor that

debt by providing veterans with the benefits that they were guaranteed, including adequate benefits for veterans, surviving spouses and families, burial rights, health care, disabled tax credits, and home loan assistance. This issue, as my colleagues know, is not a partisan issue but a fundamental issue of fairness.

In July, during consideration of the fiscal year 2004 VA-HUD appropriations bill, my colleagues on both sides of the aisle were really, quite frankly, embarrassed by the Republicans' leadership attempt to shortchange to the tune of \$1.4 billion those who sacrificed the most for our Nation. So yesterday this body unanimously voted to increase a host of veterans' benefits. But it has yet to deal with the most pressing veterans' issues like concurrent receipt legislation which would extend full retirement and health care benefits and end the practice of unjustly subtracting disability payments from veterans' pensions, creating, in effect, a special disabled veterans' tax. So that is why we have filed a discharge petition to bring H.R. 2569, the Salute to Veterans and the Armed Forces Act of 2003, to the floor. And tonight I call upon my Republican colleagues to join us in eliminating this unfair and very outrageous tax on our Nation's veterans.

Mr. Speaker, on November 11 we will remember our veterans, as we should really do each and every day. Injustice in housing must end. It is shameful that veterans are twice as likely to become homeless as nonveterans, and female veterans are about four times as likely to become homeless as their counterparts. It is also shameful that despite the fact that 76 percent of these veterans are on the street in large part due to alcohol, drug, or mental health problems, or a combination, quite frankly, of all three, that we here in Congress fail to provide the necessary resources to help them get back on their feet.

Looking back on the plight of so many of our Nation's homeless veterans, I cannot help but think and remember that so many are the victims of the 1980's and "Reaganomics" and today's struggling economy, and I am outraged that we are allowing their numbers to grow.

Finally, when we talk about the veterans and the failures of this country to fulfill its promises to them, we must also discuss and recognize the racial disparities and discriminations that affect every aspect of American society including, yes, veterans. People of color have served this country in numbers far out of proportion to their percentages within population.

How is this the case? The harsh truth is that economic forces oftentimes compel minorities to assume the risks of service, yet historically they have not received its rewards in equal measure. The truth is African American veterans were denied employment opportunities, education, housing, and, of

course, jobs returning to America after fighting for America. I remember this very well. They are truly heroes. They are real patriots.

The creation of the Bureau of Colored Troops during the Civil War, the famous Buffalo Soldiers of the Indian Campaigns, the 92nd Division and the 761st Tank Battalion and African American women, who served in the Women's Army Corps and the Waves during World War II, and the 24th Regiment of the Korean War are only a few examples of the famous and forgotten African Americans who defended this Nation.

In many ways our military has become the most integrated institution in this country. Despite its advancements, however, in the treatment of blacks and minorities in the military, there remains issues that really do need to be addressed, legacies of biased drafting procedures, advancement, honors, distribution of benefits, and really back to it, the treatment upon coming back home after returning from active duty.

We must honor the legacy of all veterans as members of the Congressional Black Caucus tonight are doing. We choose to highlight the service of African American and other minority veterans. We respect their service and their role really as leaders. And I would like to just thank all of those who have contributed to American history for their service and for their sacrifice. This Congress must step up to the plate and put our money where our mouth is in a very real way, and that is to support our veterans.

In a note from the Veterans for Peace organization, I was reminded that Veterans Day was once called Armistice Day, the anniversary of the end of World War I, of course, the "War to end all Wars." Tragically, that war has been followed by many others. Let us honor our veterans by working each and every day for freedom, for peace, and for justice.

Once again, I want to thank the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus for his unbelievable leadership, focus, and for his commitment to honor in a real way our veterans.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman for her comments, and I just want to talk to her for just a moment.

She said something that really touched me, and I think that many people who have moved throughout our neighborhoods know this, but there are so many veterans who are homeless, and it is so painful. When I go to our drug treatment centers, it is not unusual for me to just sit down and talk to the people there and just find out a little bit about their history. And I notice that it is interesting that when people who are a little bit older, I would say maybe one out of every six or seven that I talk to is a veteran, and a lot of them are, of course, complaining about various things, but the fact is a lot of them link a lot of their problems to their service.

When a person serves, when they volunteer and they go in or they are drafted or whatever the case may have been, they go in to serve their country. But I also think our country, and I think this is what the gentlewoman was talking about too, has a duty to take care of them when they get back, because after all, I mean it is very nice for us to stand here and say all those wonderful things about our soldiers with the ongoing conflict we have certainly in Iraq, but the fact is there is that duty, and just as we lift them up and applaud them as they go off to war and just as we pray for them and we hold them in high esteem when they go off to fight our battles and defend our freedom, when they come back, they should come back to a situation that makes them whole. Just this evening, as a matter of fact, on one of the national news shows, there was a just a very painful story of a young man who just came back from Iraq, and I know he is not a veteran yet, but when he got back, his bills had amounted up to so much between him and his family. He was a National Guardsman, and they had some kind of a furniture repair business or something of that nature, but in the course of his being gone for the period he was gone, his income from the business went down 80 percent, and now he finds himself in a position where his wife and he have decided for whatever reasons to go their separate ways.

□ 2100

But the thing that really touched me was he had apparently an opportunity to now get out of the military, but he said he wanted to stay. He said that he was an Honor Guard, one of the men who go to the funerals and fold up the flag and deliver it to the family. He said that he wanted to stay because he felt that that was so important.

When I heard that, I said to myself, we really ought to make sure that we do right by our veterans. It is not enough for us to come and applaud them. It is not enough for us to come and thank them. We have really got to support them.

Ms. LEE. The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is absolutely correct. I agonize every time I walk down the streets in my community and see veterans who are homeless, and then find that hospitals are closing and that they cannot get their medication and they do not have anyplace to sleep.

I think it is a shame and disgrace that we have allowed that to happen to our veterans, because here they are, proudly serving our country. We should roll out the red carpet upon their return, and we should have every program, every provision for them returning to either civilian life or life here in the military. That should be made easy, that transition.

Instead, what do we have? We have cuts in their funding, we have lack of medical care for them, and we have many of our veterans coming back

from different parts of the world with unknown diseases, and we cannot get them in for treatment or diagnosis or for any kind of medical care. It is mind-boggling to me.

I will tell the gentleman, I think we need to really look at what we mean when we say we support our troops, because, in supporting our troops, for me, that means, yes, protecting them and keeping them from harm's way, but also upon their return making sure that their families and their lives are not only made whole, but that they receive the type of incentives and the type of real action, affirmative action, that we should provide for them, because they have done such a job for this country.

Mr. CUMMINGS. When the gentlewoman talks about disabilities, I want her to go back a moment and talk about concurrent receipt. It seems to be just an unfair situation, when you are injured and you go leave the military on a disability and then your disability payments are then deducted from the funds that you are supposed to be getting. Can the gentlewoman explain that to us?

Ms. LEE. That, in essence, is taxing disabled veterans for disabilities that they unfortunately acquired while serving this country.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Basically what is happening is they are taking away money.

Ms. LEE. They are taking away money from them after they have been hurt. That is mean. That is mean, and I think it immoral. Somehow, the entire country needs to wake up to that and say how unjust this is and correct this. That is why H.R. 2569 has got to come to the floor.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I agree. I get letters all the time from our veterans on that issue of concurrent receipt. As a matter of fact, I just got something today where a gentleman from Oklahoma was just very upset. He said, "I wish you all would address that, because it is just so unfair to me." He is extremely angry.

Ms. LEE. He should be. What we are doing is making veterans pay for their disabilities, which are no fault of their own. It should be just the reverse. We should pay them a stipend, an additional benefit, for what they have done.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I want to thank the gentlewoman for her support. I really appreciate it.

Mr. Speaker, as I conclude, I just want to go on and say that although the U.S. military has traditionally been, as my colleague has said, a diverse institution, it has not always been an integrated institution. From Crispus Attucks, who suffered the first shot during the Revolutionary War, to the Tuskegee Airmen, who never lost a single bomber under their escort during World War II, African Americans have answered the call to service whenever our country was in need. Yet these same soldiers have not always been treated fairly by their country.

Even today, our veterans, all of our veterans, are not treated, as the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) has said, with dignity and the honor that they deserve. How else can we explain the things that the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) just talked about, cutting the veterans budget in this year's budget resolution? How else can we explain proposing to close veterans hospitals around the country when they are in dire need of care? We must change this course and honor our veterans in word and in deed.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand on the floor of the House tonight feeling a sense of pride; pride for the ultimate sacrifice that our men and women have made throughout our history, so that I and my colleagues might stand on this floor tonight.

I want to just yield back to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) with regard to some issues that she wants to discuss.

Ms. LEE. Just very briefly. As the gentleman was talking, I am reminded of my childhood now. I can remember very vividly men in uniform, black men in uniform, being denied entrance to a restaurant or to a movie theater, or being forced to go to a water fountain that said "Colored Only," in uniform. I can remember this.

I have so many unfortunate memories of proud African American men in their uniforms being turned away, being discriminated against for one reason, and that is because they were black. I think that they are true heroes, they are true patriots; and I hope that history will record their service to this great country. But also I think we need to make sure that history is accurate in its writing and in its history and not cloud over the fact that men in uniform did not have equal access to basic kinds of services, such as a water fountain.

Mr. CUMMINGS. It is very interesting, in my district we just had an opportunity for some African American students to talk to the superintendent of schools. This is one of the best school systems in the country, Howard County, outside of Baltimore. The African American students were talking to the school board, talking about the difference in the disparity between their achievement and those of white children.

One of the things that they said that just was so profound is they said it is so important that we know our history. I chimed in and said, "It is not just important that you know it. That is not enough. It is very important that all of your classmates know it too, because then I think the world can appreciate all that has been contributed, not only by African Americans, but by this whole melting pot in making this country what it is."

I cannot forget as you were talking, Jessie Jackson, Sr., talking about when he came back from war. He had to sit in the back of the train, and a lot of the white German prisoners were allowed to sit in the front of the train.

The reason I understand why you raised these issues is we want to make sure on the one hand that we honor our veterans, but we realize that honoring our veterans is giving the total story, or, as somebody used to say in one of the movies, "giving the rest of the picture."

Ms. LEE. The gentleman is right. History must be recorded accurately. I think only by telling the truth, by putting forth the true history of any group of people, but especially our veterans, whom we are discussing tonight, that has got to be a priority for our young people, because how will they know what to do in the future? How will they know how to live? What kind of values will they embrace, if they do not know of the struggles and of the challenges and of the fights that many people in this country have waged?

So history must be recorded, and it must be recorded accurately.

Mr. CUMMINGS. As we conclude, I think when one looks at the stories that the gentlewoman told about when she was a little girl and would see what the veterans would return to, and the water fountain that said "Whites Only," the fact is that so many of these soldiers, think about the Buffalo Soldiers and many others. Although they knew that this country was not necessarily treating them fairly, they still stood up. As a matter of fact, many of them were beating down the doors trying to stand up for this country.

Not only do we pause here tonight to thank the living veterans, but we thank those and their spirits who may have gone on who were fighting for a country that they knew was not necessarily treating them right, but they were always fighting for their future. They were fighting for generations yet unborn.

Let me say that when one thinks about somebody putting their life on the line and knowing that they would return to a situation in this country where they were not treated fairly, but puts their life on the line today so that, not only their offspring, but even the offspring of those that might not have treated them right could have freedom and could have opportunity and could have convenience, that is a powerful statement. It really is.

So we come here not only to honor the veterans who can hear us tonight, but we come here also to honor those who have gone on and who dreamed a dream that the world would be better that they were fighting for.

Ms. LEE. There are many veterans who are still with us who are getting older now who I have the privilege to know and work with, and those are the Tuskegee Airmen. What a wonderful legacy they have left.

I will never forget when I was working for our great statesman, Congressman Ron Dellums. I was on his staff and we worked very hard to get a display in the museum, I believe it was in the NASA museum, of the Tuskegee

Airmen. That was a real fight, but we got it there. Millions of people were able to read about, see and honor the Tuskegee Airmen because of Ron Delums and because of the work we did to make sure that they received a prominent place in the museum here.

Mr. CUMMINGS. So many people here hear the Congressional Black Caucus stand up over and over again and talk about the war and talk about our objections to the war; but one thing they always hear from us over and over again is that we support our troops, that we support our men and women who are out there fighting. But we have come here tonight to say not only do we support our troops, but we also support our veterans with everything we have got. I used to say we support them 100 percent. I change that to 1 million percent.

Ms. LEE. That is right. My final comment is, as I said earlier, I think we need to put our money where our mouth is now and try to fight like we know how to fight to make sure that each and every nickel that they deserve they receive.

Mr. CUMMINGS. So, Mr. Speaker, again as I have said before, there are so many deeds that go unnoticed, and the ones who perform them are often unseen, unnoticed, unappreciated, and unapplauded. Tonight we in the Congressional Black Caucus take a moment to salute those who have given so much so that we might live the lives that we live.

IN MEMORY OF THE HONORABLE
CORWIN M. NIXON

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

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak briefly about a dear friend of mine who passed away earlier this morning. I rise to honor the memory of the Honorable Corwin Nixon, a dear friend, a distinguished constituent, and an accomplished public servant, who passed away this morning in his beloved Ohio at the age of 90.

He was someone I knew all my life, and someone whose devotion to public service was an inspiration to me. He served with honor for 30 years in the Ohio General Assembly, including 14 years as minority leader. Before his election to the State legislature, he served 12 years as a Warren County commissioner.

He was probably the most recognized man in Warren County, and evidence of the great affection for him can be seen throughout southern Ohio. His name is on a Waynesville covered bridge, a Dayton health center, and an aquatic center at Miami University. But most importantly, Mr. Speaker, thousands of people in Warren County remember him fondly and the help he gave them, a family member, a neighbor, or a friend.

Corwin Nixon's life experiences and his extraordinary people skills made

him an effective representative for all the people in Warren County. He grew up on a farm near Red Lion, Ohio, where he continued to live most of his life.

□ 2115

He rose through the ranks to become manager at a Kroger grocery store in Lebanon, Ohio, and in the 1950s became the manager of the Lebanon Raceway, a job that became his passion as he built the raceway into a major regional attraction.

Corwin Nixon was also an active volunteer, locally, Statewide, and nationally. Among his many activities he served on the boards of Bethesda Hospital in Cincinnati and Grandview Hospital in Dayton. He was President of both the U.S. Trotting Association and the International Trotting Association. He was an original member of the American Horse Council. He was inducted into the Ohio Harness Hall of Fame and received the Harness Horseman International Appreciation Award.

He used to say his start in politics "just happened," but it happened because of his remarkable work ethic, his genuine concern for people, and his ability to deliver for his constituents. His trademark in the State legislature was his ability to work effectively on both sides of the aisle to achieve results for all people. He was a true gentleman who respected everyone and treated them with respect.

Despite all of his impressive accomplishments in government and business, Mr. Nixon's greatest legacy is his family. He and his wife Eleanor were married for 45 years before her death. Their two children, Keith and Karen, provided them with three grandchildren, Melissa, Tina, and Keith, Jr. and four great grandchildren, Corwin Nixon, III, Eleanor, Preston, and Austin.

Mr. Speaker, Corwin Nixon was one of Ohio's great public servants, whose accomplishments touched many lives in our area and throughout the State of Ohio. He will be greatly missed.

CALLING FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION
FOR HEALTHY FOREST RESTORATION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, today the House asked for conferees to meet with the other Chamber to work out differences on the Healthy Forest Restoration Act, H.R. 1904. This evening, I am pleased to be joined by some of my colleagues on the House side to talk about the importance of this legislation that passed the House of Representatives nearly 6 months ago and, yet, has still not been resolved.

This issue has been debated for literally years. Former Committee on Ag-

riculture Chairman Bob Smith of Oregon attempted to address this issue after the Sierra Grande fire which destroyed hundreds of homes in New Mexico in the year 2000. The other Chamber considered similar measures. Last year, a similar bill was reported out of the Committee on Resources.

This year, I worked with two other distinguished full committee chairmen, the gentleman from California (Mr. POMBO) of the Committee on Resources and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) of the Committee on the Judiciary. We crafted a bipartisan bill that garnered 90 cosponsors. The bill went through three full committee markups before coming to the floor. Our bill takes a truly national approach to a national problem. We passed this bill on May 20 of this year by an overwhelming and bipartisan majority.

I think it is critical to note that we appointed conferees today. We also unanimously accepted a motion from the minority to instruct our conferees to finish work on this bill within 1 week. The fact that the whole House agreed to these instructions shows the urgency of starting these negotiations but, because of a small group in the other Chamber, the essential step of appointing conferees is being delayed. Any further obstruction from the minority party in the other body thwarts the will of not only the 80 members of the other Chamber who voted in favor of their version, but of the entire U.S. House of Representatives.

Since we passed this bill, almost 6 months have elapsed. While H.R. 1904 languished in the other Chamber, 169 days have gone by, over 3.5 million acres have burned, 30 firefighters have died, and 20 civilians have perished as a result of the fury of catastrophic wildfires. The California wildfires of the last 2 weeks provided a stark reminder of the need to act to prevent future disasters. It was only when the California wildfires were dominating the nightly news that the other Chamber saw fit to take up this critical bill, with an 80 to 14 vote on the measure, which seemed to indicate a sense of urgency on the part of the other Chamber.

Unfortunately, the minority party of the other Chamber is still not allowing the naming of conferees. They are refusing to do so in spite of the fact that they know the differences between the two bills are not insurmountable. They are refusing to do so in spite of the fact that an agreement that could result in real action to improve forest health is easily within reach.

The goals of the two bills are strikingly similar. Both seek to address the issues that have tied the hands of our forest managers: NEPA analysis that drags on for months, administrative appeals that spring up at the last minute, and court actions that stall proposed projects for so long that they are moot long before the judicial process concludes.