

Can you imagine President Teddy Roosevelt or President Woodrow Wilson or FDR or Harry Truman saying we are going to go to war and your country needs you to accept a tax cut? Should we really be saying, we are going to go to war and so you should have a tax cut and your kids should pay the bill, not just for the war but for the 10 years afterwards? We are already being asked to borrow money to pay for this war, and the scuttlebutt is that the minute the war begins we are going to get a bill from the administration, a request for about \$100 billion. And Lord knows what it is going to cost in the next 10 years.

And my simple and last question would be: Should we, at the same time that we are borrowing money to pay for this war, should we also be borrowing money to take millionaires off the tax role, as the White House tax and budget request in fact is asking us to do? I would hope that the political leadership of this country would be more mature than that and more fair than that. I cannot believe that we are going to put this war on the cuff; that we are then going to proceed with tax action that will take another more than \$1 trillion out of the Federal Treasury in the next few years and then go to the American people with a straight face and say we have strengthened the economy for the long term.

I think Americans expect to do their duty in a time of crisis, and I think Americans do not expect that while we are having several hundred thousand troops abroad prepare to make the ultimate sacrifice in defense of what the President has concluded is in our national interest, I do not believe that at a time when those soldiers are doing that, that the best we can do back home is to say to everyone on the home front, folks, you are going to have to sacrifice by taking a tax cut, even though it is going to load billions and billions of dollars of debt on future taxpayers, including the kids that we say this war is being fought to help protect.

So, Mr. Speaker, this country is going to war. It is obvious. But I would hope that the next time that we do so we have not ahead of time, as the administration has done, that we have not ahead of time looked for ways to antagonize the very allies that we are going to need in this case, like we need support in the Security Council today if we are to have unity in the world when we take on Saddam. I hope we learn from this experience that if you intend to ask the support of the world in a military endeavor of this nature that you do not spend the first 2 years saying, by the way, everything we are going to do in the world, we are going to do it our way or no way. I do not think that is an intelligent or a thoughtful way to run foreign policy. And I certainly do not think that adding over \$1 trillion to our budget deficit and our national debt over the next few years is a way to run the economy

at a time when we are contemplating going to war.

□ 1530

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in the wake of so many thoughtful remarks made in this Chamber as perhaps this Congress is about to adjourn a weekend before America may again be called upon to lead the civilized world and the arsenal of democracy into battle.

We have heard from my colleagues this afternoon, many of the strategic and military and diplomatic justifications for that. They are legion. The violations of U.N. Resolution 1441 are painfully and patently obvious. The rejection by the regime of Saddam Hussein over the last 2 decades through five Presidential administrations and 17 U.N. resolutions, of one international convention after another, argue for the civilized world, for the forces of order, to rise up against the forces of disorder, as the columnist Thomas Friedman, from the New York Times, is want to say.

I rise today after having received a very thoughtful e-mail from a constituent named David in Richmond, Indiana. David is opposed to the war strongly, and he wrote to me after urging my staff to make sure that I saw the letter, not knowing that I see all my mail, but he urged me to look at a Web site, and so I did. It was not just a Web site opposed to the war, but it was mostly a Web site, takebackthemedias.com, or some such thing, that showed very moving photographs of families in Baghdad.

Mr. Speaker, I brought a few of those photographs with me today, like this photograph of a beautiful baby boy curled up on a rug with his official travel papers of his family before him to prove his location. He looks an often lot like one of my three small children. David had me look at these pictures of families, like this beautiful young family with a boy about the age of my 11-year-old son, families on the streets of Baghdad. The argument was if as a Member of Congress, I were to look into the faces of those who may by virtue of living in Baghdad fall into harm's way, I might change my mind about the use of force.

Mr. Speaker, I must tell Members, as I told David in a phone call, when I look into these bright shining faces of families who live in Baghdad, in the region of what used to be Mesopotamia, this picture taken January 5, 2003, I am not moved away from taking action to remove this regime, I am moved closer toward it. As I said to David in a phone call late yesterday, when I look into these faces, I see an argument for re-

moving Saddam Hussein because I cannot imagine, particularly for the four young women depicted in this photograph, what it is like to live in Iraq during these last 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, that is why I rise today. It is in the hope of talking about the human rights record of this regime that I come to the floor today. We recall a great deal of focus in the 1990s on the human rights record of Slobodan Milosevic, and the world community coming together, including France and Germany, calling on the United States of America to challenge and to remove Slobodan Milosevic for one reason: Because of his record of abuse of human rights, his wanton killing of Muslims strictly out of a policy horrifically known as ethnic cleansing. President Clinton did nobly lead America into the breach with France and Germany under the color and authority of NATO and remove that barbarous dictator.

There were no U.N. resolution. There was no previous example of them attacking their neighbors or discussion of weapons of mass destruction, there was just a dictator who abused and tortured and killed his own countrymen for ethnic reasons.

So I am a bit confused when the human rights record of Saddam Hussein seems to be irrelevant to many who oppose the war. It is a record against which the record of Slobodan Milosevic pales in comparison. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has actually said that Saddam Hussein's record on human rights is second only to that of Adolph Hitler in the 20th century, and I want to speak on some facts, things that we know about Saddam Hussein and his regime. It is about these beautiful young girls that I hope Members' hearts will attach, to think of a regime in which these young girls are forced to live is my purpose today.

First, from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, a 1997 report, the Commission on Human Rights, reaffirming that all member states have an obligation to promote and protect human rights elaborates the following actions by Iraq that it strongly condemns:

One, the massive and extremely grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law by the Government of Iraq, resulting in an all-pervasive, repression and oppression sustained by broad-based discrimination, and this is the U.N.'s terms, against his own people, widespread terror.

Two, suppression of freedom of thought, expression, religion, information, association, assembly and movement through fear of arrest, imprisonment and other sanctions.

Summary and arbitrary executions were also condemned by the U.N. Commission on Human Rights in 1997, including political killings, enforced or involuntary disappearances by the thousands. Without regard to due process, political opponents of Saddam Hussein, according to the U.N. Human

Rights Commission, have disappeared into the mist. Arbitrary arrest, detention consisting of a routine failure to respect due process of law, and again thinking of these families, Mr. Speaker, I quote, "widespread systemic torture in its most cruel forms. The enactment and implementation of decrees prescribing cruel and inhuman punishment, namely mutilation for punishment of offenses and diversion of medical care services for such mutilations."

Mr. Speaker, this is a barbarous regime, and I begin by quoting from the United Nations because we hear so much about how we ought to rely on the United Nations and I begin there, but the facts simply continue to flow. Think about that for a moment, Mr. Speaker. Widespread terror against his own people, the suppression of human rights, suppression of freedom of thought, expression, religion, information, association, assembly and movement through fear of arrest, imprisonment and other sanctions, summary and arbitrary executions and political killings, widespread and systematic torture in its most cruel forms. That is from the Commission on Human Rights United Nations High Commissioner, April 16, 1997.

Mr. Speaker, citing from the report published by Great Britain, let us talk about what we know from organizations like Amnesty International and others, let us talk about the torture that is sanctioned by the government of Saddam Hussein and in which he has been personally involved on many occasions.

From the British report, we find that the victims of torture and their families have reported the following methods of torture to international human rights like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, eye gouging.

Amnesty International reported the case of a Kurdish businessman in Baghdad who was executed in 1997. When his family retrieved his body, the eyes had been gouged out and the empty eye sockets stuffed with paper.

Piercing of hands with an electric drill. A common method of torture for political detainees, Amnesty International reported one victim who then had acid poured into his open wounds during interrogation in Iraq.

Suspension from the ceiling. Victims are blindfolded, stripped and suspended for hours by their wrists, often with their hands tied behind their backs. This causes dislocation of shoulders, tearing of muscles and ligaments. Iraq is also known to use electric shock. A common torture method, shocks are applied to various parts of the body including ears, tongue, fingers and genitalia.

Sexual abuse. Victims, particularly women, have been raped and sexually abused as a means of interrogation on a routine basis by this regime.

Mock executions. Victims are told to be executed by firing squad. A mock execution is staged. Victims are hood-

ed, brought before a firing squad, and then blanks are fired as a form of torture.

David Scheffer, U.S. Ambassador at Large for War Crimes, reported that photographic evidence showed that Iraq had used acid baths during the invasion of Kuwait. Victims were hung by their wrists and gradually lowered into acid.

These are unspeakable acts of barbarism, Mr. Speaker. I am a bit loathe in this, what is a public forum by definition, to speak these words after school is out, but I think it is important as we think through the strategic issues, as we think through the diplomatic issues, international convention, disarmament, international terrorism, that we also think of this. These are the facts that I must assume that the sincere activists, perhaps at this very hour, are engaged in some demonstration here in America, or perhaps even on the streets of Baghdad, these are the facts that these people must not know. How could any decent human being, knowing the official barbarism of the regime of Saddam Hussein, ever deign to defend it.

Let us talk for a moment about the cost to fellow Muslims. There are many who want to divide the world along religious lines between the West and the Islamic world, suggesting that we in the West are not challenging an outlaw regime in Baghdad that has attacked 3 of its 5 adjacent neighbors during its regime and used chemical weapons on its own people, but rather that we are somehow engaged in a war against an "ism," against a religion.

Here is the truth, again citing the recent British report published this fall. The truth of it is that Muslims have had no greater enemy in contemporary history than Saddam Hussein. I believe it is accurate to say that Saddam Hussein has killed more Muslims than any government leader in the past 50 years, including Slobodan Milosevic who sought, through a policy of ethnic cleansing, to destroy the Muslim population in the form of Yugoslavia.

□ 1545

The Iran-Iraq war, which ranged from 1980 to 1988, resulted in 1 million Muslim casualties dead and wounded. Iranian casualties in that war, Mr. Speaker, were estimated at between 450,000 and 730,000. Iraqi casualties were between 150,000 and 340,000. Really not since our Civil War have we ever as a nation experienced casualties the likes of which occurred in a barbaric and ruthless war between these two nations for 8 years.

During the 1988 Anfal campaign in Iraqi Kurdistan, Iraqi troops were responsible for the death or disappearance of up to 100,000 Muslim Kurds. Also according to Great Britain on March 16, 1988, Iraqi troops killed up to 5,000 and injured some 10,000 Muslim Kurds in a single day in a chemical weapon attack on the town of Halabja in northern Iraq.

The 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait led to the death of 1,000 Kuwaiti Muslim nationals. 605 prisoners of war remain completely unaccounted for since 1991, including nationals of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, India, Syria, Lebanon, Iran, Egypt, Bahrain and Oman. Between 3 million and 4 million Muslim Iraqis have abandoned their homes and sought refuge outside of Iraq. Many hundreds of thousands of Iraq's Muslims have been displaced internally. Estimates of 900,000 according to the United Kingdom's report may be conservative.

In the north, towns and villages were systematically destroyed by the regime during the war with Iran. Further south, non-Arabs in the region of Kirkuk have been relocated to other parts of Iraq and Arabs induced to occupy their homes and lands. And in the south, between 300,000 and 500,000 Muslim citizens have been forced from their traditional homes in Iraq's marshlands. Thousands of Muslims have been arbitrarily arrested, ill treated, tortured, and executed in Iraq in recent years.

This is according to the International Alliance for Justice News Service, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch Country Report, and the U.S. Committee for Refugees Report, and I will cite each of the following. The regime of Saddam Hussein has reaped an extraordinary and barbarous toll on Muslims in the region over its 20-some-odd-year history. This is also a regime that has used chemical weapons according to the Human Rights Watch's "Genocide in Iraq" report.

Mr. Speaker, I will say for a moment that while I have great respect for Amnesty International and great respect for Human Rights Watch and as a member of the Committee on International Relations I greatly cherish any organization that makes its business to attend to the human rights of people around the world, I must concede standing on this particular side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, not to have a great deal culturally in common with most of the people that are drawn to the work of these organizations. I have a passion for human rights. I am on the Subcommittee on the Middle East for precisely that reason. I am interested in advancing the human rights of people all across the world in whatever brief time that I have in this institution. But I know that most people who think about these things and donate to these organizations have a little bit of a different political view from mine and I suspect, Mr. Speaker, a different political view of the war from mine.

And so I am hoping that somehow through this process, we can reach some of those who object to this war, who express fealty and appreciation for Human Rights Watch and for Amnesty International and for all the plethora of groups out there that largely draw their support from the left, who have

nonetheless chronicled as a great service to mankind the barbarism of this regime.

According to the Human Rights Watch "Genocide in Iraq" report, which carried extensive research into chemical weapons attacks in northern Iraq, based on field interviews, they have determined that at least 60 villages as well as the town of Halabja were attacked with mustard gas, nerve gas or a combination of the two during the Anfal campaign against the Kurds between 1987 and 1988.

Human Rights Watch says that the Iraqi regime has used chemical weapons for at least four complementary purposes: number one, to attack base camps and main-force concentrations of Kurdish guerillas; two, to harass and kill retreating guerillas; three, to inflict, I make emphasis here, Mr. Speaker, that we are not simply talking about Iraq deploying chemical weapons in a military environment, which according to international convention and expectation is barbarism but also, according to Human Rights Watch, they have deployed chemical weapons to inflict exemplary collective punishment on civilians for simply supporting the Kurdish guerillas. The most dramatic case is the chemical bombing of Halabja after the seizure of the town by guerillas and Iranian revolutionary guards. And lastly, they have used it simply to spread terror among civilian populations as a whole, flushing villagers out of their homes to facilitate their capture, relocation, and killing.

The list of chemical attacks by Iraq against its own citizens, and not just in a military context, is astonishing and horrifying. And the list goes on, Mr. Speaker, of evidence upon evidence of a regime that has lost any connection to the civilized world.

But I want to go back to these pictures, if I can; and I have not yet shown all of them. These are some great-looking kids. This photograph that I got off the aforementioned Web site was apparently taken on December 19, 2002, in Baghdad, and those are some beautiful little girls. I have got two little girls of my own. They are 9 and 8 years old, Mr. Speaker. I think that I would do anything to deliver my little girls from living in the kind of society and under the kind of regime that I am here to describe and that organizations like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have identified and associated with the regime under the leadership of Saddam Hussein.

Let me share with you some testimony which was presented before the Congressional Human Rights Caucus on the human rights situation in northern Iraq, the Kurdish minority. This is the testimony of Bayanne Surdashi, a Kurdish humanitarian aid worker now in asylum in the United States of America. After pleasantries, Bayanne told the following story. This is a Kurdish Iraqi and her personal story:

"I was 12 years old when I experienced firsthand the suffering of my

people. One evening in the spring of 1987, one of my aunts and her whole family showed up on our doorstep in Sulaymaniyah unexpectedly. We learned that their village, Askar, was one of several that were attacked by Iraqi helicopters using chemical gas and then turned into rubble by bulldozers. My aunt's family had managed to avoid the military and find their way to our home. They spent 11 months hiding with us.

"Later the Iraqi regime relocated them to newly built government settlements where they could be closely watched by the military. They were not allowed to return to their farms and were turned from hard-working independent people into people dependent on the government for their very simplest needs. Over time my family discovered that at least 40 of our relatives living in the villages had been killed during this genocidal campaign known as the government's Anfal policy. Only those relatives who managed to escape or hide survived the horror of Anfal which killed more than 150,000 Kurds.

"Three years later after our failed uprising against Saddam Hussein in 1991, the Iraqi army used every possible form of brutality as they moved into northern Iraq, destroying everyone and everything before them. In the middle of a cold, rainy winter, we were awakened by the sound of bombs. It was clear that Saddam's army was very close. My parents feared that Saddam would again use chemical gas like he did during the genocidal campaign, so, like hundreds of thousands of other frightened Kurds, we fled. We said good-bye to our home, and we joined a flood of other refugees crowding the streets on our way out of the city and out of Iraq in search of sanctuary. We walked on foot for 10 days through the mountains before we reached Iran and safety, poorly clothed from harsh weather and without enough food or water. We were surrounded by the sound of misery and distress and witnessed families burying their dead along the road and weeping mothers unable to let go of their dead infants. Due to shock, one of my brothers suffered terrible seizures a few times a day.

"When we finally returned home," Bayanne would conclude before this congressional committee, "we learned that some of our relatives did not survive the exodus. My mother's aunt had been in the hospital when we left but died along with hundreds of other patients abandoned by the staff who were forced to flee the city as well. My uncle was found frozen to death in the mountains. On the radio we heard more than a thousand Kurds died every day during the exodus."

That was the testimony of a 12-year-old little girl who because of the courage of her family made it out. This could be a picture of her, Bayanne Surdashi. She is now a Kurdish humanitarian aid worker. She escaped. Hun-

dreds of thousands did not. But when I think of my children that same age and I think of that horror through which she passed, my blood runs cold. And I am amazed that others' does not. I am amazed, Mr. Speaker. I really am. And I just must assume that those who oppose the use of force in Iraq do not know this. Because I believed when I voted to authorize the use of force, Mr. Speaker, I believed it was right under international conventions going from the U.N. resolution 687 that was the cease-fire in 1991 and that it was appropriate for us to make clear to Iraq that they must disarm, they must disclose, they must destroy their weapons and cease any liaisons with terrorist organizations. I supported giving the President that authority. I have supported the administration unflinchingly in its attempt to develop international support for this war and believe those arguments are enough.

But there is this, which when taken in its totality, 20 years of barbarism, we see that the case against Iraq does not end with diplomatic resolutions, Mr. Speaker. The case against Iraq does not end with liaisons with terrorist organizations. The case against Iraq ends here. It ends with what will end when that regime ends.

I want to speak specifically to the issue of torture, which as I have said before is systematic in Iraq. I think again of David who asked me to look at a Web site, Mr. Speaker, where there were pictures, and I think of innocent Iraqis like this. This photograph was taken January 5, 2003, on the streets of Baghdad. These are adorable kids who maybe look an awful lot like the kids that we now know are tortured to extract information from their parents by this regime.

Mr. Speaker, I am very moved by that thought, and the sheer horror of it, but I want to reflect for a moment on what the word "systematic" means.

□ 1600

We are not talking, Mr. Speaker, about the torture that happens on the margins in the basement of the prison because of the brutality of prison guards who are operating outside the rule of law. When the U.N. Commission on Human Rights and Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch use the phrase that torture is systematic in Iraq, that means it is part of the system of Iraq. It is part of the ordinary undue process that the people of Iraq must endure.

And I hope I make this point, Mr. Speaker, that we are not talking about a regime that has left the rails. We are not talking about a regime that some of its operators have lost their way. We are talking about a regime that sanctions the torture and killing of its own people. The most senior figures in this regime, according to international sources, have been personally involved in torture.

Saddam Hussein runs Iraq with close members of his own family, the "filthy

40" that we heard about in the media this week, most of them either married into the family or in some way related by blood. Most of these come from his hometown of Tikrit. These are the only people he feels he can trust. He directly controls the security services and, through them and a huge party network, his influence reaches deep into Iraqi society. Saddam presides over the all-powerful Revolutionary Command Council, which enacts laws and institutions and it has been through this council, according to Amnesty International in a report published in August of 2001, "torture is used systematically against political detainees. The scale and severity of torture in Iraq can only result from the acceptance of its use at the highest level."

Over the years, Amnesty International and other human rights organizations have received thousands of reports of torture and interviewed dozens of torture victims who survived and escaped. Some of the propagandists, Tariq Aziz comes to mind, may step before the cameras some day in the near future and hold out something from a statute book in Iraq that says that torture is illegal in Iraq. But according to the report recently published by the British Government, our intelligence sources are not aware of a single case of an Iraqi official suspected of carrying out torture being brought to justice or prosecuted, not one.

I quote again, Amnesty International in a report from 2001: "Torture is used systematically against political detainees," and stay with me now. "The scale and severity of torture in Iraq can only result from the acceptance of its use at the highest level," according to Amnesty International.

Let me tell the story about a family, and I think we have a picture of a wonderful family in Baghdad. This photograph taken on the streets of Baghdad on January 7, 2003. A father, maybe a grandfather, with his arm around what looks to be about an 11- or 12-year-old boy and a daughter in a shawl, and it is a warm family photograph. Let me read the story of a family arrested in late 2000, not long ago. They were taken to two separate interrogation centers in Iraq within Republican Guard facilities located along the road to Abu Ghraib, according to a report published by the United Kingdom.

The husband was held in one center whilst the wife and children were held in a women's facility. The husband and wife were interrogated under torture about the husband's sale of vehicle that the interrogator said had been captured by Iraqi security forces during a raid on Iraqi oppositionists. The interrogators said separately to both husband and wife that they would cease the torture if they signed confessions admitting to be collaborating with oppositionists. They refused. The wife was stripped naked and cigarettes stubbed out on all parts of her body when she refused to implicate her husband.

This was August of 2000. I am not talking about ancient history, Mr. Speaker. According to testimony, she was beaten and thrown around the interrogation room. Her children were forced to watch the torture. She was eventually released, having been told her husband would continue being tortured until she returned to confess. She was arrested again 2 weeks late and the same pattern of torture was repeated, leaving her a psychological wreck.

During his testimony, the husband's arms were tied behind his back. He was then suspended in the air using a hook hung from the ceiling. According to testimony, this caused intense pain as his muscle and shoulder ligaments were torn. After a period, the interrogators entered the room and the husband was unhooked, placed in a chair. From close range, he was then shot at with a pistol whenever he refused to agree to sign the confession. Sometimes shots were fired which missed his body. At other times, a pistol muzzle was placed against his fingers, toes, and arms and fired so as to mutilate those areas. Over the following 2 weeks, further interrogations occurred at intervals following periods of food and water deprivation. Eventually the husband and wife's wider family paid a bribe to an Iraqi intelligence officer and they were released, and subsequently survived to escape from Iraq and testify.

Mr. Speaker, I recite these things because I think many people just do not know them. I recite these things because there are many who want to morally equivocate in this case and even to suggest that there are other countries that have weapons of mass destruction, Iraq is no different. Iraq is different, Mr. Speaker.

Let me give you more examples. Among these pictures that I was presented when I went to a Web site called to my attention by a constituent who opposed the war who asked me to look into the eyes of some recent photographs of people who live in Baghdad and think about the cost of this war. Among those photographs here is a January 5 picture of four beautiful girls and one little boy, and it is a good starting point for us to talk about women in Iraq, Mr. Speaker. I am not going to quote some propagandist organization on the right or some pro-war organization. I am going to quote from the Human Rights Alliance in France and Amnesty International's report in 2001 about the treatment of women by the regime in Baghdad.

According to Amnesty International, a 25-year-old woman known as Um Haydar was beheaded in the street without charge or trial at the end of December, 2000, after her husband, suspected by the authorities, of involvement in Islamic armed activities, fled the country. Beheaded in the street without a trial. And some think this is just another country, Mr. Speaker.

Men belonging to Saddam Fidayeen took Haydar from her house in the al-

Karrada district in front of her children and mother-in-law. Two men held her arms and a third pulled her head from behind and beheaded her in front of her family, according to witnesses with firsthand knowledge presented to Amnesty International. Human Rights Alliance in France, their report in 2002, young woman was arrested because her husband had refused to join the war against Iran. Pregnant at the time, she gave birth in prison on 3 December, 1999. She said, "I breast-fed my son, but they took him away when he was 17 days old so that he would not become like me. I'm still looking for him. I never had further news of him."

This woman, who was also horribly tortured in prison, still said she suffers endless torture, the torture of not knowing where her son is. This according to Human Rights Alliance in France.

Najat Mohammed Haydar, an obstetrician in Baghdad, was beheaded in October, 2000, apparently on suspicion of prostitution, according to Amnesty International. Even by Iraqi standards, her execution was an outrage, Mr. Speaker. There was no evidence to support the charge of prostitution. She was reportedly arrested before the introduction of the policy to behead prostitutes. The real reason for her death was believed to be, according to Amnesty International, her criticism of corruption in the Iraqi health service. A female obstetrician in Baghdad was beheaded in October of 2000.

I cannot say enough, and as I prepared for these remarks today, these are things that shocked my conscious and mind. I know where I was in October of 2000, Mr. Speaker, and to think that there is still a place in the world where a professional woman, an OBGYN, a medical doctor could criticize her government's health policy and be beheaded publicly is a frightening thought. But that is Baghdad and that is Iraq.

A few more personal stories, Mr. Speaker, and then I will yield this Chamber to another colleague. It is the individual stories that touch me the deepest. When I got that e-mail from David in my district, I had to thank him. He challenged me, Mr. Speaker. He said that if you support this war, I challenge you to go to a Web site where there are photographs of families that live in Baghdad, recent photographs of the people who may fall under the wake of U.S. military involvement. He challenged me, and I rose to the challenge, and I went to the Web site, but instead of finding myself backing away from engagement, I found myself drawn to it. I looked into the face of this little boy and he looks like mine. And it is the personal stories that draw me into this and reaffirm my belief that the rule of law and the laws that govern civilized men and women on planet earth are not the province of the west. They are not the province of English-speaking people or Europeans, but the freedom from terror, the obligations of due process, the freedom of

speech and association, these are things that attach to the human heart that this little boy, sitting on a carpet in Baghdad, smiling for all the world to the camera, not knowing what may well be coming to his city, touches me deeply.

A few more personal stories and I will close. These are from an Amnesty International report issued in November of 1999. They are personal stories regarding Iraq's obvious human rights violation, and I say this it as often as I can, Mr. Speaker, that I might per chance by some be heard that what I am reading now is not from some pro-war, pro-Bush Web site or document. This is from Amnesty International. Abd al-Wahid al-Rifa'i, married with nine children, according to Amnesty International, was arrested without a warrant on 8 March, 1999, at 2 a.m.

Taken from his house in Baghdad by plainclothes security men, initially he was held in the headquarters of the General Security Directorate. According to Amnesty International and testimony thereafter, he was then taken to a hospital because of ill health, returned to the Baghdad security headquarters where he is currently held without charge or trial. Since his arrest, his family has not been allowed to visit him. He is believed to have been arrested because authorities suspected he was in contact with the opposition through his brother, an active anti-government opponent who lives in Europe.

□ 1615

His brother, a businessman, fled with his wife and children to Jordan in 1995. The previous month, he had been detained in Iraq accused of having contacts with opposition abroad, and was tortured. This included beatings, suspension by his feet, electric shock to his lips and genitals. He escaped by bribing a prison official in August of 1995, and a criminal court sentenced him to death in absentia. His brother remains incarcerated without charges in his absence.

Ibrahim Amin al-'Azzawi, a 70-year-old lawyer, according to Amnesty International, was arrested on the morning of 23 March 1999. Four plainclothes security men took him away from his house in Baghdad. He was reportedly not involved in any opposition activities.

The previous evening his daughter, Bushra, married with two children, came with her children to her parents' house in a state of shock. She told her family, who are Sunni Muslims, that her husband had been arrested at his house and taken away by security men.

The whole family could not sleep that night. When the four security men came to the house around 6 a.m., they knocked at the door, and it was Ibrahim Amin al-'Azzawi who opened the door. They searched the house, confiscated documents, and arrested Ibrahim without giving him any reason for the arrest.

The family then feared that the security men would return and arrest them. Bushra and her two children and her two unmarried sisters and their 61-year-old mother collected some of their valuables and ran from the house. A few weeks later, they managed to flee the country. They believe that the reason behind their father's arrest was that his son-in-law, a Shi'a Muslim, was suspected of involvement in some antigovernment activities.

Ibrahim Amin al-'Azzawi was executed. His body was buried by the authorities. No information of a charge, trial, or sentencing was available. No information was made available to Amnesty International as to the fate of his son-in-law. This was a 70-year-old lawyer in Baghdad, who upon hearing that his son-in-law had been arrested in the dead of night, went to his house to comfort his daughter and was himself dragged off and executed. This is Iraq, Mr. Speaker. This is Iraq today, 1999, according to Amnesty International.

Let me tell you a story about a 67-year-old man, married with four grown children. Ayatollah al-Shaikh Murtaadha al-Burujerdi is his name, I say with respect, age 67. He was shot dead by armed men on the night of 22 April 1998 as he walked home from the shrine of Imam Ali in al-Najaf one of the Shiite Muslims' holiest cities, where he had led the congregation in dawn prayers. His two companions were also shot and sustained injuries.

He had reportedly been harassed in the past by Iraqi security services, and there had been at least one attempt on his life in 1991, and following the Shiite uprising in the South, he was arrested with scores of other Shiite scholars, was detained, and then released.

A few weeks before his murder, he had been visited by a delegation from the Ministry of Religious Endowments and Religions Affairs, urging him to stop leading the prayers. He was reported to have stated to the delegation he would only agree if he received in writing an order from the Iraqi government. Following the assassination, an official statement released by the government blamed the intelligence service of a foreign country. Amnesty International.

These names are hard for me to pronounce, but these facts are not hard for me to understand: a 67-year-old grandfather coming back from a prayer service, shot and killed. Two men were coming back from one of the holiest places for Shiite Muslims were also shot and wounded. His offense was praying.

The list, Mr. Speaker, goes on and on and on. There is persecution of the Kurds that has been documented again and again. There has been much human rights and religious persecution within Iraq. It is a record of mindless barbarism that is contemporary, not ancient history.

Some may believe that these were things of a frontier period in the regime before law and order took hold.

These things may happen, they say; but I am talking from the benefit of the great work of Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

Mr. Speaker, I speak of things that have happened within months of this day. A woman who was a medical doctor was beheaded because she criticized the government; a grandfather walking back from a prayer service, shot and killed simply because he did not adhere to the government's demand that he stop leading prayers with the Shiite Muslims; and the systematic use of torture as part of government policy.

So I rise today to simply add something to the discussion. I do so with great humility, Mr. Speaker, knowing that each one of us among the 435 who are privileged to serve in this place are simply part of a national conversation. We are the way America talks to itself.

I had a burden on my heart, Mr. Speaker, that America ought to be talking about this. We get caught up in resolutions and weapons of mass destruction, and were they or were they not involved with al Qaeda, were they or were they not involved in September 11. Each one of us, by our own lights and by the facts, will decide what we believe, and decide what we believe should be the proper course of action.

However, what I see the debate bereft of is an honest discussion of the barbaric and virtually unprecedented record on human rights that is contemporary Iraq under Saddam Hussein.

These families, these kids. December 19, 2002, this paragraph was taken of two beautiful little girls, about the age of my girls, in Baghdad. When I think of the man who was beheaded in front of his wife and children, when I think of the parents who were incarcerated and tortured in front of their children, when I think of the woman who escaped from Iraq, but they took her boy of 17 days away because they did not want him to be polluted by her ideology and thinking, she grieves to this day, not for the torture that she suffered and no doubt the physical scars she bore, but she feels the emotional scars of not knowing where her baby boy is.

It is about these families, Mr. Speaker, that I believe in the justness of our cause. I think of those words from Ecclesiastes, Chapter 4: "Again I looked and saw all the oppression that was taking place under the sun. I saw the tears of the oppressed, and they have no comforter. Power was on the side of their oppressors, and they have no comforter. I declared that the dead who had already died are happier than the living who are still alive; but better than both is he who has not yet been, who has not seen the evil that is done under the sun."

When I look into these eyes, Mr. Speaker, I see the tears of the oppressed. When I look into these eyes, I know the evil that is done under the sun. Because of the outstanding work of Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, I am able, and millions

are able, to know of these things, and the reality of them.

But let it not be said in this place that they have no comforter, that they have no defender; because in the days ahead, as we pause and reflect this weekend, each of us going to our own place of worship, I suspect many millions of Americans in churches and synagogues and mosques and in their own private devotions will pray.

We will, each of us, pray, not just for the safety of our troops, but we will pray for these who shed the tears of the oppressed. We will pray that God will have his mercy on all the innocent in the way of war, confident that our military will use extraordinary efforts to avoid casualties by noncombatants.

It is my hope that somewhere in the heart of hearts of the children in these pictures that I have shown today, and in the families they represent, there will be the knowledge that there is a defender; there is a nation, some 50 nations, that stand ready to end their oppression, to dry their tears, and to lead Iraq into a new dawn of civilization, a new dawn of freedom from oppression and torture and the abuse of women and the stifling of basic civil and human rights.

That is my prayer, that is my hope, and of that I remain confident, that the United States of America will, if need be by force, or by showing enough force that it is voluntary, lead Iraq into that bright future.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

AMERICA'S ROLE IN FINDING A SOLUTION TO TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I take this time to try to craft and articulate the burden that so many of us feel as we hope to be part of a solution that respects life over death, and clearly captures the role and the position of the United States of America as the singular world power, the problem solver, the great humanitarian.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the American people every day epitomize a caring Nation, a population that is charitable and eager to be of help. I know that, Mr. Speaker, because none of us are the same since 9-11. We cried, we hoped, we prayed, and all we wanted to do was to embrace our brothers and sisters who had lost their loved ones; and even to find some sense of hope that more would be found alive. We watched steadfastly every day, every hour, every minute, every second as the

brave first responders were looking to find life.

So I know that Americans truly are those who care about people; and yes, where there is no justice, Americans desire to march in to create justice.

Mr. Speaker, we could find almost zero divide when Americans rose to the floor of the House in the United States Congress after 9-11 and authorized the President's authority to fight the war against terrorism. Not only did Members of the United States Congress offer themselves as soldiers in the political process of fighting the war on terrorism, but all of America joined.

As we looked around as far as the eye could see, and as far as we could hear, and as far as we could imagine, nations all over the world, Mr. Speaker, joined us in our horror, in our hurt and pain, but in our resolve. As I traveled on behalf of this Congress, whether it was in the Caribbean, in Africa, in Asia; whether it was in the Pacific or in South America, Australia and other places, they all, to a one, said, we are with you. We feel the pain of this Nation, and we wish to fight with you.

□ 1630

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing like a coalition of strength and resolve that will make democracy and freedom a breathing, living entity, not just words.

Mr. Speaker, I was eager to join my colleagues shortly after 9-11 and shortly after we began the war on terrorism as we went to Afghanistan. One of my major concerns, Mr. Speaker, was to make sure I greeted and met with the men and women of the United States military, as I have done, Mr. Speaker, in going to Bosnia during the middle of that war before the Dayton Peace Treaty was signed; meeting with the respective presidents at that time, Milosovic who obviously told an untruth and got his just to do by being tried before the war crimes tribunal. And then as I went to Kosovo to meet with General Wesley Clark near the muddy near Albania as we were in a collaborative effort with NATO raising our voices against ethnic cleansing, murderous acts, stopping that with our allies; and then going into Afghanistan to see the troops and to go into that nation to begin to hopefully encourage it to be a nation, and as well to see the pain that was there.

I do not have the pictures of the faces of children, but when you go to an orphanage with a thousand children's scars and sores all over their faces, you have a resolve to say America is here now; we are going to help you.

I mentioned Afghanistan last before I discussed this dilemma with Iraq because I have just heard the pleas of women from Afghanistan saying that even with the commitment of this Nation, there is fear in Afghanistan now because they wonder about America's resolve to help them. I am thinking, of course, of the battle fiercely going on there with our troops bravely fighting

against the Taliban that are in the respective mountains and caves that maybe which cleared the city.

But Afghans will tell you the Taliban are still there, that the terrorists still abound. What does this say to America and our foreign policy and to this Congress? Unlike 20 years ago, we cannot abandon Afghanistan and so Afghanistan becomes a front that deals with the needs for American military to be present, and in essence the needs for us to continue our war against terrorism.

But how do we do that, Mr. Speaker? We are now yielding to what I consider an untimely move toward war in Iraq, when in actuality our job is not finished in Afghanistan. And in fact we have options to be able to address the question in Iraq. There is no doubt that a despot rules that country. I hesitate to say, Mr. Speaker, tragically we could probably list 30 to 31 nations with that kind of despotic leader; and so the United States has to be methodical, we have to work with coalitions, we have to be able to reflect upon history.

We have to look at the Berlin Wall and as Americans saw that wall crumbling brick by brick. How did it go so? Because the United Nations, the allies and America had a resolve to have a strong defense and to be able to allow the German people to see a better way; and it crumbled from within, not without, of course, a strong military from the allies making it known to Germany that we would not tolerate the continued existence. The resolve brought the wall down. And out of that, we saved thousands of lives without going to war.

Russia, the Soviet Union, is not the Soviet Union of yesteryear. And the independent European countries that used to be part of the Soviet Union are clamoring to be part of NATO. How did we do that with our resolve and our persistence in a coalition?

There is nothing worse than this Nation going forward unilaterally and preemptively against Iraq. What we will be intending to do may not be the result because all of those wonderful people that we want to save, those 6-year-old babies, 2-month-old babies, those elderly women, elderly men, those young families who are seeking nothing but a better life will be the collateral damage, how cold a word, of our unilateral attack on Iraq and Baghdad. Lives will be lost, and certainly large numbers of the brave young men and women in the United States military who without one bit of criticism are there in the Mid East now will be lost.

War should be the last option, Mr. Speaker. I have not said war should never be an option because I do not believe in this Nation being a wimp. And I believe that if this Nation needed defending, every American would step over each other in order to be on the frontline. But you cannot characterize one patriotism on the basis of raising the doubts of a war at this juncture