

I recently returned from a trip to the Far East where I urged our friends in the region to help. An isolated America, I warned, is likely to become an isolationist America. The ramifications for international trade as well as politics are potentially explosive.

At the height of the Vietnam War, Senator George D. Aiken of Vermont became famous for a policy suggestion in the form of a quip. He argued that the U.S. should simply declare victory and get out.

Iraq is not a circumstance in which the U.S. should be trumpeting military victory despite its decisiveness. But little could be more appropriate than to announce a change in policy based on the fact that our principal mission has been accomplished, ridding Iraq of a despotic dictator and eliminating the near-term prospect that Iraq could become a center for the development and distribution of weapons of mass destruction, whether or not Saddam had a significant WMD capability prior to U.S. intervention.

Having intervened, the U.S. cannot end its responsibility until Iraqi society is back on its feet in a credible, progressive and legitimized governance basis. The question is whether that basis is more likely to be achieved with Americanization or internationalization of responsibility.

My sense is that the establishing of a more progressive government in Iraq will be achieved earlier and with substantially less bloodshed if it becomes clear that Iraq is being put back together under the mantle of an international mandate rather than by an intervening military power.

□ 1815

The goal should be to emphasize the idealism of the challenge before us rather than dwell on realpolitik posturing which can too easily trigger increased anarchy and even a clash of civilizations. Strength, to be sustainable, must come from a balance of judgment that brings respect rather than resentment from the rest of the world. Otherwise, an intervention designed exclusively to diminish terrorism could serve as a rationale to expand terrorism around the world, including on our own shores.

Four decades ago, the British author Lawrence Durrell wrote a series of novels called the "Alexandria Quarter" in which he describes a set of events in Alexandria, Egypt, before World War II. A seminal literary experiment in the relativity of human perception that was named one of the top 100 novels of the last century, each of the books viewed the same events through the eyes of four different participants. The full story cannot be comprehended without synthesizing how each of the protagonists viewed events from his or her own individual perspective.

Today, in Middle East, we have an analogous circumstance. For the full story of Iraq to be understood, we need to understand how events are perceived

through very different sets of eyes and very different sets of reasoning. American policy makers, for instance, generally reason in a pragmatic, future-oriented manner. Much of the rest of the world, on the other hand, reasons more generally, by historical analogy. Events centuries back play a definitively greater role in judgments made about policies today.

Symbolically, the nature of the radically different way Americans and Middle Easterners look at the world is reflected in the startling statistic that four out of five Al Jazeera viewers believe a French author who claims that the plane which blasted into the Pentagon on 9/11 was actually a U.S. military aircraft ordered by the U.S. military to hit itself in an effort to justify the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. This kind of conspiracy theory is instantaneously understood as ludicrous in America, but not elsewhere. In fact, even in the heart of the democratic Europe, conspiracy theories about the events of 9/11 have topped best-seller lists. Intriguingly, from a Muslim perspective, the fact that nearly 70 percent of the American public believe that Saddam Hussein was personally involved in the attacks of September 11 appears equally unconvincing. Muslims note that no Iraqi citizen was involved in the attack and believe that alleged evidence of Iraqi complicity is peripheral and tangential at best.

On the other hand, virtually the entirety of the Muslim world recognizes Saddam to have been a sadistic dictator. There is no public support for him, but extraordinary consternation that a Western power would intervene in the Middle East in the way it did.

It is possible to suggest, from an American perspective, that since we received inadequate support for the UN, it makes little sense to cede authority to outsiders now. On the other hand, if one does not rebalance transitional governance in Iraq, it is hard for America to suggest to the international community that all countries have an obligation not only to support the governing authority but provide reconstruction assistance.

The question is whether America would be better off with a new Security Council mandate that gives responsibility for coordinating the political transition process to the UN, assisted by American experts already in the field, while maintaining the U.S. role in military and internal security concerns, or whether we want to continue to bear near exclusive responsibility for a country with a government lacking legitimacy.

I am convinced that the fact that the U.S. did not get solid support from the UN, prior to the invasion, underscores the importance of seeking greater international legitimacy in the transition to a democratic Iraqi Government.

Simply put, legitimacy delayed is security denied.

PRIVILEGED REPORT REQUESTING PRESIDENT TO TRANSMIT REPORT ENTITLED "OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM STRATEGIC LESSONS LEARNED" AND DOCUMENTS IN HIS POSSESSION ON THE RECONSTRUCTION AND SECURITY OF POST-WAR IRAQ

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan (during special order of Mr. LEACH), from the Committee on Armed Services, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 108-289, Part 2) on the resolution (H. Res. 364) requesting the President to transmit to the House of Representatives not later than 14 days after the date of adoption of this resolution the report prepared for the Joint Chiefs of Staff entitled "Operation Iraqi Freedom Strategic Lessons Learned" and documents in his possession on the reconstruction and security of post-war Iraq, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

IMMIGRATION, OVERTIME, AND RUSH LIMBAUGH

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there are several items that I would like to comment on and share with my colleagues.

We had a very powerful day today. Hundreds of immigrants and immigrant supporters, friends of this Nation, parents and sisters and brothers and neighbors of some of the young men and women that are now on the frontlines of Operation Iraqi Freedom came to the Nation's Capitol to speak to the issues of civil rights and human dignity. They came in what we call the Immigration Freedom Ride. They leave tomorrow morning on to New Jersey and then to go to the seat of Ellis Island in New York to be able to restate to all Americans that we all came from somewhere, and that this Nation is bountiful because each of us were able to contribute our own culture and the respect for human dignity. They ask simple things, Mr. Speaker, and that is access to legalization, the ability to reunite their families, and civil rights and civil justice. They came in the spirit of the Freedom Riders of the 1960's and the first ones in the 1940's. They came in a spirit of Martin Luther King and the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. LEWIS), our own colleague. They walked across the bridge in Selma, Alabama, the Edmond Pettus bridge. They realize that the two have now intertwined: their quest for civil justice and civil rights, as our quest, the Freedom Riders' in the 1960's quest for civil rights and civil justice. And they call upon America's goodness, just as we who are African Americans, maybe called colored, maybe called Negroes in the early 1960's pressed the case that we too were Americans.

I believe it is time now for this Congress to put in place legislation that deals with earned access to legalization, to be able to say that if they have not committed a criminal act, that they are here working, they may be undocumented, they are paying their taxes, that they should have the access to being able to apply for citizenship. I believe we should pass 245(i) to reunite our families. And, yes, I believe that we should treat all people with human dignity.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind my colleagues that we are the people's House. We should open our doors to this voice and the voices that cannot be heard or the picture of the young lady that was shown to me who is suffering because she cannot access a kidney transplant, and she came here as a baby and is still here at 21 years old and dying with kidney failure. How unmerciful can we be? And I would ask that my colleagues consider a real immigration policy for this Nation that deals with the security of this Nation, the justice of this Nation.

And then might I say very briefly, Mr. Speaker, we spoke today on the floor of the House about an untoward legislative initiative that would force hardworking Americans to overcome or to be able to eliminate their overtime. I said overcome. I wish we could overcome it. We won the instruction to the Labor-HHS conference to say that we do not want to eliminate America's overtime. Hardworking Americans, our first responders, restaurant workers, white-collar workers, people who are putting their children through college, the only way they do it is through overtime. What an insane proposition that we would even believe that is the right thing to do with the economy stumbling as it is.

And then, Mr. Speaker, I come to say something that I wish I did not have to do. That is to bring to task Rush Limbaugh, who has been blessed by being in this country, having the freedom to say anything he desires to say. The first amendment gives anyone the right. It protects free speech. It respects sometimes hostile speech. Rush Limbaugh decided that he had the latitude to be on ESPN and to castigate an African-American quarterback. And as I stand here today, I insist that he has the right to free speech. He has castigated those of us in public life every day of the week. He spoke with great insult of President William Jefferson Clinton. Not that he has no right to say that, but he disrespected, from my position, the position of the Presidency. But what Rush Limbaugh does, and what is an insult, is that he continues the stereotypes and stigma and does not respect the human dignity of all people.

Rush Limbaugh, I say to you, you have a first amendment right, but you have no values. You have no ethnic respect. You have no dignity and no integrity, and you do not know what it is to hurt people.

All I can say is that it is time now that we stand up against this kind of bigotry and hateful speech, and I stand, today, against it.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all Members to address their remarks to the Chair.

QUESTIONS CONCERNING MONEY FOR IRAQ

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.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, this evening the Congressional Black Caucus is coming before this Congress to address the issue of the \$87 billion that the President just recently requested of this Nation to continue our efforts in Iraq and in Afghanistan. We certainly are a group of 39 people, and I often say 39 very gifted legislators, who are simply ordinary people called to an extraordinary mission, and in the process of doing the extraordinary, I do believe that we have become extraordinary. And we have been consistently standing up for our troops over and over and over again because they are our children, they are our brothers and sisters, they are fathers, they are mothers.

And just the other night, Mr. Speaker, at the Congressional Black Caucus annual banquet, we were very pleased to honor Sergeant Shoshanna Johnson, who of course we know was shot in both feet and taken captive in Baghdad. So tonight we come to address this \$87 billion because it is our belief that our troops must be supported, but at the same time we are very clear that we need to look at the moneys that are being spent on what I would title the resurrection of Iraq after we tore it down, and we want to look at both sides of it.

In other words, we want to look at the money that it is going to take to support our troops, but at the same time we want to look at the money that will be spent, and is being spent, for these no-bid contracts and for repairing the infrastructure of Iraq while the infrastructure of so many of our cities and our rural areas are falling apart. We want to certainly look at the issue of schools, building a new school system. And it has all been on the news here recently, particularly today and yesterday, about how the Iraqi children are now beginning their school year, and certainly we are a very compassionate group of legislators, but at the same time when we go back to our districts, we fail to understand why it is that so many of our children in our districts are sitting in classrooms with rain falling on their heads and trudging through mud because they are in

portables or they have situations where they are in overcrowded schools. So we question that.

We also come questioning the whole question of elections. It is our understanding that a substantial amount of money is going to be spent on making sure that Iraq has a wonderful election system. And then we look at what we just saw here in the United States, the fiasco down in Florida and throughout the United States with our election process in the year 2000. And we believe, as the Congressional Black Caucus, that we are asking the basic questions, the questions that anybody would ask in any very serious family matter. This is not rocket science stuff. Questions like, Mr. President, we just spent \$80 billion. What did we do with that?

□ 1830

And can you account for that and tell us what that was spent for? Questions like, it is our understanding that there is quite a bit of oil over in Iraq, and we want to know simply what that money is being spent for, because we were promised a long time ago that that money from those oil reserves would be used to resurrect Iraq but, at the same time, you now come to the American people asking them to do it.

The other thing that we are certainly concerned about is that we hear over and over again that we are fighting terrorism for the world, and we do believe that. But at the same time, we ask the question, if we are fighting terrorism for the world, if there is going to be substantial benefit to the world, why is there not substantial giving or sacrifice on the part of other countries?

And certainly we want to know the exit strategy. One of the things that the President said when he was running for office, and we certainly hold him to it, as the American people do, is that he would never go into another country, let our Armed Forces go into another country without having an exit strategy. We want to know what the exit strategy is.

Then finally, and there are some other questions that will be raised by my colleagues, but certainly we are very interested in knowing, how do we measure success. The answer has to be very clear with regard to our schoolchildren, and he has made excellent arguments about how we need to measure how our children are doing. That is all well and good. So we come to the President asking him, exactly how do we measure our accomplishments in Iraq?

I am so glad that this evening I am joined by my colleague who sits on the Committee on Armed Services, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK), a freshman who is just doing a great job. But the gentleman has an opportunity to look at it from an armed services standpoint, and I would like to hear from the gentleman.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I am just so pleased how the gentleman from