

serve at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island in Washington State's Second Congressional District, so I come to the floor of the House of Representatives today to honor him and call on all my colleagues to look to Matthew's example to inspire us and spur us on to our own acts of selfless service and care.

Because of Matthew's humble heroics, Leslie is alive today. Matthew himself is not just a good father and not just a good sailor, he is a great person and a true hero.

#### FREEDOM WINS

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, did you see the newspaper? Iraqis vote by the millions, turn out undeterred by threats. Violence was replaced by Iraqi citizens, 70 percent of them freely and openly voting for their representatives, affirming the wonder of liberty.

The entire world is witness to their desire, demonstrated by their courage and action to live in a country where life and liberty are treasured.

This week we have seen success in Iraq, another vivid victory over terrorism. Anxiety has been replaced by celebration, purple-stained fingers were seen throughout Iraq, testimony to the glory and the spirit of freedom. Everyone may now see that our efforts in Iraq are successful. Millions of Iraqis are participating in leading their country to a bright future, full of promise and potential.

Mr. Speaker, we should all applaud these efforts. Today is a day of victory for Iraq, for America, and for the free world. It is testimony that the will of the Iraqi people will not waiver and that freedom will prevail.

#### IMMIGRATION

(Mr. GRIJALVA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 4437, the Border and Immigration Enforcement Act of 2005.

H.R. 4437 is an enforcement-only approach that fails to provide real family security, real national security, and real economic security for our country. It is neither comprehensive nor realistic.

If this Nation really wants to create an effective border security policy, we need to have a debate that includes a discussion about actual solutions to our problems, which means taking all of the political grandstanding and baiting out of the equation.

H.R. 4437 is unrealistic, it is based on fear, and it is financially irresponsible and even unconstitutional at times. It joins rank with the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Depression-era repatriation of U.S. Citizens to Mexico, two of

our country's most embarrassing moments.

As a first-generation son, a native-born son of an immigrant that came to this country, I hope we do not close the door to that legacy.

#### IRAN AND ISRAEL

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the outburst of hateful and irresponsible rhetoric coming from Iran in recent days and weeks is simply outrageous.

In October, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad sparked international outrage when he publicly declared that Israel should be "wiped off the map." Just last week, he suggested that the Holocaust never happened. This week, he called for Israel to be moved to Europe.

Nations, including the U.S., France, Germany, and the European Commission, have all expressed their disgust with these comments. The Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman, Mark Regev, said it best when he said, "The combination of fanatical ideology, a warped sense of reality, and nuclear weapons is a combination that no one in the international community can accept."

He is absolutely right. These comments were not made by some cleric of some small mosque. He is a head of state, and to think of him having nuclear weapons is frightening. It threatens not only Israel, but the international community as a whole, and should be denounced in the strongest terms possible by all nations.

#### PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. RES. 612, VICTORY IN IRAQ RESOLUTION

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 619 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

#### H. RES. 619

*Resolved*, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 612) expressing the commitment of the House of Representatives to achieving victory in Iraq. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and preamble to final adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on International Relations; and (2) one motion to recommit which may not contain instructions.

SEC. 2. On the first legislative day of the second session of the One Hundred Ninth Congress, the House shall not conduct organizational or legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday was an extraordinary day not only in the history of Iraq but the history of the world. We saw the third free and fair election take place in the country of Iraq, and for the first time in the history of that nation we saw the people of Iraq choose their own leaders.

On January 30 of this year, there were many people who thought it could not happen, there were many terrorist attacks, and it actually was slow in coming. As you will recall, the pictures that we saw of voting stations where early on no one voted, but ultimately 8.5 million Iraqis voted to put into place a coalition government that was charged with the task of fashioning a constitution, a constitution that would work to bring together the very disparate factions that exist within Iraq, the three that we know of, the Shia, the Sunni, and the Kurdish populations, and of course the other divisions that exist in the country.

Mid-summer, we saw the work on that constitution proceed. We saw the August date approach. There were problems, difficulties. And then we saw the October 15 election rapidly approach, and people from all over the world, including leaders of the U.S. forces there, were uncertain as to whether or not the Iraqi people would in fact ratify their constitution.

Mr. Speaker, we saw a 64 percent voter turnout, roughly 10 million Iraqis voting, and 78 percent of the people of Iraq from throughout the country among all of those three disparate factions within the country came together and overwhelmingly, with a 78 percent vote, ratified that constitution. The existence of that constitution called for parliamentary elections to take place, and for, as I said, the first time in the nation's history we yesterday saw the Iraqi people choose their own leaders, a 275-member parliamentary assembly.

Mr. Speaker, we do not know yet the exact outcome of that election, but there are a number of very important things we do know about yesterday's election. We thought that there would be wide-ranging terrorist attacks, when in fact there were very few if any difficulties with the election at all when it came to attacks. We saw something that came as a great surprise to so many people, and that was a 70 percent voter turnout.

Mr. Speaker, 11 million Iraqis voted in this election. If one looks at where it is that we are headed, it is an amazing testament to what the United States of America and our Coalition Forces have done.

We, as a body, strongly support our troops; and we, as a body, strongly support the mission of our troops.

Mr. Speaker, what I would like to do, at this point, is share with my colleagues the resolution that, if we approve this rule, will be considered. It is a resolution introduced by the very distinguished chairman of the Committee on International Relations. And I should say parenthetically that our thoughts and prayers are with Chairman HYDE right now as he is going through a very difficult situation in his family. But in his absence, I know that from the International Relations Committee our colleague from Miami (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) came before the Rules Committee last night and testified on behalf of this resolution; and she was joined by the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on International Relations (Mr. LANTOS).

The resolution reads as follows, Mr. Speaker: Expressing the commitment of the House of Representatives to achieving victory in Iraq.

Whereas, the Iraqi election of December 15, 2005, the first to take place under the newly ratified Iraqi constitution, represented a crucial success in the establishment of a democratic constitutional order in Iraq.

And whereas, Iraqis who by the millions defied terrorist threats to vote, were protected by Iraqi security forces with the help of United States and Coalition Forces.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that:

1. The United States House of Representatives is committed to achieving victory in Iraq;

2. The Iraqi election of December 15, 2005, was a crucial victory for the Iraqi people and Iraq's new democracy and a defeat for the terrorists who seek to destroy that democracy;

3. The House of Representatives encourages all Americans to express solidarity with the Iraqi people as they take another step toward their goal of a free, open, and democratic society;

4. The successful Iraqi election of December 15, 2005, required the presence of U.S. Armed Forces, U.S.-trained Iraqi forces, and Coalition Forces;

5. The continued presence of United States Armed Forces in Iraq will be required only until Iraqi forces can stand up so our forces can stand down, and no longer than is required for that purpose;

6. Setting an artificial timetable for the withdrawal of United States Armed Forces from Iraq, or immediately terminating their deployment in Iraq and redeploying them elsewhere in the region, is fundamentally inconsistent with achieving victory in Iraq;

7. The House of Representatives recognizes and honors the tremendous sacrifices made by the members of the United States Armed Forces and their families, along with the members of Iraqi and Coalition Forces; and,

8. The House of Representatives has unshakable confidence that with the support of the American people and the Congress, the United States Armed Forces, along with the Iraqi and Coalition Forces, shall achieve victory in Iraq.

That is what House Resolution 612 says, Mr. Speaker; and it is very clear to me that an overwhelming majority of the House of Representatives will be supportive of this effort.

Now, I think that it is important for us to also look back at a number of the charges that have been leveled over the past couple of years. There was no strategy, no plan for victory in Iraq. We have constantly heard that from many over the past several months. I got, as I know all my colleagues did, this 35-page document that was put forward by the President as he began his campaign in the past several weeks to enlighten the American people on what our strategy for victory in Iraq is.

Now, there are many who believe that this is some great revelation, but the lead page of this 35-page document, Mr. Speaker, refers to a speech that was delivered 3 weeks, actually about 3½ weeks, before we began our military engagement in Iraq.

In February of 2003, President Bush said as follows: "The United States has no intention of determining the precise form of Iraq's new government. That choice belongs to the Iraqi people. Yet, we will ensure that one brutal dictator is not replaced by another. All Iraqis must have a voice in the new government, and all citizens must have their rights protected. Rebuilding Iraq will require a sustained commitment from many nations, including our own. We will remain in Iraq as long as necessary and not a day more."

Now, that was stated by President Bush on February 26 of 2003, and I commend this document to my colleagues, in which it refers to the fact that we have seen extraordinary achievements take place since we began our effort in Iraq. The impact that it is having on the region is underreported. The positive salutary effect of what the United States of America, the Iraqi Security Forces, and our Coalition Forces have done has had, I believe, an extraordinarily positive impact on nations like Egypt that for the first time in its history held, as I was told by the defense minister of Egypt, because of what we have done in Iraq they held multicandidate elections; in Lebanon where we have seen people, because of what we have done in Iraq, standing up for the cause of freedom say that they will give their lives to ensure that the Syrians do not control their country. So throughout the region we are seeing very important developments.

Mr. Speaker, it is also important to note that we continue to live in a very dangerous world, and that region of the world is particularly dangerous. All one needs to do is look at the statement made most recently this week from Iran's leader about the continued quest towards undermining the cause of freedom and liberation and democracy.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution makes it very clear. We congratulate the people of Iraq. We underscore the fact that the Iraqi Security Forces, the United

States of America and our Coalition played a critical role in finally bringing about the self-determination which the people of Iraq are now enjoying; and it makes it clear that the region is still a very dangerous spot on our globe and that any kind of artificial timetable that were put into effect calling for our withdrawal would undermine the tremendous successes that we have been able to see over the past nearly 3 years and, I believe, could jeopardize the future of these people who are just now getting a taste of the kind of freedom that we take for granted.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER), the chairman of our committee, for yielding me the customary 30 minutes, and I yield myself 7½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, last night and this morning, like all my colleagues, I watched the news reports about the parliamentary elections in Iraq. This is a proud day for the Iraqi people, and it is fitting that this Congress, this House of Representatives, recognize the courage of the Iraqi people, their desire to take control of their own destiny, and how much they have suffered to achieve this taste of democracy.

As has been stated by so many analysts in the news media, one of the most important outcomes of this election was the significant participation for the first time of Iraqi Sunnis in this election, many of whom, according to news reports, were encouraged to vote, escorted to the polls or guarded at the polls by armed Iraqi insurgents.

Everyone in the House of Representatives is proud of the Iraqi people. Everyone in this House respects the efforts made by our uniformed men and women to help the Iraqi people get to this historic moment.

This House could have sent a strong unified message to the Iraqi people, our troops in Iraq, and to the international community in support of our troops and in support of the brave Iraqi people. But, Mr. Speaker, once again, as it has so often done in the past, this Republican leadership has chosen to include controversial language in this resolution, knowing that it will provoke sharp and divisive debate over Iraq.

□ 0930

Rather than choosing to send a united message to the world, the Republican leadership has cynically and deliberately decided to highlight our divisions rather than our unity.

Late last night, the ranking member of the House International Relations Committee, one of the most respected leaders in this House on human rights, Congressman TOM LANTOS, came before the Rules Committee with a resolution that focused on congratulating the people of Iraq for three successful elections conducted in Iraq this year. The resolution further praises our troops

for their contributions to peace and stability in Iraq. And, Mr. Speaker, he was rejected out of hand.

Shame on the majority to treat one of the most respected Members of this body in such a fashion. Shame, Mr. Speaker, there are many points of view in this House about how the U.S. should proceed in Iraq. Even among the majority, there are differing points of view. I for one believe these successful Iraqi elections provide an opportunity for the United States to change course in Iraq and begin bringing U.S. forces home. As we pass the 1,000th day of the war in Iraq, I believe we must begin the transition to putting the Iraqis in charge.

After 3 years of war, the United States claims, for better or for worse, the elimination of Saddam Hussein from power, and that the United States has furthered the Iraqi political process, culminating in the passage of a Constitution and now the first democratic election and Iraq's first constitutional government.

At this point, plans for a full transfer of sovereignty to Iraqis demands a change in course, one that puts Iraqis in charge. Iraq can't move forward with 160,000 U.S. troops, the largest U.S. Embassy in the world, and with Iraqi public opinion behind a timetable for withdrawal.

Mr. Speaker, many years ago Vermont Senator George Aiken said of the disastrous Vietnam war that the United States should declare victory and go home. Well, the elections in Iraq and the other milestones constitute a sufficient reason for the United States to declare that it has done all it can in Iraq, and it is time to reverse the Bush administration's policies.

President Bush's unwillingness to announce a plan to remove U.S. troops within a clear time frame and his refusal to renounce the use of permanent U.S. military bases there undermines his rhetoric about Iraqi democracy and will undermine the legitimacy of the new Iraqi Government. Our occupation of Iraq complicates the transition to democracy. Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright had it right, Mr. Speaker, when she said last month that the United States can support democracy, but we cannot impose democracy. And it is a deadly combination when democracy is equated with occupation.

While the President continues to give speeches on the war, the American people have become disenchanted with the administration's Iraq policies and its failure to disclose a plan for withdrawal. Let us be clear, Mr. Speaker. The President has a credibility gap when it comes to Iraq. According to a December 8 New York Times/CBS poll, 59 percent of Americans disapprove of the way President Bush is handling the war in Iraq, and 70 percent do not believe that he has developed a clear plan to get American troops out of Iraq.

We have lost more than 2,100 soldiers dead and over 15,000 wounded, over-

stretched our military, placed our homeland and those of our allies at greater risk, and still this President persists in a useless quest for, quote, victory.

But excuse me, Mr. Speaker, just what is "victory"? Who defines it? Who decides when "victory" has been achieved in Iraq? Is it the Iraqi people themselves? Is it President Bush, who has already declared "mission accomplished"? Is it next year? Or the year after that? Or 5 years or 10 years down the road? Is it when we have lost 3,000 troops in Iraq? Or 5,000? Or 10? How many more American troops do we have to sacrifice? How many more Iraqi lives must be sacrificed before we decide that "victory" has been achieved?

While most Iraqis are confident in yesterday's parliamentary elections, two-thirds are opposed to the presence of U.S. troops, according to a poll released on December 12 by ABC News and Time Magazine. According to news reports, many of the Sunnis turned out in such large numbers yesterday because they see it as a means to end the U.S. occupation of their country. Arab voices through the Cairo process are helping change the dynamic in a positive way and are filling a role that the U.S. no longer needs to play.

The President must work with the United Nations and Iraq's Arab neighbors to develop an interim arrangement as American troops depart. The best way to preserve the gains made so far is to commit to long-term financing for reconstruction, working with the new Iraqi Government to set a timetable for withdrawal, and to arrange for an over-the-horizon troop presence.

The Bush administration and the Republican leadership of this House should be spending less time on spin and speeches and more time on preparing for bringing American troops home. The way out of Iraq begins by genuine respect for the will of the Iraqi people and their desire for U.S. military withdrawal from Iraq. The President can begin to demonstrate this respect by putting an end to the attempted manipulation of Iraqi public opinion with fake news written by Pentagon contractors, the unambiguous announcement that the U.S. will not maintain permanent military bases there, and the immediate initiation of a coherent plan for the withdrawal of our forces there. This will not only give the vast majority of the Iraqi people what they want, but the new Iraqi Government its strongest chance for success.

Unlike what is stated in this resolution, there is nothing "artificial" about this approach. Congress, too, has a responsibility to take action where the Bush administration falters. Today we should praise the Iraqi people, but tomorrow this Congress should move to must-pass legislation to force beginning to bring our forces home.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as I listen to these statements made about public opinion polls, I would like to point to my colleagues the ABC News poll about which my friend referred. Seventy-one percent of the Iraqis polled said that their lives were very good or quite good; 61 percent reported the security situation is very good or quite good in the area where they reside; 64 percent said they expect their lives to be much or somewhat better a year from now.

I know that my friend from Ohio is introducing a resolution, he spoke about it earlier today, talking about the independence and the Iraqis making a choice as far as our presence. The Iraqi President, Jalal Talabani, made it very clear in an editorial that he wrote in the Wall Street Journal. He said:

"A timetable will aid the terrorists and tell them that all they have to do is wait. Military plans must be flexible. We should have the suppleness to respond to the often-changing level of terrorist threat."

That is not an American military leader making that statement. That is the President of Iraq.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 3 minutes to the very distinguished chairman of the Republican Study Committee, my friend from Columbus, Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

Mr. PENCE. I thank the chairman for yielding.

As a member of the International Relations Committee, I rise in strong support of this resolution and take a moment to express our prayers and good wishes to the author of this resolution, who labors at the side of his namesake at this very hour in a hospice in Illinois.

It is extraordinary day today, Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress that has had the privilege to travel to Operation Iraqi Freedom on three different occasions, the news that 11 million Iraqis, with Iraqis on point handling the security during these elections, 70 percent of Iraqis turned out. It was, in no uncertain terms, a victory for democracy in Iraq. And it is my privilege and honor to rise this morning on this floor in support of the rule and the underlying resolution that confirms this great day in the history of freedom, December 15, 2005, when millions of Iraqis defied terrorists to say "yes" to democracy.

I stand also in support of the affirmative statements in this resolution that this House of Representatives is committed to achieving victory in Iraq and sees this election as a crucial victory for the Iraqi people and a defeat for the terrorists in that country. It is also in this resolution an effort to state emphatically the rejection of the wisdom of an artificial time line and also to recognize the extraordinary sacrifices made by members of the United States Armed Forces and their families. It is about them that I rise especially today, Mr. Speaker.

This week at my office in Muncie, Indiana, a group of the citizens that I

have the privilege of serving came to protest our military presence in Iraq, to urge the withdrawal, as some have done and continue to do, of our forces from this nation. And while it is their right to do so, let me say emphatically, it is my duty to stand with our Commander in Chief, to stand with our soldiers in the field, and to stand with the good people of Iraq until we achieve a total victory for freedom in this nation.

I derive that sense of duty from seven names that I felt obligated to mention today. They are the names of the soldiers that I represented until they stepped into eternity, who fell in Operation Iraqi Freedom, from eastern Indiana.

Lance Corporal Matthew Smith.

Private Shawn Pahnke.

Specialist Chad Keith.

Staff Sergeant Frederick Miller, Jr.

Sergeant Robert Colvill, Jr.

Specialist Raymond White.

Lance Corporal Scott Zubowski.

These seven men didn't leave their post, and this Congressman won't, either. It is them and to their credit and to their grieving families that I rise in support of this resolution today. It is the sacrifices of over 2,000 American soldiers who laid down their lives for the freedom that we saw demonstrated in the streets of every corner of Iraq yesterday that I support this resolution.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking member on the International Relations Committee, who was denied his request to offer his amendment here on the floor today.

Mr. LANTOS. I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in sorrow, not in anger, because this morning could be a morning of unity and celebration and congratulations. Yesterday in unprecedented numbers the people of Iraq rejected the threats and intimidation of the terrorists and chose a new permanent national Parliament, the first fully sovereign, elected democratic assembly in the history of Iraq. This should be cause for celebration for the Iraqi people, for our troops, the troops of our allies and the Iraqi security forces who bravely protected the Iraqi people who came out to vote. Unfortunately, the resolution before us does not do that, and that I deeply regret.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that there is a spectrum of views on my side of the aisle on how to deal with the difficult situation in Iraq in the weeks and months ahead. Yesterday I was asked with a number of other Democrats to go to the White House. I sat next to the President as we talked about the possibility of building a united approach to this difficult dilemma. But the leadership, in a rigid, unbending, almost ruthless fashion, refused to take one single word of change or modification in their resolution. It was a take-it-or-leave-it proposal,

which is inappropriate in a democratic legislative body where some of us have been attempting to operate in a bipartisan fashion.

I introduced a resolution and asked the Rules Committee to make it in order. My resolution congratulates the Iraqi people on three democratic national elections, encourages all Americans to support the Iraqi people, and commends our troops and those of our allies and the Iraqi forces for protecting their people at election time.

That is the resolution which should be before us today. We would get a unanimous vote, and we would send a message to our troops and to the whole world that Congress is united. Instead, by rigidly demanding total adherence to the Republican formula, there will be an ugly, divisive debate in this body this morning. This is not in our national interest.

I wish to use the balance of my time to read the resolution that I believe ought to be before us, Mr. Speaker.

The text of my resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 613

Whereas the people of Iraq have consistently and courageously demonstrated their commitment to democracy by participating in three elections in 2005;

Whereas on January 30, 2005, the people of Iraq participated in an election for a transitional national assembly;

Whereas all segments of Iraqi society actively participated in the approval of a new Iraqi Constitution through a referendum held on October 15, 2005;

Whereas reports indicate that the people of Iraq voted in unprecedented and overwhelming numbers in the most recent election, held on December 15, 2005, for a new, national parliament that will serve in accordance with the recently-approved Iraqi Constitution for a four-year term and that represents the first fully sovereign, elected democratic assembly in the history of Iraq;

Whereas this remarkable level of participation by the people of Iraq in the face of dire threats to their very lives has won the admiration of the world;

Whereas the Iraqi elections could not have been conducted without the courage and dedication of the members of the United States Armed Forces and the armed forces of other nations in Iraq, including the members of the security forces of Iraq; and

Whereas the December 15, 2005, election in Iraq inspires confidence that a robust, pluralistic democracy that will bring stability to Iraqi society is emerging: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates the people of Iraq on the three national elections conducted in Iraq in 2005;

(2) encourages all Americans to express support for the people of Iraq in their efforts to achieve a free, open, and democratic society; and

(3) expresses its thanks and admiration to the members of the United States Armed Forces and the armed forces of other nations in Iraq, including the members of the security forces of Iraq, whose heroism permitted the Iraqi people to vote safely.

Mr. LANTOS. There isn't a Member in this body who could not subscribe to this. This is not the time for an ugly and divisive debate. And with its rigid-

ity and total unwillingness to listen to half of this body, the majority has chosen to give us an ugly and divisive debate.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond to my very good friend from California by saying, first and foremost, there is nothing ugly and divisive about the debate that we are about to undertake, that we are in the midst of right now, number one.

Number two, I think it is important to note that while all of the recommendations that were made by the minority were rejected, I have just been given by the staff of the International Relations Committee an outline of those two recommendations that were made. They were to entirely delete the resolved No. 6 clause in the resolution, which was the language that I read which says that we cannot establish an artificial timetable for withdrawal, which is exactly what President Talabani said in his piece, number one. And, number two, it underscored the fact that there was a desire from the minority to change the goal of achieving victory to establishing stability in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is very important for us to note that there should be, in fact, complete bipartisanship in our goal to not have an artificial timetable complying with the request of our men and women on the ground there along with President Talabani, as well as making sure that we achieve victory in Iraq. Nothing, nothing, has to be divisive about this debate. I am convinced, Mr. Speaker, that at the end of the day, an overwhelming majority of the House of Representatives will support this, because we want to do more than simply pat our men and women in uniform on the back and pat the Iraqi people on the back. We want to talk about the importance of sustaining what took place yesterday for the future of Iraq.

Mr. LANTOS. Will my friend yield?

Mr. DREIER. I will in just a moment. We have got a limited amount of time. I look forward to engaging my friend, but I promised the former Secretary of State of Michigan that I would yield 2½ minutes to her. At this point I would like to do that and then would look forward to any comments that my friend would offer.

Mr. LANTOS. I would like to comment on your observation.

Mr. DREIER. Absolutely. I look forward to it.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you for your courtesy.

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I rise in strong support of this rule and the underlying resolution as well, because this House must show our troops, the Iraqi people, and our terrorist enemies that we are committed to achieving victory in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, just a couple of days ago, I spoke with a constituent of mine named PFC Josh Sparling. Josh serves

in the 82nd Airborne Division with the 3rd of the 504th, also proudly known as the Blue Devils. Josh was wounded by an IED while serving with his unit in Ramadi, Iraq. He is currently at Walter Reed Hospital recuperating from surgery, with doctors working literally to save his leg.

When I talked to Josh, he did not want to complain about his wounds nor the pain that they were causing him. No, this American hero wanted to talk to me about the progress being made on the ground in Iraq, and how well the new Iraqi troops performed in the field, and how committed the Iraqis were to reclaiming their country from the terrorists.

His proudest day in Iraq was when he provided security in the Iraqi election last October. He watched thousands of Iraqis singing and celebrating on their way to polling stations. It made him proud that the American military was accomplishing their mission to spread peace and hope and freedom and democracy. He was disappointed that he was not in Iraq right now with his unit providing security for yesterday's election and watching the left flank of his buddies.

Mr. Speaker, that is commitment. That is dedication, what we expect and what we get from our brave men and women in uniform. Yesterday's election was a great victory for the Iraqi people, more proof of an historic pivot in that part of the world, and now is not the time to wave the white flag just as our Iraqi allies begin the difficult business of forming a new democratic government.

We cannot redeploy troops based on political concerns instead of needs on the ground to secure victory. We must not let down all of our brave men and women in uniform who have served so remarkably. We cannot let down over 11 million Iraqis who yesterday stuck a finger in the eye of the terrorists as they stuck their finger in that blue ink. We cannot give our terrorist enemies a victory which they cannot achieve on the battleground.

We need to send a message, this House needs to send a message, today that we are committed to completing the mission. Vote "yes" on the rule and the underlying resolution.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, before I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) to respond to what the chairman of the Rules Committee had said, let me make clear, nobody is talking about waving a white flag here. What we are talking about is trying to figure out a way to make a bad situation less bad. The polls have shown clearly that the majority of the Iraqi people want us out of Iraq. When a majority wants something, they usually get what they want, because that is what a democracy is about.

We don't know a lot about democracy in this House because we are routinely shut out of being able to have debates and votes on important issues. But the bottom line is that those of us who are

advocating that the President set some sort of a timetable are doing so because we think that that is a way to strengthen the situation, to give the new government over there a chance to succeed. I don't believe it can succeed if it is viewed as a puppet of the United States. I don't believe it can succeed with a huge U.S. occupation over there. I don't believe it can succeed with the largest U.S. Embassy in the world over there. I don't believe it can succeed if those are the conditions.

And so having said that, let me yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS).

Mr. LANTOS. I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield a minute to my friend from California as well.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you. My good friend Mr. DREIER suggested that there will not be a divisive debate this morning. That divisive debate has already begun. You need to listen to the words of what my colleagues are saying. I attempted to avoid this divisive debate this morning. I attempted at the end of this session to have this Congress go home with a unanimous vote congratulating the Iraqi people on what they have done; congratulating our military, our allies and the Iraqi forces for making it possible for them to vote.

There are divisions on policy, and it is an ostrich policy to pretend that there are no divisions. I may agree with the gentleman's view about a timetable. That is not the issue. The issue is that the last discussion of Iraq in this body will show division, bitterness and divisiveness, and that could have been avoided with a little bit of flexibility and consideration on the part of the majority for the views of almost one-half of this body.

I thank my friend for yielding.

Mr. DREIER. Will the gentleman yield? I have yielded 2 minutes to the gentleman. I think he still has time.

I just would like to say that I believe that the resolution that has been brought forward is one which recognizes the directive, the call from the President of Iraq. It recognizes the sense of the men and women in uniform who are on the ground there. And I believe that an overwhelming majority, and I will say to my friend, there may be some Republicans who choose to vote against this measure. I don't know that every Republican is going to vote in support of this resolution, but this resolution underscores the importance of victory in Iraq.

Mr. LANTOS. Reclaiming my time, it is in the national interest to show the greatest degree of unity in this body, and your resolution does the opposite.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to one of the authors of the amendment that was rejected last night in the Rules Committee, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), my colleague on the Rules Committee.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank my friend, the distinguished Rules Committee member from Massachusetts, for yielding me time.

Last night I made the statement in the Rules Committee that I would not participate in the debate. I do not intend when the debate begins to have anything to say, and quite frankly if I had the wherewithal, I would ask my colleagues on the Democratic side not to say anything as well. But I do know a little bit now, having served on the Rules Committee for a little while, about closed rules, and I know when we have closed rules, we restrict democracy.

We come here to advocate for democracy in Iraq, as rightly we should. But I come this morning to advocate democracy for the Members of the House of Representatives who have a different point of view that needs to be heard regarding this important matter having to do with our Nation. Like my friend and mentor, TOM LANTOS, I feel that there will be division as a result of the resolution as filed. I quite frankly am a bit surprised that so many people in the majority who argue that the war should not be politicized have done an act, although subtle and nuanced, that is as political as most things that we do here.

□ 1000

I do not decry politics. That is what we do for a living. But when it comes to this Nation, we all have a responsibility to stand together. There is no one in this Congress that does not support the military of the United States in every aspect of what it has done. There is no one in this Congress that wants us to fail in achieving victory in Iraq and anywhere that terror exists in this world. We have a vested interest in that. We have a natural right to pursue that particular interest.

But to fashion a resolution that ignores the language that Mr. LANTOS offered, that does precisely the same thing with civility all throughout it, I cannot imagine that we have passed yet another closed rule and that we have restricted a sensible, civil resolution offered by Mr. LANTOS, Ms. PELOSI, and Mr. HOYER.

In that light, I consider it to be the kind of act that is seemingly becoming the pattern with so many people in this House who represent so many constituents who are not being heard.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond to my friend.

First of all, let me say that as a member of the Rules Committee, I am very proud of this democratic, small "d," institution; and I am very proud of the work of the Rules Committee. I would like to say that in this session of Congress more amendments offered by Democrats have been made in order than amendments offered by Republicans.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to say that as my friend talks about ideas

being shut out, that is a mischaracterization of what has happened here. We have come forward with a sense of the Congress resolution, a simple resolution is what it is. I would like to share with my colleagues, since we are talking about the process of democracy in Iraq and the process of democracy here in the United States of America and in the people's House, according to the Congressional Research Service, they state on simple resolutions, "Simple resolutions express non-binding opinions on policies or issues (the 'sense' of the House or Senate) or deal with the internal affairs or prerogatives of the House. For example, they are used to establish select and special committees, appoint the members of standing committees, and amend the standing rules. In the House, the Rules Committee reports its special rules in the form of simple resolutions."

This is a simple resolution which I believe is going to enjoy strong bipartisan support. Democrats and Republicans will, I believe, in overwhelming numbers support this resolution which simply says, Mr. Speaker, that we recognize the incredible sacrifice by our troops, we recognize the incredible sacrifice and suffering that the Iraqi people encountered under Saddam Hussein and the struggle that they have gone through over the past 3 years. And it recognizes what has been clearly stated by Iraq's President, by our men and women in uniform and by the people of Iraq, and that is establishing some artificial timetable would undermine the process of democracy.

One must look at the letter which has gotten a great deal of attention that was sent from the number two operative in al Qaeda, Mr. Zawahiri to the lead operative for al Qaeda in Iraq, the center of terrorism from Zarqawi. And he has said in that letter, Democracy is coming and there will be no excuse for violence thereafter.

Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely essential that we do everything that we can for the stability of Iraq, the stability of the region, and the stability of the world, that we must maintain that path towards democracy. The coalition forces, the Iraqi security forces are making that happen.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS).

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 10 seconds to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS).

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, in 20 seconds I put to the Chair a simple question: If this resolution is so simple and noncontroversial, why did it come through the Rules Committee? And is it not true that Mr. LANTOS' resolution is also simple, and there was nothing to preclude the Committee on Rules from hearing the Lantos matter, had you chosen? And are you not the greatest exemplar of not having closed rules, Mr. Chairman?

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume to respond to my friend.

I will simply say that I believe we should do everything we can to pursue the deliberative process here. I believe that the Rules Committee does that. We have a management responsibility. We bring resolutions through the Rules Committee. If there is controversy, I believe that recognizing our strategy for victory in Iraq is the right thing to do. People in Iraq, our men and women on the ground, recognize that.

I believe it is the right thing to do and I look forward to a strong and overwhelming bipartisan vote in support of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank the chairman for not answering my question.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, to suggest that the Rules Committee respects a deliberative process in this House or that it is somehow democratic or receptive to alternative ideas, I think demonstrates to me that the chairman has pretty low standards when it comes to being inclusive.

The bottom line is, on important issues, on important matters like this one, we are routinely shut out. I mean, the chairman may be on board with what the President is doing in Iraq, but there are many of us who have great concerns. And the fact of the matter is, the section that is controversial in this bill deserves debate, not in the context of this resolution, but we should be on this floor debating this for a period of time and let everybody have their chance to present their viewpoint on what our policy should be in Iraq.

We should be debating Iraq almost every day. I mean, we are at war. We have lost 2,100 American servicemen and women; 15,000 are wounded. We have spent hundreds of billions of dollars, and we do not like to talk about it except in the context of these resolutions that kind of get dropped on us and brought to the floor; and we are supposed to praise our troops, which we all do.

We want to congratulate the democratic voting in Iraq, which we all do. But then tucked into this is a provision which some of us find objectionable.

This administration has a credibility gap, in my opinion, when it comes to Iraq. We have been misled too often, and it is time to demand the truth. It is not acceptable to embrace an open-ended U.S. policy toward Iraq that suggests that we put all our faith in the President.

He has been wrong on everything. There were no weapons of mass destruction. There was no tie to al Qaeda. There was no imminent threat to the United States from Iraq, and he rushed us into war. He said we would be greeted as liberators. Here we are approaching the third year. We are not greeted as liberators. We are stuck in a mess.

Mr. Speaker, I will also point out to the chairman of the Rules Committee

that if you read the front page of today's Washington Post it says, "Iraqi Vote Draws Big Turnout of Sunnis." Underneath, subheadline, "Anti-U.S. Sentiment is Motivator for Many."

A majority of the people in Iraq want us to begin the process of withdrawal; and what you are asking us to do is to embrace a resolution that says we will be there for as long as the President wants us, and that is unacceptable.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT).

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, like the President's wishful, staged declaration of "Mission Accomplished" on that aircraft carrier 2½ years ago, or the Vice President's declaration that the insurgency was in its "final throes," this resolution proclaims the desire of Congress for "victory" in Iraq.

Instead of dispatching our troops in adequate numbers, this Congress made one speech after another. Instead of covering our troops with adequate, impenetrable armor, this Congress passed one paper resolution after another like this, which provided little shield from those who would do our brave men and women harm.

Well, each day's news shows how out of touch this Administration and its congressional followers continue to be. Like the administration, this Congress has no idea what victory means other than trying to escape the morass that its bad judgment got us into.

I believe that victory in Iraq, which we all desire, begins with a commitment to championing the truth. This is an administration that cannot utter "Iraq" without saying "9/11," even though it knows there is absolutely no connection between the two.

To win a war you have to shoot straight. Our young men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan understand that, but this administration and its congressional followers demonstrate again and again that they do not—when they are discussing the real weakness of the Iraqi army or fail to do so, the strength of the insurgency, or the length our armed forces should be deployed.

They are so proud of the democratic choices made in Iraq this week and so very fearful for there to be any democratic choices on the resolution of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and others. They fear a democratic debate in this House because their position is one of complete weakness. They have waved the white flag themselves at the possibility of a true debate in this Congress.

What we need is a genuine debate about the best pathway for our security in Iraq. The President finally conceded over 30,000 civilians have died in this invasion. We have passed 2,000 young, brave men and women in the service of America, and we are on the way to 3,000.

This administration has begun a public relations offensive when what we need is an offensive for the protection of our families. It has abandoned that

in favor of a meaningless political victory, not a real plan for success for the security of our families.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I first say to my friend from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) that this notion that we are going to stay just as long as President Bush wants us to stay and not a day longer, well, actually, what President Bush has said is that we will stay as long as necessary and not a day longer. And that was part of the initial strategy that was launched on his speech on the 26th of February 2003. And it is very, very clear that the President of Iraq has said that any kind of artificial timetable would, in fact, jeopardize the prospect of democracy.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DREIER. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DOGGETT. Has the President or your resolution been willing to declare that it rejects the idea of permanent bases in Iraq?

Mr. DREIER. Reclaiming my time, I will say that the President has said in that speech that we will remain in Iraq as long as necessary and not 1 day longer. That is very clear to me, and so it is obvious.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield 2 minutes to the very, very able fighter for freedom, our great friend from Springdale, South Carolina (Mr. WILSON).

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am here today in support of the rule and the underlying resolution, in very strong support. I am here as a Member of Congress. I am here as a 31-year veteran of the Army Reserves and the National Guard.

I am also proud to be the father of a son who served for a year in Iraq. I know firsthand of the progress that is being made there, along with other Members of Congress.

We should be proud that Chairman HUNTER, his son served in the Marines for a year in Mosul. Mr. SKELTON had a son serve in Afghanistan in the war on terrorism. Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina, Mr. AKIN of Missouri, Mr. KLINE of Minnesota, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, and Mr. SAXTON of New Jersey, all of us have had family members who have participated in the global war on terror, and we are so proud of their successes.

Additionally, I would tell you that I disagree with Democratic Leader PELOSI. I believe that her position is wrong. I believe that proposing a withdrawal is giving your game plan ahead of time. You do not do it in football; you do not do it in politics. And you do not do it in a time of war. It is my view that we should understand that war is unpredictable.

Of all times, this week 61 years ago we found out the unpredictability of war and that is the Battle of Bulge. Tens of thousands of German troops secretly were located in the Ardennes

Forest, attacked our troops in Luxembourg, in Belgium, and in Germany itself, and we lost 17,000 Americans. This could not be projected, this surprise attack.

We need to be prepared. So I am very proud that indeed progress is being made.

Our President has a wonderful plan of developing the Iraqi Security Forces, developing the Iraqi economy and the political situation, as we saw yesterday with the historic turnout of millions of Iraqis to build a civil society. And the bottom line is, it protects the American people.

This is exactly what America did after World War II, developing the democratic society of Japan which now is one of our great allies. We have the same potential to protect American families now.

□ 1015

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution we are debating today is an H. Res. resolution. Basically, this is just a sense of the Congress. It is largely symbolic.

One of the complaints that many of us on this side of the aisle, and I know some of the people on the Republican side have as well, is that we kind of skirt around the real issue, which is what the policy is. Staying as long as it is going to take, that is not a policy. That is a sound bite.

The President does not know where we are going in Iraq. He has given speeches that have been heavy on rhetoric, but not particularly big on specifics.

If we want to do something helpful here, bring a binding bill to the floor here that sets out our policy, and let us have it out. Let us have the debate. Let us talk about what our policy should be in Iraq. Let us come back next week or let us come back for a week in January and have this debate. Let us discuss what, in fact, our policy should be in Iraq. We are not doing that. This is all symbolic.

Notwithstanding the fact that we have 160,000 troops over there, that over 2,100 Americans have died over there, and 15,000 Americans have been wounded, tens of thousands of Iraqis have been killed, we have yet to have a real policy debate on this House floor about what course we should take in Iraq. That is what we want. That is what we are hoping for. I do not think that is unreasonable.

To bring a largely symbolic resolution to the floor and tuck in it this kind of policy statement, give us an hour during the debate on the resolution to talk about everything, that is not the way we should be doing business around here.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE).

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, the odds of success in Iraq are not enhanced by Congress continuing to act as a rubber stamp for President Bush. We need a change in strategic vision in Iraq.

This resolution says that setting a timetable somehow is a Communist plot, but, in fact, the President himself set timetables in Iraq when he set timetables to have transitional elections in Iraq. He set timetables for elections because it focused the Iraqis to demand performance, and that is what we should do in setting a timetable to transition to Iraqis true sovereignty for three reasons.

Reason number one, we should no longer provide a crutch for an indefinite period of time to the Iraqi politicians. We need to focus their minds on making the compromises that are necessary if a real government is going to be followed. We cannot fall into the trap of enabling Iraqi politicians to continue their bickering. They need a solution.

Number two, people say a timetable will encourage more violence. Let me ask you this: If there is a young unemployed man who is angry about foreign troops marching on his neighborhood, what do you think will make him more angry and more likely to plant an IED, the fact that we tell him we are going to leave in a year or so, or tell him we are going to stay there as long as George Bush says so? We need to tell them that we are going to come home.

The third reason we ought to think about this is that in our briefings we have received, we have been told that the Iraqi military will be fully trained by next December 2006, and it is realistic, it is commonsense, it is a measure to focus the Iraqi politicians on the necessity of seeking compromise, to say that we should begin transitioning next year and substantially conclude by December 2006.

During that time I have one message for the administration. They need to do a better job arming the Iraqi military forces. They need radios, they need Humvees, they need logistics. We cannot allow that force to fall apart. We need to defeat this resolution.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire of the Chair how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) has 4 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) has ¾ minute remaining.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 30 seconds, and I do so to simply focus on the issue that is constantly raised here, and that is, the notion that we somehow impose closed rules on every piece of legislation.

There have been 113 rules considered on the House floor in the first session of the 109th Congress. With the exception of those rules which by statute or simple resolutions or appropriation continuing resolutions, 10 percent of those 113 rules have been closed rules.

We allow for a free floor in debate. More Democratic amendments than Republican amendments have been made in order. So we are enjoying democracy right here in the people's House, and the people of Iraq are enjoying the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DOGGETT) for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, given the stated interest in democracy here in the House, I would ask unanimous consent to amend the rule to permit for division of the question so that we could express our unanimous support for the various provisions of this resolution, except for that on which we have disagreement as to the best way to achieve success in Iraq. At this point, so that we can have the kind of democracy that occurred this week in Iraq, of which the majority seems so proud, and actually have it right here on the floor of the House, I ask unanimous consent for a division of the question on the provisions of this resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The majority manager of the resolution has not yielded for the purpose of such a request.

Mr. DOGGETT. Given his professed interest in democracy, I am sure he will yield for that unanimous consent.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Does the gentleman from California yield? The gentleman from California is indicating that he does not yield for that purpose.

Mr. DOGGETT. Shocking, truly shocking, that democracy cannot exist here on the House floor.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the remaining time, and I will close for our side.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, let me remind the Members of this House, the chairman of the Rules Committee talked about how generous the Rules Committee is. This year, in the 109th Congress, we have had 43 restrictive rules, 22 closed rules, plus three additional closed rules that were included in one rule, H. Res. 351, and we have had 11 open rules as far as appropriations bills.

Let me also simply say my point was that on important matters we usually have closed rules, as we did yesterday on the pension bill.

Mr. Speaker, I will be asking for a "no" vote on the previous question so I could amend the rule and allow the House to consider House Resolution 613 instead of House Resolution 612. House Resolution 613 was introduced last evening by International Relations Ranking Member LANTOS, the Democratic Leader PELOSI, Democratic Whip STENY HOYER and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), which expresses congratulations to the people of Iraq on three national elections conducted in 2005.

This amendment was offered in the Rules Committee early this morning, but unfortunately, it was rejected.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment and the text of House Resolution 613 immediately prior to the vote on the previous question.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, regardless of how Members of this House feel about the war in Iraq, I think all of us want to congratulate the people of Iraq for holding these historic elections and for getting out to vote despite the significant risks. We all want to congratulate our troops, but quite frankly, there is language in this bill that some of us consider inflammatory, that some of us strongly disagree with, and I would urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the previous question so that we can have a unified message and not a divisive message here in the House.

Mr. Speaker, we have been in Iraq now for over 1,000 days, and I believe we must begin the transition to putting the Iraqis in charge. President Bush's unwillingness to announce a plan to remove U.S. troops within a clear time frame and his refusal to renounce the use of permanent U.S. military bases I think undermines his rhetoric and I think endangers the chance for democracy to succeed. Our occupation in Iraq complicates the transition to democracy.

People can disagree with me on this, but the fact of the matter is we should be debating this issue of how we deal with Iraq not in an H. Res. form, but in a binding resolution here on the House floor. We have time to debate Merry Christmas resolutions here in the House, but we never have the time to debate in a real way and in a meaningful way this war in Iraq.

We have sent thousands of our servicemen and -women into harm's way in Iraq. I would argue we rushed into this war. We have paid dearly for what the politicians in Washington have decided to do. We owe our troops better than just coming up and saying, stay the course. We owe them more than saying we are going to stay there until victory is achieved.

What is victory? I mean, nobody has defined what victory is. The President says we will know when we get there. Well, that is not good enough. That is not good enough for anybody in this House. That is not good enough for our soldiers.

We owe these brave men and women more than just a pat on the back and a congratulations. We owe them a real policy, and we owe the people of Iraq who have sacrificed so much the right to determine their own future. They want us to begin to extricate ourselves from Iraq. We should do that, and I would hope that my colleagues will vote "no" on the previous question so we can bring up a resolution that truly unites this body and not divides it.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of the time.

Mr. Speaker, I have seen these buttons that my colleagues on the other side have been wearing, although I do not see them wearing it this morning, but they wore them last night, that says, debate Iraq. I just listened to a statement by my friend from Massachusetts, and I would say what is it that we are doing right now?

We have just gone through a very rigorous debate on the Defense appropriations process. It was considered under an open amendment process. We have gone through the Defense authorization process, and we have had a full debate on that. Every single day on the House floor at least one Member stands up to outline his or her position on the issue of Iraq. We are debating it constantly here, and it is a very healthy and important debate for us to have.

Mr. Speaker, as I have been listening to this debate, which has been taking place over the past hour, a name sticks in my mind. The name is J.P. Blecksmith. J.P. Blecksmith is a young marine who was tragically killed in one of the biggest battles in Iraq a year ago last month. It was the battle of Fallujah, and since he died, I have gotten to know his family, and his parents have repeatedly said to me personally, have gone on television and said this, that in the name of their courageous son who is a marine killed in the battle of Fallujah, it would be absolutely reprehensible for the United States of America to cut and run, for us to leave Iraq on some artificial timetable.

So, Mr. Speaker, today is a day of celebration. I cannot understand why my colleagues would say that the following line is somehow contentious. It simply says, while congratulating the Iraqi people for this overwhelming success that they had yesterday, congratulating our men and women in uniform and the Iraqi security forces and the coalition forces, it says basically what President Talabani of Iraq has said in a Wall Street Journal editorial. The resolution says, Setting an artificial timetable for the withdrawal of United States Armed Forces from Iraq or immediately terminating their deployment in Iraq and redeploying them elsewhere in the region is fundamentally inconsistent with achieving victory in Iraq.

What is contentious about that? I cannot understand why anyone would believe, Mr. Speaker, that we cannot come together with a strong bipartisan vote, making sure that the success that we enjoyed on January 30 and October 15 and just yesterday in Iraq is sustained.

We know that Mr. Zarqawi has made it very, very clear that, as democracy blossoms, terrorism will come to an end.

So let us do everything within our power to support this resolution, to support our troops, to support the sustained victory of the people in Iraq. I urge support of this resolution.

The material previously referred to by Mr. MCGOVERN is as follows:

PREVIOUS QUESTION FOR H. RES. 619, THE RULE FOR H. RES. 612 EXPRESSING THE COMMITMENT OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO ACHIEVING VICTORY IN IRAQ

Amendment in nature of substitute:

Strike all after the resolved clause and insert:

“Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order without intervention of any point of order to consider in the House the resolution (H. Res. 613) congratulating the people of Iraq on the three national elections conducted in Iraq in 2005. The resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the resolution and the preamble to final adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) one hour of debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on International Relations; and (2) one motion to recommit.”

H. RES. 613

Whereas the people of Iraq have consistently and courageously demonstrated their commitment to democracy by participating in three elections in 2005;

Whereas on January 30, 2005, the people of Iraq participated in an election for a transitional national assembly;

Whereas all segments of Iraqi society actively participated in the approval of a new Iraqi Constitution through a referendum held on October 15, 2005;

Whereas reports indicate that the people of Iraq voted in unprecedented and overwhelming numbers in the most recent election, held on December 15, 2005, for a new, national parliament that will serve in accordance with the recently-approved Iraqi Constitution for a four-year term and that represents the first fully sovereign, elected democratic assembly in the history of Iraq;

Whereas this remarkable level of participation by the people of Iraq in the face of dire threats to their very lives has won the admiration of the world;

Whereas the Iraqi elections could not have been conducted without the courage and dedication of the members of the United States Armed Forces and the armed forces of other nations in Iraq, including the members of the security forces of Iraq; and

Whereas the December 15, 2005, election in Iraq inspires confidence that a robust, pluralistic democracy that will bring stability to Iraqi society is emerging: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates the people of Iraq on the three national elections conducted in Iraq in 2005;

(2) encourages all Americans to express support for the people of Iraq in their efforts to achieve a free, open, and democratic society; and

(3) expresses its thanks and admiration to the members of the United States Armed Forces and the armed forces of other nations in Iraq, including the members of the security forces of Iraq, whose heroism permitted the Iraqi people to vote safely.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, today, without a doubt, we should congratulate the Iraqi people for what appears to be a successful, high-turnout election.

For the third time this year, courageous Iraqi citizens have enthusiastically exercised their democratic rights.

But successful elections do not, and cannot, obscure the devastating national tragedy that is the Iraq war.

It doesn't change the fact that over 2,100 Americans have died for weapons of mass destruction that never existed.

It doesn't change the fact that this war has turned Iraq into a hotbed of terrorist activity.

It doesn't change the fact that our troops are sitting ducks for the insurgents, who have been emboldened—not deterred—by our military presence in Iraq.

Here's the bottom line: a successful Iraqi election should, at the very least, reinforce the imperative of bringing our troops home. If Iraq is truly able to self-govern, then we have no business occupying their country and meddling in their affairs.

I've argued all year long that it's time to restore Iraqi sovereignty and give Iraq back to the Iraqi people. If the election is a watershed moment as the White House claims . . . then what is the continued justification for having our troops over there in harm's way?

Now is the time to enlist the support of the international community to establish an interim security force for Iraq. But that's just the start.

As I've written to the President in a letter signed by 61 other members of the House, the United States must also launch a “diplomatic offensive,” recasting our role in Iraq as reconstruction partner rather than military occupier.

We must also lead the way in establishing an international peace commission to oversee the post-war reconciliation and coordinate peace talks between Iraq's various factions.

The majority of the American people aren't behind it. Our global allies aren't behind it. The Iraqi people aren't behind it. Even Iraqi leaders—Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish alike, who agree on practically nothing—have united around a call for the United States military to leave.

With the Iraqi people having voted once again, let's offer the ultimate vote of confidence in their democracy. Let's reward the self-sufficiency they've demonstrated—by giving them their country back and bringing American soldiers home.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

□ 1030

PROVIDING FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4437, BORDER PROTECTION, ANTITERRORISM, AND ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION CONTROL ACT OF 2005

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 621 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 621

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4437) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to strengthen enforcement of the immigration laws, to enhance border security, and for other purposes. No further general debate shall be in order, and remaining proceedings under House Resolution 610 shall be considered as subsumed by this resolution. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. Each further amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such further amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill, as amended, to the House with such further amendments as may have been adopted. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TERRY). The gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 621 is a structured rule providing for further consideration of the bill. It provides that no further general debate is in order, and the remaining proceedings under House Resolution 610 shall be considered as subsumed by this resolution. It makes in order only those amendments printed in the Rules Committee report accompanying this resolution.

This resolution provides that the amendments printed in the report accompanying the resolution may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole.

It waives all points of orders against the amendments printed in the report and provides one motion to recommit with or without instructions.