

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H. Res. 57, which urges the European Union to maintain its arms embargo on the People's Republic of China. While I have been a supporter of increasing trade and diplomatic relations with China, I am not nearly as comfortable with the idea of lifting the arms embargo. I am also disturbed by reports that China has sold weapons to Iraq that bolstered the regime of Saddam Hussein and are now being used by insurgents who have gotten a hold of the regime's weapons stockpiles. China needs to take a giant step back in its weapons proliferation in order to become a valuable ally instead of the menacing figure it often portrays.

Again, I want to reiterate that while I have many concerns about the Chinese government, I have long recognized that trade with China has value for Americans and the people of China, which is why I voted in favor of Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) with China. My record on trade measures since coming to Congress demonstrates my willingness to evaluate each vote on its own merits, as long as worker and environmental rights are protected. In addition, I have voted for most-favored-nation status for China, while I have continued to raise my voice against the "undemocratic" ways of China. Unlike during the Cold War, we have unparalleled opportunities to bring the people of China and America much closer together. Trade is one way to accomplish this, however my desire to bring our two nations together is overshadowed today by my concerns about China's role in the world, especially in the form of weapons proliferation.

China's weapons exports remain the most serious proliferation threat in the world. Since 1980, China has supplied billions of dollars worth of nuclear weapon, chemical weapon and missile technology to South Asia, South Africa, South America and the Middle East. It has done so despite U.S. protests, and despite repeated promises to stop. The exports are still going on, and while they do, they make it impossible for the United States and its allies to halt the spread of weapons of mass destruction. I am especially shocked by the role of China in supplying Iraq with weapons, including chemical weapons that were used against the Kurdish people by the Saddam Hussein regime. Now many of those same weapons have fallen into the hands of insurgents who are targeting our military personnel. China must cease and desist immediately from interfering in Iraq and bring itself into the international circle of non-proliferation efforts.

I urge the European Union not to lift its Arms Embargo against China, because doing so at this time will send the wrong signal. Relations between the United States and China are a long term effort, one which cannot be handled with a singular approach. I stand for trade and diplomatic relations with China because this increases our person to person contacts that can only serve to create friendly relationships. However, lifting the Arms Embargo at this time will give the signal that proliferation of these weapons is acceptable, and it is not. Lifting the Arms Embargo will also signal that a bad human rights record is acceptable, and likewise it is not. Lifting the Arms Embargo against China will also signal to other nations who seek to gain access to weapons of mass destruction that proliferation

of these weapons is acceptable, and to this point the whole world must stand up and say that it is not. I will continue to support increased relations with China because it is a key nation in the world, but I will forever refuse to turn a blind eye to weapons proliferation that threatens the security of all nations.

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 57, expressing the Sense of the U.S. House of Representatives that the European Union should not lift its embargo on the sale of arms to China.

After the 1989 Tiananmen Square Massacre the European Union imposed a ban on arm sales to China. I support this embargo, as I believe it helps ensure peace in the region and deters China from the use of arms against Taiwan. In the world we live in we should strive to ensure peace, liberty and democracy. I feel strongly that the European Union's lifting of the arms embargo would be detrimental to the fragile peace that we are striving to maintain, and I am proud to join my colleagues in support of the embargo.

Ms. BORDALLO. I would like to thank Chairman HYDE, Ranking Member LANTOS, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, and Congressman MCCOTTER for initiating this resolution urging the European Union to maintain its arms embargo on the People's Republic of China. I rise today to give my strong support to this resolution. The arms embargo we are discussing today was placed on the People's Republic of China in response to the massacre at the Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989. That singular event succinctly demonstrated the oppression of those who suffer under a closed society like the PRC. They suffered on that fateful day at the hands of a brutal suppression. I urge our European friends to uphold their principled stand against arms sales as they opposed arming Eastern Germany and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. At that time it was the safety of Europe that hung in the balance. Now it is the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region that is at stake.

The gathering of students and peaceful protesters at Tiananmen Square that summer represented a value we in this country hold dear: the right to freely assemble. If you believe in that freedom, then don't lift the embargo. Let us remember the graphic image of the lone protester stopping a line of People's Liberation Army tanks on a Beijing highway. How will the governments of Europe explain that the next time this occurs the People's Liberation Army could be using French or German tanks to quell a protest for democracy?

One member of the PRC government recognized the plight of the Chinese people on that fateful day and had the courage to admit that the brutal suppression was a shameful tragedy. General Secretary Zhao Ziyang was then stripped of power and placed under house arrest until his recent passing. It is forbidden to discuss his heroism in China, but here on the floor of Congress we can be candid because we enjoy the right to free speech that the people of China do not. In his memory, I urge the good nations of Europe to recognize that the work begun by the protesters at Tiananmen is not done.

I admit that I have personal interest in keeping the arms embargo in place. The People's Republic of China has had a history of aggressive military acquisition. These forces may

someday threaten our allies in the Asia-Pacific region. It was only recently that a Chinese submarine was detected circling our island. I urge the leaders of Europe to look beyond their own self-interest and consider the cause of freedom in making their decision concerning the arms embargo.

To this end, I ask my colleagues to vote in favor of House Resolution 57, to urge the European Union to maintain its arms embargo on the People's Republic of China.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 57.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. 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 and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RELATING TO FREE ELECTION IN IRAQ HELD ON JANUARY 30, 2005

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the previous order of the House, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 60) relating to the free election in Iraq held on January 30, 2005, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of House Resolution 60 is as follows:

H. RES. 60

Whereas in April 2003, United States Armed Forces and other Coalition forces liberated the people of Iraq from the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein;

Whereas at the end of June 2004, an Interim Government of Iraq assumed sovereign authority over Iraq;

Whereas the Interim Government of Iraq called an election for January 30, 2005, to elect a Transitional National Assembly, which will choose Iraq's Transitional Presidency Council, approve Iraq's other national leaders, serve as a transitional legislature, and draft a permanent Iraqi Constitution to be submitted to a referendum;

Whereas tens of thousands of Iraqis signed petitions nominating thousands of candidates for seats in the Transitional National Assembly under rules prescribed by the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq;

Whereas thousands of Iraqis served as poll workers or observers;

Whereas a terrorist insurgency used murder and intimidation in a desperate but ultimately fruitless attempt to prevent the people of Iraq from exercising their right to choose their own leaders;

Whereas despite the efforts of Coalition forces and Iraqi security forces, a regrettably large number of Iraqi election workers, political party volunteers, security officials, candidates, and ordinary citizens attempting to participate in the political process or who

were merely innocent bystanders were victimized by the insurgency, with some individuals having been killed while attempting to vote;

Whereas millions of Iraqis nevertheless exercised their right to vote, despite threats and actual violence directed against them;

Whereas Coalition forces, in cooperation with Iraqi security forces, continue to provide security for the people of Iraq; and

Whereas a representative democracy is more than a way to settle disputes but, most importantly, ascribes intrinsic value to every human being: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates the people of Iraq, in particular those individuals who participated in the political process as voters, poll workers, observers, party workers, or candidates for the Transitional National Assembly, for having taken part in the historic and inspiring Iraqi election of January 30, 2005;

(2) expresses its thanks to the Interim Government of Iraq and the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq, Iraqi and Coalition security forces, and the civilian United States and international partners of the Government of Iraq for their tenacious efforts to create the conditions in which a free election could be held;

(3) expresses its condolences to the families of those Iraqis who perished while attempting to exercise their right to choose their government or while protecting Iraqis who were doing so;

(4) congratulates the candidates who were elected to Iraq's Transitional National Assembly which will be, when it is formed, the newest democratically-elected legislature in the world;

(5) offers its continued support to the people and political institutions of Iraq, including the Iraqi Transitional National Assembly, as they deal with the consequences of decades of misrule by the former regime of Saddam Hussein;

(6) expresses its gratitude to the United States Armed Forces for their ongoing valiant service to their country and commitment to the highest ideals and traditions of the people of the United States;

(7) expresses its gratitude to the families of United States Armed Forces personnel, especially the families of those who have lost loved ones in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and to Armed Forces personnel wounded in the service of their country, for their sacrifices;

(8) reaffirms that—

(A) United States Armed Forces in Iraq will remain under the full authority, direction, and control of their United States commanders; and

(B) United States Armed Forces will possess all necessary authority to fulfill their mission in Iraq effectively and to provide for their operational safety;

(9) urges the people of the United States and other countries to celebrate this latest step in the restoration of freedom to the people of Iraq; and

(10) reaffirms that the world is safer when democracy replaces tyranny.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Tuesday, February 1, 2005, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within

which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 60.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this important resolution relating to the free elections held in Iraq on Sunday, January 30. I commend the leadership for bringing this important measure to the floor at this time.

This past Sunday, freedom permeated from all corners of Iraq. Iraqis celebrated their vote. They reveled in it and embraced it. They clearly demonstrated to the terrorists and to the world the power of the human spirit. They showed the indomitable will of a free people anxious to exercise their rights as human beings and citizens. We witnessed women in this Arab nation taking their place as free individuals alongside men, their voices and their votes given equal weight.

The Kurdish people, who have been the victims of unspeakable human rights violations under Saddam Hussein's evil regime, at long last voted to take their well-earned, equal, respected place in a new Iraq. Both Shias and Sunnis, through the ballot box, were afforded an equal opportunity to exercise their rights and a role in their future government.

Some naysayers have focused on percentages and what ethnic group voted more than others. I, however, will always remember the images of the young and old Iraqis, of men and women of all backgrounds, proudly showing their ink-stained fingers, while hugging and waving to American soldiers in a show of gratitude.

I have never been prouder to have been an American and know that we have and will continue to contribute to make these images of hope possible. It is a testament to the power of freedom that as we commemorated the liberation of Auschwitz we finished that same week with elections in a country previously shackled with decades of tyranny.

It is a victory for those of us who believe that people throughout the Middle East are not just ready but enthusiastic for democracy. It is a victory for the principle that human rights are universal and not gifts bestowed to a select few.

However, our work is by no means complete. From Iran to Libya, from Saudi Arabia to Syria and beyond, much of the Middle East remains engulfed in oppression under the iron grip of dictatorships. Only by securing a decisive shift towards democracy across the region can the misery endured by the people of the Middle East be relieved.

Simultaneously, we must encourage those governments and populations in the region who have heeded the call for political and economic reform to ex-

pand those efforts, as they will surely ensure a prosperous future for their people and a more secure and stable world for us all.

Let us congratulate and commend the courageous Iraqis for defying the terrorists in going to the polls in huge numbers. Let us honor the brave men and women of our Armed Forces and all Iraqi security forces, officials and innocent civilians who have given their lives so that all Iraqis were given the opportunity to exercise a valuable, cherished freedom.

As the great communicator, former President Ronald Reagan, said on January 20, 1981, "No weapon in the arsenals of the world is so formidable as the will and moral courage of free men and women." This was clearly evident in Iraq this past Sunday.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to overwhelmingly support this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. I first want to commend the bipartisan leadership of this body for bringing this resolution to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, the votes are still being counted in Iraq, but it is already clear that democracy has won. The people of Iraq have cast their ballots in favor of freedom, including the right to choose their own leaders and their own fate.

We should not be surprised. We have seen people choose freedom over tyranny repeatedly during the past 15 years in country after country. But Iraqis voted in unprecedented circumstances, literally risking life and limb merely to exercise the privilege that most of us take for granted and many of us do not even exercise. Their courage inspires us, reinvigorating our own love for democracy and testifying to the power of freedom's call.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to have been a fly on the wall of those in power throughout the Arab world who watched the televised spectacle of Iraqis freely choosing their own leaders. We do not know yet who will lead the new Iraqi government, but we know that that government will be the sole representative of democracy in the halls of the Arab league. And we know that increasing numbers of Arab citizens in other Arab countries are already asking why their governments, with very limited exceptions, are chosen and perpetuated only at gunpoint.

The evident success of the election should boost the self-confidence of all concerned. Iraqis themselves organized the campaign and election. They monitored the vote, they secured the polling places, and now they are counting the ballots.

U.S. forces wisely situated themselves beyond the horizon of the polling places, but no one should lose sight of the fact that it was American and coalition soldiers who made this day possible because of their performance on

election day and for many days and weeks before.

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Mr. Speaker, we must pay special tribute today to the bravery shown by our fighting men and women, to the commitment shown by our civilian personnel in Iraq and to the dedication and sacrifice shown by their families. I am proud that this resolution does just that.

We also acknowledge with respect those who have been wounded in the prosecution of this war, and we remember with the deepest sadness those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Not the least of the gratifying developments on Sunday was the excellent manner in which the Iraqi armed forces acquitted themselves. We need to pay special tribute to General David Petraeus for his extraordinary work in training Iraq's military forces.

Mr. Speaker, I believe Sunday's election is an important milestone in the democratic development not only of Iraq but the entire Middle East. But it is also another battle won in the fight against the antidemocratic terrorists who opposed the election and continue their pernicious struggle. The impressive voter turnout, perhaps most impressive in the Sunni areas where anti-democratic intimidation was the most intense, is the surest sign that Iraqis as a whole are embracing the legitimacy of their new government and their new security forces.

But we must be realistic, Mr. Speaker. Democracy entails far more than a day at the polls. The major challenges are still ahead for Iraq. Can Iraqis ensure that all segments of their nation have the opportunity to be heard? Will they produce a fair and workable constitution leading to a durable democracy? Will they learn the art of compromise that will be essential to their success? Will they be moderate or will they dig in their heels on the difficult issues such as the role of religion or the disposition of the contested city of Kirkuk?

Building democracy in the Middle East will require immense patience. It surely is a multigenerational project. Even building democracy in just one nation, especially one with a complicated society such as Iraq's, is a long-term challenge. But for today, Mr. Speaker, let us recognize that the Iraqi people have just taken a first but vitally important step towards meeting that challenge, and let us affirm that they merit the admiration of all free peoples across the globe. And last, but hardly least, let us take pride in America's enormous contribution towards true Iraqi self-determination.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART), the vice chair of the Committee on Rules.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. I thank the distinguished gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution brought forth by our majority leader and others commemorating, celebrating the extraordinarily historic accomplishment of the Iraqi people last Sunday.

As our majority leader stated in a meeting where we were able to hear him speak just a few minutes ago, what we saw, what the world saw in Iraq on Sunday was more than an accomplishment. It was a miracle. But it was a miracle made possible by the leadership of President Bush and the Armed Forces of the United States and the coalition that have stood firmly for the security of a people who were oppressed for decades and who made it known to the entire world last Sunday that those thugs who seek to cloak themselves in some sort of sector of Islamist thought are nothing but a bunch of gangsters, thugs and gangsters who seek to intimidate through violence and through terror.

So the world was able to see on Sunday the gangsters and the thugs for what they are, a pathetic group dedicated to terror and intimidation. The world has seen and was able to see, by the courage of the millions and millions of Iraqis who, despite the threat to their own lives, stood in line and the lines refused to be broken. As our majority leader stated so eloquently in the meeting that we had, as I stated before, earlier today, the lines refused to break even when the bombs came and the attacks came and the injured were taken to hospitals and the dead were mourned. Yet the lines remained to demonstrate to the world that the Iraqi people not only seek but appreciate and will stand for their freedom and that the gangsters and the thugs are simply pathetic believers in violence.

I am a firm believer in the Bush doctrine. All people want to be free and all people deserve to be free. There are a handful of tyrannies in the world. Their day will soon come, also.

Just 90 miles from the shores of the United States there is a tyrant who for 46 years has oppressed a people, also through the same gangster tactics that these thugs in the Middle East use. Unfortunately, he has all the weapons, and his people are unarmed. His day will soon come as well.

This is a great day for history, for peace that we are celebrating today with this resolution by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY). That is why I so strongly support it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am so proud to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. MILLER).

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, there have been so many images that have come out of the election in Iraq that have warmed the

hearts of all who love freedom. My favorite was that of a woman holding up the victory sign accentuated by the blue ink on her finger indicating that she had voted. That victory sign stands for victory over dictatorship, for victory over terror, victory for democracy, victory for freedom.

There have also been some statements from voters showing what they think of their newfound freedoms. One voter remarked, "I moved to mark my finger with ink. I dipped it deep as if I was poking the eyes of all the world's tyrants."

The Iraqi people have spoken with a loud voice, and once again freedom is on the march. This is thanks to the dedication not only of the people of Iraq but certainly for all the service and the sacrifice of our brave men and women in the armed services.

So I do find it amazing that some on the other side of the aisle and throughout our Nation are calling for a quick pullout of our troops from Iraq. We all want our troops to come home, and they will, as soon as their mission is accomplished, as soon as it is completed. They will not leave early and allow dictatorship and repression to return to fill the vacuum left by their departure.

Many of these advocates of an early withdrawal were also in opposition to President Ronald Reagan when he stood strong for freedom against Soviet communism. These same detractors say that we should not overhype the election in Iraq. In 1989, were they saying that we should not overhype the fall of the Berlin Wall? Tell that to the people of the former East Germany who now live in freedom, tell it to the people of Poland, tell it to the people of the Czech Republic, tell it to the people of Hungary, or to the people of the Ukraine, all of whom live in freedom because of the steadfast determination of the American people to spread liberty.

The flag of freedom has been raised high in Iraq, and we cannot and must not leave Iraq before freedom and democracy take root. Because, just as in Europe, the idea of freedom will resonate throughout the Middle East.

Let freedom ring.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), a member of the Committee on International Relations.

Mr. ROYCE. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution celebrating the free elections held in Iraq this past weekend. I think it is important that the world watched as millions of Iraqis defied the edict of Zarkawi and other terrorist leaders, defied their edict not to participate and went forward to cast what for most was the first meaningful vote in their lives.

Thousands of Iraqis served as poll workers. There were thousands of observers, as this resolution notes. The

turnout exceeded all expectations. Iraqis of all backgrounds celebrated this milestone in the history of their country, but I believe it was a milestone for the Middle East and a milestone for the world. Tyrants and dictators would have people believe that democracy is a charade. Tell that to the Iraqis celebrating in the streets throughout Iraq. They rejected Saddam Hussein in a way that they had not had an opportunity to before, and they actually rejected him with an exclamation point in this election. What we saw was yet more evidence that the yearning to shape the political life of one's community and one's nation is universal. Freedom truly is a human aspiration.

Voting, as we have heard, is a step. The ballots have not yet been counted. A constitution needs to be drafted. Democracy, if it is going to work, must respect the interests of minorities. Otherwise, it is the tyranny of the majority.

In general, everyone wants their own rights respected. The challenge is to get people to respect the next person's rights. Kurdish rights must be protected, Sunni rights must be respected, and the rights of the Iraqi down the street must be respected. As President Bush has told the American people, this will be a long struggle. Iraq is very difficult terrain.

The stars of last weekend clearly were the Iraqi people. They put their lives on the line for a better future. Some were killed. But, make no mistake about it, there was a key supporting cast. Our Nation owes a debt of gratitude to the many members of our Armed Forces, our diplomats and other Americans in Iraq who are also risking their lives and in some cases sacrificing their lives to help Iraqis and also Americans.

We have a strong national interest in seeing Iraq become a success. If this happens, when the history of this era in Iraq is written, these men and women will be widely revered.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON).

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, insurgents in Iraq this weekend had vowed to wash the streets in blood. Yet, despite all their threats of people who were going to get killed and places that were going to be bombed, and indeed 43 people were killed, despite all that, voters turned out, of course, in record numbers because the election itself was a record.

One voter said on Sunday that each vote was a bullet in the heart of the enemy. We are defeating the terrorists in coming here, he said proudly, as he dipped his finger in the famous purple ink. This was done in over 30,000 polling places. And now the votes are being counted.

When we look at the turnout, nearly 60 percent, we are not really sure what the turnout officially is, but compare

that to the United States presidential election just this November of a 60.7 percent voter turnout. Yet no one was threatened to be killed. That was the highest turnout in the United States of America in 38 years. Indeed, in my home county in Savannah, Georgia, Chatham County had a turnout of a mere 48 percent 2 years ago when we elected the Governor of Georgia.

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So for them under these circumstances to have a 60 percent voter turnout, it is phenomenal; but it is also a huge statement on how badly people want freedom, how badly they want to throw off the shackles of oppression, and how they value the opportunity to vote.

The U.S. Marines said that watching voters go to the polls was a spectacular and a wonderful payoff of the magnitude of the well-visualized photo of their knocking down Saddam Hussein's statue 2 years ago in Baghdad. And the people who died, the 43 lives who are no longer with us, they should all be remembered along with the other heroes who made the day possible. We owe them a debt of gratitude.

It took the United States of America 7 years to fight the Revolutionary War to win its independence from Britain, and then it was not until 1789 that we threw out the Articles of Confederation and wrote our own Constitution. And yet we fought a Civil War since then and we have had lots of struggles and lots of amendments to our Constitution. Indeed, over 200 years later, we are still fighting and working on this experiment that we call democracy, representative democracy.

What the world needs to do right now is to support Iraq in this endeavor. It is time for folks around the globe to say this did serve as a referendum and a statement; now let us reach out and do what we can to help Iraq become independent.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI); but before turning the microphone over to her, let me just say she has devoted her life to expanding the arena of freedom and democracy throughout the globe, and we are proud to have her represent us as our leader in this body.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for his very generous remarks and commend him in turn for his leadership and the determination and dedication that he has given to human rights throughout the world and freedom throughout the world. Having just visited Auschwitz and having his own personal sad experience in the deprivation of freedom, he is an inspiration to all of us. I hope that the trip was not too painful for the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), but again his courage and his determination are a lesson to all of us, and I thank him.

Mr. Speaker, Sunday was a historic day for the people of Iraq. In the face of

violence and threats, millions of Iraqis made it clear that they want the future of their own country decided by the ballot, not by the bomb or the bullet. Their willingness to risk their lives to vote is compelling evidence of the depth of their aspiration for self-determination. Their courage commands our admiration and our respect.

The bravery of our military personnel cannot be praised highly enough. Without their selflessness in the face of great danger, the election could not have been held. Every American is inspired by their courage, their patriotism, and the sacrifice they are willing to make for our country.

Iraqis have demonstrated their desire to take responsibility for their country's future. Our effort now should be to use the momentum created by the election to help them realize that goal. Iraq needs to be made more secure. Let us intensify our efforts to train the Iraqi Army that can provide that security. The sooner we transfer the responsibility for security of Iraq over to the Iraqis, the better.

Iraq's future depends on improvements to its economic infrastructure. Let us accelerate the reconstruction efforts that have lagged so badly and give Iraqis a larger stake in having those efforts succeed.

Iraq's political future depends on the involvement of all Iraqis in the political process. Let us redouble our diplomatic efforts with Iraq's neighbors to help create an environment in which Iraq includes those who have thus far felt excluded.

We know that Sunday's election was but a step on the road to a stable and secure Iraq. The American people, who have sacrificed so much for Iraq, are owed a clear explanation by the President of his plan to end our presence in Iraq and of the standards by which they can judge that plan. I hope that we will hear that plan tonight in the President's State of the Union address.

In congratulating the Iraqi people on their achievement, we also need to acknowledge that the election should signal the beginning of a change in our relationship with Iraq.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, on Sunday Iraq held democratic elections to nominate legislators to write Iraq's constitution, and I want to congratulate the courageous Iraqi people who voted in the election. My congressional district, Marin and Sonoma Counties, north of San Francisco, across the Golden Gate Bridge, had an 89½ percent voter turnout in the United States the last election, 89½. Believe me, we know the importance that elections play in our democracy.

And now with Iraq's elections completed, we in the United States must ensure that the people of Iraq control their own affairs as Iraq transitions towards democracy. In fact, Sunday's election gives the United States yet another opportunity to get back on course in Iraq. We can do this by supporting the Iraqi people, not through our military but through international cooperation to help rebuild Iraq's economic and physical infrastructure. There are four components to my plan on how to do this. H. Con. Res. 35, which is co-sponsored by over two dozen other Members of the House, this plan secures Iraq for the future. It ensures that America's role in Iraq gives Iraq back to the Iraqis and actually makes America safer.

First, we need to develop and implement a plan to begin the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. Second, we must develop and implement a plan for the reconstruction of Iraq's civil and economic infrastructure. Third, we need to convene an emergency meeting of Iraq's leadership and the international community to replace U.S. military forces in Iraq with an international peacekeeping force and Iraqi police and national guard forces. Finally, we need to take all steps to provide that the Iraqi people receive the opportunity they deserve to control their own internal affairs.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly salute the Iraqi people for their courage in participating in last Sunday's elections. But if we are to succeed in Iraq, we must utilize this moment as a means to bring our troops home and a means to return power to the Iraqi people.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS).

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, only a few months ago, for the first time in history, ballot boxes were coming in from remote places like Khyber Pass in Afghanistan on the backs of mules. What a great time it is to live in this world.

And last Sunday we saw free elections in a nation whose people have been crushed and oppressed since the days their country was called Babylon. We saw young men carrying old men to the polls. We saw one gentleman whose leg had been blown off by a terrorist bomb who said, I will crawl to vote if that is what it takes. And one of Saddam Hussein's former generals said, When I voted today, it felt so good inside, like I was free.

Mr. Speaker, the United States of America has been a leader in freedom, and we have now had the privilege of becoming the unipolar superpower of the entire world. No nation on Earth can actually challenge us in military, economic, or technological terms; and truly every nation sees America now as the flagship of humanity. This Nation now possesses a greater opportunity to promote freedom in the world than we have had since the Republic began.

But it is because we have had such great victories and opportunities that more than ever before we must be deeply humble and remind ourselves that we are only briefly the temporary stewards of this God-given greatest Nation in the history of humankind. And we only have a short time to fulfill our privileged and sacred mission of making America such a beacon of liberty that the light of freedom will some day fall across the faces of every person on this planet.

Last Sunday tells me, Mr. Speaker, that this is the generation who lives in the window of time where we can firmly set the world on that course. This is freedom's day, and we must seize it while we can. And while I do not often quote Shakespeare, he said, "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; omitted or delayed, 'all the voyage of their lives is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea, we now find ourselves afloat, and we must take the current when it serves or lose our ventures."

Mr. Speaker, as we take this current to freedom, let us remember that the best leverage to maintain freedom's march in the world is to make sure that its foundations are secure beneath freedom's home; and then, Mr. Speaker, let us take this tide of freedom as it serves so that one day all generations will bask in this glorious sunlight of liberty just as it has now begun to dawn on the people of Iraq.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3½ minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON).

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and I thank him for always standing first and foremost for human rights here and around the world. I am not surprised that he would come forward with the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) with this well-deserved and important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more gratifying to the American people than seeing people vote, and especially people vote for the first time. I feel what is happening in Iraq with great and moving nostalgia because it reminds me of the first African Americans who voted after the Civil War. It reminds me that this is the 40th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and what it meant for people in Alabama and Georgia to come to the polls for the first time. There is unanimous applause for the people of Iraq who risked their lives to come to the polls. They did not just vote. Many of them knew they were risking life and limb to vote.

They know, however, and we know where the risk was greatest, and that risk was greatest on the Armed Forces of the United States and their allies who made this right possible.

Mr. Speaker, I come forward to say that no people in our country more appreciate that vote on January 30 than the people in the District of Columbia.

In the District of Columbia, lives were lost for the vote in Iraq. But these residents are the progeny of 2 centuries of District residents who have gone to war without a vote. Three of these young men who were on the frontlines in Iraq came to the House as the House opened and asked for the same vote for their families and for the residents of the District of Columbia as their service has given to the people of Iraq. They asked to start with the Committee of the Whole where we had the right to vote but the right was taken from us when the majority changed.

Listen to one of the young men: "Two of my friends and I earlier this month asked for the return of the House vote of the Committee of the Whole our city won during the 103rd Congress . . . Think of what American leaders and citizens would say if one party were to nullify the legitimate vote of another party after the elections in Iraq."

They asked to see the Speaker; the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), leader of the Democrats. She saw him. The Speaker and a member of his staff were unable to see him. Senator LIEBERMAN and I have reintroduced the No Taxation Without Representation Act.

□ 1215

Let me leave you with the words, finally, of one of these young men.

"I was prepared in Iraq for whatever came, including service in a border breach squad charged with clearing mines and anything else that got in the way to prepare the first troops to cross the border. That was my duty and I would do it again. However, our country also has an important obligation to those who serve and to other citizens. One of the most important obligations is to ensure every citizen that his representative will have a chance to vote before that citizen goes to war for his country."

The third young man: "My father served in the 101st Airborne in Vietnam and I am proud to follow him by serving my country in the same manner. I want equal treatment at home. I want the same voting representation in the House and Senate as other soldiers and as the Iraqi people have in their elections this month."

Out of the mouths of young residents of the District of Columbia who are on the frontline. I will insert their statements and a statement concerning their service from the Washington Post in the RECORD.

STATEMENT OF EMORY KOSH

First, my thanks to Congresswoman Norton and Senator Lieberman for re-introducing the No Taxation Without Representation Act. I also want to thank Mr. Shallal for his moving words addressed to men and women like me who served in Iraq and to D.C. residents. During the year I spent in Iraq, I met and spoke with many Iraqi citizens, but Mr. Shallal is the first Iraqi American I have met. His words have special meaning to me and I thank him.

When I watch television and see people in Iraq and here in the United States preparing

to vote in the Iraq elections for voting representation, I think of my time in their country. I am proud that I had some role in the voting rights Iraqis will get there on Sunday. For that reason, I deeply appreciate that Mr. Shallal has come not only to thank us, but to join us in the fight for the same voting representation here in the Nation's capital.

Two of my friends and I earlier this month asked for the return of the House vote in the Committee of the Whole our city won during the 103rd Congress that was taken from us when control of the Congress changed hands. Think of what American leaders and citizens would say if one party were to nullify the legitimate vote of another party after the elections in Iraq. Our vote in the Committee of the Whole represented the first step toward the goal of D.C. residents as expressed in the No Taxation Without Representation Act. We didn't intend to stop there when we asked that this first step be taken, and we won't stop now. We will work with the Congresswoman, the Senator, Mr. Shallal and our fellow citizens until the full voting rights we fought for in Iraq are also available here in our hometown.

REMARKS OF ISAAC LEWIS

Congresswoman Norton, Mayor Williams and fellow Americans, thank you for recognizing us today. I was born and raised in the District of Columbia and have always wanted to be in the military and when I graduated from Dunbar High School, I joined the Army Reserves. As a volunteer soldier I was prepared for the interruption of my education at Morehouse, or as it turned out at Bowie State where I was in college when I was called up. I had to withdraw in the middle of the semester and the loss of that time will delay for a year and a half the possibility of law school for me. Yet my service in the military has helped me meet my dream of a college education and I am proud to serve my country.

I was prepared in Iraq for whatever came, including service in a border breach squad charged with clearing mines and anything else that got in the way to prepare the first troops to cross the border. That was my duty and I would do my duty again. However, our country also has an important obligation to those who serve and to other citizens. One of the most important obligations is to assure every citizen that his representative will have a chance to vote before that citizen goes to war for his country. My buddies and I from the 299th did not have the benefit of that vote. I come to the Congress today to ask for that vote before we are deployed again. Congress can return the vote in Committee of the Whole that the District won fair and square in the 103rd Congress. Although this would not be the full vote other Americans have and that the Iraqis soon will have, I understand that this vote would be the maximum the House of Representatives can give at this time. The maximum is what my buddies and I are pledged to give. We believe that voting representation is not too much to ask in return.

REMARKS OF MARCUS GRAY

Congresswoman Norton, Mayor Williams and fellow citizens, thank you for honoring us here today. I am grateful to be back home in the District of Columbia where I was born and raised after almost a year in Iraq with the 299th Engineering Company out of Fort Belvoir, VA. My father served in the 101st Airborne in Vietnam and I am proud to follow him by serving my country in the same manner. I am equally proud to be a resident

of the District of Columbia where I was born and raised. I am a graduate of Ballou High School and will soon graduate from Norfolk State University. I was at the University when I was called to duty. I am back at Norfolk State to resume the year and a half I lost while on active duty. I will obtain my B.A. in sociology with a concentration in Criminal Justice.

However, I could be called again this year, but being called to active duty is what every soldier in the Reserves expects could happen. We also expect equal treatment and the Army tries hard to see that all soldiers are treated equally. However, I want equal treatment at home as well. I want the same voting representation in the House and the Senate as other soldiers and as the Iraqi people will have in their elections this month. Today I ask that Congress make a good start by returning to me and other citizens of the District of Columbia the vote in the Committee of the Whole we once had. This step would make me as proud as I will be to see the Iraqi people go to the polls on January 30th.

[From an article in the Washington Post on the denial of Congressional voting rights to D.C. residents]

Scanning the distant horizons looking for people craving democracy.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) be permitted to manage the balance of the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and proud to yield the balance of our time to the distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the democratic whip, who has been a leader in the field of expanding the arena of freedom globally.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time.

I would like to acknowledge the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) and his leadership. We had the opportunity to travel recently to Iraq, to Amman, and to Israel. Both Israel and Iraq have now passed through two very historic elections. I had the opportunity of speaking about the Palestinian election just recently.

Despite the fact, Mr. Speaker, that we have differences over our Nation's military action in Iraq, I supported the effort and will support the funding to accomplish the objectives. But I have made valid criticisms, as others have, of the administration's administration or execution of the policy. However, Mr. Speaker, I believe that all of us are united today, hopefully, in saluting the courageous Iraqi people who turned out to vote on Sunday. I know that every Member of the body commends the bravery and sacrifice of our men and women in uniform whose patriotism and professionalism made this important day possible.

We must hope that 50 years from now a future generation of Iraqis can look

back at this election, this event, as a turning point in the history of their nation and as a victory for freedom over tyranny, for democracy over despotism.

After toiling under the boot of Saddam Hussein for decades and weathering a vicious terrorist insurgency over the last 2 years, the Iraqi people said no, no to intimidation, and yes to the most basic democratic right, the right to vote.

Sunday's election, Mr. Speaker, in which millions of Iraqis cast ballots, is a stunning repudiation of those who despise freedom and democracy. Zarkawi, that criminal leader of terrorist activity and insurgency in Iraq, said it accurately for the terrorists: They despise democracy. They despise freedom. They fear the decisions of free people. That is why they tried to intimidate the Iraqi people.

Having lived under the totalitarian Saddam Hussein regime all these years, however, the Iraqi people know that the insurgents offer nothing but further repression and violence.

Last Friday, Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of visiting the out-of-country voting station in New Carrollton, Maryland, and watched as many of these Iraqis Diaspora cast their votes freely for the first time in their lives. The joy and pride on their faces and in their hearts had to move everyone with whom they spoke. It was a moving moment, it was an historic moment, and it was a poignant reminder to all of us that our rights, while God-given, must never be taken for granted; a reminder that the cost of protecting those freedoms is sometimes high, and we must honor those with the courage and commitment even for others across the sea to protect those rights in the realization that democracies and free people are safer for us here at home than the tyrannies that have prevailed in history.

Without question, Mr. Speaker, there are difficult days ahead. The truly hard work that remains in establishing a viable, stable democracy that is capable of maintaining internal order in Iraq is not finished by far. But today, today at least, Mr. Speaker, let us celebrate the courage of the Iraqi people and express our gratitude and pride in the bravery of our Armed Forces, our men and women in uniform who made that day possible.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, before yielding back our time, may I just remind all of my colleagues and all of the American people that we have been debating three important policy resolutions with a degree of bipartisan unity that should fill us with pride and joy in the recognition of the fact that, despite all the commentary of deep divisions in this body, we stood together, Republicans and Democrats, supporting the same resolutions and the same policies.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of our time to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the distinguished Majority Leader and the original sponsor of this important resolution.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding me this time.

I just want to say the comments by the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) are well taken; and it is because of his work, and particularly his work to hold us together and work together on these issues, that that kind of bipartisan support for these resolution happens. So I commend the gentleman and thank him very much for his work and his willingness to work with us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) who came to the floor because he just returned from Iraq a couple of weeks ago and he has some very important things to say.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the Majority Leader for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, two Sunday mornings I was in Baghdad inside the Green Zone, an idyllic morning in the cradle of civilization, if you will. But we had a wide-ranging discussion with Prime Minister Allawi about what lay ahead for Iraq.

The Prime Minister said that what matters most is the kind of Iraq that we have at the end of this process. His feeling was that Iraq had its roots in ancient civilization. He now relished the opportunity for Iraq to spread the cause of democracy and liberty to other areas of the Middle East, which will make the cost and the risk of liberating Iraq worthwhile. Terrorism will continue after the elections because there will always be those who resist stability, but it will become more and more difficult to unravel the community.

The Prime Minister became fairly philosophical and said he had spent the best part of his life fighting for freedom for his country, and now that freedom lay at the doorstep. He would not allow those individuals, meaning the Sunnis, to distract the process. He stated that if they cannot participate now, there will be a space open for them to participate in the future.

To quote the Prime Minister, “We don’t want the radical forces to win now, nor do we want the outside forces from Syria or Iran to take over. I am a practical person. The Sunnis are changing. The process is slow, but our only hope for everyone is to engage in the process and distance ourselves from the terrorists. February 1 begins the next chapter in our country’s history.” From the Prime Minister Dr. Allawi.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I appreciate the gentleman from Texas entering the Prime Minister of Iraq’s remarks into the RECORD. I think it is very appropriate to do at this time, particularly on this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, the central point of this resolution is the central point of Amer-

ica’s foreign policy: that mankind is made more secure when tyranny is replaced by democracy. That is the story of the American revolution against the old world, Western Europe’s liberation from Nazism, Eastern Europe and Central America’s liberation from communism and despotism, and the Middle East’s liberation from terrorism. The victory of human freedom over human oppression, of good over evil, Mr. Speaker, is why we are here.

Last Sunday morning, the people of Iraq showed the world that humanity’s will to freedom knows no borders. When I first saw the news Sunday and saw an image of a woman in Najaf exiting her polling place alive and well with tears streaming down her proud, smiling face, I thought to myself, now, this, this is what Operation Iraqi Freedom was all about. But I was wrong. Sunday’s election, Sunday’s miracle of democracy, was about more than that.

I thought about the image of the elderly man in a wheelchair in Basra who, in his long years, saw revolution and war, tyranny and terror and, finally, with a joy only possible in a man who had known such pain, cast the first ballot of his life.

I thought of the image of the little girl with a ribbon in her hair, holding her mother’s hand as hundreds of women in traditional hijab dress waited in line. Now, this little girl was not quite sure what was happening, only that the women knew it was important.

I thought of the image of the voters in Baghdad who ducked for cover as their polling place came under fire, yet whose lines never broke. There were bullets and bombs and mortar shells, yet their lines never broke.

These voters in Baghdad, not soldiers, but shopkeepers and home-makers, knew when they left for the polls in the morning that they might not come home. They knew that they were targeted, that their spouses would be, could be widowed and their children orphaned. Yet the lines never broke. A humble defiance of evil.

And that is when it hit me, Mr. Speaker. Just as on Sunday all free men and women were Iraqis and on Sunday the Iraqis were all free men and women. Sunday’s elections are not just why we invaded Iraq. They were why we stormed Omaha Beach and took the Normandy cliffs. They are why we held Little Round Top and braved Valley Forge.

The lines that formed in Iraq on Sunday stretch not only around the world but back in time to the moment when 13 British colonies declared their independence. For the first time, at that moment, a nation declared itself endowed with an inalienable right to liberty, and in 228 years since, no nation, no nation, no people ever offered a chance at freedom refused it.

Against all odds and it seemed at times even against all hope, the Iraqi people, over 8 million of them, all marked by death by the terrorists,

woke up Sunday morning and got into line.

Some people still do not get it. They still do not understand Concord and Lexington or Gettysburg or Bastogne or the Cold War, or even Flight 93.

□ 1230

They do not understand why those lines in Iraq never broke or that every man and woman who ever lived, fought, or died for freedom was standing in that line with them. They still do not know why we fight.

Last weekend that Iraqi woman in the photograph knew. After a lifetime of oppression she voted in humble defiance of evil, and then she broke down crying. And in those tears she is shedding along with the anguish of how many friends and children lost and how many wars and prisons are the hopes and dreams of all God’s children who still yearn to be free.

Sunday’s elections in Iraq were not an accomplishment; they were a miracle, a miracle made possible by the resilience of a liberated Iraq, the mercy of a loving God, and the moral courage of this Nation under God to stare evil in the face and make the devil blink. Eight million brave Iraqis struck terrorism a lethal blow on Sunday, replacing tyranny with democracy, and in doing so they made America and the world safer, for which it is altogether fitting and proper that we commend and thank them.

Despite the continued threat represented by terrorists and terrorism and despite the threat of disgraceful partisan rhetoric coming from many on the other side, Sunday’s miracle in Iraq shows that the dead who died to free that nation have not died in vain and that even in the darkest recesses of violent oppression, all who would live in peace and liberty have yet reason to hope.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in offering my warm congratulations to the Iraqi people for the successful elections they held on January 30, 2005.

It is truly amazing to see the Iraqi people take their first steps toward democracy. To see a people who were once slaughtered and tormented under a brutal dictatorship take a stand and declare that enough is enough, shows their unwavering determination in deciding their own fate by the ballot instead of the bullet.

Despite the predictions of widespread terrorist attacks on election day in Iraq, 60 percent of the registered voters turned out. Moreover, the physical courage of the Iraqi people to leave their houses, walk to the polls and cast ballots under this specter of violence speaks to the power of democracy and their passion for freedom.

Sometimes in America, we take the right to vote for granted. No one who watched the moving images of Iraqi men and women proudly showing their purple-stained fingers will ever make that mistake again.

It is also important to pay homage to the thousands of brave American soldiers, some of who lost their lives, who held the line. Let

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us not forget the bold sacrifices these courageous men and women made to liberate the Iraqi people. It is all of our hopes that this election marks the beginning of a new chapter for the Iraqi people, one in which they enjoy the sweet taste of the fruits of freedom, democracy and sovereignty.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I would like to commend the sponsors and leadership for bringing this important resolution to the floor and I urge an “aye” vote.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in offering strong support for H. Res. 60, commending the free election held in Iraq last Sunday, January 30, 2005. This historic event marked progress, hope, and enthusiasm for the future of democracy in the Arab region.

Iraq held free elections for the first time in about 50 years. Millions of voters cast their ballots, and the death toll for the day was 45—lower than usual since the United States occupied the region.

I applaud this administration for the successful free elections held on Sunday under its auspices. An election with a turnout of nearly 60 percent is very encouraging for the Arab region. However, the fact remains that American troops have remained in occupation for 2 years, and the death toll continues to rise; therefore, we must proceed with caution. The positive momentum that has come from a successful election must be used as an opportunity to stop the bloodshed and the expenditure of tax dollars on this effort. I hope that the administration will use the positive momentum of this achievement as an opportunity to devise an exit plan for our troops.

Now that the election has taken place, the next step of restoring independence in Iraq is crucial and must be taken now. Along with 25 other original cosponsors, I joined Representative LYNN WOOLSEY to introduce H. Con. Res. 35, a measure to bring the troops home. It proposes to do this in a four-step process: (1) Development and implementation of a strategy to withdraw American troops from the region; (2) development and implementation of a reconstruction plan for the Iraqi civil and economic infrastructure; (3) creation of an international peacekeeping force composed of Iraqi leadership, neighbors in the Arab region, the United Nations, and the Arab League to keep Iraq secure; and (4) restoration of Iraqi officials as overseer of its internal affairs. This legislation will help restore independence in Iraq and will bring our troops home safe.

Since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, 1,423 members of the United States military have died which includes 1,084 dead as a result of hostile action and 333 of non-hostile causes. Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,269 U.S. military members have died. More than 89 percent of United States casualties in Iraq have come after this announcement. The message as to our exit plan must be made clear to the Iraqi people, the American people, and to our troops.

Mr. Speaker, I support H. Res. 60, and I urge my colleagues to join me in the spirit of preserving democracy, in the spirit of instilling international trust and self-sufficiency, and in the spirit of keeping the American troops safe.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, the right to vote—democracy itself—is more than a way to settle disputes, however petty or important.

It is, rather, the embodiment of a larger, much more important notion: the notion that every individual is worthwhile; that every individual, by virtue of his or her humanity, is worthy of consideration and respect.

What an important notion. How that notion is disregarded and abused in so many places in the world—sometimes even here at home.

Where was that notion ignored more systematically than in Saddam’s brutalized Iraq? The Iraq of terror, of mass graves, of mothers and children killed by poison gas and rotting where they dropped to the ground?

Yet less than 2 years later, the Iraqi people, under the protection of an American-led Coalition and their own nascent security forces, have turned out in defiance of threats and, in some cases, even in the face of explosions and gunfire, to cast ballots.

When they did so, they affirmed that, as individuals, they were anyone’s equal; they were, in essence, demanding respect from those who would govern them. And by joining together in public, each with their one vote, they were affirming their willingness to respect their neighbors and permit each of them an equal share of power.

Mr. Speaker, as has been said repeatedly, this is but one step in a long road. The election was not perfect. Elections never are. And yet, this election may turn out to be a strategic victory for freedom for Iraq and for its region.

It will, I hope prove impossible to persuade people who have understood and exercised their rights to surrender them willingly. We should have confidence that the Iraqi people will continue to defy the threats, to respond to them with force if need be, and to press for the establishment of a state that continues to respect them as individuals.

Such a state will be a good friend of the American people, and a good neighbor to all within its crucial region.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON.) All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to the order of the House of Tuesday, February 1, 2005, the resolution is considered read and the previous question is ordered on the resolution and on the preamble.

The question is on adoption of the resolution.

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

Mr. LANTOS. 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.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 36, EXPRESSING CONTINUED SUPPORT OF CONGRESS FOR EQUAL ACCESS OF MILITARY RECRUITERS TO INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 59 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 36) expressing the continued support of Congress for equal access of military recruiters to institutions of higher education. The concurrent resolution shall be considered as read. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution and preamble to final adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except: (1) one hour of debate on the concurrent resolution equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services; and (2) one motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. COLE of Oklahoma. 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, on Tuesday the Committee on Rules met and granted a rule for House Concurrent Resolution 36, expressing congressional support for equal access of military recruiters to institutions of higher education.

The rule provides for 1 hour of general debate equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Armed Services. The rule also provides for one motion to recommit.

Mr. Speaker, this concurrent resolution is an important first step in addressing a misguided ruling by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals regarding access of military recruiters to institutions of higher education.

During this time of conflict and the global war on terror, it is more important than ever to maintain the ability to recruit quality men and women for service in our military. The primary way that recruiters are able to do this is to work through those institutions which work closely with our young men and women, schools and universities.

Military recruiters need the same access to college campuses provided to other potential employers, and students deserve the right to discuss the option of a career in the United States military with the representatives of the Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, some ask, why the need for this concurrent resolution? Well, the answer is succinct. This concurrent resolution grows out of an egregious decision by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals overturning the power of Congress to control the purse.

This decision simply states that Congress and the Government may not as a matter of law deny funds to universities on the basis of their denial of access to recruiters and ROTC units. This decision, couched in the language of civil rights, fails to recognize the underlying inequity behind these university policies. This decision asserts the