

Bush administration for not leveling with the American people about the real number of Iraqi troops that have been trained to date.

On Sunday's "Meet the Press," the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) said, "We can't come back to America and have our people be convinced that the Iraqi troops are prepared to take over when they are not." WELDON went on to say that the administration needs to come to grips with the rising insurgency, again an insurgency that Vice President CHENEY refuses to acknowledge.

Mr. Speaker, these are the kinds of statements we have heard for the last year from a large group of my Democratic colleagues. We have been calling on House Republican leaders to hold this administration responsible for its faulty intelligence. We have called on the House Republican leadership to hold this administration accountable for the 20-plus billion dollars spent in Iraq. We have called on the House Republican leadership to call the war leaders at the Pentagon up to Capitol Hill to explain their war strategy. And to this date, the House Republican leadership simply refuses to hold the Bush administration responsible for the way it is conducting the war in Iraq.

It is refreshing to finally hear several Republican colleagues questioning the actions of this administration. However, it simply is not enough. At a time when the Army and Marines are having a difficult time reaching their recruitment goals for the military of the future, at a time when the Bush administration is painting a far rosier picture of the number of Iraqi troops that have been trained, at a time when the Bush administration refuses to admit that the insurgency in Iraq is getting bigger and more difficult to deal with by the day, the House Republican leadership cannot continue to ignore a growing number of Members of this Chamber, of both parties, who are demanding that the administration level with the American people about the Iraq war.

#### FOUR IDEAS TO IMPROVE RETIREMENT SECURITY

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, in discussing the collapse of his retirement plan and pension plan, United Airlines pilot Klaus Meyer said, "I call it legalized crime. I lost almost all my United stock value in the bankruptcy, and another part of the retirement I was promised is gone. And now my Social Security is at risk. Where does it all end?"

Mr. Meyer's statement is a stark reminder of what is at stake as we continue to debate the future of Social Security. The sad fact is that for many Americans retirements are less, not more, secure and any debate about So-

cial Security should be about how to secure its future rather than make it more risky. In fact, the head of the GAO announced that the President's plan would in fact exacerbate the financial stability of Social Security, rather than strengthen it.

The whole task is to do two things: strengthen Social Security for future generations and help Americans save for their retirement. Make no mistake, Social Security and the debate about retirement is key to the future of Americans' retirements. For United Airlines employees, and the steel industry that came before the airline industry, and probably the auto industry that will come after them, Social Security is the linchpin of their retirement security.

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Our task before us is how to strengthen both aspects as Americans plan to retire and save for their retirement.

As John Pinto, another United States airline employee put it, "Social Security is the cornerstone of my retirement." That is our task here. Every American is asked to plan for their retirement with personal savings, employment-based savings, and Social Security. Those are the three legs to the stool of any retirement plan and any retirement security. The privatization of Social Security would exacerbate the stability that Social Security has created for millions of Americans as they plan for their retirement.

Benefits for United Airlines employees would be cut up to 40 percent, retirement benefits that they have put money away for, they have saved for, they have done everything that we as a country advocate that they do; 120,000 employees have now been cut up to 40 percent. As I always say, go ask a United Airlines employee what they think of Social Security. They are glad that it is there and they can count on it. It is the linchpin, it is the foundation for all of their retirement security.

Two-thirds of seniors and 40 percent of widows rely on Social Security as their entire retirement plan. It may come as a shock to some, but the American people like the security that comes with Social Security.

A few weeks ago, the President said, "Those who obstruct reform, no matter what party they are in, will pay a political price." Ironically, it is the President's insistence on privatization of Social Security that is slowing the reform and progress we could have in our retirement security. He is, in fact, the reason we are not making progress. Privatization has become the poison pill to progress when we discuss retirement security for Americans.

We need to broaden the debate on privatization of Social Security into a discussion on retirement security. I proposed a series of ideas, Republicans have proposed a series of ideas, Democrats have ideas. If we put away privatization, we can make progress.

I would like to remind everybody that in 1983, when we had the commission that developed and planned for the future of Social Security and gave it security for 75 years, President Ronald Reagan took privatization off the table, and you secured Social Security for 75 years. If you take privatization off the table today, you can secure Social Security for another 75 years, and we can make progress on 401(k)s, employer-based retirement, defined benefit pensions, as well as personal savings. We can do it all. But as long as privatization is on the table, it will become the stumbling block to progress, and the President's insistence is stopping the progress we can make.

Here are the four ideas I have introduced, separate pieces of legislation: Automatic enrollment to 401(k)s. Rather than the pressure being on an employee to line up and sign up for a 401(k), have them automatically enroll, and the pressure is, if you do not want to participate, the onus of responsibility is on you to get out, not in. RR Donnelley, a big corporation in Chicago, Fortune 500, set up automatic enrollment. Participation went up to 92 percent of employees, and the participation rate increased dramatically among basically support staff and others who do not have a retirement plan. Also, you would have the automatic step-up so as you were there longer, your pay went up, the participation in your plan increases.

Direct deposits from your tax refunds into your savings plan. About 100 million Americans get a refund on their tax return. The average tax return is \$2,000. When you fill out the 1040, you can decide, do I want \$1,000, \$750, \$2,000 to go to my retirement plan? That is the one day we should organize for retirement security rather than just for consumption. And if you have direct deposit, more Americans would participate.

Third, there is the fully refundable credit for people earning \$60,000 or less. The government would match 50 percent on every dollar.

Lastly, we have 16 various different vehicles for retirement savings. You could, in fact, unify that to one single, universal pension and get rid of all of the paperwork that comes with 16 different versions of savings.

Those are just four ideas, but when it comes to retirement security, let us remove privatization from the discussion, secure Social Security and, therefore, secure for Americans and generations to come retirement security and the dignity that comes with Social Security and with retirement.

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

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

There was no objection.

#### SMART SECURITY AND IRAQ WITHDRAWAL PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, our Constitution states that Members of Congress must be chosen by the people of the United States, and Congress must represent the people of the United States. That means that we as Members of Congress need to listen and need to act when the people speak.

Well, the American people have spoken. The last Gallup poll released earlier this week indicates that the American people are ready for our military forces in Iraq to start coming home. Nearly 60 percent of Americans believe that the U.S. should bring home some or all of our troops from Iraq. Just as revealing, the Gallup poll showed that only 36 percent of Americans support maintaining our current troop levels in Iraq. This is the lowest level of support for the war since it began in March of 2003.

The American people have stated loud and clear where they stand, and their numbers are increasing. They know that the only way to keep our sons and daughters from being killed in Iraq, and the only way to end the death and destruction that occur there every single day, is to begin the process of bringing our troops home. Clearly, the American people are way ahead of Congress on this issue.

Unfortunately, the President of the United States is way behind on the issue of Iraq. We have asked the President to come up with a plan for ending the war. He has not, so we will.

Our efforts to come up with a plan began in January when I introduced legislation calling for the President to begin bringing our troops home. Thirty-five Members of Congress support this legislation. We continued our effort on May 25 when I introduced an amendment to the defense authorization bill calling on the President to create a plan for Iraq. Mr. Speaker, 128 Members of Congress, including five Republicans and one Independent, voted in favor of this sensible amendment.

It is clear that the United States must develop a smarter agenda for Iraq

than a continued military occupation, because the 2-year war has left us disturbingly weakened against the true security threats that we face here at home. Let us not forget, Osama bin Laden is still at large, and al Qaeda continues to recruit new members in Iraq and elsewhere every single day. So, we ask the President to create a plan and bring it to the Congress that will bring our troops home. Once they are home, we can secure the U.S. and Iraq for the future, and we can use a smarter resolution, which is a Sensible Multilateral American Response to Terrorism for the 21st Century. It will help us address the threats we face as a Nation.

SMART Security will prevent future acts of terrorism by addressing the root conditions which give rise to terrorism in the first place: poverty, despair, resource scarcity, and lack of educational opportunities, to mention just a few. SMART Security encourages the United States to work with other nations to address the most pressing global issues. SMART Security addresses global crises diplomatically instead of by resorting to armed conflict.

Instead of maintaining a long-term military occupation of Iraq, our future efforts to help the Iraqi people must follow the SMART approach: humanitarian assistance, coordinated with our international allies, to rebuild Iraq's war-torn physical and economic infrastructure.

That is what I mean when I talk about SMART Security. We can defend America by relying on the very best of American values: our commitment to peace and freedom, our compassion for the people of the world, and our capacity for multilateral leadership.

Mr. Speaker, we must follow a smarter approach as we work to help the Iraqi people, which means implementing a plan to end the war in Iraq. I invite the President, I invite all Americans and all Members of Congress, to join in this effort.

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

(Mr. FOSSELLA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### IMMIGRATION REFORM EMPHASIZING FAMILY VALUES

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to talk about family values and creating an immigration system that better values families, a system that keeps families strong and, most importantly, keeps them together.

I know the issue of family values is a top priority for the President and for

many in this Chamber, but when it comes to the issue of immigration, I am afraid our Nation's efforts to protect families, to keep mothers and fathers, parents and children together has fallen far short.

So let me begin this evening by highlighting an example of the tragic consequences of our failed immigration policies and its disastrous and often destructive affects on hard-working families in my district.

Meet the Benitez family. Rodolfo Benitez is a supervisor at the Civic Opera House's Tower Club. He is a U.S. citizen who works extremely hard so his children in the picture, who are also citizens, can get a good education and can realize all that our country has to offer. They are a great family. They are active and well-liked, respected in their community. And if you ever get a chance to meet Rodolfo, Jr., Brenda, Andrea, and their new baby, Eric, you will quickly realize that they are all we could wish for in children.

But, Mr. Speaker, while this story may appear on the surface to have all the makings of the American dream, our Nation's convoluted immigration laws are making life a nightmare for the Benitez family, because about a year ago, Rodolfo's wife Maria was deported without time to even get her life in order. As the Chicago Tribune wrote, "Her school-age children, who returned home one day with the panicked question: 'Where's mommy?'"

As parents, can anyone in this body imagine having to answer that question? Can anyone in this body imagine explaining to these beautiful, young children that their 4-month pregnant mother was being deported 2 days before Mother's Day with barely enough time to kiss her children goodbye? Can you imagine telling your children that they will not have the opportunity to see their new baby brother when he is born, because the Government of the United States and its immigration policy says, we are going to deport her? It is simply heart-wrenching.

But in cities and small towns across our country, there are thousands of families facing the exact same situation as the Benitez family, because too often, our immigration system tears families apart, leaving single parents to fend for themselves and leaving children to grow up without a loving mother or father. Too often their stories are never told, and defenseless children and parents are forced to suffer in silence.

In the case of Mrs. Benitez, we were fortunate enough to get her a temporary visa to return from Mexico to the United States so she could receive proper prenatal care and ensure that there were no complications with her pregnancy, but that visa expires this summer, and, after that, our immigration system, our law enforcement system will take Mrs. Benitez back to Mexico and take her away from her American citizen children and her American citizen husband. Who in this body can say that is right?