

FEED THE RICH, STARVE THE
POOR

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of an energy crisis. Gas is around three bucks a gallon and utilities are now predicting that families could pay as much as 70 percent more to heat their homes this winter. Natural gas prices are so high, the Energy Department predicts that the average bill will be \$350 more this winter. Home heating oil, used by many in the Northeast and the Midwest, has skyrocketed.

But while American families struggle with sky-high energy bills, oil and gas companies are facing an entirely different crisis: what to do with all the cash. For example, Exxon-Mobil recently reported that their profits increased by 75 percent in the third quarter. Their revenues were \$100 billion. Shell said that their earnings increased 68 percent; Phillips' third quarter, 89 percent; BP-Amoco, a 34 percent rise in quarterly earnings.

American families are struggling with massive energy bills that are cutting into their living expenses while energy companies are reaping huge profits. Henry Hubble, the vice president for Exxon-Mobil, head of investor relations, said, "You just got to let the marketplace work."

I agree with the oil companies, let the marketplace work. Now, what do I mean by that? This Congress, the Republican Congress, gave Big Oil \$14 billion in taxpayer subsidies to drill for oil. I am tired of this corporate welfare.

You want to do your business plan? Go drill for oil. We are not going to subsidize it so people have to pay three bucks a gallon at the pump and on April 15 have to subsidize the oil companies, who are making \$100 billion of revenue a year, \$9 billion in a single quarter, profits up 89 percent, record numbers; and what are we asking the taxpayers to do, struggling to make ends meet for housing, education, health care needs? We are going to subsidize Big Oil, and while we are on top of it, we are going to cut home heating assistance for the elderly in this country.

What Congress would actually cut home heating assistance for senior citizens, yet provide Exxon-Mobil \$16 billion to execute their business plan? A Republican Congress, of course.

Now, this should make sense to you for one simple reason: since 1980, the big oil companies have contributed \$220 million to the Republican Party in total, to candidates, and they get \$16 billion in return. You cannot get an investment like that even on Wall Street. They are one of the largest contributors to the Republican Congress and the Republican Party, and they get a huge taxpayer-funded bailout when you consider the refining bill for \$2 bil-

lion, the oil and gas bill. The Republican Congress, when it comes to Big Oil, is the gift that keeps on giving.

There is a cost to this corruption. It comes in the stripes and colors of a \$14 billion taxpayer subsidy to Big Oil, who are making record profits. Pharmaceutical companies are one of the biggest contributors. They get \$132 billion in additional profits in the prescription drug bill. You have an energy bill that we talked about. You have a corporate tax bill.

They were trying to figure out a \$5 billion problem, so what do we do? We took \$150 billion and threw it at that problem. Who is picking up the tab? The taxpayer. There is a cost to the taxpayers of this country for the culture of corruption. We saw it in the energy bill. And now all of a sudden Republicans are all upset with figuring out what they are going to do to really punish Big Oil.

I say it is time we give the taxpayers back their \$14 billion in taxpayer subsidies from the oil companies, the \$2 billion back from the refiners, and let the marketplace work its wonder. You want to do your business plan, you will do your business plan; but I am not having the taxpayer subsidize you, all the while we are going to literally cut assistance this winter to our elderly and our most vulnerable.

You cannot give out money fast enough to the energy companies who are making massive profits, and then on the other hand cut funding for those who need it most. You cannot have a policy in this country that says to the oil companies, who are reaping huge profits, that is their business, but we should not subsidize their business, we are going to give you more while we cut those who are struggling. Those are not the values of this country, those are not the values of the Democratic Party, and, most importantly, thank God, those are not the values of the American people.

We need a change. We need new priorities. These are the wrong priorities for America's future. We can do better, Mr. Speaker. It is time we return the people's House to the people. When that gavel comes down, Mr. Speaker, it is intended to open the people's House, not the auction house; and when it comes to the energy bill and prescription drug bill, the corporate tax bill, this House has looked like the auction house.

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.)

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

(Mr. BISHOP of Utah 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 Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. STUPAK 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 Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURGESS 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 Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

OUT OF IRAQ CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I come before the House this evening as one of the organizers of the Out of Iraq Caucus to talk about what we have done in that caucus, what we are attempting to continue to do, and where we feel we are at this point.

We now have 69 Members who have signed up as part of the Out of Iraq Caucus. We have been meeting on a regular basis. We have had invited speakers and experts come to our caucus to talk about the war in Iraq, to talk about our image in the world as it relates to the war in Iraq, to talk about any number of subjects to help us try and guide this House and this Nation on this war. We think it is extremely important for the Members of Congress to be involved in this way because there are so many questions that are being raised by the American public about the war in Iraq.

When we organized this caucus, we did not organize the caucus with the conclusion that we had to get out right now. We did not organize the caucus with the strategy to adopt an exit strategy or to try and force the administration to adopt an exit strategy. We did not organize the caucus around the idea that we should stay there for as long as it takes to train Iraqi soldiers and then exit.

We simply organized the Out of Iraq Caucus because we all felt that we must get out of Iraq, and we did not try to say when. We did not even try to say how. We wanted to bring together the kind of discussion that would lead us to adopting the right kind of strategy, to provide some leadership to the Congress of the United States and to this administration.

While we have been doing that, over 2,032 U.S. soldiers died while serving in Iraq as of November 2. In the month of October, 93 United States soldiers died in Iraq. October was the fourth deadliest month for U.S. soldiers since the war began on March 29, 2003, and the deadliest since January when 106 U.S. soldiers died. The second most violent month was November 2004, when Americans battled Sunni Arab rebels in Fallujah. The third most violent month was in April 2004, when U.S. soldiers fought militiamen loyal to the Shiite cleric in Najaf. More than 15,353 U.S. soldiers have been injured while serving in Iraq, and we are told there are over 404 amputees.

The administration has allocated about \$357 billion for military operations, reconstruction, embassy costs, and various foreign aid programs in Iraq and Afghanistan since the September 11 attacks. Of that \$357 billion, \$251 billion of that total has been for Iraq and about \$82 billion for Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, we are told, despite these casualties, despite these amputees, despite what appears to be our inability to get a handle on the insurgents and all of these roadside bombings, we are told that we are winning this war. As a matter of fact, the President rolled out May 1, 2003, on an aircraft carrier all decked out in the proper dress to accompany his speech and said "mission accomplished."

The American public has trusted that this administration knew what it was doing. They gave the administration the benefit of the doubt, even when Mr. Rumsfeld was being urged by people much more expert than he that we did not have enough troops on the ground in order to win the war. He insisted that he knew better what he was doing. He did not increase those numbers. The American public sees now that he did not know what he was talking about.

The American public has stayed with this administration despite the fact that the President said that we were going to get enough money from the oil wells in Iraq to take care of rebuilding the infrastructure. That has not happened. The insurgents continue to blow up the oil wells. We have gotten no money from the oil in Iraq.

The American people continue to try and trust the President of the United States, but the lack of getting a handle on these insurgents and the killing of our soldiers, the lack of getting any profits from the oil wells, the lack of being in control and getting a handle on what is going on in Iraq is causing the American people to move away from support for the President of the United States and this war.

At first, the American public was saying, no, we do not like the way this administration has handled this war, but we think perhaps the President may be right. Perhaps we need to stay there until we have trained enough Iraqi soldiers to wind out of the war.

But that does not appear to be happening. As a matter of fact, we keep

getting muddled information about how many Iraqi soldiers have been trained. We have been told numbers that we cannot confirm. We have been told that it is just a matter of time before we will have trained enough of these soldiers to whom we can turn over the operations.

We have had all of these different military operations. We started out with Operation Iraqi Freedom, which was the name of the entire Iraqi effort that began in March of 2003. At its height, we had over 300,000 troops in the region. Currently, we have about 139,000 U.S. soldiers in Iraq.

We had Strike and Awe, which described the initial military action in the opening hours and days of the war. We have had Operation River Gate, which took place in the al Anbar Province near the Syrian border. American forces were trying to retake three towns from al Qaeda insurgents.

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Some 2,500 U.S. troops along with Iraqi forces participated in Operation River Gate.

Then we had Operation Iron Fist, similar to Operation River Gate, which occurred shortly before Operation River Gate.

Then we had Operation Lightning launched in early May 2005, to break the insurgency. Approximately 40,000 Iraqi troops and 10,000 U.S. soldiers were deployed in and around Baghdad.

Then we had Operation Matador. Operation Matador was launched in the first weeks of May 2005, after U.S. intelligence showed insurgents had moved into the northern Jazirah Desert after the losses in the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi.

Operation Spear began on June 17, 2005, with 1,000 Marines and Iraqi soldiers in western Iraq to hunt for insurgents and foreign fighters. Operation Spear took place in the Anbar province. The operation came one day after Air Force Brigadier General Don Alston called the Syrian border the worst problem in stemming the influx of foreign fighters to Iraq. Syria is under intense pressure from Washington and Baghdad to tighten control of its porous 380-mile border with Iraq. Yet we do not know whether or not the insurgents are really the Sunnis and al Qaeda inside Baghdad, inside Iraq, or really all of the insurgents coming from Syria.

Operation Dagger. About 1,000 U.S. Marines and Iraqi troops, backed by fighter jets and tanks, launched a second offensive Saturday against insurgents operating in restive Anbar province. That was called Operation Dagger. Operation Dagger aims to uncover insurgent training camps and weapons caches in the southern part of the Lake Tharthar area in central Iraq, 85 kilometers northwest of Baghdad.

And now, Operation Sword. Operation Sword included about 1,000 U.S. Marine soldiers and sailors from Regimental Combat Team-2, as well as

about 100 Iraqi soldiers. It was the fifth operation launched in late spring, early summer 2005, designed to pressure insurgents in the country's expansive and restive Anbar province west of Baghdad.

We are not in control of what is happening with this war that we launched because there were supposedly weapons of mass destruction. We are losing our soldiers. We are not getting Iraqi soldiers trained. The President of the United States said we may be there for the next 10 years.

The American people have had enough. I believe that those of us who are working in the Out of Iraq Caucus have had enough. It is time for us to review what we are doing. It is time for us to call on this President to tell the American people when and how we are going to get out, and we cannot accept that we will be there until hell freezes over if that is what it takes.

We cannot accept that all of these operations have not worked. We cannot accept that we cannot find a way to stop these roadside bombings. We cannot accept that we are bleeding the American taxpayer dollars with over \$1 billion a week being spent in Iraq and over \$1 billion a month being spent in Afghanistan. So we come here tonight to challenge the President and this administration.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to yield to my colleagues who have come here to discuss this very, very serious matter with us. First, my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) for her leadership in the Out of Iraq Caucus and for her leadership in the effort to achieve peace and to achieve a more rational U.S. foreign policy and to do the right thing on behalf of our country.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that the war in Iraq was wrong. I believe it was a mistake. This was a war based on fix. There were no weapons of mass destruction. There were no ties to al Qaeda. There were no nuclear weapons. There was no imminent threat to the United States. And with the acquiescence of this Congress, I am sad to say this country rushed into a war, a war that has turned out to be a violent quagmire, a war with no end.

Mr. Speaker, we have already spent some \$300 billion on this war in Iraq. There is no end in sight. We are told that if we are there for another 2 years that the figure will be up to \$1 trillion.

Now, think about it. What could we do with hundreds of billions of dollars? We could reduce our deficit and reduce the debt. We could actually do something very important in helping to insure some of the millions of Americans who do not have health insurance in this country. We could help to rebuild our schools and provide a first-class education to every single young person in this country. We could rebuild our infrastructure. Or we can put it toward

helping our veterans who have fought in the wars over the years, who have given so much of themselves, and who are sick and tired of getting nickled and dimed by this Congress with budgets that underfund the veterans' affairs every single year.

Mr. Speaker, I personally believe that the policy that we should pursue is one that requires the United States to end our involvement in Iraq. I have legislation that I have introduced that requires an end to the war in Iraq now, not 6 months from now, not a year from now, not at some date to be determined by the President. We have given him his chance, and he has come back and said that he just wants to stay there for the next decade. He does not seem to be mindful of the fact that everything that he said about this war has turned out to be false.

I want this war ended now. I think the majority of people in this country want this war ended now. They realize that this huge U.S. presence in Iraq right now is not calming the violence. They realize that we are now a major part of the problem.

There was no al Qaeda in Iraq before we got in Iraq. It is not just al Qaeda. It is other terrorist organizations, quite frankly, that are now sticking their nose in Iraq, trying to get at the United States. It is not about the future of Iraq. It is about the United States of America.

Now I believe that the time has come for the President to authorize an orderly and safe withdrawal of our troops. The legislation that I have introduced calls for that, right now. If it passes today, it would begin today. The legislation says that we can support all efforts to make sure that our troops have a safe and orderly withdrawal from Iraq. It says that we can support reconstruction efforts in Iraq, which I think is important. We helped destroy that country. We need to help rebuild that country. It says that we can support international forces as transitional security in Iraq. If other countries want to provide a transitional security force, we should be able to support that. Hopefully, some of the neighboring Arab countries will want to do that. We should be able to support a U.N. force or a NATO force going in.

But the bottom line is, I think it is clear to anybody who has been watching this, that the time has come to demand that no more U.S. forces be in Iraq. It is time to end this war.

Mr. Speaker, now I know that there are some, and I hear it a lot, every time those of us try to raise some questions and try to raise some dissent, there are those who say, well, you should not do that. It is somehow unpatriotic. You are not supporting our troops. You are not supporting our country. You are giving comfort to the enemy. I hear that all the time when I speak about my opinions on Iraq or when I hear others speak in ways that dissent from this current policy. Well,

nothing could be farther from the truth.

Let me tell you, it takes absolutely no courage at all for anybody in this House or in the United States Senate or in this administration to wave the American flag and say, stay the course and send more troops. It takes no courage at all. Because it is not us whose lives are on the line and, with very few exceptions, it is not our children whose lives are on the line. Over 2,000 Americans have lost their lives in a conflict that the President of the United States said would be a relatively short conflict that would be easily manageable and that would not entail these casualties. He was wrong. Two thousand Americans have now died, over 2,000 Americans. That is not counting the tens of thousands of innocent Iraqis who have lost their lives.

The President and his administration was wrong on this. We were not told the truth. I sat through all of those classified briefings with the Secretary of State, with the Secretary of Defense, with all of the intelligence agencies that they brought up here to tell us about what this war would be if we got into it, and everything they said was wrong.

Now, one of two things explains that fact. One, either our intelligence agencies are just so incompetent and so dumb that they got everything wrong; or, two, that this intelligence was exaggerated. Now, I do not believe that our intelligence agencies are dumb. I do not believe our intelligence agencies could get anything that wrong. We spend billions of dollars each year in supporting our intelligence agencies. I do not think, I do not believe that anybody believes that they got it that wrong.

What I think most people believe is that the intelligence that was presented to the Congress and to the United States people was the intelligence that this administration thought fit their argument, complemented their argument. It was not a balanced picture. It was what they wanted to present; and, as a result, there was a rush to war.

Mr. Speaker, we need to figure out a way now as to how to get out of this. It is imperative that we get out of this now. I have been to three funerals in the last few months in my own district of young men who have lost their lives in this conflict. I have seen their families grieve, their friends grieve. I do not want to see any more families have to go through that. I want this administration to come clean on what the facts are, on what their plans on, and also come clean on the intelligence leading into this war.

I want to say one thing about the Senate Minority Leader HARRY REID. I will tell you, I was never more proud of him than I was yesterday when he finally stood up and showed the commitment and showed the spine to ask the tough questions that people all over this country, Republican and Democrat

alike, have been asking, and that is, what was the intelligence that brought us into this war? Was it exaggerated? How was it manipulated? How could we have gotten it so wrong?

I want to tell my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, I think Democrats and Republicans alike believe, I am not saying in this Chamber, but I am saying throughout the country, believe that if, in fact, there are people in this administration who intentionally and deliberately exaggerated intelligence and manipulated intelligence to get us into this war, then those people should be fired and fired now.

What you saw was Scooter Libby's indictment is just the tip of the iceberg. Quite frankly, the President should fire Karl Rove now. He lied to the President of the United States. He lied to the American people. He told the President, along with Mr. Libby, that they had no knowledge of who leaked Valerie Plame's identity to the press. We now know that that is a lie. And the fact that this President sees no problem with keeping his top aide on after this man lied about something so serious, quite frankly, is very disturbing to this Member of Congress.

These are serious matters. War is a big deal. This is not something to be taken lightly. The great English conservative Edmund Burke once said, "A conscientious man would be cautious in how he dealt with blood." This administration claims to be conservative. Well, they should heed Edmund Burke's words. They have been too casual with how they have dealt with blood. They have been too casual with how they have deployed our troops overseas.

And the indifference that we see each and every day at press briefings by White House spokespeople, by the President; you never hear from the Vice President, so I cannot really say much about him. But this kind of casual attitude that everything is just great. Let us just stay the course. We are doing the right thing. It takes my breath away. I do not know if it is that they do not watch TV or they do not read the newspapers or they do not talk to those who are on the ground in Iraq or those families who have lost loved ones, but the fact of the matter is this is a serious matter.

I think the only way that we are going to see a change in course is for Members of Congress to organize, like we are doing here in this Out of Iraq Caucus, for people across this country to join in protest, to join in dissent, to start writing their Members of Congress and saying, we demand that you end this war and end it now. That is the only way we are going to see an end to this war. Because I am convinced, watching this administration in action, that nothing will change.

Sadly, I am convinced, by watching the leadership of this Congress and how they have behaved during these last few years of this war, with this indifference, with this kind of cover-up

mentality, to not question the administration, to not hold them accountable for anything, to not do our job with proper oversight, I am convinced that unless Members of Congress are pressured by their constituents, then we will not act here as well.

□ 2145

Mr. Speaker, let me just conclude by saying that I love this country more than anything, and nothing disturbs me more than to see us involved in a war that we have no business being in. Nothing disturbs me more than to see the loss of innocent lives that we see going on each and every day.

I think we are better. I think we can do better. You know, great nations sometimes misstep. Sometimes great nations make mistakes. It is up to great nations to fix those mistakes. We have made a mistake in Iraq. This is not about whether we honor our troops or not. I honor our troops. I want to do more for our troops.

I wish the people on the other side of the aisle would join us in demanding more money for our veterans. I am worried about all of those men and women coming back from Iraq with post-traumatic stress syndrome. I am worried that they are not going to get the health care they deserve.

I am worried that their families are not getting the benefits that they need and that they deserve. I am worried about people coming back to no jobs. So this is not about our commitment to our troops. We are committed to our troops. We honor them. We are in awe of their service. They have done what their country has asked.

This is about whether this policy is right or whether this policy is wrong. And if you believe, as many of us do, that this policy is wrong, then you need to stand up and you need to be counted, and you need to demand that this policy change and change now.

It is not patriotic to remain silent in the face of policies that you object to. That is not patriotism. That is cowardice. And we need to stand up, those of us who believe that this war is wrong, and I know that there are many who are silent right now who believe as we do that this war was wrong. They need to stand up and join with us.

Enough is enough. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) put it eloquently and succinctly. Enough is enough. This war needs to come to an end. Not one more dollar, not one more death. This is the time to do it.

We are trying, with this caucus, to energize people on both sides of the aisle, this is not a partisan issue, to come together and demand that we change our policy. Our country is so much better. We are so much better than this. We stand for so much more than what is on display in Iraq.

And I hope, Mr. Speaker, that the White House listens to those of us in the United States Congress. Our numbers are growing each and every day who disagree with this war. And I hope

they are watching these public opinion polls and listening to people all across this land who are saying they do not want any more war, they do not want any more people to die.

They are tired of being engaged in a war that is dragging our good name into the mud. This is not America. We are so much better.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to listen to what we are saying tonight, to join with us and hopefully help put this country on a better course. With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS).

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for his eloquent and very thorough evaluation and assessment of what is happening in Iraq. He has been an absolute stalwart in trying to help bring this Congress to its senses and this administration. And I am so pleased that he was here this evening to further share with the American public our very, very deep concerns and our very deep feelings.

The gentleman's call for an end to this war, I think, is right on target. With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) to further discuss not only her long-time involvement with trying to help frame a direction for this Nation, her long-time commitment to challenging this administration, about the way that it went into this war, and what has been happening since we have been in this war, all the work that she has done, the many nights that she has been on the floor, the resolution that she did so well on with this Congress.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the Out of Iraq Caucus, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS), in bringing all of the voices together in the Congress, because we all have a lot to say. And we are all getting to the same conclusion, the conclusion that I reached a couple of years ago, actually. We do not need to be in Iraq. We are making a mistake. It is a faux war, and we need to bring our troops home now.

Mr. Speaker, I want to share a quote: "Victory means exit strategy, and it is important for the President to explain to us what that exit strategy is." Those words were not spoken by a Member of Congress, not by a prominent opponent of the Iraq war. They were not even spoken by this President about this war.

Those words were spoken in April 1999 about President Clinton's military campaign in Kosovo, and they were spoken by a Republican Governor named George W. Bush. But what a difference 6½ years makes. It is precisely an exit strategy that is missing from our Iraq policy.

With over 2,000 of our citizens dead, \$1 billion of tax dollars being spent in Iraq every week, the American people have a right to some answers to some important questions like, what exactly defines victory? What are the benchmarks of success? What is the long-

term plan? What does the end game look like? These are the questions that my leader of the Iraq Caucus has been asking about tonight.

We are paying for this war in blood and money. My home district lost a 23-year-old soldier less than a month ago. Why does the President insult us with empty platitudes about staying the course and staying in Iraq as long as it takes?

Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of traveling to Iraq 1 month ago. I went with a few of my colleagues here in the House. The most rewarding, the most enlightening part of the trip was simply having dinner and talking with the enlisted men and women, particularly those from my district, California's 6th Congressional District. It is Marin and Sonoma counties just north of the Golden Gate Bridge across the bridge from San Francisco.

These troops are online over there, believe me. They know I am against this war. They knew I was. They looked me up before I got there. And they immediately asked me, and they had every right to, Congresswoman, why are you here? You are against this war. My answer was straight. My answer was true. And my answer they believed. Yes, indeed, I told them, I am against this war. I have been against this war from the very beginning.

But I want you to know that I support the troops. I have been working within this Congress to make sure that you have the equipment you need to make sure that you have the health care over there, the best you can have; and when you get home, that you will have the benefits that we have promised you.

But in all of that, I remain against this war because I want you to come home and I want you to be home with your families. I want you to be alive. I want you to be mentally whole, and I also want you to be physically whole.

Mr. Speaker, these young people are the very best America has to offer. They are brave. They are intelligent. They are loyal. They are loyal to their country, to their mission, and to each other. They are profoundly committed to this mission, even those who told me privately that they do not support the war or the policy that underlies it.

They are genuine heroes whose courage and resolve is greater than our accolades can begin to convey. We truly have the most capable military the world has ever known. So what is the problem? The problem is that we do not have leaders in Washington worthy of these fine soldiers. Our troops have been failed, failed by their civilian superiors who sent them to Iraq on false pretenses, on a poorly defined mission without all of the tools they needed, and without a plan to get them out of there. If the President will not lead to bring our troops home, then we will.

And that is what the Out of Iraq Caucus is all about. Last month we assembled a group of Middle East experts and military strategists to explore viable

and compassionate exit strategies because the American people deserve better than the poor planning that has characterized every single phase of this war.

The extraordinary men and women who I met in Iraq most certainly deserve better. They deserve leaders as courageous and honorable as they are in return for their unfailing loyalty. They deserve basic competence and integrity. I have some suggestions of what the President should be doing next in order to bring our troops home immediately.

Part of what he must do is eat crow. He has to apologize to the rest of the international world for going into Iraq in the first place and trying to bring them into the war with him.

He must become a diplomat instead of a warrior because the way he is doing it now is not working. He also must reach out to the global world. He must ask worldwide for assistance to help Iraq return their country to their people.

He also must work internationally with the United Nations, with NATO, with the experts who have been through this before in South Africa and in Ireland. He must work with them, help them, give them the room to help the Iraqis in their reconstruction and reconciliation. We do not know how to do it, obviously. We only know how to cause a war. We need to work now on how to end that war and how not to totally leave the Iraqi people in a quagmire.

But speaking of quagmires, that is what our President has us in. He has us in a corner. It is a lose-lose situation. Actually, if we stay in Iraq, our troops will continue to be killed and maimed and innocent Iraqi civilians will lose their homes and their lives and their families.

If we leave, indeed we will leave Iraq in a bad way. It will be a bloody mess until they can figure out how to get their country back together. But we can help them put it back together, not militarily, but with a non-militaristic presence. Why we are not doing that is beyond me. That is how we should have been doing it in the first place.

So what I would like to suggest is that our President, I do not want to suggest it, what I would like to demand is that the President of the United States put together a plan to bring our troops home and to bring them home immediately.

I yield to the gentlewoman.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for her commitment, for her hard work, and for her sincere desire to provide leadership for this Congress to bring our troops home.

□ 2200

Mr. Speaker, you have heard from two of our hardest workers this evening about the war in Iraq. You have heard their assessments. You have listened to their advice.

I think it is important for us all to understand that not only have we gone into this war under false pretenses, having the American people believe that there were weapons of mass destruction when, in fact, there are no weapons of mass destruction. We have gone into this war with this administration making the American people believe that somehow Saddam Hussein was responsible for the 9/11 attacks when that certainly is not true. And al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden who have been determined to be responsible are still not contained, have not been apprehended.

The idea that somehow we must stay in Iraq because it is going to make us safer is the kind of argument that the American people just will not accept any more. As a matter of fact, I think the American people understand we are less safe because we are in Iraq. We are less safe because we have created a breeding ground for the training and development of these insurgents. We are less safe.

While the President talks about homeland security, it takes but a natural disaster to help Americans know that really we do not have a handle on homeland security at all. If, in fact, we can witness what happened to us as a result of Katrina, if we understand that not only were we not able to handle a disaster despite the fact we have this huge bureaucracy of homeland security under FEMA, and with all of that people were left stranded without food, without water, still we do not have a handle on how to get those people into temporary housing, let alone permanent housing.

So people have to be suspicious about what would happen to us in the event of a terrorist attack, and people have to wonder why are we putting all of this money and all of this effort into Iraq when the folks who were responsible for 9/11 still have not been apprehended.

People have to wonder what is it about this relationship with Saudi Arabia, when we know that the perpetrators of 9/11 were from Saudi Arabia, trained in the madrassas of our so-called friends, trained by the royal family's money that helped them to learn to hate the United States of America, yet we wrap our arms around them, we call them our friends. And after the 9/11 attack we went to their aid, and the members of that royal family that was in the United States of America, we picked them up one by one. We had airplanes dispatched across this country. We put them on those airplanes when Americans could not get on airplanes. When airplanes were grounded, when the Vice President of the United States could not get an airplane, we picked up the Saudis, we put them on the airplanes. We protected them, and we got them out of here.

We did not know whether or not they were tied to those that were responsible to 9/11. We did not understand

how the funding of some of the so-called nonprofit operations were really funds that were going into terrorist operations. We did not do an investigation. We did nothing but pick them up, protect them, and send them on their way. And we talk about homeland security. Give me a break.

We cannot trust that this administration can secure the homeland and certainly we are spending the taxpayers dollars, billions of dollars, billions of dollars in Iraq when perhaps we do need that money in our ports. We need those monies in our airports. We need those monies with helping to fund the first responders.

I have been holding emergency preparedness town halls all over my district. What do the first responders tell us? They do not have enough money. They do not have enough resources. They do not have the communication systems by which in the event of an attack that the various first responders can communicate with each other just as they did not have it in New Orleans.

So this effort that has been put forth by this administration is not a good one. Not only did they not plan well for the war, they never had an exit strategy going in. They never knew how they were going to get out. The headiness of Mr. Rumsfeld with his shock and awe campaign that led people to believe that somehow we were going to bomb people into submission, make people think that somehow we were protecting them from terrorism, that we were making this country safer, somehow because of the might of the bombs and the sophisticated artillery that somehow we were going to make Americans believe everything was all right.

At the moment the President declared "mission accomplished," the insurgents said, now let the war begin. And, guess what? They do not have the sophisticated technology that we have. They do not have the resources that we have. But you know what? They are wreaking havoc on us and our soldiers. They are killing our young people.

As it was said by some of my colleagues, it is all right to say we will be there for as long as it takes. But whose children are we talking about? Whose young people are we sending into war, a timeless war, when we cannot tell the American people how we are going to get out of it, where we never had a plan to get out of it? Whose children are dying?

The American people are fed up with this war. They have trusted this President and this administration long enough. Mr. President, it is time to bring our soldiers home. It is time to get out of Iraq.

The President consistently tells the American people that we will stand down when the Iraqis are ready to stand up. However, there is little evidence that the Iraqis are ready to take over their security responsibilities.

In July, the House Armed Services Committee ranking member, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON),

told us that he believed there were only about 5,000 trained Iraqis, even though the Bush administration claims to have trained 170,000.

General John P. Abizaid, who leads the U.S. Central Command, told the Senate Armed Services Committee in September that a single Iraqi battalion was at level one combat readiness, meaning it was capable of taking the lead in combat without support from coalition forces.

During the same testimony, General George W. Casey, Jr., who oversees U.S. forces in Iraq, said the number of level one battalions had dropped from three to one since June.

We cannot even get the right information, and that is why the Senate Democrats will take the action that they took. They had to go into closed session. They had to confront the Republicans in the Senate about the so-called investigations, about going on to phase two, to try and get information about what happened with our intelligence community. What did we know and when did we know it and what did we do about it? You cannot hide this information forever.

The tactics of this administration, misleading, not giving out all of the information, distorting information, will come to an end; and the retaliation against those who speak out is being unveiled now in a way that is causing the indictments and more to come.

The fact of the matter is this administration attempted to punish Ambassador Wilson by outing his wife, Valerie Plame. These tactics of distortion, intimidation, misleading information, rolling out Republican relations campaigns, all of this must come to an end. Americans cannot stand to be misdirected. Americans can stand no longer to be told mistruths. Americans can no longer take from their President and this administration that kind of treatment.

So we stand here tonight to say again and again, enough is enough. We have got to bring an end to this war. We have got to redirect our resources back to the people of this Nation. The war in Iraq has cost us almost \$3 billion so far. The funding would provide much-needed resources for Americans here at home for the money that we are sending in Iraq.

Let me just give you some idea what could have been provided: Health care for 46,458,000,805 people. Health care could have been provided for the amount of money that we are spending. 3,545,016,000 elementary schoolteachers could have been paid for. 27,93,000,473 Head Start places for children. 120,351,991,000 children's health care could have been paid for. We could have built 1,841,000,833 affordable housing units. We could have built another 24,000,072 new elementary schools. On and on. 39,000,665,748 scholarships for university students. 4,000,000,699 public safety officers or 3,204,000, 265 port container inspectors. I could go on and on.

The American people deserve to have their tax dollars spent not only to pro-

tect and secure us but to provide universal comprehensive health care. It is unconscionable to talk about we are going to be confronted with a pandemic but we do not have enough medicine. We do not have enough resources. We do not have enough hospitals. We do not know how we are going to take care of people in the event of a pandemic. It is unconscionable to talk about how in the event of a pandemic so many people are going to be at risk, to anticipate that so many people are going to die.

It is unconscionable to talk about you cannot pay for Katrina or Rita or any of these disasters that are confronting us unless we go back into the budget and reconcile and cut the budget deeper and deeper and deeper and do all of this while we continue to give a tax break to the richest people in America.

We are sick and tired of these policies that do not make good sense. We are sick and tired of the direction that is keeping us at war while we are hurting and undermining the people of this Nation. We are sick and tired of public policy that does not make good sense.

I am pleased that my colleague said this evening at the beginning of their discussions, we support our soldiers. Do not forget it was really this side of the aisle who forced the issue of protective gear for our soldiers when we discovered that, with all of the talk from Mr. Rumsfeld about we had enough soldiers and they had everything they needed, and we discovered that they were over there with spit and glue, literally trying to build protection, literally trying to figure out ways by which to stop the bullets. It was this side of the aisle that forced getting more money.

And we will continue to do that because we do respect, we do support our soldiers. We love them. That is why we want them home. We want them out of harm's way. We cannot tell them why they are there. We cannot tell them why they are losing their lives.

Many of those young men and women went there because they are patriotic. They believed their President. They went there because they thought they were doing something good for their country, only to discover that they were misled, that there are no answers.

Many of them went there because they were looking for a way out. They were looking for ways by which to provide for their families. They were jobless in America, in the rural communities, in the inner cities.

We have not done right by our young men and women. We have not done right by them. We have neither provided them with the security and the protection that they need to serve in this war, nor have we respected their right to have the answers to the questions that they are raising.

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I would like to at this time have a colloquy with my dear friend from California who has worked so hard on this issue.

Do you believe that if we bring our soldiers home that we will be taking the kind of action that will not only bring resources back to this country that could be spent domestically, but in the final analysis, we are taking them out of harm's way because if they stay there there will be more and more deaths, and we still will not be able to contain what perhaps is going to be a civil war anyway between the Shiites, the Sunnis and the Kurds?

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Congresswoman totally, and the American people know that you are right in what you said. This Congress, this Pentagon, this administration will eventually catch up to the American people who know that we should not be in Iraq in the first place and that our staying there will not solve any problems. We will lose more troops. They will come home maimed or dead, and we will injure more innocent Iraqis and destroy their communities and their neighborhoods and their lives; and when we leave, whatever is going to happen will happen anyway. In the meantime, our troops will be losing.

What I would like to ask is, if the President really believes that we are ending terrorism by being in Iraq, why in the world has he not found Osama bin Laden? Iraq was not an Islamic terrorist country until we went in, and now they are.

I asked the commanders directly, first, who is the enemy? The answer was more than once, as a matter of fact, the insurgents are fighting the very presence of the United States in Iraq because we do appear as occupiers. When I asked the question who are the insurgents, they are not coming from across the border. The great majority of the insurgents are indeed local. They want us gone because they see us as occupiers.

We are helping build local insurgents by our presence. Our presence needs to be there over time, but not in a militaristic way. Our presence needs to be to help the Iraqi people rebuild their infrastructure, their economic infrastructure and their physical infrastructure that we have so destroyed. If we want the end of terrorism, go after the guy that blew up our buildings in New York, go after Osama bin Laden.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentlewoman is absolutely correct. As a matter of fact, they do not even talk about Osama bin Laden anymore.

I am absolutely outraged that we put money into Pakistan. We think we have a friend there, Musharraf; but we know that that border between Afghanistan and Pakistan is where we have al Qaeda, is where we have terrorists. We believe that is where Osama bin Laden is. I believe that he is being protected by those who we are trusting in Pakistan. I believe that we are not putting enough time and effort on that border where we have not only the terrorists and al Qaeda, but increasingly, the Taliban is rising again from the Afghanistan side of all of this.

So we just have a misdirected administration who has messed up everything. They have created a crisis. Our young men and women are dying. We are spending American taxpayers' dollars. This money is going out of the window. We are not accomplishing anything. We are getting ripped off in more ways than one. Halliburton is making all of its money. They have been cheating us, and we have slapped them on the wrist, and we have let them go.

We are sick and tired. Enough is enough, and I would like to say to the gentlewoman from California, if you have one last word in this 1 minute or so, please.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, my last word is wake up, catch up with the American people. Bring our troops home if you support them.

DEFICIT REDUCTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, tonight, we are coming here to talk about a very important piece of legislation titled the Deficit Reduction Act.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation is seeing a number of challenges here, obviously 9/11, which we have heard a lot about. Recently our Nation has been hit with a number of hurricanes, natural disasters that have proven very, very costly to our Nation. Now we have seen the threat of avian flu. There are a number of different challenges our Nation faces, and we will meet these challenges; but meeting these challenges is not free.

Particularly within the context of the hurricanes that have hit, at the end of the day, when we look at the Federal response, how much money the Federal Government is going to spend, there are really only three ways that we are going to be able to pay for this. Either number one we are going to raise taxes on hardworking American families yet again as they are facing challenges in meeting the cost of filling up their pick-up trucks and heating their homes, or we are going to pass debt on to our children, even more debt to be passed on to our children. But, Mr. Speaker, we on the Republican side of the aisle believe that there is another way, and that way is to restrain the growth of government. That way is to protect the family budget from the Federal budget.

We are going to spend some time, Mr. Speaker, this evening bringing up some very interesting facts that we believe the American people need to know.

Number one, you will hear this evening about how tax relief that we have brought to American families and small businesses, that has been part of our deficit solution, not part of our def-

icit problem; and we will talk about that later this evening because there has been a lot of misinformation there.

In addition, we have heard the other side talk about gross and draconian cuts in the Federal budget. Well, what we are going to discover, Mr. Speaker, is what they call a draconian cut is trying to restrain the growth of government so we do not have to raise taxes, so we do not have to pass on debt to our children. It is the same old song we have heard from them for 50 years.

What we also hear from them is that somehow any reform, any accountability that we institute in the Federal budget is somehow tantamount to hurting the poor. Mr. Speaker, we do not buy that. The American people do not buy that either because we know that year after year after year, as we dump new programs on top of old programs, as the Federal Government refuses to measure the success, the progress, the ability of these programs to meet goals, that we have a budget now that is fraught with waste. It is fraught with abuse. It is fraught with duplication.

Mr. Speaker, finally, not all spending is created equal. Families all over America have to make some tough decisions occasionally at the end of the month when that paycheck begins to run out, and this is what people do in a great Nation.

In my own family, if we are a little low on money at the end of the month, I am not going to tell my two children, my 3½-year-old daughter and 2-year-old son, I am sorry, children, you just cannot have anymore milk because your mom and I have got this great movie we want to go see. What happens is my wife and I do not go to the movie. Instead, we buy the milk for the children.

Some spending in the Federal budget is just not high priority, not when compared to trying to relieve human suffering along the gulf coast that has been wrought by these hurricanes. So the American people, I think they instinctively know, but occasionally we have to remind them about what is in this Federal budget.

Mr. Speaker, often when we spend money here in Washington, D.C., many good things come from it: Kevlar vests for our brave men and women fighting in Iraq and fighting in the global war on terror. Occasionally money is spent to help start a small business; but more often than not, though, we see that this money is spent for an \$800,000 outhouse in a national park and the toilet does not even flush. We see it spent on 342 different Federal economic development programs, 342. Does that not suggest some duplication? More often than not, it is spent on food stamps where 10, 20, and sometimes 30 percent of the recipients do not even qualify because we are not checking their income levels, and the list goes on and on and on.

The important thing, Mr. Speaker, that we need to know this evening is

that there are plenty of places in the Federal budget where we can save money so that families do not have to cut their budgets because every dollar we spend here is a dollar that we cannot spend back in Texas or Tennessee or Virginia or New York.

At the end of the day, it is not the government's money. It is the people's money, and we need to institute more accountability in the system. I wish more of our friends on the Democrat side of the aisle would come and help us, but too often they have bottled up each and every reform. They do not believe that there is any waste in the Federal budget. They do not believe there is any duplication in the Federal budget. They believe all spending is great spending, that nothing good has ever happened in our Nation unless it as the result of a Federal program; and that is not true.

So, Mr. Speaker, the first thing that we want to discuss this evening is to talk a little bit about what is in this Federal budget, this \$2.4 trillion budget, a budget that over the last 10 years has been growing at least a third faster than the family budget, a Federal budget that, in my lifetime, Mr. Speaker, has grown seven times faster than the family budget. That is an unconscionable growth rate. That is an unsustainable growth rate.

Again, our purpose here is to provide reforms. It is to provide accountability, and it is to spare our children the future of having to have a massive tax increase or massive debt placed on them.

So we want to talk about different ways that we believe that we can save money in Washington, D.C. without cutting vital programs. We want to make sure that the social safety net is in place; but we know that the greatest social welfare program, the greatest housing program, the greatest education program in the history of mankind is a job, a job provided by the American free enterprise system, which is what our economic policies are all about. That is why we have been able to create 4 million new jobs in this economy, with tax relief for small businesses and American families.

So there are a lot of things that we need to do to protect that family budget from the Federal budget; and I am very, very happy, Mr. Speaker, that I have been joined by a number of our colleagues who are leaders in this Congress on trying to help root out this waste and this fraud and this abuse and this duplication in the Federal budget so that we can indeed protect that family budget.

One of the individuals who is joining us this evening is one of the leaders in government reform, a colleague of mine that I have been very proud to know, a real leader in this Congress on that subject, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN); and I would be glad to yield to her.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for