

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her 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. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE 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 North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. FOXX addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE OFFICIAL TRUTH SQUAD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. PRICE) is recognized for half the remaining time until midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity once again to come before the House. I want to thank the leadership and the conference for their providing us the opportunity to come and talk this evening for a while and share some views with the Members of the House about a very important topic.

We have coined this on occasion the Official Truth Squad. This is the House Official Truth Squad, the Republican conference Official Truth Squad that grew out of a general frustration on the part of many Members of the freshmen class, 25, 26 strong, who are now about 18 months into our first term in Congress.

And after about 6 months, we met and shared conversation and thoughts about the House of Representatives and where we are going as a Nation. There was some real concern about what we sensed as the politics of division and the politics of deception that seemed to be practiced by many here in this Chamber and across the land, frankly.

So we organized what we called the Official Truth Squad and come to the floor of the House on many occasions, as often as possible, at least try to do it at least once a week. We broadened that participation in the Official Truth Squad, Mr. Speaker, because I think other Members of the conference felt that was an appropriate thing to do, to try to bring some light, shed some light and truth on the issues that we talk about here in the United States House of Representatives, because it is so doggone important to make certain that we have truth and facts when we are talking about issues. Because if you don't have the right facts, the truth of the matter is, it is tough to get to the appropriate solution.

□ 2245

We have adopted a slogan or a quote that we like to call on by the late Sen-

ator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and he had a quote that he used often. He said everyone is entitled to their own opinion, but they are not entitled to their own facts, and I think that kind of crystallizes the genesis of the Official Truth Squad and why we felt it was so important to come to this floor and talk about various issues.

So, Mr. Speaker, tonight is a topic that is extremely important, and it is a discussion that is important, and it is a topic that demands the truth.

Tonight, we are going to talk a bit about the war on terror, and it is one of those areas where, yes, people can have their own opinions, and it is important but it is also important to make certain that we think and talk about the facts of the war on terror.

I am going to be joined by a number of colleagues this evening, but I wanted to start off by outlining or by citing actions, events that have occurred in the war on terror. And many people have differing opinions as to when the war on terror actually began, when did the terrorism begin to threaten us. I think it probably was in 1979, and we will talk about that a little bit, but I want to just highlight a list of terrorist activities that I think bring real focus to the war on terror and that, Mr. Speaker, are terribly sobering, but I think they are important as we kick off this discussion about the war on terror.

There are literally tens, if not hundreds, of events that one could cite as being associated with the acts of terrorism around the world, but I would like to just highlight a number of them here.

I am going to go in chronological order. I am going to start in 1961 when the first U.S. aircraft was hijacked on May 1, 1961.

A number of events occurred over the next decade, but we all remember the Munich Olympic massacre on September 5, 1972.

The ambassador to the Sudan was assassinated on March 2, 1973. U.S. ambassador to Sudan Cleo Noel. Other diplomats assassinated at the Saudi Arabian embassy in Khartoum.

There was the attack and hijacking at the Rome airport in December, December 17, 1973.

The United States ambassador to Cyprus, Rodger Davies, and his Greek Cypriot secretary were shot and killed on August 19, 1974.

Ambassador to Afghanistan was assassinated on February 14, 1979, and of course, the Iran hostage crisis began in November of 1979 when Iranian radicals seized the U.S. embassy in Tehran and took 66 American diplomats hostage, holding 53 of them for 444 days.

Grand mosque seizure, November 20, 1979, in Mecca.

U.S. installation bombing, August 31, 1981 in Ramstein, West Germany.

Assassination of President Sadat, the Egyptian President, on October 6, 1981.

Murder of missionaries on December 4, 1981 in El Salvador.

The bombing of the U.S. embassy in Beirut, April 18, 1983. Sixty-three people, including the CIA's Middle East director, were killed. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.

Naval officer assassinated in El Salvador on May 25, 1983.

Bombing of the marine barracks, Beirut, October 23, 1983. There were simultaneous suicide truck bomb attacks made on American and French compounds in Beirut, killing 242 Americans and 58 French troops killed when a 400-pound device was deployed at a French base. The Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.

Facts, Mr. Speaker.

Naval officer was assassinated in Greece, November 15, 1983.

Kidnapping of an embassy official and the murder of political officer William Buckley in Beirut, Lebanon, March 16, 1984.

Restaurant bombing in Spain, April 12, 1984. Eighteen U.S. servicemen were killed, 83 people injured.

TWA hijacking June 14, 1985.

Achille Lauro hijacking, October 7, 1985.

Aircraft bombing in Greece, March 30, 1986.

Berlin discotheque bombing, April 5, 1986, two U.S. soldiers killed and 79 American servicemen injured.

Bus attack, April 24, 1987, 16 U.S. servicemen riding in a Greek air force bus near Athens were injured.

Kidnapping of William Higgins on February 17, 1988. He was kidnapped and murdered by Iranian-backed Hezbollah.

Naples USO attack on April 14, 1988.

Attack on U.S. diplomat in Greece, June 28, 1988. Defense attache to the U.S. embassy in Greece was killed when a car bomb was detonated outside his home in Athens.

Pan Am 103 bombing, December 21, 1988. Pan Am 103 was blown up over Lockerbie, Scotland, by a bomb believed to have been placed by Libyan terrorists, 259 people killed.

And then of course, Mr. Speaker, the first World Trade Center bombing, February 26, 1993, when a car bomb, planted by Islamic terrorists, exploded in an underground garage leaving six people dead and 1,000 people injured.

Something we oftentimes forget or very few people talk about, there was an attempted assassination on President Bush by Iraqi agents on April 14, 1993.

Saudi military installation attacked November 13, 1995.

Khobar Towers bombing June 25, 1996, in Dhahran, killing 19 U.S. military personnel, wounding 515 persons including 240 U.S. personnel.

Empire State Building sniper attack in February of 1997.

The murder of a U.S. businessmen in Pakistan, November 12, 1997.

U.S. embassy bombings in east Africa. August 7, 1998, a bomb exploded at the rear entrance of the U.S. embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, killing 12 U.S. citizens and 32 foreign service nationals

and 247 Kenyan citizens. Almost simultaneously a bomb detonated in Tanzania, killing 7 foreign service nationals, 3 Tanzanian citizens and injuring 1 U.S. citizen and 76 Tanzanians.

It is sobering, Mr. Speaker.

Attack on USS *Cole*. October 12, 2000, a small dinghy carrying explosives rammed the destroyer USS *Cole* killing 17 sailors.

Manila bombing in December 2000.

Philippines hostage incident, May 2001.

And then the attack on September 11, 2001, on the U.S. homeland, four planes, two colliding with the twin towers in New York, one crashing in a field in southern Pennsylvania and one crashing into the Pentagon, 3,025 United States citizens and other nationals killed.

Mr. Speaker, you can have opinions about what is going on here, but you cannot dispute the facts. That the war on terror should have begun long ago. The terrorism has plagued our Nation for years. This is a long, long battle, and it is a real war.

So to talk about some of those facts tonight I am pleased to be joined by some very good friends and colleagues. Representative ERIC CANTOR is the deputy majority whip from the State of Virginia, and he joins us this evening to talk a little bit about the war on terror and to share some perspective during this week when we have had actually some very, very good news and some very good facts come out on the war on terror.

I am pleased to yield to my good friend from Virginia (Mr. CANTOR).

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia, and Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the gentleman for his meticulous research in recounting the numerous incidents of terrorist acts against American citizens over the last several decades, and I think that the gentleman makes a point that will really be the focal point, the central point of the debate of the floor of this House on Thursday, and that is, that the war in Iraq, the war in Afghanistan and all of the other incidents that the gentleman speaks of is part of a greater war against terrorists.

I want to respond to a statement that was made earlier from a colleague from the other side of the aisle. He ended his remarks by mentioning the war in Iraq and portraying it as a vicious war we should never have been in anyway.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that the gentleman from Georgia has just laid out the facts as they are. We did not ask for this war. The terrorists started this war. We must respond in order to secure our citizenry, in order to secure America.

I would, however, like to pick up from where the gentleman left off and the fact that we have experienced some victories over the last week, one in which we saw the killing of Zarqawi who was a leader in a terrorist activity in Iraq against American citizens and

others, and it demonstrated, Mr. Speaker, that we are making progress, that we are able to penetrate and begin to dismantle this terrorist infrastructure that frankly has identified Iraq as the front in their war against America.

I would also like to call the House's attention, Mr. Speaker, to another victory that we experienced last week.

On June 8, which was Thursday, Mr. Speaker, the guided missile destroyer USS *Cole* joined two Iwo Jima Expeditionary Strike Group on their way to the Middle East. This marked the USS *Cole*'s first return to Middle Eastern waters since the October 12, 2000, surprise terrorist attack on the ship while it refueled in Aden Harbor, Yemen.

On a somber note, this viscous, unprovoked terrorist attack by al Qaeda terrorists on this U.S. warship claimed the lives of 17 U.S. sailors. Among these brave sailors was Hull Maintenance Technician 2nd Class Kenneth Eugene Clodfelter who was a constituent of mine.

His loss will forever be felt and his service never forgotten by any of us, by the citizens of his home county, Hanover County, Virginia, and in fact, the entire Nation.

It is a fitting tribute that the ship on which Kenneth served and gave his life returns to those same waters, reborn, resilient and again ready to bring the fight to the enemy, the Islamic fascist terrorists who seek only death and oppression.

Mr. Speaker, I believe this statement by the USS *Cole*'s newest commanding officer, Commander Bradley Roberson, says it best, and Commander Roberson said: "We draw strength from this being a very stout and resolute hull. The crew reflects that and the fighting spirit of the navy. I think the ship symbolizes America, its determination, its fortitude and the resolve that we will be around no matter what."

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take a moment to commend and honor the thousands of Virginian National Guard and Reserve soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines who have served in our struggle to rid the world of Islamic-fascist terror.

As we speak, more than 1,000 brave men and women in dozens of Army Reserve, Army National Guard, Marine Corps Reserve, Navy Reserve, Air National Guard units from central Virginia continue in this struggle.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would again like to thank the gentleman from Georgia for his leadership, not only on the Official Truth Squad, but on this very, very important topic of the war against the terrorists, a war against an enemy that frankly harbors a view of the world very different from those of us in this country and one in which we will not stand down.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments and his keen perspective and dedication to the support of our men and women in the military who are waging this incredibly important battle and

incredibly important war. Thank you so much for your participation tonight in bringing a little light, a little vision and a little truth to the discussion.

We are also joined tonight by Congresswoman MARSHA BLACKBURN from Tennessee who is almost a regular on the Official Truth Squad that brings some truth and light to so many topics, and she has a clear vision as well and a great perspective on the importance of truth in this discussion but also the importance of waging this war on terror, and I am happy to yield to my good friend from Tennessee.

□ 2300

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding. He is so appropriate in his remarks this evening as we talk about the big picture of what is happening with the war on terror and reminding us that this is not something that happened last week, last month, last year, or just within the last decade. This is something that started happening four decades ago and has grown more and more and more repetitive in attacks and actions and outward expressions of aggression as we have moved through the past four decades.

Yes, what has happened is we have moved from responding to these terrorist attacks as acts of civil disobedience to getting to the point after September 11 that we said, no, this is not just civil disobedience, this is an act of war. This is now a global war on terror and, indeed, it is important, it is imperative that we win in the battles in Afghanistan and that we win in the battles in Iraq. And as the gentleman from Georgia has mentioned, this is not something that is going to be quick and easy. This is going to be a long fight and a long struggle.

We must be certain that we all realize that our enemy is not an enemy that is located in one single place. There are terrorist cells all around the globe. At this point, yes, indeed, primarily they are drawn into Iraq because of the battle that is there, and that is one of the reasons it is important that we fight and that we win.

As the gentleman from Georgia knows, Mr. Speaker, we are winning. And we hear this from our men and women in uniform. We hear it from them in the stories that they recount to us. We hear it from their families. And we are very, very grateful to every one of these families and every man and woman in uniform who stands and fights and who understands the mission of why we fight.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. If the gentleman will yield.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. I would be glad to yield to the gentleman.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. A couple of points you make are so important for this discussion. One is about the quality and nature of our enemy. It is unlike any enemy we have ever faced because it is not an enemy who is attaining ground or territory. This is an

enemy that hates us because of who we are, what we are, and what kind of government we have. They clearly have stated that democracy is their enemy. It is not a territory.

And you mentioned about the troops being behind our actions virtually 100 percent. I was so heartened to see the President in Baghdad earlier today in the tape we saw and the welcome he received from our U.S. troops. It was just incredibly moving to see our President visit our troops there and to visit the new government in Iraq.

I yield back.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Indeed, it is heartening to see that. And what a source of encouragement for those men and women in uniform to be in their day working in Baghdad and all of a sudden they receive the news that their Commander in Chief has flown through the night to come and say thank you to them for that work; thank you for what they are doing for this country.

And as the gentleman just mentioned, we fight because we have an enemy that would destroy what this country is built on. It would destroy what we stand for. It is imperative that we win so that we continue with America as we know America, so that we continue to live our lives in freedom, so that our children go to school not in fear but go ready to learn and with a sense of security, so that we live in our homes, so that we go to work, so that we have our daily life and carry on our business and do it without the fear of being interrupted by terrorist threats, by terrorist strikes, by terrorist fighting that would take place in our streets, in our cities here in America.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. If the gentleman will yield once again.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Be happy to.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I think it is important because when we talk about opinions and facts, a lot of people have their opinions about the nature of our enemy and what their goal is, but the fact of the matter is you don't have to look too far because you can look to their words. You can look to their words, and we have a quote here from al-Zarqawi, who was finally brought to justice in the past couple of days, and what he said in January of 2005.

These are his words, now. These are not our words but his words: "We have declared a fierce war on this evil principle of democracy and those who follow this wrong ideology." That is the nature of our enemy. That is why it is unlike any enemy that we have ever, ever had before.

And I yield back to the gentlewoman.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. The gentleman is so correct in that, and for them it is a fierce war to bring down the pillars of free enterprise, to bring down those underpinnings of democracy that allow us to be a productive society, that allow us to be a free society.

I know that I join the gentleman from Georgia in looking forward to the debate we are going to have in this body this week, and I want to again

thank the leadership for setting aside this time for us to focus once again on why we fight and why we must win and why it is imperative that we have a democratic ally in the Middle East and that we break apart the stranglehold that terrorism has had on that region of the world.

I thank the gentleman for the time, and I yield back to him.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I appreciate so much your participation tonight, and I join you in looking forward to our discussion and our debate on Thursday. We will spend the majority of the day here in the United States House of Representatives talking about the war in Iraq and talking about the war on terror and the importance of it and bringing a perspective that I think is so needed for the American people to see and appreciate as we recognize the longevity of the battle that has occurred already and the challenges that we have before us.

I am so pleased to be joined by my colleague from Georgia this evening, Congressman PHIL GINGREY, my good physician colleague from Georgia and also congressional colleague from Georgia. He is an individual also who recognizes the extreme importance of the support of our military forces and the gravity of the war in which we are engaged now, this war on terror.

I am pleased to have you join us tonight and yield to you.

Mr. GINGREY. I thank my colleague from Georgia for yielding. I certainly, certainly appreciate, Mr. Speaker, the Official Truth Squad that the gentleman has led, and particularly tonight in regard to this subject.

The gentleman spent 10 or 15 minutes actually going through a historical perspective, taking us, Mr. Speaker, all the way back to the 1960s, as he outlined the attacks that have occurred against this country, and made the point that this policy that we have had heretofore prior to our President's response to 9/11, on September 11, 2001, this so-called policy of containment that has proven itself to be a dismal failure because of these attacks, one right after another, as the gentleman pointed out, Khobar Towers, U.S.S. *Cole*, first attack on the World Trade Center, and finally leading up to the horrendous killing of over 3,000 people on September 11.

We didn't start this fight, Mr. Speaker; and I think that is the gentleman's point. It was just astounding to me to hear someone from the other side earlier this evening imply that we started this battle, that we have got no business defending freedom and standing up for the rule of law.

Edmund Burke once said that "all that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." And quite honestly, Mr. Speaker, over the last 40 years, as the gentleman from Georgia has pointed out, we basically did nothing. It was like turning the other cheek, or I dare you to do that again, or I double dog, even triple dog

dare you to strike at us again, and on and on and on. And finally this President and this Congress had the courage to stand up and take it to the enemy. And I would point out that at that particular time, Mr. Speaker, this battle was not against any one individual but this was a long slog, that it was going to be tough, that the global war on terrorism would not end with just one battle.

It is so interesting, as we hear from the other side, that finally the tracking down and the killing of Zarqawi was almost a nonevent. It doesn't matter. They are going to replace him with someone just as terrible and we won't even notice the difference. That would be like saying that Knute Rockne was going to be replaced at Notre Dame, or a Lou Gehrig was going to be replaced by the New York Yankees and nobody would know the difference.

This guy was the worst of the worst. And I think that what we have done last week in killing Zarqawi is a tremendous accomplishment for our military, for the Iraqi people, for the intelligence that was brought to bear that led to the success and also, Mr. Speaker, in regard to the Iraqi Government finally, very carefully vetting individuals to place as ministers of defense, ministers of interior, and minister of their national security. These are huge items of success.

I want to say to my colleagues on the other side that we will, as the gentleman from Georgia has pointed out, we will discuss this thoroughly, and every Member in this body will have an opportunity to have their say about what we are trying to do and whether we support continuing this battle or whether we decide that it is time that, as the gentleman from the State of Washington said earlier this evening, to bring our troops home. I think it is very simple. I hear the Members on the other side of the aisle saying, well, the American people are against this, the American people have turned against this. Well, if that is the case, when we have this simple resolution on Thursday or Friday morning, then they will have an opportunity then to vote the way they think the American people want.

I, Mr. Speaker, refute that. I think the American people stand strong and understand that when you are in a contest, you don't say, we are going to play the game for 60 minutes, but if it happens to go into overtime then we are going to pull our team off the field because we don't want to go any further. This is what this is all about.

And, again, I want to thank the gentleman from Georgia for leading the Official Truth Squad. As he said at the outset, you are entitled to your own opinion, but you are not entitled to your own facts, and these are the facts that Congressman PRICE has brought to us as he outlined what has happened over the last 40 years.

It is time that we stood up. We are going to win this battle, and we want

to make sure that every Member of this body has an opportunity to vote yea or nay. So I commend the gentleman from Georgia, and I yield back to him.

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. I thank the gentleman for joining us tonight, and I appreciate your perspective and your commitment to our servicemen and -women and for the sober reflection that you gave on the situation that we find ourselves in today and the importance, the real importance of this war. And it is a real war. It is a real war, and you know and understand that as well as anybody.

I also appreciate your reminding folks again that on Thursday we will be spending time on this floor discussing the war on terror and the importance of it and why America has found itself in this situation, why it is important that we respond in the way that we have.

When I am at home, I hear people talk about the war in Iraq. And whenever I discuss this with some of my constituents, I oftentimes will say it is important for us to remember that this war in Iraq is really just the battle in Iraq in the larger war on terror. And the gentleman from Georgia just described it extremely well, that the policy of containment that we had used in the past, prior to 9/11, was a dismal failure. And so this is truly a war. It is a real war. It is a real war in which we must engage, and it wasn't of our choosing. It wasn't of our choosing, Mr. Speaker.

I want to spend the final few moments that I have to talk about an issue that is related to the war on terror and the battle in Iraq that we have right now, because you hear so many people say, how are we going to know when it is over? How are we going to know what victory is? How will we know when we win?

It is difficult. I understand that. It is difficult because this, again, is a war unlike any war we have ever had. Victory in Iraq will not come in the form of our enemy surrendering, because our enemy doesn't hold any territory. It is not like they can say, okay, I give up, I am not going to fight any more. And it won't be signaled by a single particular event.

For folks who remember past wars and past ends to past wars, there will be no Battleship *Missouri* signing. There will be no Appomattox signing. The ultimate victory in the battle in Iraq will be in stages. And I think it is important to point out that these stages have been defined by members of the military and members of this administration and have been articulated by the administration as well as members of the United States House of Representatives leadership and others.

□ 2315

And they have been defined in the short term, in the medium term and in the long term. I would like to run through those briefly because I think it

is important for the American people to appreciate that yes, indeed, there are benchmarks that one can follow, and that we have made incredible progress, not just in the war on terror but in the battle in Iraq.

In the short term, we have an Iraq that is fighting the terrorists and neutralizing the insurgency, meeting political milestones, which they have done to a remarkable degree, building democratic institutions and standing up robust security forces. We hear over and over that those security forces number around 250,000, which is truly remarkable. They are destroying terrorist networks and maintaining security and tackling key economic reforms to lay the foundation for a sound economy.

So in the short term, those are the kinds of benchmarks that we should be looking at. Many of them have been accomplished.

In the medium term, an Iraq that is in the lead defeating terrorists and insurgents and providing its own security with a constitutional, elected government in place. Mr. Speaker, that is a medium-term goal that has been described for a number of years and in fact has now been accomplished, providing an inspiring example to reformers in the region, and well on its way to achieving its own economic potential.

And then in the longer term, Mr. Speaker, we will know that victory in Iraq has been obtained when an Iraq has defeated the terrorists and neutralized the insurgency, an Iraq that is peaceful and united and stable and democratic and secure where Iraqis have the institutions and resources that they need to govern themselves justly and to provide security for their own country, and an Iraq that is a partner, a partner in the global war on terror and the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, integrated into the international community and an engine for regional economic growth and proving the fruits of democratic governments to the region.

Mr. Speaker, those are the kinds of benchmarks we ought to be looking at. There won't be a surrender. There won't be a signing. There won't be a waving of the white flag certainly by our enemy. We just hope Members in this body and across the Nation do not wave the white flag. This is an important battle. It is a part of the war on terror. It is imperative that we wage this with the vigor and enthusiasm and the spirit that we saw on the faces and heard in the voices of American soldiers as they greeted President Bush as he made his visit to Baghdad.

Mr. Speaker, America is a wondrous and a glorious nation. Freedom's light is strong here. We are a vessel of liberty and a beacon of hope to so many people around the world. The work that we do here is so important as we continue to provide that American leadership, international leadership, and show that light, show that light of freedom.

I am so proud to have the opportunity to stand here with my colleagues and to highlight some of the truthful and honest efforts that this government, this administration, this House of Representatives is taking to make certain that that vessel of liberty and that beacon of hope rings true around the world.

CROSSROADS IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) is recognized for the remaining time until midnight as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, tonight I wish to speak about Iraq, a separate and distinct war from the war on terrorism. Those who are terrorists with their genesis in Afghanistan have a goal of creating a fundamentalist Muslim caliphate all across the Middle East. The insurgents are Baathists and Sunnis in Iraq who have as their goal a separate and distinct one of toppling the government that is there and creating their own.

My friends on the other side of the aisle wish to confuse the battle against terrorists and the battle against insurgents in the country of Iraq. Tonight I wish to speak about Iraq because we are at a strategic crossroads as a Nation regarding that war.

I wish to speak about the health of our military that is being drained by the war in Iraq. As a matter of fact, we are sustaining a battalion's worth of casualties every month wounded and killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. The number of attacks on the American and allied forces is at the highest level since the insurgency began despite the increase of America combat operations and the introduction of some 40 new Iraq security forces and battalions.

An ABC poll shows that 60 percent of Americans disapprove of the situation in Iraq. What is responsible for us arriving at this point? I have to say a lot of good words about our military, the finest we have ever had, they are doing a superb job. I am proud of them, and every American should be. But there have been operational strategic mistakes sadly made by the administration that has brought us to this point at a crossroads in Iraq.

First, allowing the looting; second, not having a plan for the aftermath, although duly warned; by dismissing the Iraqi Army rather than giving them a paycheck and a shovel; failure to plan and have American civilian professionals from the State Department, Transportation Department, Agriculture Department, and Judiciary with the right skills to advise the Iraqis when they took over their governmental ministries; the failure to react to the wartime collapse of the Iraqi military and security police forces; and the decision to disband the Army, as I mentioned; failure to have a