

A lot has changed in Iraq. It has been 3 years since the Saddam Hussein regime fell. It has been 2 years since an interim government was formed and the sovereignty of Iraq was transferred to that interim government. It has been 15 months since the first elections in Iraq. Iraq has a new constitution. They have elected a permanent government.

In December of 2005 we went on record in the defense authorization bill that 2006 should be a year of transition in which the Iraqi security forces take control of their own security. That has not happened.

It is time to change the policies in Iraq, and yet the President still says let's stay the course. We need a new direction in Iraq. That direction should include the drawdown of American troops. We have 130,000 soldiers serving in Iraq. 20 percent are from our National Guard and Reservists. Military experts have recommended a drawdown of 10,000 troops a month.

Although we should not announce a specific time schedule, it is reasonable to expect that one-half of our combat troops could be home by the end of 2006, and all of our combat troops home by the end of 2007. It should start with our National Guard. They were never intended to be the primary coverage for a military operation. We need them home to meet local needs.

This would allow us to achieve certain necessary objectives, bringing our troops home to their families and not in the middle of a civil war. It is an important message to the Iraqi government that they cannot assume that American soldiers will be there indefinitely to take care of their own security needs. It would remove propaganda for al Qaeda in which they look at the United States as being an occupation force, and it allows us to stage outside of Iraq to work with our allies and international community to fight international terrorism. We have lost our focus in the war against terror. It would help us preserve an all-volunteer military.

We also need to organize an international conference, including the Iraqi government and our friends internationally. The United States is the only superpower. We need to mend our diplomatic fences. We need to engage the international community. It is in their interest to help us in Iraq, to create a ceasefire for the Iraqi government and its militia, train the security forces, and coordinate humanitarian aid and infrastructure assistance.

We need to honor our commitment to our military veteran families and strengthen troop recruitment. The voluntary military is in danger because of excessive deployments. Morale is down because of long tours of duty and our failure to live up to our commitments on veterans' benefits.

The recruitment goal in 2005 was missed by 6,000, and our National Guard and Reservists have only hit 80 percent of their goal. The answer is the

proper deployment of our military and honoring our veterans, commitments on benefits, including health benefits, so that the 18,000 who are returning injured from Iraq and the 50,000 who we anticipate will have battle fatigue related issues are dealt with as we have promised.

Mr. Speaker, I call upon the President to change course in Iraq in order to further U.S. interests.

FISCAL RESTRAINT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, there is an ongoing joke here in Washington that the Democrats have no agenda. It is a joke, Mr. Speaker, and it would be very funny if it were not so true. There are ongoing press reports, just this week there is a press report that the Democrats planned to roll out their agenda this week. Well, it is funny because they decided not to. Well, it is also funny because this is a press report that goes back since November of last year. They keep having these press reports that say we are going to roll out our agenda next week. The next week comes and goes, and no Democrat agenda.

It is an amazing thing that such a formerly great party with such high ideals and strong agenda can't even get together an election-year agenda. It is an amazing thing to me as a conservative who has an agenda, who is a member of a party who has an agenda. It is a wonderful thing that the party leadership won't come together. The party leadership won't come together and issue an agenda.

Now I know there are some on the other side of the aisle that have high ideals and have an agenda, but the Democratic leadership in Washington won't come together and issue an agenda. I am hopeful they will because I think what their agenda will show, when they do issue their agenda, it will show two things: Waving the white flag on the war against Islamic extremists and raising taxes. It is a two-part agenda, and I am going to boil it down to those two things.

They are going to wave the white flag and say this war is not worth fighting, let's bring all of our servicemen home. Let's just work with terrorist attacks on our home soil rather than taking the fight to the enemy wherever they are.

The second part of that is big government. How do you have big government, Mr. Speaker? You have big government by having big taxes, by taking more out of the economy and bring it here to Washington, D.C., by taxing people more wherever they are in this Nation, Mr. Speaker, by taxing them more, and bringing that money here to Washington and running programs out of Washington.

Big government liberalism is still at the heart of the Democratic Party, and that is something that is very out of step with what the American people want.

Let's talk about what the Republicans have done and what our conservative leadership here in Washington has done. Just in the last 33 months, we have had wonderful job growth across this Nation. Within the last 3 years, we have had 5.3 million new jobs. Why? Because we have restrained spending in Washington. Well, not as much as I would like as a conservative, but we have been able to restrain spending here in Washington, and excessive growth of government. And we have been able to pass tax cuts that let Americans keep more of what they earn.

Those two things have led to this wonderful job creation, and that is why this House continued to pass tax cuts every year since we have taken the majority as Republicans. Every year we have passed tax cuts since 1995. And those results that we have shown the American people have led to the economy expanding.

Moreover, when the economy expands and people have jobs through these lower taxes, through conservative fiscal policy, you know what happens? As they make more money, they pay more taxes. The Federal Government gets more revenue when people are working, Mr. Speaker.

These things work, and the American people know it and they are benefiting from the prosperity that through conservative fiscal policy, we have helped lead the Nation in this right direction.

So, Mr. Speaker, there is a very severe contrast between the two ideologies that underpin the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. They are two disparate views of the world and how we defend our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, we should have this great debate, not just on the war, which we have had for the last 10 hours on the House floor, but we should also have a debate about fiscal policy.

As a conservative, I don't believe we have done enough in terms of fiscal policy, but we are making progress and that progress is getting real results. That is a wonderful agenda for a conservative party to stand for. Now we look forward to our opposition on the other side of the aisle to one day to come up with an agenda.

REDEPLOY OUR TROOPS

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

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, we were promised another chance to debate our policies with respect to the war in Iraq. Yesterday and today we had that debate. But those who listened to that debate need to understand that it was mere theater.

We had before us today a resolution that could only be voted up or down,

yea or nay. If I wished to offer an amendment giving voice to my desire and that of the majority of my constituents to redeploy our troops from Iraq, I could not. You heard me correctly, the rules of this debate that we had today precluded me from taking any substantive action.

I believe that one of the fundamental functions of the Congress is to act as a check and a balance to the executive branch. Yet here we are in the people's House, the people's House, unable to do the people's will.

Mr. Speaker, America is the lone superpower in an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world. Along with that awesome and unprecedented power comes responsibilities to humankind and the planet itself.

America's reasons for maintaining her superpower status must be to export the best of our democratic system of governance and the hope of the American dream to the rest of the world. But these cherished ideals cannot be exported through force. We must teach and lead by example. Leading by example means modeling the behaviors that we want others to emulate. We must respect the rule of law. We must respect civil rights and liberties. We must stand firmly for human rights, renouncing in all circumstances the use of torture, assassinations, kidnappings as political tools, illegal detention, and cruel and unusual punishment.

Mr. Speaker, we must renounce the preemption doctrine. President Kennedy had this to say about the use of America's military force: "The United States, as the world knows, will never start a war. We do not want war. We shall be prepared if others wish it. We shall be alert and try to stop it, but we shall always do our part to build a world of peace where the weak are safe and the strong are just."

Mr. Speaker, I voted against authorizing use of force in Iraq. I believed then, as I do today, that Iraq posed no threat to America's security. I agree with the 9/11 Commission members that there was no credible link between Iraq and the 9/11 terrorists. I feared that war in Iraq would divert our attention from anti-terrorism efforts and serve to make us less safe and secure.

I called upon the President to tell Congress and the American people what circumstances would be required in order to bring home our troops from Iraq. My letter demanding articulable milestones and an exit strategy was sent to the President before the war even started, and to this day that letter remains unanswered.

Mr. Speaker, since that time I have participated in fearful troop sendoffs and joyous homecomings. I have nothing but respect for our brave soldiers. During the past 4 years, I have embraced and stood and prayed with Wisconsin families as they said their last good-byes to brave sons, fathers and brothers.

As of yesterday over 2,500 young men and women of our military have given

their lives in Iraq. During the past 4 years, I have also heard from parents who clearly see that it is their children and grandchildren who will pay the \$320 billion that this war has cost to date.

Mr. Speaker, I am a member of the Out of Iraq Caucus and a proud cosponsor of Mr. MURTHA's resolution, H.J. Res. 73, to redeploy our troops. I only wish it was that resolution that we had debated over the past 2 days.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). 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 WAR IN IRAQ

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous consent to speak out of order and assume the time of Mr. BURTON.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Tennessee is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I requested this Special Order to read a statement that I earlier placed in the RECORD during the debate on the Iraq war resolution.

I did not request time during the debate because it was obvious that the chairmen controlling the time, all good friends of mine, wanted only speakers who support the war, and I did not want to place them in an uncomfortable position.

I did not request time from the Democrats because many of my colleagues in the minority were using this debate in a bitterly partisan way. Surely, war should be the last thing that should become partisan.

Yet 80 percent of the House Republicans, including me, voted against the bombings in Bosnia and Kosovo when President Clinton was in the White House. I believe 80 percent of Republicans would have opposed the war in Iraq if it had been started by President Clinton or Gore, and probably almost all the Democrats would have then been supporting it, as they did the bombings in Bosnia and Kosovo.

Much of the resolution that was just passed by this House contains language that everyone supports, especially the praise for our troops. Our troops do a great job everywhere they are sent. And it is certainly no criticism of them to criticize this war.

In August of 2002, 2 months before Congress voted for the war in Iraq, Dick Arme, then our Republican majority leader, in a speech in Iowa said, "I don't believe America will justifiably make an unprovoked attack on another nation. It would not be con-

sistent with what we have been as a Nation."

Jack Kemp wrote before the war, "What is the evidence that should cause us to fear Iraq more than Pakistan or Iran? Do we reserve the right to launch a preemptive war exclusively for ourselves, or might other nations such as India, Pakistan or China be justified in taking similar action on the basis of fears of other nations?"

Mr. Kemp said, based on the evidence he had seen, there was not "a compelling case for the invasion and occupation of Iraq."

William F. Buckley wrote that if he had known in 2002 what he knew then in 2004, he would have been against the war. Last year he wrote another column against the war, saying, "A point is reached when tenacity conveys not steadfastness of purpose, but misapplication of pride."

The very popular conservative columnist, Charley Reese, wrote that this war was "against a country that was not attacking us, did not have the means to attack us, and had never expressed any intention of attacking us. And for whatever real reason we attacked Iraq, it was not to save America from any danger, imminent or otherwise."

Many years ago, Senator Robert Taft expressed a traditional conservative position: "No foreign policy can be justified except a policy devoted to the protection of the American people, with war only as the last resort and only to preserve that liberty."

Millions of conservatives across this Nation believe this war was unconstitutional, unaffordable and worst of all, unnecessary. It was waged against an evil man, but one who had a total military budget only two-tenths of 1 percent of ours.

We are not going to be able to pay all our military pensions, civil service pensions, Social Security, Medicare and all the other things we have promised if we are going to turn the Department of Defense into the Department of Foreign Aid and attempt to be the policeman of the world.

This is contrary to every traditional conservative position on defense and on huge deficit spending. The conservative columnist Georgie Ann Geyer wrote, "Critics of the war against Iraq have said since the beginning of the conflict that Americans, still strangely complacent about overseas wars being waged by a minority in their name will inevitably come to a point where they will see they have to have a government that provides services at home, or one that seeks empire across the globe."

Mr. Speaker, a few days ago I found out that a rating service called voteview.com which studies all of our votes from the last Congress, 472 votes I think it was, from last year, in this Congress, rated me as the sixth most conservative Member of this body. And yet I am steadfastly opposed to this war and I have been since the beginning.