

by psychological and physical injuries or the tens of thousands of Iraqi civilians who have been killed?

Speaking of U.S. troops killed in Iraq, the President's new press secretary recently called the 2,500th American casualty "just a number."

But the American people know that this soldier and the other 2,510 soldiers who have been killed aren't just numbers; they are sons, they are daughters, they are husbands and wives, they are fathers, they are mothers; and each of them was willing to lay down their own life for what they believed to be their duty as part of the U.S. military.

These brave men and women deserve a foreign policy worthy of their sacrifice. Unfortunately, their civilian superiors at the Pentagon and at the White House have let them down in many ways, but particularly by referring to any troop, dead or alive, as just a number.

Instead of trying to justify a tremendously wrong-headed war by pointing to decades-old shells buried in the ground, the Bush administration ought to start engaging in a little something called diplomacy. By going on a diplomatic offensive, the United States will shift its role from that of Iraq's military occupier to its reconstruction partner. We need to engage the United Nations to oversee Iraq's economic and humanitarian needs. At the same time, we must publicly renounce any desire to control Iraqi oil and ensure that the United States does not maintain lasting military bases.

Engaging in diplomacy will give Iraq back to the Iraqi people, helping them rebuild their economic and physical infrastructure, creating Iraqi jobs, and ending the humiliation that corresponds with another country maintaining 130,000 plus occupying troops on their soil.

A strategy emphasizing the diplomacy is in line with an approach I call SMART security. SMART stands for Sensible, Multi-Lateral, American Response to Terrorism. Instead of throwing our military weight around the world, SMART security utilizes multi-lateral partnerships, regional security arrangements, and robust inspection programs to address the threats of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Speaker, to be able to address the true threats we face as a Nation, we need to retract ourselves from the very conflict that is damaging our national security on a daily basis, and there is one and only one, important way to begin this process. For the sake of our soldiers, for the sake of their families, for the sake of our very own national security, it is time to stop sacrificing lives and limbs. It is time to stop spending billions of dollars on this war, and it is time to bring our troops home.

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

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

PROPERTY RIGHTS IN AMERICA (ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE KELO DECISION)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. HARRIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the first anniversary of *Kelo v. New London*, the Supreme Court's misguided interpretation of the fifth amendment's restrictions on the taking of private property rights.

Both the Old Testament and Greek literature contain references to the government's ability to take private lands. However, in modern times, the exercise of eminent domain has been very limited and only used in public projects such as roads or the provision of electricity and telephone services.

Yet, nearly a year ago this week, the Supreme Court struck a devastating blow to this Nation's homeowners and small businesses when it ruled that government may seize private property and transfer it to another private owner under the guise of promoting community improvement for so-called economic development. As Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said, "The specter of condemnation now hangs over all property."

The *Kelo* ruling inspired citizens and legislators in more than 30 States, including Florida, to enact laws to limit the scope of eminent domain. Their outrage was echoed in the words and actions of many of us here in Congress, and last November the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed H.R. 4128, the Private Property Rights Protection Act of 2005.

Yet, as quickly as our voices were raised in defense of our fundamental rights, they now seem to have fallen silent. H.R. 4128 lingers in legislative limbo.

In Riviera Beach, Florida, a poor, predominantly African American coastal community, city officials plan to use eminent domain to seize 400 acres of land to build a \$1 billion waterfront yachting and housing complex, displacing about 6,000 local residents. Surely this is not what the Founding Fathers meant by public use.

Are we to tell the American people that private property is no longer guaranteed under the Constitution?

Mr. Speaker, the battle of individual rights and liberties cannot be a part-time engagement. The expropriation of private property for private transfer in the name of economic development is not an act that speaks to the tradition of Robin Hood; it is one that betrays our fundamental constitutional rights.

As James Madison eloquently wrote in the Federalist Papers, private property rights lie at the foundation of our Constitution. "Government is insti-

tuted no less for the protection of property than of the persons of individuals."

The *Kelo* case illustrates only one front in a broader battle to preserve the individual rights granted to all citizens under the Constitution. We must apply equal vigilance to protecting intellectual property rights. Safeguarding property such as artistic, musical, and literary works, as well as the commercial branding tools, promotes entrepreneurship and creativity, and incentivizes honest innovation. Moreover, protection for intellectual property plays an ever increasingly prominent role in today's global economy, promoting trade and influencing foreign direct investment. American explorers rely on intellectual property protection.

Mr. Speaker, property rights are basic principles of individual freedom, whether it is real property or intellectual property of which we speak. Today, I rise to marshal my colleagues in defense of this fundamental right of property ownership for every individual in every district that we are honored to represent from homeowners to entrepreneurs.

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

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

THE DEBT AND THE DEFICIT

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of turn.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, today we granted a tax break of nearly \$800 billion over the next 10 years to the wealthiest among us, and it made me think about a quote from children's literature, which I think is a good place sometimes to learn what we really ought to know.

We all know about the morality tale called the "Lord of the Rings"; and one of them is called "The Return of the King," and the main character is Gandalf, the magician. The children asked Gandalf what they are supposed to do, and he says, "It is not our part to master all the tides of the world, but to do what is in us for the succor of those years wherein we are set, uprooting the evil in the fields that we know, so that those who live after may have clear earth to till. What weather they shall have is not ours to rule."

Now, we stand out here on this floor very frequently and talk about our children and what kind of a world we are leaving to our children, and we are leaving a world of debt to our children. The June 11 issue of the New York

Times magazine says, “Debt,” and the subtitle is, “America’s Scariest Addiction is Getting Even Scarier.” Well, we added to the debt today.

Now, the question is, What does it mean when a country goes into debt? It means that we do not tax the people sufficiently for what services they expect, so we have to borrow the money. This year, we are borrowing from the Chinese the entire debt that we are creating in this year, some \$300-some-odd billion that we did not raise in taxes, that we gave away this afternoon. We are going to go to the Chinese tomorrow and borrow that money.

Now, what difference does that make? Well, ultimately you have to deal with debt. You all have credit cards. You understand what you have to do with a credit card: you either pay it off, which means we have to raise taxes, or stop giving it away. Or in the case of a country, we can devalue our money.

□ 1900

You say, well, why, what difference does that make? Well, if our money, if the Chinese borrowed a dollar that was worth this amount, and we now drop it down by 50 percent, they have lost 50 percent of what they lent us. How do you think they feel when we do something like that? Well, the next time we come to lend, they say, give us a higher interest rate. Now, lowering the value of the dollar, which happened in 1983, 1985, some people remember when our money went down, and people lost a lot of money. That was a devaluation, and we are heading for another devaluation in this country.

When it happens, we will also have inflation because with the cheaper dollar we can buy more, and it is easier to buy foreign goods. So we will buy more, and they will buy our goods, and they will demand higher interest rates.

Now, the Feds try to control inflation by driving up interest rates. Some may even remember when our interest rates were 22 percent, when buying a house was absolutely impossible. Well, then interest rates came down because we changed our fiscal policy. We paid our debt. We started borrowing. Under Mr. Clinton we actually went into a positive state. We no longer were borrowing. We were actually taking in more and paying down some of that debt. But in the last years since 2000, we have just gone on a wild spree, and we have gotten ourselves deeper and deeper in debt. People like me worry about that because my children are going to pay for it, not me. In fact, it may be my grandchildren that pay for it.

There are two categories of debt that you have to worry about. One, of course, in this country is personal debt. Now, lots of people bought houses in the last year, last years, 5, 6 years, and they have been buying houses because the interest rates were low. They were buying on interest only, or they were buying on ARM, that means ad-

justable rate mortgages, and all of those had a term, an adjustable rate of 4 or 5 years, and those ARMs are coming due now.

Because of what is happening in terms of the dollar and in terms of inflation, the Feds are raising it every month. Since March of 2004, the ARM rate has gone up 59 percent, and it could easily jump 50 percent when these adjustable rates happen. Some people are going to lose their houses. Listen to the children.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). 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.)

WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

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

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, last week the House entertained 10 hours of debate on the Iraq war. The unamendable resolution which formed the basis of the debate was a partisan measure crafted to be a simple endorsement of our troops, a subject upon which all Americans are united. But the resolution also scoffed at the notion of establishing time lines for withdrawal and thus implicitly sanctioned a prolonged engagement, implying that it might be considered a 21st century version of Lyndon Johnson’s Gulf of Tonkin resolution.

During the debate, several of us suggested that the longer we stay in Iraq, the greater the prospect that forces of anarchy will multiply and spread, perhaps across oceans. I would like to amplify on this concern.

From an American perspective, the two central issues in our Iraq policy are how best to advance our long-term national interests and how best to protect our troops. At issue is whether a prolonged engagement makes better sense than a time-lined withdrawal policy.

The case for a prolonged engagement involves a neocon objective of establishing semipermanent bases in Iraq and neighboring emirates from which American military power, or the threat thereof, can be readily projected against Syria or Iran, or potentially Saudi Arabia if it were to become radicalized. It also allows greater flexibility in support of the new Iraqi Government. On the other hand, there is a thin line between being a liberating and an occupying power that many in the Muslim world either do not accept or think has been crossed.

Sometimes it is as hard to determine when to end a war as when to start one. It may have been a mistake to inter-

vene in Iraq in the first place, but clearly a precipitous departure after our initial engagement would have been an error. By the same token, prolonging our involvement runs the risk of causing American forces supporting the Shi’a majority government to be seen by Sunnis as favoring one side in an intrareligious conflict. Worse yet, the longer we stay, the more we will be seen as an occupying force, embarrassing to the Muslim world, causing the prospect of a long-lasting conflict between the Judeo-Christian and Muslim civilizations to increase in likelihood.

It is important to give momentum to and solidify Iraqi democracy, but there are tipping points in all struggles. We are at a point where action/reaction engagements could all too easily and rapidly intensify in asymmetric and multigeographic ways if the struggle to build a new Iraq comes to be perceived as an imperial American imposition on Iraqi sovereignty instead of an effort by Iraqis working to shape their own future.

This is why it is so important that we reframe the discourse away from WMD and 9/11 concerns and define instead the establishment of democracy as our principal reason for intervention, and thus the logical basis for disengagement. Now that a Constitution has been written, elections held, and a government formed, we should forthrightly announce that we are prepared to draw down our troops in a measured, orderly way. A hasty departure would be imprudent, but the sooner the disengagement process begins, the better. Our goal may be to fight anarchistic forces over there rather than here, but we must understand that prolonging our involvement over there could precipitate a gathering storm of resentment which could make violence here more rather than less likely.

With regard to protecting our troops, it is impressive that in polling data reported by the Brookings Institute, 47 percent of Iraqis favor attacking American forces, and 87 percent favor time lines for withdrawal. Occupation is neither the American way, nor is it tolerable for Muslims. While precipitous withdrawal after our intervention might have led to civil war and a breakup of the Iraqi state, the logic of these polling statistics would seem to indicate that Iraqis have become weary of and humiliated by a foreign occupying presence.

The rationale for attacks against American forces would be undercut if Muslims had confidence that we were committed to an orderly and timely withdrawal policy. If we do not begin to leave Iraq now that democratic institutions have been put in place, anarchistic acts will continue, and the other side may be in a position to say when we eventually draw down our forces that they have somehow forced us out. Little would be worse for the American national interest or more demoralizing for all those who have