

November, it is not "if we can, we may get around to it." It will be one of the first things that the Democratic Caucus does. A done deal. We don't even have to talk about it, that the American people will see an increase in the minimum wage.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I would like to make a point, because when you raise the minimum wage, you raise the wages for all people who are participating in the labor market.

Let's take for example our friends at Wal-Mart, okay? If you raise the minimum wage, now, if you don't work at Wal-Mart or somewhere else of that caliber of a store that hires so many millions of people around the country, they are all going to get a boost. So instead of companies like Wal-Mart making billions and billions and billions in profits, some of that money will make its way back to the workers, so all the workers will get a couple dollars more an hour, which means you are going to have consumers with more money in their pocket so they can pull it out and go buy more goods, which will stimulate the economy.

The American people right now are feeling they are not benefiting from what is happening. I think a raise in the minimum wage would do that, it would accomplish that, it would give demand a spark, which is obviously what we want to do.

Then, like we have talked about here, investing in sewers and roads and bridges and infrastructure and get this country back where it needs to be with our infrastructure, so that we could build industrial parks and roads and bridges and increase commerce in the United States, extend broadband. All of these things will stimulate the economy here in the United States of America, educate our kids, get information into the households, and, at the end of the day, you have got a strong country.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. I know that my good friend Kendrick Meek is going to close out on a New Direction for America, but I want to talk again about the minimum wage.

Consider that if the minimum wage had increased with inflation, it would be \$9.08. Well, think about it like this. Family health care insurance is up 70 percent. The increase in minimum wage would help 7.5 million. Gas prices have doubled. So if the minimum wage doubled, it would be \$10, and we would be able to do it. Record surplus has been turned to record deficits. And then college costs are up. There have been \$12 billion in student aid cuts under this administration and Republican Congress.

It is time for Democrats to take control of the House so that we have an opportunity to serve the people and put America in a new direction.

I yield back to our leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Let me just say this. You can go ahead and give the website out, sir, and I will close out.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Are you talking to me?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I am talking to you, sir, Mr. RYAN.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I appreciate you letting me do this. [www.housedemocrats.gov/30something](http://www.housedemocrats.gov/30something).

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you, Mr. RYAN.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Thank you, Mr. MEEK.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I want to thank Ms. TUBBS JONES and also you, Mr. RYAN, and Mr. TANNER and Mr. TAYLOR, who was here at the beginning finishing off his 5-minute speech for joining us tonight.

As Mrs. TUBBS JONES mentioned, as Democrats, we want to take this House in a New Direction for America. I think it is important, and we will let it be known that we will implement on day one, or days within being in the majority, if the American people see fit, a real security plan that will implement the full 9/11 Committee report, work on affordable health care, to fix not only the prescription drug law, but a series of seniors' issues as it relates to health care and also health care for the American people, from GM down to the small mom and pop business. Also make sure we have good paying jobs and stop sending jobs overseas and raising the minimum wage. Reversing all the things that the Republicans have done to Americans as it relates to higher interest rates for students and making college affordable. Also with tax deductions, and also energizing America by making sure we have investment in the Midwest versus the Middle East. And ensuring dignity as it relates to no privatization of Social Security.

With that, Mr. Speaker, it was an honor addressing the House. We would like to thank the Democratic leadership for the time.

#### AN OPTIMISTIC VIEW OF CONDITIONS IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the Speaker for the privilege to address this House of Representatives.

I came to the floor here to speak about a number of issues, but the subject matter, as often happens when I arrive here and listen to the preceding speakers, that subject matter does change, and I would just take it from the top.

Gas prices. Mr. Speaker, gas prices are exactly the same that they would be if we had Democrats in charge of this Congress rather than Republicans. The difference is people have a lot more money in their pockets to buy the gas with, because Democrats would raise the taxes, take the money out of the pockets of the working people and gas prices would not have changed.

We need to do more with energy supply, and I am for that. We can't get

past some of the Republicans in here. But there aren't Democrats that I know of that will support us expanding the supply of energy.

We need to drill in ANWR. We need to drill on the Outer Continental Shelf. I am hopeful we will be able to bring out a bill within the next few days of proceedings in the House so that we can drill on the Outer Continental Shelf for gas and oil, within reasonable limits that we can work out with the States.

So, gas prices are the same as what they would be. It is just that people have more money in their pockets under Republicans to pay for this gas.

This is also a global market. It isn't a United States market. We are not able to drill for oil in places where we know we have reserves because the environmentalist coalition blocks that drilling in the United States of America, especially the Outer Continental Shelf and other places, our non-national park public lands. We have a tremendous supply of natural gas and oil. We are not able to get into that.

That is focused over on that side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, not this side of the aisle. We need a far greater supply of energy, and you will have less energy, not more, if you listen to the advice of the people that spoke ahead of me.

With regard to the tax issues that came here today, the estate tax, most of the money that is taxed in an estate tax has already had the tax paid on it. Most of that is earnings that have already had the taxes paid.

So if you go out and you earn \$100,000 over a year or a lifetime and you pay the income tax on that and that becomes savings that you invest, when that portion of that capital is taxed at your death, much of that, the core of it, the equity of it, the basis of it will be taxed a second time, not a first time.

How many bites at the equity apple does government need? Does government need to tax people on death? Does government in fact need to tax people for their productivity? My answer is no.

I would take all tax off of all productivity. I would put it on consumption. Then if people inherit a few million or a few billion dollars, when they spend that money, they would pay the tax and no one would escape it. But as we have it today, attorneys, and especially large corporations sometimes have whole floors of tax attorneys whose jobs it is is tax avoidance. So very wealthy people avoid the tax, and very poor people don't pay tax. In fact, even lower-middle income people don't pay very much, and sometimes not at all. It is those middle people in there that have earned a reasonable nest egg that get taxed, but they can't afford the attorneys or they don't do the planning because it is that marginal kind of an equation.

But we need to quit taxing people upon death. No taxation without respiration. This bill that we brought out

here today doesn't go far enough, in my opinion. And I am not one who is full of class envy. I believe I am the poorest delegate out of the Iowa delegation from a cash-in-the-bank standpoint at least. I am one of the richest on the part of family and those kind of blessings. But I don't envy anyone the wealth that they have earned. In fact, I am proud of them. I encourage them. Keep doing that.

People that build equity, their capital, if it is invested in a bank or in stocks or wherever it might be, finds its way into the hands of people that are reusing that money to create jobs. We have to have wealth in this country to create jobs. That is why we have jobs. This idea that we can raise the minimum wage and somehow or another it is going to make the world a better place for people just belies the simple fact that labor is a commodity, like corn or soybeans or gold or the oil that we talked about, and the value of labor is determined by supply and demand in the marketplace.

That is why it is \$8.50 an hour or more to flip burgers at the burger stand in the Midwest. That is why very few people are working for minimum wage today, is because the supply of labor has not driven the price of wages down low enough that the minimum wage kicks in. The standard is higher.

So now the people on this side of the aisle want to raise the minimum wage a couple bucks an hour to try to catch up with what the economy has already done. If the argument ever was there that we should raise the minimum wage, no, the markets have already raised the minimum wage. That is what we ought to have as markets.

Sometimes people go to work for a minimum wage and then they realize, I don't like living here. I don't like this low wage that I am getting for the work that I am doing, so I am going to go get an education or I am going to train for a skill, because I want to upgrade this world that I am living in.

That should happen to most of us that start out into the working world. It certainly happened to me, and it happens throughout the process. If an entry level wage is what the minimum wage is today, most people aren't there very long before they move on up the line.

But if we can legislate a minimum wage without costing jobs, if people don't get laid off when the wage gets pushed higher by a potential Federal increase in the minimum wage, if we can legislate a minimum wage, Mr. Speaker, we can then legislate a living wage; and if we can legislate a living wage, enough money to live on, maybe raise a family on, maybe buy a modest house on, if we can do that, Mr. Speaker, without costing jobs, without reducing the number of opportunities for Americans, if we could take this \$7.50 minimum wage proposal that perhaps takes it from \$5.15 cents an hour, up a couple of bucks up to \$7 and something, if we can do that without costing us

jobs, why not take it up to a living wage? Why not take it up to \$12, \$13 or \$14 an hour and call that a living wage, so that people could earn that much money and go buy their modest house and raise their family, and maybe they could do it on 40 hours a week.

But I will submit that we don't do that because we know if you raise that wage to that level, it certainly will cost jobs. And if we raise the minimum wage, if you have a minimum wage at all, it costs jobs. We should let the marketplace determine.

But the philosophy over on this side of the aisle says no, we have to legislate that at the Federal Government because it is a political kick for them, not because it is a rational economic one, Mr. Speaker. And I will submit that if we can legislate a minimum wage without a penalty to jobs in this economy, we can legislate a living wage at \$12, \$13 or \$14 an hour without a penalty to the economy in this country. And if we can legislate a living wage, there is no rational reason by the rationale of the people on this side of the aisle that we can't just simply legislate prosperity.

If we are going to do this and do it at all, then let's legislate prosperity so we can all live in opulent mansions and we won't have to work and work our way up from the bottom at all.

What a wonderful country this would be if we could follow the rationale of the people on the other side of the aisle, who say that they don't even worry about partisanship. They don't worry about being bipartisan, about working with Republicans on this side of the aisle. But they say put me in, coach; elect those other people out and put me in, because I want to run this country.

But it is night after night after night, 60 minutes, sometimes 120 minutes, of the most pessimistic message anyone could ever hear on any television show anywhere in America on any given night. I mean, if I had that kind of an attitude, I would not want to get out of bed in the morning. I would be afraid to walk over a bridge for fear I would jump off of it.

No, this is an optimistic nation. That is not the right tone for America. This is an optimistic nation, Mr. Speaker. We have freedom. We have a freedom that was granted to us from God, that flows through the Declaration into the Constitution, the sacred covenant we have with God delivered to us through our Founding Fathers that he put on this Earth to guarantee us these rights. And we have these guarantees that flow through the Declaration and the Constitution; the freedom of speech, press, assembly, religion, guaranteed property rights. Not what they were before Kilo, I will admit, but guaranteed property rights. The freedom to be safe in our persons and freedom to be judged only once before a court of law. We have equal opportunity under the law, guaranteed under the 14th Amendment and also I believe the 15th

Amendment, Mr. Speaker. We all ought to take advantage of that opportunity.

We should recognize that on the day that we are born, our glass is half full. In America your chance to fill your glass the rest of the way up is greater than it is anywhere else on this planet.

If you have a negative attitude and say your glass is only half empty, and you get this almost terminal case of the "poor me's" when you think about what it is like to have to go out and earn your share of the prosperity that is totally available in this country, if that drags you down, then I guess that is the motivation that brings you over here to the floor of the Congress, Mr. Speaker, and that is the motivation that just continually goes into this never-ending series of lamentations that we have heard now for, oh, maybe a year-and-a-half or so.

□ 2030

I know that a lot of Americans just turn the channel on that. Well, that is good advice, America.

But I am going to talk to you about some other things that are important in bringing out an optimistic message. I would submit, also, that there are bipartisan bills in this Congress and there are many of them. Any time that anyone wants to come into this gallery, Mr. Speaker, or watch this on C-SPAN and watch the votes or look them up on the Internet to see what the votes are, you will often see that there are significant votes up here where maybe almost all of us agree. Time after time after time, it is all green lights up here or all but three or four green lights up here on the board behind where I stand, Mr. Speaker. Those are bipartisan bills.

There are bipartisan bills that come to this floor day after day after day. Often for the first day of the week whether it has a Monday or a Tuesday for votes, those votes that come up that night are under suspension because there isn't dissension. We have found issues that we agree upon. We have bipartisanship and we reach across to the other side of the aisle. It is just that sometimes that attitude of "I don't even worry about bipartisanship" that were heard over here from Mr. MEEKS tonight, sometimes the hand that reaches across for bipartisanship gets bitten and then that causes the person to pull back again and think, well, all right, I guess maybe there are 232 Republicans and I guess we only need 218 votes to pass legislation, so is it worth the effort to have bipartisan legislation.

I will submit, I do believe it is worth the effort. Issues come through the committee better. They come through more smoothly. They come to the floor. They pass more smoothly. In fact, there are times when the conscience of the left calls into check the conscience of the right. I am on the right. I am making this confession. We have bipartisan efforts and we need to have partisanship in this Congress. The

reason we need to have it is so that we have viewpoints from both ends of the political spectrum so we can come together with a policy that is best for America. That is the mission and that is the vision.

I didn't listen enough tonight to know if the people on the other side of the aisle, the lamentations group, have actually spoken about some of the other issues, about the national security. I suspect they have. That is part of the repertoire for every night. But regardless, I am going to rebut that as well.

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that we have some things going on around the world. We are involved in a global war on terror. We know that there is a battleground in Afghanistan and there is a battleground in Iraq. The argument that somehow we went there for the wrong reasons just astonishes me, and I am waiting to hear, maybe ever so faint from the other side of the aisle, the apology for being utterly wrong on weapons of mass destruction. I have not heard that apology from anyone over there, Mr. Speaker. Yet it is true. They have been utterly wrong. I have stood on this floor continually, and I said the law of physics is this. Matter can neither be created nor destroyed.

Now, we knew that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction. He admitted he had weapons of mass destruction. He said that he destroyed them and got rid of them, but we could, of course, not believe him. We sent the inspectors in. He had the inspectors running around in circles. Anyone who has listened to the tapes of Saddam and some of his henchmen there knows very well that they knew where the inspectors were at all times and they were giving them the runaround. They talked about it on the tapes. There are 12 hours of tapes there that say so. That material, that information, is available to the public today.

And so we know that he had weapons of mass destruction. And we know that he was pulling the wool over the inspectors' eyes. And we know that he used them on his own people. In one instance with only three of the weapons, only three of the canisters for gas, he killed 5,000 of his own people up in Kurdistan. 5,000 people with only three.

We got the news. We got the news a couple of days ago, Mr. Speaker. The information about the collection and the gathering of the finding of the weapons of mass destruction had finally been declassified by the Pentagon. When it was declassified then, we saw Senator SANTORUM and Chairman PETE HOEKSTRA go before the world and say, We have found weapons of mass destruction. Since 2003, we've accumulated 500 of the weapons of mass destruction.

Now, there isn't very much information that is available to the public that has been declassified, and I will confine my remarks to the declassified information that is there. But I would sub-

mit, Mr. Speaker, the facts are that we have found over 500 weapons of mass destruction and among those are mustard and sarin gas and that they are lethal and the warning that comes out from the Pentagon is that they remain lethal. And so whether these were pre-1991 or post-1991, nobody on that side said, well, he had them up till 1991, then they're gone again. That wasn't a condition. In fact, they are going to find a way to put conditions on it. No matter how much we come up with, no matter what the reality is, they will never make an admission that Saddam had weapons of mass destruction when we went in.

And so they were found. They were found perhaps in various locations around Iraq, and the cumulative total right now is 500. We are confident that we will continue to find more. I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that if we do not find them and if the terrorists do find them, they will find a way to use them on coalition troops, on Americans. They will use them on their own people if they think they can create the kind of chaos that would melt that country down, get us to pull out and turn that into a training center and a mission operations control center for al Qaeda and for their side of this global war on terror.

No, Mr. Speaker, Saddam had weapons of mass destruction, he had significant quantities of weapons of mass destruction, and the fact that we didn't end up with great huge warehouses full sitting there waiting for us to ride in on doesn't prove that they don't exist. It has been proven and admitted and no one denies they did exist. Saddam had them. He used them.

And so what I have said is, either you have to believe that Saddam Hussein used his last canister of gas on the Kurds and simply ran out of inventory. And so there he was, his warehouses were empty, and we came in to liberate the Iraqis and he simply had used up his supply of chemical weapons. Either you have to believe that or you have to believe that those weapons that we know existed are somewhere. Matter can neither be created nor destroyed. So the King version of that is, everything has to be someplace, Mr. Speaker, and we found 500 of them and there are many more someplace, whether they were hauled across the border by the Russians and whether they were buried in Syria, whether they are buried in Iraq.

But I would ask the people on the other side of the aisle, this group of lamenting pessimists that we hear every night, if you will confess that there are 500 different pieces of weapons of mass destruction, then you can make your arguments about how much that means to you. It means a lot to the American people. It means a lot to this war effort. But I would ask, then, if they happen to be something that the Iraqis forgot about, which one wag actually said, how do you forget about 500 pieces of weapons of mass destruction, if that is

the case and you think they don't exist, where did we come up with these MiG-29s that were buried in the Iraqi desert, fully operational MiG-29s. They were ordered to be buried by Saddam Hussein. We found that out. Did we find these jets by having some kind of a United Nations weapons inspector walking around with a metal detector in the desert? No. Did we find them by using intelligence having someone who said, all right, I know what we did, we dug a hole and we buried these MiG-29s, scattered them around the desert. Here's where they are. Here are the GPS coordinates. Go dig them up. They're operational. You can dust the sand off, fuel them up, and fly them out of here.

That didn't happen either, Mr. Speaker. What happened was the wind blew the sand off the tail section of a MiG. Some people looked over there and thought, That's funny. That looks a lot like the tail section of a jet. Let's dig down and see what we have got. They dug down and found out, a MiG-29 sitting there, fully operational, buried in the desert. If they can bury an airplane and we can't find the airplane except by happenstance, weather and good luck, tell me why anyone would think that they couldn't have buried weapons of mass destruction there when we know that they exist, we know that he used them on his own people, we know that he only took three of them to kill 5,000 people and we found 500 of them. And think what kind of devastation that could have been on the American troops and then think about how many others are there somewhere that might fall into the hands of the enemy and be used on Americans, coalition forces, or the brave Iraqis themselves that are in uniform today defending Iraqis to the tune now and the strength of 267,000 Iraqis in uniform defending Iraqis, performing well, fighting well, carrying on operations, taking over security of the country and providing that next level of safety, security and freedom for the Iraqi people.

Mr. Speaker, this has been distorted so far that I don't know if I can express my disappointment with the message that the American people have been getting, having gone to Iraq a number of times myself, having looked our soldiers in the eye, having sat down and been briefed by our commanding officers, including General Casey and General Abazaïd, having a working relationship with Secretary Rumsfeld on this and knowing that from the lowest ranking foot soldier or marine to the highest ranking officer in our military, to the Secretary of Defense and to the President himself, everyone's message indexes up and down the line, the message that comes out of there is, we are winning, Mr. Speaker, and we are scoring points, and we are providing more security in Iraq, not less, and the future is getting brighter by the day and the enemy is giving up more and more people and more and more equipment

and more and more ability to carry out operations. Their will to fight is being destroyed, Mr. Speaker, and it is being destroyed systematically.

So, Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that poster of Abu Masab al Zarqawi. Zarqawi was the leader of al Qaeda in Iraq. He was pretty difficult to find for a couple of years. He pledged his allegiance to Osama bin Laden, and he was an inspiration and a recruiting force and probably the most evil, diabolical person that we have seen on this globe in my lifetime. He is the person that devised the most brutal ways to slaughter people. He is the one who made sure that he was on a videotape beheading Americans. The torture deaths, the burning deaths, those who were killed, a child killed and had bombs planted inside the cavity of the child and have that detonate when the family comes to collect the body. That is the kind of diabolical evil that Zarqawi was.

Now, it is ironic, I think, that he said these things about Americans. Zarqawi said, Americans are the most cowardly of God's creatures. They are an easy quarry. Praise be to God. We ask God to enable us to kill and capture them.

"Americans are the most cowardly of God's creatures." That is the last thing I have seen out of Americans. I have not seen any of that out of Americans in Iraq or anywhere else when they put on the uniform. They are the most courageous, the most noble, certainly not the most cowardly, and are far from an easy quarry, Zarqawi.

Zarqawi was in a safe house. I appreciate myself and I think, Mr. Speaker, Americans will appreciate the irony of Abu al Zarqawi being in a safe house. That safe house didn't turn out to be too safe for him and the pictures of that house after it was blown to smithereens by two 500-pound bombs that came from a pair of F-16s would tell the world how unsafe it is to be the number one enemy of the United States of America, of the coalition forces, of the Iraqi people and of the free world.

And so Zarqawi went to meet his maker and checked into the next life. What has met him there, Zarqawi knows today. But if there is a place for evil people where they burn in infinity, I have to believe that Zarqawi is there. I have never seen such evil out of anyone anywhere on the planet in my lifetime.

This is the individual that was the inspiring spirit of al Qaeda in Iraq and pledged his allegiance to Osama bin Laden. Zarqawi was the individual who was the inspiring part that recruited enemy soldiers to work for him. He is the one that organized the funding effort and the military munitions and the equipment that they needed in order to attack coalition forces and the Iraqi military and the Iraqi people, women and children included, where the only discrimination he made was occasionally he would spare the lives of some Sunnis because he had a pref-

erence to the Sunnis. This man is now dead and he is gone. In the aftermath of the detonation, the blowing to smithereens of the safe house, there were a lot of data that was gathered there, computer hard drive data and paper documents. And those paper documents and the hard drive data, Mr. Speaker, indexed with a lot of other intelligence that had been gathered around Iraq and other places that were indexed into that location in the world. All of that data that has been pored through now, and I mean all of it, Mr. Speaker, points to one thing: the enemy, the terrorists in Iraq are losing. They are having great difficulty recruiting fighters. They are having difficulty finding funds. They are having difficulty pulling together weapons and they are having difficulty finding the material to improvise explosive devices with.

□ 2045

They are having difficulty logistically because security in Iraq is getting tighter and tighter and tighter and moving from section to city, from city to section, and from city to city. It is ever more dangerous than it was before.

They are getting demoralized and dispirited. The very thing that some of the people on the left would like to have the enemy think about the United States is actually happening to al Qaeda and the terrorists in Iraq. We are very close to putting this thing away.

Their spirit is weak and Von Clausewitz wrote a book, and the name of the book was "On War," and Von Clausewitz's statement on war was the object of war was to destroy the enemy's will and ability to conduct war, and that seems to be a little bit obvious, but I think it is something that bears repeating.

We should all be in the same effort here. We should be in the effort of destroying the enemy's ability to conduct war, and that means we need to turn our military loose on them with a ferocity that we can bring to bear, and we have been doing that. We have been doing a great job, both in Afghanistan and also in Iraq, but additionally to that, we need to be destroying the enemy's will to carry out war, to conduct those acts of war, and that means they need to understand that our will will not be shaken. We will not let up. We will provide all of the troops and all of the support for the troops and all of the equipment and the training and the munitions and the weapons and the tactics and the technology necessary to take them out until this is over because the stakes are far too high. We cannot tolerate stepping back from this confrontation.

We made a commitment to go in there, and there is only one option, and that option is victory, Mr. Speaker. There is no option to any phased pull-out or any drawdown unless it is something that it is no longer necessary to have troops there.

There is also an option to escalate if we need to do that, if we see the need to do that, but if we need to do that, that option is on the table. If we needed to double the troops there, that is what would happen, if that is what the generals asked for because this enemy, this one is dead. The ones beneath him, some of them, many of them are actually dead, and the one who follows will soon be. Those that are part of the officers will be sent into the next life as well, but at some point, they are going to understand that they cannot carry on this fight, that it is absolutely hopeless.

The best part of it is, Mr. Speaker, it will be hopeless when the political solution in Iraq is fully manifested. Now they have a prime minister. Now they have a fully operational Cabinet, one that was carefully chosen and it was a little bit of a struggle to get to that agreement, but their minister of defense and the minister of the interior, in particular, are very, very important cabinet positions. Those positions are now filled with good people. People that are going to have the best interests of the future of Iraq in mind, not their best interests in mind, but the best interests of the future of Iraq.

That means that the minister of defense is going to continue aggressively taking out the enemy. We have seen that kind of leadership out of the prime minister, and we will see that kind of leadership out of the minister of defense.

The minister of the interior is going to be looking at their national resources and thinking how do we convert this oil into cash, and they will set up a formula to do that. When that cash starts to flow into Iraq, prosperity begins, and it will take a little while, but it will take root. When prosperity takes root, the root that is there now for freedom goes deeper and wider. It has something to nourish itself, and that will be the profit that comes from marketing the national resources called oil, and the wealth of that will generate the many layers and the cycles and the interconnectivity of the economy.

That is all going to take place. That is going to take place because the Iraqi people see themselves as Iraqis first and Shi'ias, Sunnis and Kurds second. They understand that they have one chance at freedom, and that is as a unified Nation, and they are fighting together to do that, and we need to stand with them. We made that pledge.

Our commander-in-chief is the commander-in-chief. The President of the United States has that constitutional duty and responsibility, Mr. Speaker, and we need to stand with him.

When I see amendments come out here on this floor that undermine the President's authority to conduct this military operation as he sees fit, then that is unnecessary interference. If there is anything that takes away a tool from the battlefield, if there is anything that undermines our ability

to do negotiations to work with and cooperate with the Iraqis, that is undermining the war effort, and that should not ever happen out of this Congress.

We committed to this task. This Congress voted to commit to this task, and we put up at least two resolutions since then committed to this task. We will, Mr. Speaker, stay committed to this task, and those who work against it are working on the side, and this is what makes this guy, what made him smile was when our left-handed leaders here stand up and say we cannot win: wrong war, wrong place, wrong time.

Some say that the American soldiers are carrying out operations that are not becoming of American soldiers. Things happen in war, but our soldiers are conducting themselves with honor and with dignity.

Zarqawi, Mr. Speaker, is now gone, checked into the next life. I will tell you, then we have another leader in the other side of the theater in Afghanistan that ran a tape just other the day. This, Mr. Speaker, is Ayman al Zawahiri. He would be second-in-command among the al Qaeda and operating, we think, out of the border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan. He has put out a tape, and let me see, it is kind of interesting to watch how they do this when they take some serious blows, as they did when Zarqawi was killed by those American bombs.

As we see the intelligence that they are operating out of desperation and despair, that every bit of that intelligence says that they are losing the war, and when we see these weapons of mass destruction have been discovered and accumulated since 2003, when the people on the other side of the aisle say, well, that is not really any big deal, killing Zarqawi was not that big a deal and finding the weapons of mass destruction is not that big a deal and the intelligence is there that says that they are dispirited and they are running out of resources and they are having trouble recruiting, that is not that big a deal.

Then we have Zawahiri who does about a 3½ minute video. He is calling out also I think in desperation, and he says I am calling upon the Muslims in Kabul, in particular, and in all Afghanistan, in general, and for the sake of God to stand in the face of the infidel forces that are invading Muslim lands.

Well, I do not know that we have invaded Muslim lands, and I am surely convinced that there is a lot of strong Christians there. That would be a definition, by my definition, would mean they are not infidels. He also calls out to Egyptians. He is an Egyptian-born fugitive, Zawahiri, who says, here is his operation. The collapse of American power in Vietnam, they ran and left. He thinks that is going to happen in Afghanistan. He thinks it is going to happen in Iraq.

Americans did not run and leave, but they were deployed out of Vietnam by the direction of this Congress. This Congress lost their will, and losing our

will back in 1974, Mr. Speaker, has given inspiration to a man like this in 2006. It is costing American lives today, coalition lives today in Iraqi, and innocent and civilian lives today because that has been what has inspired this Egyptian-born fugitive who also said in his tape, the young men of Islam in the universities and schools of Kabul should carry out their duties and essentially go volunteer for Jihad.

But we have a prime minister in Afghanistan. They are a free country. They are a sovereign nation, Mr. Speaker, and people went to the polls in Afghanistan for the first time with those routes to the polls and the polling places being guarded by American soldiers, by coalition soldiers, and for the first time in that place on this planet, free people went to the polls and elected their national leaders, chose and helped direct their national destiny, the first time ever in Afghanistan in the history of the world that that has happened. They elected Karzai.

So he says, of Zawahiri, the truly elected leader, the leader of the Afghan people says, Zawahiri is the first enemy of the Afghan people, the first enemy, and then the enemy of the rest of the world, says Karzai during his press conference. He killed Afghans for years, thousands, and then he went to America and destroyed the twin towers.

Mr. Speaker, Karzai went on to say we and Afghanistan want him arrested and put before justice. Well, Mr. Speaker, many of Zawahiri's supporters have been delivered to justice, perhaps 600 of them in these last operations. Coalition forces, Afghani troops and Americans are serving well in Afghanistan in some of the most intense operations that we have seen over there in some time, and they are serving effectively over there, Mr. Speaker. They are going to preserve and protect the freedom of Afghanistan.

I just have not heard the criticism of the other side of the aisle with respect to Afghanistan as I have with Iraq. I am wondering why that is. Twenty-five million people freed in Afghanistan; 25 million people freed in Iraq. It takes a little longer in Iraq than Afghanistan. Fewer casualties in Afghanistan. There are more in Iraq certainly, and it is sad and it is a tragedy for every family. It is a tragedy for every family, but they can take great pride in knowing that that sacrifice has great value, frees people around the globe, and it is not just the freedom of the Iraqi people or just the freedom of the Afghan people.

This is an inspiration of freedom that will one day free every Arab in the world. Everyone through the Middle East will one day breathe free and perhaps even in my lifetime we will see that happen.

The return for that sacrifice does not just do that. Some may think why do I care about freedom for an Arab people. I will submit, Mr. Speaker, that to the extent that the globe is free, we can

also be more free in this country, safer in this country, Mr. Speaker, because wherever there are free people, they are not plotting and scheming to go to war against us.

The United States of America has never gone to war against another free people. We work out our differences in a democratic process. To the extent that the globe becomes entirely free, with people who can have their differences in the voting booth instead of on the battlefield, is also the extent that the world becomes a safer place. Even though we have had ongoing conflicts going on around the world, it seems like it never ends, and in fact, Mr. Speaker, it does not end. It has been a long, long time since we have had conflict that took lives by the millions as opposed to lives by the thousands or even the hundreds.

That means that millions of lives, I believe, have been saved, and if this inspiration for the Arab people, if Afghanistan and if Iraq become the lodestars of inspiration for a free people, that echoes across the Arab world the same way that freedom echoed across Eastern Europe, Mr. Speaker, that is the formula for victory in this war. We can get there. We are getting there.

Freedom has never been easy and it has never been without price, but freedom is priceless, Mr. Speaker, and it is a profound honor for those who have given their lives also, for those who have given their limbs and other parts of their bodies or a year out of their life to give the Iraqi people a chance at freedom and to help ensure safety and freedom for the American people for perhaps a long time to come, and that, Mr. Speaker, is the reason why we fight.

Now, there is another subject matter that needs to be brought up because I hear from the other side of the aisle that it is intolerable. It is intolerable to have the level of violence in Iraq that we have. It is intolerable to have the level of casualties in Iraq that we have. So, therefore, we should cut and run, Mr. Speaker, and that is almost the words that get used, and sometimes they actually do get used.

Well, the ranking member of the Defense Subcommittee came here on the floor some months ago, and in news conferences around the country and nationally, and then globally it got picked up and certainly by Al Jazeera and Arab TV that we should pull out of Iraq immediately. Here we are holding together this country and nurturing and training troops, and we have someone who is viewed as a leader in the armed services in this Congress who says we should immediately pull out and pull back to the horizon. That was much discussed around America, and sure it was discussed in the Middle East. I am sure it was a great inspiration to people like Zawahiri. In fact, it was a great inspiration to Zarqawi. He was alive then.

But Mr. Speaker, if we should pull out to the horizon, the horizon to me

would be some place in range, someplace where kind of the top of the hills so you look down in the valley and shoot down in there if you need to or rush down there if you have to. No. We found out where that horizon was in this past week, Mr. Speaker, when that Member, the representative from Pennsylvania, said, no, we should immediately redeploy to Okinawa. Now, how many people in America could have gotten that multiple choice question right? I would have missed it, Mr. Speaker. If you would have given me two answers, if you would have said Okinawa and let me see if I can pick another one, Australia, I would have gotten it wrong. I would have picked Australia. If you had given me 10 choices across there, I think you maybe could have picked two or three, I could have, as being more likely or less likely but Okinawa? I would have never done that in an essay question or a fill-in-the-blank.

I do not know where he came up with Okinawa as a place to deploy all of our troops over to. It is not a tactical thing that makes any sense. It is not a political thing that makes any sense to take our troops and say we are going to take you out of Iraq and we are going to put you in the barracks in Okinawa where you can train, let us say train beach landings in Okinawa to get ready to one day go back and fight in the desert in urban warfare. Does not make sense to me? Now, if he said let us deploy them down to the border, to the illegals that are coming across this border, that would have made sense, but Okinawa? To say we are going to mount military operations out of Okinawa to go into Iraq in case there is some civil unrest where you have to be there quickly, where you have to have boots on the ground, when our troops, our coalition troops and Iraqis have to understand the neighborhood, have to know the people, have to have relationships there in order to be effective? Okinawa?

□ 2100

Okinawa? Okinawa? I don't think that there is anybody in America that can, with a straight face, defend such a proposal. And it causes me some concern about the foundation of where that came from.

I would like to know. I would like to know if this is kind of a mental equation where you take a kaleidoscope and you bump it and it looks a certain way; and then you leave it like that for a while and you say, this is the way it is. And then over time, you bump it again and it cracks a little differently and you get a different picture entirely. I think that is how we come up with Okinawa. It can't be a rational, deductive reasoning path that gets you there.

Even the argument that you can mount air missions out of Okinawa to come into Iraq and somehow they can be effective from there, no, Mr. Speaker, we have many bases a lot closer to

Iraq. If there was the idea we would run out of those bases or fly out of those bases, it would not be out of Okinawa.

But I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that we do have a base agreement there in Okinawa. We do that in the aftermath of any of our military operations. We have open discussions with the sovereign nations that control those territories and we enter into those agreements so that we can have better security and be better positioned militarily. We have bases in Germany and we have them scattered around in other places around the globe. We have Gitmo down in Cuba that is a legacy left over from the Spanish American War of 1898. So that is something that a sovereign nation must do, Mr. Speaker.

So I think we have covered some of this with regard to the enemy, but the issue of the casualties being too great needs to be raised, Mr. Speaker. So I am going to submit something.

I was asking the question on how dangerous is it for a regular civilian in Iraq. How dangerous is it? What would it be like when I see violence on television day after day after day? I think sometimes they must announce to the television cameras there is going to be a detonation of an IED so they can set their cameras up and be homed in on the site so they can see the dust and the smoke from the explosion and the flying parts that come out of there.

How else would they know to have a video camera set up down there? And I know some of that film comes from the enemy. They set the cameras up and make sure it gets to the news. But we see it day after day after day, something that would appear to be an intolerable level of violence, and something that the people on the other side of the aisle surely can't stand to see, because they come down here on a daily basis and say, bring them home, Mr. President, we can't tolerate this type of violence.

But what must it be like for a regular Iraqi citizen, an average citizen that could be living in a random place in Iraq? They might live in a small town or city somewhere. But what are the odds that you are going to be killed in an explosion of a suicide bomber or the detonation of an improvised explosive device?

I thought I would look into that, Mr. Speaker, and I came up with some very interesting statistics, and I have them here.

This is a little example that tells us about the violent death rate across some countries, some of them selected for their high rates of violence and some selected for their low rates of violence, like the United States; but it is designed to tell us about how dangerous it is to be a regular citizen in Iraq, Mr. Speaker.

We went to a couple of Web pages and pulled the most reliable information that is available. This is the information that is used by Congressional Re-

search Service people who provide us factual data to be used here on the floor of this Congress, Mr. Speaker, and in committees. This is the factual data that is used as a foundation for the decisions that are made in Congress. That factual data came up with these numbers for us.

The violent death rates for civilians are rated in the per 100,000 category. So here is the United States: 4.28. That means out of every 100,000 Americans each year, 4.28 of them, on average, meet a violent death. That is considered, in the civilized world, a relatively low violent death rate. There are other countries that have lower rates, certainly. Many of the States have lower violent death rates, including Iowa, I might add.

But 4.28 is compared to Mexico, with a rate that is more than three times higher. About three times higher. The violent death rate in Mexico is 13.02 per 100,000.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I take us to where Iraq is. This is our subject here, Iraq's violent death rates. An average citizen in Iraq is going to be faced with this statistical reality, that 27.51 Iraqis will die a violent death out of every 100,000.

Now, keep in mind, there are 25 million of them. So you can calculate what this number is, and I just haven't done this for this survey. But what does that compare nation to nation? Well, it is clear that Iraq is about twice as dangerous as Mexico, 27.51 compared to 13.02.

So you are about twice as likely to die a violent death in Iraq as an average citizen as you are in Mexico. But as you can see here, about seven times more likely, 6-point-something times more likely to die a violent death in Iraq than you are in the United States.

So it is not so safe by that standard, Mr. Speaker. But when we look down the line on some of these other representative countries, for example, Venezuela, with Hugo Chavez down there, who is really running a tight ship down there, I hear, with 31.61 violent deaths per 100,000.

It is more dangerous to be an average citizen in Venezuela than it is an average citizen in Iraq, Mr. Speaker. And even more dangerous yet in Jamaica, only by a little bit, with 32.42 violent deaths per 100,000.

So there is your comparison. It gets a little more dangerous as we go down the line: Iraq at 27.51, Jamaica at 32.42. But South Africa, Mr. Speaker, has 49.6 violent deaths per 100,000. Significantly more dangerous to be an average citizen in South Africa, in the nation of South Africa, than it is to be an average citizen in Iraq. Not quite twice, but moving up the line along in that direction.

Then we go to Colombia, almost a neighboring country down there. They produce a lot of drugs down there that come up into the United States. There is a drug culture down there and it is violent there, and the death rate is 61.78 violent deaths per 100,000. Clearly

more than twice as high a death rate in Colombia as there is in Iraq.

Now, that seems to be a little bit shocking, but when you go to Swaziland, 88.61 violent deaths per 100,000. So you are up there a good solid 2½ times more dangerous to be walking around in Swaziland as a regular citizen than it is to be walking around in Iraq as a regular citizen.

That gives us a sense of the level of violence that is there. Can they tolerate that level of violence? Can they be a sovereign nation with that level of violence? If it never diminishes from where it is today, can they still continue to move on and have a civil society; and could they still produce and deliver electricity and goods and services and have shops open up and close down at the end of the day and people could go on with commerce?

The answer to that is, well, they are doing it, Mr. Speaker, in Venezuela, in Jamaica, South Africa, Colombia and Swaziland every day, and we are not hearing a word about that in the news. But every day we see the violence in Iraq that the cameras have been trained on before it happens, Mr. Speaker, and it is a distorted viewpoint.

Safe in the United States, three times more dangerous in Mexico than in the United States. They have a drug culture down there too that is coming at us at a rated of \$65 billion worth of illegal drugs a year, but almost seven times more dangerous in Iraq than it is in the United States, but then incrementally more dangerous in Venezuela, Jamaica, South Africa, Colombia, and Swaziland.

I think I made my point on that, Mr. Speaker.

So, then, okay we are talking nation to nation, Iraq compared to other nations. But what is it like for those of us who live in cities? We have a sense of what it is like here, for example, in Washington, D.C. Well, I just happen to have, Mr. Speaker, this little chart right here that lays out the relative violent death rate for civilians in the cities.

Now, I would point out that we have exempted military deaths in Iraq and police deaths in Iraq, and done so because they are involved in combat over there in a war against the terrorists. So they are faced with running into that on a daily basis and those casualties will certainly be higher. But we are comparing an average civilian to an average civilian in some of these other places in the world.

So we will start out here. Let us go to the low side of this, with 27.51 deaths in Iraq. Now, we could not find any reliable statistics for city-by-city data of violent deaths in Iraq, so I can't give you Mozul, I can't give you, Mr. Speaker, Kirkuk, or Basra, or Tikrit, or any of those places. That information is not available by the CRS research that has been done on these Web pages that provided this data. If it doesn't come through CRS, I don't have enough con-

fidence in it being reliable. In fact, we just simply could not find it, so we put out what we have.

An average citizen anywhere in Iraq, to give you a sense of what it must feel like to live there, compared to Oakland, California, it is a little bit safer in Oakland, California, with 27.51 deaths per hundred thousand in Iraq and 26.1 in Oakland, California. So if you are walking the streets of Oakland, California, and you are wondering whether it is dangerous or not for you there, you should have about the same kind of feeling if you are living in a random place in Iraq.

That doesn't mean there are not highly violent locations in Iraq, but it just means that overall average citizens feel about the same as in Oakland, California.

But St. Louis is a little more dangerous than Iraq, on average, with 34.4 deaths per 100,000. Atlanta is more dangerous yet than Iraq, at 34.9 violent civilian deaths per 100,000.

Someone said, well, you didn't include the policemen's deaths in these cities. They are not included in this data. And I can't tell you actually whether they are or whether they aren't, but I went back and looked at the level of deaths that we had in the last year, one in Atlanta, and none in Washington, D.C., so you can see statistically it just simply is not relevant. So that issue doesn't really matter to this debate.

So we have 27.51 deaths per 100,000 in Iraq, average citizen; Baltimore, 37.7. If you feel safe in Baltimore, you ought to feel safe in Iraq. Detroit, 41.8. The rate is going up. If you feel safe in Detroit, you ought to feel safe in Iraq. Washington, D.C., 45.9 violent civilian deaths per 100,000, and 27.51 in Iraq.

Now we are getting up there to that number that is approaching twice as dangerous in Washington, D.C. as it is for an average citizen in a random place in Iraq. If you feel safe in Washington, D.C., you should feel equally safe in a random place in Iraq. There are many places more dangerous than that, but a random place in Iraq.

Now, when you get to New Orleans, and this number is pre-Katrina, 53.1 violent deaths per 100,000. And guess what, Mr. Speaker? They called out the National Guard and deployed troops down to New Orleans because the level of violence got so high down there, even with the diminished population. There was a violent murderous event down there, and so the Governor called out the National Guard to deploy them on the streets of New Orleans to get control of that city.

Is anyone on that side of the aisle talking about that, about calling the troops up and mobilizing the National Guard to go to New Orleans because of the crime rate? Well, it has finally happened, Mr. Speaker. This crime rate of 53.1, that is almost twice as high as the crime rate in Iraq, might well be higher than twice the crime rate in Iraq after this last flurry of crime they have

had, where there were five people that were executed in one vehicle. We don't know whether it was over drugs or a grudge or both, but likely that would be the foundational excuse. There would never be a reason for doing something that horrible, Mr. Speaker.

So the Governor called out the National Guard. And the people on this side of the aisle, they are not saying, what is your exit strategy, Governor Blanco? When are you going to get the National Guard out of New Orleans? We don't need to have troops deployed there, in an American city that ought to be a civilized place. They are not calling for pulling the troops out. They are not calling for an exit strategy.

They are not objecting to troops being deployed to New Orleans to keep order for a simple crime rather than the kind of violence that comes in Iraq from the terrorists that are trying to turn that society into an uncivil society, Mr. Speaker, the terrorists that are attempting to break that country up and start a civil war; the terrorists that think if they just kill enough people, maim enough people, if they can kill enough people in a heinous enough fashion, sooner or later everyone will say, enough, I can't take it any more. Will you please just stop killing us in the brutal fashion that you are.

Why would anybody think they would ever stop? That is their religious belief. That is their religious mission. They think somehow their path to salvation is brutally killing us; killing people who are not like them. And I would submit, Mr. Speaker, that they kill more Muslims than they do Christians or Jews. Not that they are their preferred target, but it is just simply, I think, because they are handier.

Those who announce that there is a civil war in Iraq, that resolution that has been introduced over in the Senate and I believe a resolution that may have been introduced here in the House that says there is a civil war in Iraq, how can they come to such a conclusion, Mr. Speaker?

□ 2115

I will define a civil war in Iraq so folks can have a measurement to go by, and that is this: 267,000 Iraqis in uniform defending Iraqis trained on the job today, taking over more than 30 bases, covering a high percentage of the real estate in Iraq, Mr. Speaker, and these Iraqis are recruited, and they are mixed up. They are not sorted out by Kurds and Shi'as and Sunnis. They are blended together in one force.

When those Iraqis choose up sides and start shooting at each other wearing the same uniform, Mr. Speaker, that will be the definition of a civil war.

So great strides have been made. There is a great reason for optimism. There will be a successful conclusion. This Nation will not blink. This Nation will not retreat. This Nation will stand forward until victory. There is no alternative but victory, Mr. Speaker.