

We must do everything we can to help our Iraq veterans cope with their traumas. It is the least our government can do after sending them to war on false pretenses, with insufficient equipment and without an exit strategy.

But as an even more urgent matter, we can ensure that no more soldiers suffer from terrifying nightmares and setbacks and flashbacks by ending this occupation and bringing them home at once.

I have actually presented my four-point plan for a radical shift in our Iraq policy to the President of the United States. This policy includes four major areas:

One, greater multilateral cooperation with our allies in enlisting their help in establishing an interim security force in Iraq;

Two, a diplomatic offensive that recasts our role in Iraq as construction partner, rather than military occupier; this means no permanent bases in Iraq, no American claims on Iraqi oil;

Three, a robust post-conflict reconciliation process with a peace commission established to coordinate talks between the Iraqi factions; and

Four, and most importantly, withdrawal of the U.S. Armed Forces.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.)

#### ENCOURAGING NEWS ON MEDICARE PART D

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share the encouraging news that more than 25 million seniors are now enjoying prescription drug coverage under Medicare Part D. This includes over 1.5 million Americans who have enrolled in the last month alone.

Twenty-five million enrollees. That is 25 million seniors who are saving money every time they visit the pharmacy, 25 million seniors who have better access to drugs they need to prevent and manage their illnesses, 25 million seniors who can now afford protection from many catastrophic medical costs.

Like many of my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, I am working incredibly hard to educate seniors about Medicare Part D. With any new program, parts of the enrollment process certainly can be confusing. After all, this is the largest enrollment effort since the introduction of Medicare 40 years ago. But by investing a little time, seniors can nar-

row down their choices and find the plan that best fits their prescription drug needs. And let me assure you, the benefits of this program are undoubtedly worth that effort.

I have been thanked by so many seniors who are now reaping the benefits of prescription drug coverage under Medicare, seniors who have seen their prescription drug costs drop by 50 percent or more, seniors who now have more money in their pockets at the end of the month.

In fact, I would like to share with my colleagues two of the many success stories I have heard from my constituents regarding their positive experiences. I hope these stories will encourage other seniors to explore the savings Medicare Part D holds for them.

Take the experience of Carol Burke. She lives in Newnan, Georgia, in my district, my wife's hometown. She recently wrote me, saying, "I am disturbed by media commentators repeatedly referring to the Medicare drug plan as too difficult to understand and a total disaster. I never hear them say what I truly believe, that it is a wonderful benefit to those of us who have no retirement drug plan provided. A few hours spent with pencil and paper show that the choice to pay a slightly larger premium and have no deductible is clear. The suggestions given in the Medicare 2006 Guidebook are complete and easy to follow, and math is not my strong suit. Thank you for your efforts in providing this much-needed service to seniors."

Now, my colleagues, that is a real letter, and I completely agree with Mrs. Burke's assessment. It may take a little time to choose the right plan. Seniors might need to rely on family, friends and community organizations to help with the process. But a little time spent enrolling today will pay huge dividends in the upcoming months and years, because affordable prescription drugs help seniors live healthier lives.

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Let me share another story with you. I received a phone call from fellow Georgian Mr. Richard Mosrie who recently enrolled in the Medicare part D plan.

Mr. Mosrie explained that he is now saving over \$150 a month on his medications, \$150 a month. Seniors across America understand what a difference a couple hundred dollars a month can make. These are the stories that seniors need to hear. These are the stories that are happening in every congressional district in America regardless of whether the Congressman or -woman is a Republican or a Democrat.

I find it disappointing that there are people who attempt to use Medicare part D as a political ploy. How cruel to put partisanship over the health of our seniors by encouraging people not to enroll in this great program. That is, in essence, encouraging seniors not to save money and not to improve their

health. So, Mr. Speaker, in the following months we will be hearing more and more positive stories from seniors who have enrolled in Medicare part D who are reaping financial and health rewards.

The initial sign-up period runs through May 15, 2006, so there is still time for seniors to enroll without a premium penalty.

As a physician, I know that access to the right medication is a bedrock of good health. Our seniors deserve affordable prescription drug coverage and Congress has passed good legislation to deliver this benefit.

Now is the time for seniors to enroll, and I sincerely hope all of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle will stand with me in commitment to helping our seniors access the medication they need to stay well.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK of Pennsylvania). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

#### THE CENTER CANNOT HOLD

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, it is doubtful that we can even accurately count the number of Iraqis who have died today in their country. The President vows he will stay the course. We have heard this before over and over again, as if saying it repeatedly would alter the reality.

For months the American people have spoken with an ever louder voice urging the President to redeploy U.S. soldiers to get them out of harm's way. For months, many Members of Congress, especially Mr. MURTHA of Pennsylvania, have urged the President to redeploy the U.S. soldiers to get them out of harm's way.

Now even U.S. soldiers overwhelming say that the U.S. should be out of Iraq this year. In military terms, that is enough time to quickly plan and safely reallocate U.S. soldiers. In other words, the men and women of the United States Armed Forces, those in the battlefield, are saying what this administration refuses to act on.

The ground the President is standing on has shrunk to the size of a postage stamp. His approval ratings have fallen so low they are below sea level. Today, not only is Iraq in the throes of relentless civil violence, even members of the administration are telling Congress that there is danger the violence in Iraq could spill outside the borders and inflame the entire Middle East.

Yet despite the warnings, despite the reality, despite the Iraqi leaders urging

the U.S. to stop interfering with efforts to form a new government, the President is going to stay the course.

The same rhetoric spoken after every wave of violence has really worn threadbare. It is time to set a course, and we have done that. It is time to lead the U.S. out of harm's way because that is what leaders do.

Another U.S. soldier died today in Iraq. The total number of U.S. men and women serving this country in Iraq who have died has climbed to 2,292. They have paid the ultimate sacrifice for Bush's folly. In my judgment, the price they paid was too high. These soldiers are heroes. That much we know. And that is of comfort to their families and this proud and grateful Nation.

But we owe these heroes more than comfort for their families. Many of these soldiers died saving other soldiers. We have to ask ourselves whether we are failing as a Nation because we know Iraq is not working, and yet we leave the soldiers in harm's way.

We have to ask ourselves whether we are failing as a Nation because we allow our government to act contrary to the wishes of the people. This is supposed to be a democracy. This is not about a war time when only the Commander in Chief can know everything there is to know, and we must place our trust in him or her. This is not the Invasion of Normandy.

The war in Iraq is nothing like that. We know what the President knows about the situation. There are no secret intelligence reports laying out the real Iraq story. We know it. We see it on television. We read about it in the newspapers, and we discuss it online. We are truly all in this war. Everyone, except the man who lives at 1600 Pennsylvania. There is not a shred of evidence or paperwork that he has that says repeating the line, "stay the course," is going to benefit the U.S. or the Iraqi people.

Why then are we doing it? It is time for the American people to demand that the President account for his actions and the lack of actions on the Iraq war. Iraq is reeling from its worst fear, the launch of a civil war.

U.S. soldiers are bunkered in their defensive positions. But why are they there at all? Many Iraqi leaders are beginning to blame the U.S. occupation for unleashing the evil, as they call it.

Every day that goes by, the reputation and credibility of our Nation bleeds a little more. That is nothing in comparison to the lost lives and shattered lives of thousands of U.S. soldiers and their loved ones. William Butler Yeats, the Noble Prize laureate who was a Senator in Ireland, said in a poem called "The Center Cannot Hold," it is the Second Coming. Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world, the best lack all conviction while the worst are full of passionate neat intensity.

When will we learn? When will this government listen to the people? The soldiers in battle and the people at home, they know what Iraq is and is

not. But two people, or maybe only one, in the White House have yet to learn it. But until they do, Iraq will be a price for which we witness relentless chaos that can be turned loose upon the whole world. We cannot stay the course when there is no course. The best thing is to come home.

Mr. President, give us a plan.

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

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

#### DUBAI PORTS WORLD DEAL RISKS NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, my constituents in Minnesota and I are overwhelmingly opposed to the administration handing over day-to-day management of six U.S. ports to a company owned and operated by the United Arab Emirates.

Mr. Speaker, this port management deal poses a very real risk to national security, as many experts have pointed out. As the former Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security, Clark Ervin, said last week, "It is true that our Coast Guard would remain in charge of port security. But that means merely setting standards that ports are to follow and reviewing their security plans. Meeting those standards every day is the job of port operators. They are responsible for hiring security officers, guarding the cargo and overseeing its unloading."

As another security expert put it, you cannot separate port security from port management. Our ports are on the front lines of our homeland defense, and terminal operators play a key role. It is undisputed that under the contract to manage the six U.S. ports, Dubai Ports World would handle shipping arrivals, departures, unloading at the docks, and many other security-related functions.

The UAE-owned company would be responsible for keeping cargo containers secure from the time they are unloaded from foreign ships until the containers are taken away on trucks. In addition, terminal operators work with port security plans that contain sensitive security information.

They are responsible for securing the perimeter of the terminals and they conduct security training for dock workers.

Mr. Speaker, the fundamental question is this: Do we really want a company owned by a foreign government that has been a home base for terrorists, do we really want that company in charge of these functions? I think not.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, we also know the United States Coast Guard conducted an intelligence assessment of Dubai Ports World and its owners in the United Arab Emirates. As a result of that December 13, 2005 intelligence assessment, the Coast Guard warned: "There are many intelligence gaps concerning the potential for DPW assets to support terrorist operations that preclude the completion of a thorough threat assessment of the merger."

The intelligence assessment also stated: "The breadth of the intelligence gaps also infer potential unknown threats against the large number of potential vulnerabilities."

Mr. Speaker, this Coast Guard assessment raises serious questions on the overall security environment at DP World facilities, the background of some personnel and foreign influence on company operations.

As a cosponsor, Mr. Speaker, of H.R. 4807, authored by Chairman Peter King of our Homeland Security Committee, I strongly support this critical legislation that would allow Congress to block the ports deal following the current 45-day investigation.

Mr. Speaker, the security of our homeland must be our highest priority. That is why we need to pass this important legislation.

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

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

#### PROBLEMS WITH THE DUBAI PORTS DEAL

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong concern about the Bush administration's agreement to allow a United Arab Emirates company, Dubai Ports World, to manage operations at several U.S. seaports, including the Port of Baltimore in my home State of Maryland.

Let me first emphasize that the United Arab Emirates is a valued ally in the war against terrorism, and I sincerely appreciate their contribution to the war effort.

Unfortunately, some pundits and supporters of this deal suggest that bipartisan criticism of the port deal stems from racism or xenophobia or even political-year grandstanding. I reject these arguments. These are the same pundits who were quick to say that Congress was lax in its oversight and failed to connect the dots after a terrorist attack.

The sole issue here is national security and connecting the dots before the facts. Let me be clear. I do not oppose foreign ownership or operation of U.S.