

I want my constituents in Maryland's Seventh Congressional District and the people across this great Nation to know that they are not alone. This is a priority issue for me, and I will not stop until this issue is addressed. This is why I am calling upon all of my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 933.

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.)

PRAISING THE RESCUE EFFORTS OF HORIZON LINES

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, when most Americans think of open-seas rescue operations, they think rightly about the United States Coast Guard. Our Nation's Coast Guard has a distinguished history of search and rescue missions dating back 217 years. They recently celebrated their one-millionth rescue, and I want to commend the bravery and service of this time-honored branch of our Armed Forces.

But it turns out the Coast Guard isn't the only one assisting seafarers in distress these days. North Carolina-based Horizon Lines, a leading domestic ocean shipping company, came to the rescue of 22 Chinese crew members on a 420-foot log ship this summer. The log ship was transporting a load from Papua New Guinea to China, when it encountered the 70-mile-per-hour winds and 24-foot seas of a typhoon. The rough seas apparently caused the log ship's cargo to shift and eventually led to the loss of the vessel.

The ship, the *Hai Tong*, had sunk in the very rough seas and the survivors had been adrift in the ocean 375 miles from Guam for 2 days when the Horizon Lines container ship, the *Horizon Falcon*, arrived. The *Horizon Falcon* was the first vessel to arrive on the scene after the log ship's crew alerted the Coast Guard to the *Hai Tong's* distress.

When the *Horizon Falcon* arrived, it found survivors in the water surrounded by an oil slick and debris from the sunken ship. With the U.S. Coast Guard on the way, the Horizon Line's vessel immediately began a search and rescue operation amidst treacherous 30-foot swells and 40-mile-an-hour winds.

The *Horizon Falcon's* captain, Tom McDorr, navigated through the heavy seas filled with the log ship's cargo and managed to get the huge 722-foot container ship within range of a rescue mission using one of the ship's lifeboats. His brave crew took the small lifeboat into the heavy seas, which still threatened their lives with 20-foot

waves, and began searching for survivors of the wreck.

Due to the distance of the nearest Coast Guard vessels, at this point there were not yet any Coast Guard rescuers on the scene. The lifeboat, crewed by three of the *Horizon Falcon's* seamen and under the command of Chief Mate Kevin McCarthy, fought its way through the massive waves and managed to locate and take one survivor aboard with waves crashing down on the vessel from literally every direction.

I cannot say enough to commend the bravery of these men who risked their lives to save someone with whom they had no connection. Their selfless act was a demonstration of profound humanity in the face of extreme danger.

The danger was so great that as they returned to the ship with a survivor in the lifeboat they were forced to abandon the damaged lifeboat, to the heavy seas. The crew and the rescued seaman managed to climb to safety up the container ship's 40-foot pilot's ladder.

The heroic actions of the *Horizon Falcon's* crew continued as another survivor was rescued by able-seaman J. Dacaug. He was secured to the pilot's ladder and went back to the ocean after the additional survivors. He managed to attach a grappling hook to a Chinese sailor even as he was battered by the huge swells and occasionally was submerged completely in the heavy seas. His bravery resulted in another life saved when both men were winched back to the safety of the container ship.

The *Falcon* continued to search through the night for more survivors with the help of additional commercial ships and by the light of flares from a Navy airplane based in Japan. As the *Falcon* began to run low on fuel, it was relieved by a Coast Guard vessel that joined the search. The Coast Guard finally suspended the search 2 days later after 13 survivors had been rescued.

Working against time and the power of nature, the captain and crew of the *Horizon Falcon* risked their own lives so others might emerge from a disastrous shipwreck to sail another day. Chuck Raymond of Horizon Lines put it well. "Ever since man has been going to sea, there has been danger. But there also has been and will ever be brotherhood at sea that crosses any boundary. This rescue effort is a shining example of that."

The Coast Guard also praised the heroic actions of the *Falcon's* crew saying that their efforts were to be "commended and do not go unnoticed." I completely agree. We live in a time when it is easy to pass up opportunities to help someone in distress with the assumption that someone else will take care of it. But in the spirit of the Good Samaritan, the crew of the *Falcon* proved that ordinary people can do extraordinary good if given a chance. They deserve to be commended for reaching out across boundaries of language and culture and helping people in dire need.

I wish to extend my thanks to all the people at this fine North Carolina company for a job well done. They have shown what they value most, which is to protect human lives at all cost and to reach out to those in need. I hope other companies take notice and follow their lead in this exemplary deed.

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THE ADMINISTRATION'S FAILURE IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ISRAEL). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, over the past 5 years, the Bush administration has repeatedly asked the American people to put their faith and their judgment in the judgment of the White House, especially as it pertains to our position in Iraq.

But as we have seen, and we have seen it time and time again, that judgment is based on ignoring voices of dissent and the reality on the ground in favor of a stay-the-course mentality.

When General Petraeus presents his report on Iraq next week, we cannot allow the voice of the American people to be ignored. We watched this administration relaunch its public relations campaign to sell "the escalation" to the American people, and now they insist that the escalation is working. All this in spite of the Iraqi Government's failure to achieve most of its key benchmarks for military and political progress and the dramatic increase in American and Iraqi casualties since the escalation began.

The administration continues, Mr. Speaker, to resist all attempts supported by the overwhelming majority of Americans to bring our troops home. In essence, we are in the middle of another PR campaign, this one to stifle the will and undermine the judgment of the American people again.

Today Congress is again faced with the choice of trusting its own judgment or the claims of the Bush administration. Unfortunately, the past miscalculation and failed predictions of the administration have resulted in tragic consequences.

In 2003, the administration insisted that an invasion force of 130,000 troops would be enough to secure Iraq and restore peace after the invasion. They claimed Saddam Hussein was amassing weapons of mass destruction to use against our country. They promised that we would be greeted as liberators, and in May 2005 we were told that the insurgency in Iraq was in its last throes. Time after time, they have been wrong, wrong, wrong.

Earlier this year when Congress passed the emergency spending bill for Iraq, the Bush administration argued that benchmarks are the only way to measure progress in Iraq. As a result, the Government Accountability Office

released a report this week showing that Iraq has failed 11 out of 18 benchmarks. And those seven that did not fail were barely, barely worked upon at all. In response, the administration now claims that these benchmarks should no longer be used to measure progress. It is clear that the administration will never accept the reality about Iraq. The only way to end the violence is to fully fund a safe and orderly redeployment from Iraq.

The shallow fortune-telling of the Bush administration cannot replace what every American knows: The only right course in Iraq is to bring our troops home by fully funding a safe redeployment of our troops and military contractors. The American people want bold leadership, and they have called on the Congress to take action, action now. The occupation has been a total failure and the American people will not accept taking a wait-and-see attitude. They know that the only sensible moral and responsible course is to fully fund the redeployment of our American troops and military contractors. And they want us to get started on it now.

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.)

PLANNED DEFEAT BY WITHDRAWAL?

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

Mr. POE. "Never, never believe any war will be smooth and easy, or that anyone who embarks on the strange voyage can measure the tides and hurricanes that he will encounter. The statesman must realize that once the signal is given, there are unforeseeable and uncontrollable events."

Winston Churchill's statement many years from the past indicates the truism of war. It is hard. It is always hard.

Next week, General Petraeus will be reporting to this Congress what progress has been made in achieving security and stability in Iraq. No doubt the report will offer mixed results, signs of progress and probably setbacks.

In the midst of all of this review, Mr. Speaker, the question is: Now what?

Regardless of what anybody thought about going into Iraq, we are there. Right now our military personnel are risking their lives every day in Iraq and Afghanistan to protect our interests at home and abroad. In my opinion, there are far too many people focusing on where we have been and how we got there rather than making decisions about the future and our involvement in Iraq.

The way I see it, Mr. Speaker, we just have two options. We can stay in

Iraq and keep fighting for the American interest and what we believe is right, or we can turn our back and leave. There is not a third option.

To those who think we ought to leave Iraq and bring our troops home, what will happen if we withdraw before the job is done? The answer is chaos and more bloodshed. Without a stable Iraq, the power vacuum will inevitably entice more civil war like we haven't begun to imagine and, most likely, a regional conflict that will lead to serious security risks for those nations and the United States.

Congress is making the outcome of this war the same as the planned failure in Vietnam. That war lasted 10 years. The media didn't like the war. The American public got war weary and Congress then cut the funding and started bringing troops home. The results: We left before the mission was accomplished. We abandoned our friends, and when the communists gained control, they killed thousands of people because we lost our way.

Our enemies today believe we will abandon Iraq in the same way, and they hope we do. They feel we don't have the stomach for war. Our enemies believe they are more committed to their cause of killing in the name of religion than we are for our cause of life and liberty.

Abandonment and retreat is not a strategy. We stay because it is in America's best interest to stay and secure a victory before we turn the country over to the Iraqis. We stay because there are men and women laying down their lives for the cause of America. Twenty-one courageous men and women from my area in southeast Texas have died in Iraq and Afghanistan. What would the retreat crowd tell those families about their kids who died on the altar of freedom? War got too hard so we left? We don't quit because war is hard. War is always hard. We stay, Mr. Speaker, because we know that we are fighting a global enemy who doesn't intend to stop war. They want to destroy us. Success, Mr. Speaker, has never come from withdrawal; it never will.

General George Patton in World War II told his troops in 1944, he said, "Sure, we want to go home. We want this war over with. The quickest way to get it over with is to get the ones who started it. The quicker they are whipped, the quicker we can go home. You must always do your finest and win."

That is the only option. And yes, Mr. Speaker, Patton and his boys successfully finished that war.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE PRESIDENT'S WAR ASSESSMENT

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, when the President arrived in Australia the other day, he told the prime minister, quote, "We're kicking ass" in Iraq. It is a clear sign that he intends to keep a massive U.S. military force in Iraq as long as he remains in office. And he will make it official administration policy next week. "We're Kicking Ass in Iraq" might be the headline of the report the White House is writing for General Petraeus to deliver to the Congress next week.

It is supposed to be an objective military assessment, but the President has declared it will be a White House spin document, as usual. Here's what the President's "kick ass" assessment translates to on the ground: 10 U.S. soldiers killed this week; 793 U.S. soldiers killed so far this year; 3,752 U.S. soldiers killed since the beginning of the war; and 27,186 U.S. soldiers wounded since the beginning of the war. And, 71,000 documented Iraq civilian deaths since the beginning of the war, although the actual number is much higher.

As the Times of India newspaper said today, Iraq is getting worse day after day. We don't even know how bad things really are.

The ACLU filed a lawsuit the other day demanding the U.S. release military documents concerning the number of innocent civilians killed by the U.S. forces. They fear the government is hiding the human cost of war. We don't know, but reliable information does exist.

There is plenty of factual information for the President to rely on, but he won't. An independent commission of retired U.S. generals released a report today that concludes that the Iraqi national police force is so corrupt the force should be disbanded. These U.S. military experts concluded that Iraq's Army over the next 18 months, "Cannot yet meaningfully contribute to denying terrorists safe haven."

The GAO released its own independent study showing the Iraq Government has reached only three of the 18 benchmarks established as part of the U.S. continuing to fund the war. In case anyone thinks that achieving three of 18 isn't too bad, let me tell you what they are.

The first benchmark we achieved was passing a law that legally protects the rights of minority parties in Iraq. Except the minority Sunni population remains outside the political situation totally. The other two benchmarks the Iraqi Government achieved was setting up security and public relations offices to support the military escalation. But the White House will use the military brass to paint a much rosier picture next week in its report to the Congress.