

must also work diplomatically with Iran and Syria during this deliberate redeployment. While these two countries are currently involved destructively in this war, according to our intelligence community, these nations want stability in Iraq after our departure and, therefore, can play a constructive role.

I have consistently argued that a planned end to our military engagement is necessary and that such a date certain deadline would force Iraqi leaders to assume responsibility, providing Iran and Syria the incentive to prevent violence otherwise caused by our departure.

Our troops could either return home or deploy to regions such as Afghanistan, where terrorists pose a threat to our security, while others remain at our existing bases in Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and on aircraft carrier and amphibious groups to ensure our interests in the region as we did prior to invading Iraq.

Because our Army must either start a lengthy redeployment or risk unraveling, we have the catalyst for a bipartisan agreement to end this war with a stable Iraq if we also work with Iran and Syria to meet this goal. However, this opportunity for a bipartisan congressional approach to convince the President to use diplomacy to bring about a stable accommodation in Iraq once our troops redeploy will undoubtedly require an initial redeployment deadline that is a "goal" instead of a "date certain." Therefore, despite my continuing belief that a date certain is the best leverage we have to change Iraqis' and regional nations' behavior, when faced with the otherwise assured consequences of a bipartisan stalemate on resolving the tragic misadventure in Iraq, this compromise is needed for America's security.

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.)

□ 1700

WE MOURN THE PASSING OF
SHEIK SATTAR BUZAIGH AL
RISHAWI

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, scripture tells us to mourn with those who mourn and to grieve with those who grieve. I rise today to join our allies and his family and neighbors and friends to grieve the passing by assassination last week of a courageous Iraqi in Anbar province, Sheik Abdul Sattar Buzaigh al Rishawi, a man 37 years of age that I had the privilege of

meeting this last April when I visited Falluja in Ramadi.

It was there that I learned from General Odierno, as well, in our nearly 1-hour meeting with Sheik Sattar about how what has come to be known, Mr. Speaker, globally as the Anbar Awakening was born. You see, it was this Iraqi sheik, whose father had been killed by al Qaeda in Iraq, his three brothers had been murdered by al Qaeda, who said sometime in late 2006, "I have had enough." What the general told me, and the Sheik affirmed, as he came across the river in Ramadi, sat down with the Marines perhaps in the same room where we are pictured here, and said, "How can we, as Sunni sheik leaders, work with you, American forces, and the Maliki government to rid Ramadi, to rid al Anbar of al Qaeda?"

It was the end of a bloody year in 2006, just a few months earlier that Ramadi was at the very center of what was called the Triangle of Death. According to National Intelligence Estimates, Ramadi was so far gone that it could not be reclaimed militarily. But Sheik Sattar stepped forward. He had a vision for driving terrorists from his community. As General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker reported to Congress last week and independent organizations, like the Brookings Institution, a left-leaning think tank, have confirmed, because of the leadership of Sheik Sattar and over 42 other Iraqi sheiks that he recruited, Anbar province is transformed. The city of Ramadi is transformed. It has truly been a miraculous turnaround with the virtual elimination of al Qaeda in western Iraq being the result.

Iraqi military leaders say to the world media, "We considered the sheik our first line of defense." President Bush just 10 days ago met with Sheik Sattar in Ramadi to celebrate the first anniversary of the Anbar Awakening. Of his passing, the interior ministry named a national police brigade after him. The leader of that ministry said, "We will be building a great statue for Sheik Sattar Buzaigh al Rishawi at the entrance of Anbar province so it will be a witness to his great accomplishments and those of the people of Iraq."

Amidst the thousands who gathered for his funeral on Friday in Ramadi, his brother would say, "All of Anbar is Abu Risha, so Abu Risha has not been killed." He went on to say, "I pledge to you, my father, my brother, my cousins, we will follow the road taken by Sheik Abdul Risha. We will follow it until we kill the last terrorist in Iraq." I was pleased to see that even this Sunday U.S. military forces took into custody a man believed to have been involved in his assassination.

We mourn with those who mourn. In my meeting with Sheik Sattar, he said a few things to me I will never forget. He said, "Congressman PENCE, when you go home, tell your people that we in Anbar believe that an attack on an American is an attack on an Iraqi." He

said, "Anyone who points a weapon at an American is pointing a weapon at an Iraqi." He also looked at me, at age 37, wearing those flowing robes with a pinstripe suit underneath them, he looked at me, and he said through those warm brown eyes, he said, "Anyone who tells you that Iraqis don't like Americans is lying to you." He said, "Iraqis love Americans." And then he asked me, sitting at Camp Falluja and Ramadi, why we would even discuss permanently leaving Iraq.

He was a man of hope, a man of courage, a man of conviction. I mourn his loss as should every American and every freedom-loving citizen of the world mourn the passing of Sheik Sattar.

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

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

JENA SIX

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to see that the Third Circuit Court of Appeals has tossed out the conviction of aggravated battery for 17-year-old Mychal Bell. I can no longer be silent about the ongoing struggle for justice for the six high school students in Jena, Louisiana, known as the Jena Six. These young boys, who were arrested after a racially charged school fight and charged with attempted murder following a noose hanging incident now face the prospect of losing much of their young lives to a tainted criminal justice system.

I have carefully reviewed all of the news accounts of the events surrounding this most troubling case. I have talked with the parents, and I have talked with the attorneys. I remain convinced that this case is a result of long-standing, deep-seated racial divisions in Jena, Louisiana.

It seems unreasonable that on a school campus the administration was unaware of the fact that white students had claimed the space under a tree and declared it off limits to black students. Even so, once the black students asked permission of the administration to sit under the tree and were granted permission to sit under the tree, the school should have recognized that a problem was brewing. The school should have initiated discussions surrounding the residual racial issues that existed in order to avoid a confrontation.

After the black students sat under the tree, it is reported that the white students responded by hanging three hangman's nooses in a tree. Given this country's history of racially motivated

violence, specifically lynchings, the black students were offended and threatened by the physical and emotional message sent by the nooses hanging in the tree. It seems unconscionable that this kind of Jim Crow era segregation, exclusion and emotional terrorism could be tolerated today.

There was tension on the campus and several fights took place. In one fight, a black student was beaten and the white student responsible was suspended. In another fight, a white student was beaten and the black students allegedly responsible were arrested and charged first with attempted murder and later charged with aggravated battery. These are serious criminal charges.

Let me be clear. I do not condone physical violence. I believe all of the students involved in the alleged fighting incidents should be held accountable by school officials. But school-age children all over this country get in fights every day and are appropriately disciplined by school administrators, whether it is a suspension or some other administrative punishment. Appropriate action is taken, and rarely do these incidents rise to the level of a criminal act. However, regardless of the charges and the unusually harsh approach that was taken by the district attorney, one young man, Mychal Bell, who is now still in jail, should never have been tried as an adult for this incident. That is why the Third Circuit Court of Appeals just ruled that that conviction must be tossed out and the other students should never have been incarcerated for the better part of a year awaiting their fate. This injustice cannot be swept under the rug and pacified simply by moving the case from the adult court.

The work here is not done. Along with Mychal Bell, there are five other students, Robert Bailey, Carwin Jones, Theodore Shaw, Jesse Beard and Bryant Ray Purvis, whose lives have been placed on hold awaiting their day in court.

I call on the district attorney to drop all charges against the Jena Six. The City of Jena must begin a reconciliation process which begins with the apology by and investigation of District Attorney Reed Walters for breach of ethics, false imprisonment and civil rights violations. His comments and actions have been both rogue and irresponsible and clearly demonstrate an agenda that is not in line with peace, justice or fairness.

Young people are traveling to Jena on Thursday led by Howard University students. They are coming from all over America to go to Jena, Louisiana to show support. These cases stand as the greatest civil rights challenges this Nation has faced in the 21st century. I will be traveling with them. I will be in Jena with the students. This is a new chapter in the civil rights movement led by young people to get America to do the right thing and to bring justice to Jena.

A TRIBUTE TO VICKI ANN SUMMERS

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

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, I want to pay tribute to Vicki Ann Summers, 59, of Pinehurst, North Carolina, who died on Monday, July 23, 2007, at her home. She was born February 19, 1948, in Stanly County to the late Rudy Lamar Summers and Margaret Ewing Lisk Summers. Vicki was a talented newspaper reporter with a long history in journalism who was most recently employed by The News-Journal in Hoke County. Throughout her career, she spent most of her time covering local government, but she also wrote human interest stories, covered the crime beat and was a photographer. She was recognized for her writings by the North Carolina Press Association.

Vicki grew up in Fayetteville and attended Pine Forest High School before graduating from the North Carolina School of the Arts, which she attended on a full scholarship. She later attended Miami-Dade Junior College in Florida and East Carolina University.

In early 1970, she was a director of public relations for Sheraton Hotels Corporation and the Fountain Bleu Resort in Miami Beach. Around the same time, she worked as a celebrity correspondent for the National Enquirer, as a lifestyle writer for the Miami News, and as a trends writer and garden editor for the Sun Sentinel in Fort Lauderdale. Before coming to the News-Journal, she worked for the Harnett County News in Lillington and the Erwin Times in Erwin, North Carolina.

Vicki was very diligent and really cared about her local community. She took great pride in reporting about the economic development of the county and downtown Raeford streets' redevelopment.

A memorial service was held on Monday, July 30, at 7 p.m. at Northwood Temple in Fayetteville. She is survived by her mother, Margaret Ewing Pope, of Fayetteville, three sisters, Carla S. Merritt and Jan Hernandez, both of Fayetteville, and Lydia Aldridge of Raleigh, and one brother, Eric Summers of Linden.

□ 1715

BLACKWATER'S OPERATING LICENSE IS REVOKED

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Iraq today took the extraordinary step of revoking the operating license of Blackwater U.S.A. in light of accusations that Blackwater employees killed eight Iraqi civilians. Blackwater is a North Carolina-based firm providing private security forces inside Iraq.

This incident has caused another international uproar about the role of the United States in Iraq. Here at home, it is bringing long overdue attention to the role of the so-called contractors. Some call them mercenaries, as many of them are paid more than five times what our regular forces are paid.

The role of private contractors is an issue about which I have been ringing the alarm bell in this House and in the House Appropriations Defense Subcommittee for a long time.

Now the Government of Iraq has been compelled to pull the plug on Blackwater U.S.A. The company claims its employees were acting in self-defense. Many people in Iraq claim the company committed atrocities. Who knows the truth? Who has the authority to investigate? Where is the accountability when it comes to private contractors? How many such hired guns are operating in Iraq? Some say 25,000. Some say more. How many contractors totally are operating in Iraq? Some have estimated the number at 180,000, which is more than the U.S. military we have based in Iraq.

Here in Washington, Congress and the President are debating the proper troop levels for U.S. forces. But, meanwhile, there seem to be more and more contractors operating in Iraq. Due to the unpopularity of this war, I have little doubt that the Bush-Cheney plan is to replace our military forces with paid mercenaries. This would be the first time in U.S. history that our Nation will act as an occupying force by contracted mercenaries.

Indeed, the contracting out process of the U.S. military started in a small way back in the 1980s when Vice President CHENEY was Secretary of Defense. It expanded greatly under the first President Bush, and now it has exploded in this administration.

America, pay attention. Make no mistake: private contractors are also very much the face of the West in the Middle East. They might be accountable only to their bosses and shareholders, but they are Americans in the eyes of Iraqis. Blackwater's eviction from Iraq comes as no surprise to those of us who have followed the now well-established, usually irresponsible use of defense contractors as mercenary forces. In fact, I believe that you cannot win in an engagement through the use of mercenary forces.

Blackwater is not the only defense contracting firm operating irresponsibly in lieu of our well-trained and well-respected military. Unlike our government, the Iraqi Government seems to recognize this.

Today, The New York Times reported that the Iraqi Government said it would review the status of all foreign and local security companies working in Iraq. According to the Private Security Company Association of Iraq, the Iraqi Government has suspended the licenses of two other security companies, but they were reinstated after a review.