

America is losing not only the lives of our soldiers, not only are we going into a great financial debt borrowing money from Beijing to fight a war in Baghdad, but we are losing our moral position in the world, continuing to prosecute a war that is simply based on lies. Let's face it, every assertion made that took us into Iraq has been ripped away as being a lie.

So what are we to do? H.R. 1234 does the following: It is predicated on Congress taking action to end the war, stop the funding. At that point, the administration will go to the world community and say, "Look, the money is no longer here for the war. We are going to close our bases, we are going to end the occupation, we are going to bring our troops home." Only by asserting that we will end the occupation will we be in a position to be able to get help from the world community, which really doesn't want anything to do with this war absent the United States taking a new direction.

The insurgency is fueled by the occupation. It is well understood. So we end the occupation. But then that is not enough. We need the international community to help us build a peacekeeping and security force that would move in as our troops move out.

The elements of the plan embodied in H.R. 1234 are the following: Not only do we end the occupation and bring our troops home and get the international community involved, but we also create the context for a program of reconciliation between the Shiites, the Sunnis, and the Kurds. Right now there is no movement towards reconciliation, because with the U.S. occupying, the Shiites don't have any incentive at all to do that. We need to move out so that we can set in place a program of reconciliation and a program of honest reconstruction. No more theft from the American taxpayers or the Iraqi people by these contractors whose performance has been absolutely abominable, who have stolen billions of dollars. Give the Iraqi people a chance to have their own reconstruction program, with the jobs going to the people of Iraq so they can feed their families. In an economy with 50 percent of the people unemployed, we need to take a new approach and end the reconstruction program as it exists and start a new one.

In future presentations to this Congress, I intend to lay out the rest of H.R. 1234, which is the plan to end the war, bring our troops home, stabilize Iraq, and take a new chapter in America's relationship with the world.

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

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

THE GLOBAL NATURE OF OUR ECONOMY

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as we clearly saw last week with the sharp decline in our stock market following a major drop in the Chinese market, the increasingly global nature of our economy is one of the most defining issues of our time. The growing connectedness of the world's consumers, producers, workers, and investors is having an impact on virtually every aspect of our lives. And with all the rapid change that globalization is bringing about, it is very natural for us to ask ourselves the question: Have these changes been for the better? We want to know if globalization is improving our lives or making them worse.

Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest concerns that we have when we look at this question is the issue of income inequality, something that many people are talking about. We read reports of massive executive salaries, and compare them to the circumstances of America's middle class and the concerns that working families have, and we inevitably wonder if the system is in fact fair. I recently spoke here on this issue, on this very question.

The critical issue is not, Mr. Speaker, whether those at the top are becoming more prosperous; the critical issue is whether everyone is becoming more prosperous, particularly those who are at the bottom of the economic ladder.

We looked at the issue of wages and saw that they are growing for all workers. But when we looked even deeper, we saw that the outlook is even more positive. The purchasing power of working families is increased by lower taxes and greater access to low-cost goods through international trade. This growing purchasing power, along with rising wages, is increasing the standard of living for all Americans, with the greatest positive impact for those who are just beginning to move up the economic ladder.

Today, I want to look at another issue that helps to answer the question of whether quality of life is improving for everyone; that is, the issue of jobs, Mr. Speaker. More specifically, new job creation, and the quality of those new jobs.

Jobs are perhaps the most critical issue in determining standards of living. Does everyone who wants a job have a job? Does that job provide the opportunity to prosper and improve one's quality of life? Just as we saw with wages, the numbers demonstrate a very positive outlook for workers. Unemployment is at 4.6 percent, a rate that is exceptionally low. Mr. Speaker, in fact, we have had 16 straight months of unemployment at 5 percent or less. At the same time, the workforce has been rapidly expanding. Our economy has created nearly 7½ million new jobs in the last 3½ years. There are 146 mil-

lion Americans working today, more than at any time in our Nation's history. The jobs outlook in the United States continues to be very, very good.

But just like with wages, we see an even fuller picture, a better picture when we dig just a little deeper. Average monthly hires last year were nearly 5 million, the highest rate ever since data have been collected. Of those 5 million, the share of workers who left their old job voluntarily for new work was also at the highest level. 58.3 percent made that move. This means that workers are not just finding jobs, they are finding better jobs, better opportunities. Anyone who has been stuck in a dead-end job knows that this is a huge quality of life issue.

Having a job is essential to providing for a family, and any job can serve as a starting point to success. But having a good job that offers new opportunities to prosper is essential to a growing standard of living.

The fact that we are seeing 5 million new hires every month demonstrates a great deal of churn and dynamism in our workforce, and we know that that change is not always easy.

But the rapidly growing number of workers who are voluntarily leaving their old jobs demonstrates that new and better opportunities are being created. It demonstrates, Mr. Speaker, the increased confidence in our workforce that comes with growing prosperity and the prospect of a better life. And it also helps to answer the question of whether the standard of living is improving for everyone, not just those who are at the top of the economic ladder.

□ 1715

New jobs and new opportunities are helping to make all of us more prosperous.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to continue to pursue pro-growth economic policies, including an embrace of America's global leadership role. Those policies have brought about this dynamic workforce, where everyone is upwardly mobile.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman 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.)

BALLAD OF THE ALAMO

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

Mr. POE.

In the southern part of Texas
In the town of San Antone
There's a fortress all in ruins
That the weeds have overgrown.

You may look in vain for crosses
 And you'll never see a one.
 But sometime between the setting
 And the rising of the sun
 You can hear a ghostly bugle
 As the men go marching by.
 You can hear them as they answer
 To that roll call in the sky.
 Colonel William Barrett Travis, Davy Crockett
 And 180 more.
 Captain Dickinson, Jim Bowie
 They're all present and accounted for.

Mr. Speaker, these are the lyrics to Marty Robbins' "Ballad of the Alamo."

It was there in an old beat up Spanish mission in south Texas called the Alamo on March 6, 1836, 171 years ago today, that 187 men stood defiant against oppression and tyranny. They were an odd looking bunch. They were dressed in buckskin. They had large knives, tomahawks and long rifles. They were of all races, of all States, and 13 foreign countries, including Mexico. They were facing a professional army over 20 times their size.

They were there because of the new dictator of Mexico, Santa Anna. He had abolished the democratic Mexican constitution and made himself dictator of all of Mexico.

Hispanics and Anglos living in the Texas part of Mexico wanted the Mexican constitution restored, or independence from Mexico.

Santa Anna then invaded Texas with three armies to put down the dissenters. The men at the Alamo were led by a 27-year-old lawyer from South Carolina and Alabama named William Barrett Travis.

There is a lot of legend, lore and tradition about the defense of the Alamo. But what is true, Mr. Speaker, is that the Alamo defenders believed that some things were worth living for and dying for. One of those being the word, liberty.

Being surrounded, Travis knew he could not hold off Santa Anna's army and he sent out numerous dispatches for help. I have a copy of one of those letters on my office wall. It reads, "Fellow citizens and compatriots, I am besieged by 1,000 or more of the enemy under Santa Anna. I have sustained a continual bombardment and cannon fire for over 24 hours, but I have not lost a man. The enemy has demanded surrender at its discretion, otherwise this fort will be put to the sword. I have answered that demand with a cannon shot and the flag still waves proudly over the north wall. I shall never surrender or retreat. I call upon you in the name of liberty and patriotism and everything dear to our character to come to my aid with all dispatch. If this call is neglected, I am determined to sustain myself for as long as possible and die like a soldier that never forgets what is due his honor and that of his country. Victory or death, William Barrett Travis, commander of the Alamo."

Travis held out for 5 days and 6 days and up to 13 days. But no troops ever came to help the Alamo defenders except the 32 men from Gonzales, Texas.

Eventually Travis and the boys were overwhelmed, and not one was spared by Santa Anna. But victory was expensive for the dictator Santa Anna. Travis, in his last letter from the Alamo said, "Victory will be more costly for Santa Anna than defeat." He was right. Santa Anna's losses were staggering. He also had a crippled army and lost the moral victory to the Texas war of independence.

Then on April 21, 1836, General Sam Houston routed Santa Anna's larger army at the marshes of San Jacinto. Texas became an independent nation and was so for 9 years. And Mr. Speaker, the rest, they say, is Texas history.

William Barrett Travis is my favorite person in all of history. My grandson is named Barrett Houston in his honor.

I conclude these remarks about the Alamo with Marty Robbins' closing lines:

The bugles are silent.
 There's rust on every sword.
 There's a small band of soldiers
 That lie asleep in the arms of the Lord.
 And like a statue on his pinto
 Rides a cowboy all alone.
 And he sees the cattle grazing
 Where just a century before
 Santa Anna's guns were blazing
 And the cannons used to roar.
 His eyes turn sort of misty
 And his heart begins to glow
 And then he takes his hat off slowly
 To the men of that Alamo.
 To the 13 days of glory
 At the siege of the Alamo.

Mr. Speaker, that's just the way it is.

THE ENUMERATED POWERS ACT

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

Mr. SHADEGG. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak of the importance of the 10th amendment and of a bill that I have introduced each Congress since the 104th Congress, the Enumerated Powers Act. I speak today as a member of the Constitution caucus, chaired by my colleague, Congressman SCOTT GARRETT of New Jersey. It is a caucus that is dedicated and works tirelessly to illuminate the importance of the Constitution and of the 10th amendment.

The 10th amendment to the United States Constitution reads as follows: "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

Let me emphasize that again. "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."

What that means is that the Founding Fathers intended our national government to be a limited government, a government of limited powers that cannot expand its legislative authority into areas reserved to the states or to

the people. As the final amendment in the 10 Bill of Rights, it is clear that the Constitution establishes a Federal Government of specifically enumerated and limited powers.

For that reason, as I indicated, I have introduced, each year since I have been in this Congress, the Enumerated Powers Act. This bill would require that all pieces of legislation introduced in the Congress, by a Member of Congress, would have to contain a statement setting forth the specific constitutional authority granted by the Constitution to the U.S. Congress by which that piece of legislation was to be enacted. This measure would enforce a constant and ongoing re-examination of the role of our national government.

The Enumerated Powers Act is simple. It is simply intended to require a scrutiny that we should look at what we enact and that, by doing so, we can slow the growth and reach of the Federal Government, and leave to the states or the people, those functions that were reserved to them by the Constitution.

It will perform three most important functions.

First, it would encourage Members of Congress to pause and reflect and to consider whether they propose a piece of legislation, whether it belongs at the Federal level in the allocation of powers under our U.S. Constitution, or properly belongs with the states or with the people.

Second, it would function to force us to include a statement in the legislation explaining by what authority we are acting.

And third, it would give the United States Supreme Court the ability to look at the constitutional justification for each piece of legislation, and if that constitutional justification did not stand up to scrutiny, the courts and the people would find it easier to hold the Congress accountable and to eliminate those acts which are beyond the scope of the Constitution.

In 1787, when the Founding Fathers wrote our Constitution, they created a national government with great powers but limited powers, believing that granting specific, rather than general legislative power to the national government would be a central mechanism for protecting freedom while allowing us still to achieve the objectives of a national government. As a result, the Constitution gives the Federal Government only 18 specific enumerated powers, just 18 powers.

For the largest part of our history, for the first 130 years, the Constitution served as a bulwark against excessive Federal regulation and against excessive all powerful Federal Government. Unfortunately, the restraint that Congresses demonstrated under that provision of the Constitution has largely been abandoned in the latter half of the 20th Century and now in the 21st Century.

Beginning with the New Deal, modern Congresses have displayed a willingness to ignore the 10th amendment