

Mr. Speaker, there was a new Washington Post ABC news poll released this morning. And only 17 percent of Americans support sending more troops to Iraq; 17 percent is not a mandate for anything, in my opinion. And it is time for President Bush to finally listen to the American people.

Many of us woke up on New Year's Day to the headline of "3,000" bannered across our newspapers. We have now lost more than 3,000 soldiers in Iraq. Now, how many more are going to have to die before the President realizes that there is no possible U.S. military solution in Iraq?

Some supporters of the President's plan are going to claim that if we bring our troops home now, the more than 3,000 U.S. soldiers that have died over the past 3 years will have done so in vain. But I could not disagree more. These men and women fought admirably for our country and will certainly be remembered as heroes. But the question now is whether or not we want to risk thousands more American lives for a war that we so obviously cannot win.

Since the inception of this war, we have seen little evidence of progress in Iraq. In fact, the violence has only intensified to the point that a report released from the President's own Pentagon concluded that violence in Iraq was at an all time high just last month. And last month was the third deadliest month for American troops since the start of the war with insurgents claiming 111 soldiers lives.

Now, our troops know that the situation in Iraq is getting worse every day. They are speaking about IEDs, the improvised explosive devices used by the insurgents, which are now bigger and more complex.

The Bush Administration has tried troop escalation before, but it has never worked. Last summer, the President touted a plan that sent more troops into Baghdad, similar to what is expected to be proposed by him tomorrow. But while the violence subsided for a couple of weeks, by the end of August last year, violence was again on the rise, and it continued to escalate for the remainder of the year.

Based on these facts on the ground, why would the President even consider sending more troops to Iraq? Why would you put more American lives in harm's way when we know that previous troop escalations have not been successful in reducing violence and decreasing the number of insurgents?

Mr. Speaker, it is time for us to begin to bring our troops home. The President has said that increasing troops is a sacrifice we have to make to win this war. But I think truly it is time for him to admit that risking more American lives for this failed war is a monumental mistake.

HONORING THE LIFE OF HOWARD ZWYER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, today our community bid special praise and farewell to a beautiful human being, Howard Zwyer of Monclova, Ohio. A lifelong farmer, along with his wife, Eleanor, his brother, Ray, and his wife, Thelma, farmed over 1,000 acres as their father had before them. And the Zwyer family, and Howard, carried on an ethic of stewardship of our land, of husbandry, soil conservation and community mindedness that surely is not equaled by any other American.

He was 83. He lived to be 83, and he died within a mile of his birthplace. He and his brother, Ray, and their father, John, began growing corn, soybeans and wheat in the early years, even raising beef cattle.

Now, their father died in 1963, and the brothers took over. And they loved the land. When he retired formally from agriculture, he gardened and shared the produce with others. He really needed to work with the soil. It was part of him. And he never complained about being a farmer.

Mr. Zwyer retired formally about 20 years ago, and his brother died in 2002. I can tell you, they represented agriculture in Northern Ohio. There was nothing like getting on a combine with the Zwyers beaming ear to ear. I had some of those experiences.

He inherited so much of his spunk from his father, and he was also political. Howard was a Township Trustee from 1972 to 1979 and sought public office because he thought there needed to be changes for the better. Without complaint, he accepted constituents' phone calls of praise or blame and made sure the telephone was at the dinner table so he could answer.

And during late night snowstorms, he helped plow the roads. He really was a builder of our community. Throughout his public service, he attended most trustees meetings and recruited others to run for township office. His daughter said he was a little sad about how Monclova had evolved into more of a suburban community, but he understood how progress may change life as we have known it.

In retirement, Mr. Zwyer made bluebird houses, which he installed and tended, lots of bluebird houses. The family joked about how he could do anything if he had a roll of duct tape, a Snickers bar and a can of WD-40. And that is so true.

He loved adventures with his grandchildren, and he gave out cards that gave you hugs and kisses, and he handed out lots of tulips.

He was a member of St. Joseph's Church, Maumee, and became an usher until he became ill about 6 years ago.

He was a 1941 graduate of former Monclova High School, and his beloved wife, Eleanor, survives him. They have been married since 1945. They have a daughter, Jeanne Counts; a brother, Bob Zwyer; and two grandsons.

It is such a joy to be able to talk about the life of this wonderful, won-

derful Ohioan who did so much to create a culture of caring and of fatherliness across our region and who helped make agriculture in Ohio, our leading industry, what it is today.

We shall truly miss Howard Zwyer and all of the values that he represented. We know that he, his brother Ray, their father, are in a very, very special place in the city beyond the stars. We shall miss them. We wish their families Godspeed. Our thoughts are with them particularly at this difficult time.

[From The Blade, Jan. 7, 2007]

HOWARD JOHN ZWYER

Howard John Zwyer, 83, of Monclova, passed away Friday, January 5, 2007, at the Hospice of Northwest Ohio in Perrysburg. Howard was born May 13, 1923, in Monclova, the son of John and Sophie Grossheim Zwyer. He graduated from Monclova High School in 1941. Howard was a farmer and gardener his entire life, never living more than one mile from his original home. He loved sharing his raspberries, blackberries and other produce from his garden with neighbors and friends. Howard was a lifelong member of St. Joseph Catholic Church and ushered for many years. He served as a Monclova Township Trustee for eight years and after his service, he stayed active in the township and politics. He was a member of the Monclova Democrat Club, Lucas County Farm Bureau, the Maumee Eagles and the Lucas County Soil and Water Conservation District. Howard loved his family, International tractors, duct tape, WD-40, Snickers bars, adventures with his grandsons, hugs, Tulips, bluebirds and smiles.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Eleanor; daughter, Jeanne (Jim) Counts; grandsons, Buck (Heather) Counts and Will Counts; brother, Bob (Eleanor) sister-in-law, Thelma Zwyer and many special nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents; son, Jimmy; a daughter, Julie; brother and sister-in law, Paul and Geneva; brother, Raymond, and sister and brother-in-law, Helen and Gilbert Sattler.

IRAQ TROOP ESCALATION

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow night President Bush will go on prime time television to present to the Nation the results of, quite frankly, what I call his listening tour on what to do about Iraq.

After 4 years since the war began, the President has suddenly taken an interest in listening. But he certainly is not hearing the American people.

Nearly 4 years ago, this unnecessary war in Iraq began, and it has cost our Nation so much. Over 3,000 brave American men and women have given their lives. We have spent close to \$400 billion on this war, and the President is poised to ask for another \$100 billion in the fiscal 2006 supplemental next month.

And this war has greatly undermined our standing in the world and our national security.

Each additional day that our troops remain on the ground in Iraq, the

longer the target remains on their backs. Instead of doing something immediately to remove these targets from our troops, the President is expected to propose escalating the number of our troops in Iraq by 20,000.

Now, regardless of how you spin this, either as a surge or a bump, it amounts to an escalation of the war at precisely the time we should be seeking to bring the Iraq war to an end. It is like the man who finds himself in a hole and decides that the best way out is to keep digging.

An escalation in troops won't change a thing on the ground. Iraq is still in a civil war, and we are still occupiers.

As reported yesterday, nearly 23,000 Iraqis died in 2006. This is just in 1 year. And even worse, over 17,000 of these deaths came in the second half of the year.

In escalating the number of troops, the President fails to address exactly how U.S. troops will referee this civil war. Are we to pick sides and support ethnic cleansing of one group over another? Adding more U.S. troops to this mess will prove not only ineffective, it is just plain foolish.

But this tactic is nothing new. The President has added troops in the past. There have been escalations during the Iraqi elections in 2005 and 2006 to shore up Baghdad security. The violence may have quelled for a moment but only to return with a vengeance, as we have seen.

Finally, the President's plan is futile. Some of the President's own advisors and experts have questioned the utility of a troop escalation. Their reasons range from the Iraqi government's inability to capitalize on new troops to the sheer folly of adding more troops to an already incendiary situation.

No such luck. In fact, a senior military official was quoted last month as saying adding more troops would be like adding kerosene to a fire.

General Abizaid, the top military commander in Iraq, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee in November 2006. He posed the question of his commanders and generals. He said, If we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq? General Abizaid reported that they all said no.

Mr. Speaker, the President's own press secretary, Tony Snow, said yesterday that the President still wants to hear what Members of Congress have to say. Well, I tell you, we have listened to the American people. Over 60 percent oppose the idea of increased troop levels. We have listened to the President's own commanders. Escalating the number of troops won't change the facts on the ground. I think it is time for the President to listen.

Mr. President, Mr. President, Mr. President, bring our troops home and make sure that we have no permanent military bases in Iraq.

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END THE WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to give voice to tens of millions of Americans throughout our country who are looking for an end to the war in Iraq. I rise on behalf of our brave soldiers on our battlefield who have done everything our country has asked of them under terrible circumstances and who have made terrible sacrifices.

I rise on behalf of their families who have suffered great losses and who worry day and night for their safety and for the loved ones still in combat. I rise this evening to call on our President to give the Nation what it has deserved, a viable plan to safely bring this war to an end, to redeploy the American forces out of Iraq, and turn the future of Iraq over to the Iraqi people once and for all.

President Bush is soon expected to call for an escalation to the war in Iraq, seeking to deploy an additional 20,000 troops into combat. The President's plan would be just the latest in a series of flawed and tragic decisions that he has made regarding Iraq.

The President was advised at the outset of the war by one of his top generals to send a large American force in order to win. President Bush rejected that idea, and since then he has tried at different times a surge of American troops in an effort to win the war. Now, each time that effort has failed.

Now he appears ready to defy the odds and take great risks with the lives of others in order to try his plan one more time. The President has failed to make a compelling case for adding more troops into what is clearly the greatest American foreign policy disaster in half a century or even longer.

I applaud the efforts of House Speaker NANCY PELOSI and Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID, who have called for a new course in Iraq. On Friday they wrote: "Adding more combat troops will only endanger more Americans and stretch our military to the breaking point for no strategic gain. Rather than deploy additional forces to Iraq, we believe the way forward is to begin the phased redeployment of our forces in the next 4 to 6 months, while shifting the principal mission of our forces there from combat to training, logistics, force protection and counter-terror."

I implore the President to seriously consider these views, and I implore him to also consider the views of the current and former military and political leaders of his own administration who have openly questioned sending additional troops to Iraq. For instance, on December 17 in 2006, former Secretary of State Colin Powell said, "I am not persuaded that another surge of troops into Baghdad for the purposes of sup-

pressing this communitarian violence, this civil war, will work."

On November 15 General Abizaid expressed, "I've met with every divisional commander. General Casey, the Corps commander, General Dempsey—we all talked together. And I said, 'In your professional opinion, if we were to bring more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq?' And they all said no."

The war in Iraq is a mistake from the beginning, and I voted against authorizing this war. But regardless of one's position then, clearly there is no sound basis now for increasing America's military presence in Iraq. The war has claimed the lives of over 3,000 American soldiers and has wounded more than 20,000, and it has clearly become a civil war.

It is unconscionable to ask one more American soldier to fight and die in a civil war in Iraq. The President must engage key nations like Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and others in an effort to create a political solution in Iraq. The Nation opposes the ongoing war in America. There is still time for the President to change course, to reconsider his call for 20,000 more troops in Iraq, and to begin the redeployment of our troops and our forces now.

I salute those who continue to serve in Iraq. I salute their families and pledge to them my unyielding support and respect as we try to safely bring the war to an end.

Mr. President, listen to the people of the Nation which you govern. They have spoken, and they have spoken overwhelmingly. They reject the prolonging of the war in Iraq. They want our soldiers redeployed and brought home safely, and they want it done now.

Please, Mr. President, listen to the people of this Nation.

STATEHOOD FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House to inform the House that I have today filed a bill to give full voting rights in this House to the people of the District of Columbia, who are second per capita in the Federal income tax they pay to support this government, this House and this Senate, and who have fought and died in every war since the creation of a Republic, including the outrageous war where we now serve.

I come in gratitude that the House is now governed by my own party, which for decades has supported not only what my bill today would afford, a vote in the House, but a vote in both Houses, and I come to thank my own caucus for that support. But I also come in some frustration and with