

about what I think our responsibility is with respect to this wiretapping surveillance stuff and our responsibility as Members of Congress, and really as citizens of this country, because we each have an obligation as citizens to do these same things, to uphold the Constitution and the rights that we all enjoy under the Constitution and to make our citizenry safe, to help make our families safe, our neighborhoods safe, our communities safe.

There is a way under the law as we have revised this surveillance law to do both of those things. We have fixed this technical problem that existed where foreigners were given certain rights under our Fourth Amendment that they weren't entitled to. We have corrected that in this law. But we have maintained the Fourth Amendment and the First Amendment and the Third Amendment and everything else within the Constitution for each and every American by including the courts to oversee this and supervise when the government says we want to eavesdrop on a citizen, and we are demanding of the President and the telecommunications companies, we want to see what it is you are asking us to let you off the hook about.

That is what is being asked. And they are saying sorry, we are not going to let you look at that. Therefore, we are going to say, then we are not doing our job. We are not going to just let you go get a get-out-of-jail-for-free or go scot-free without information. We are not doing our job then. We are not being accountable and responsible to our constituents.

As the President has laid this out, he is just trying to stir up fear in the American populace, which is wrong. He is trying to avoid the courts as being a check and balance on the awesome power of the Federal Government to invade our privacies. He doesn't want that, and he is asking us to give this carte blanche amnesty without really giving us the basis for that, and I object to all of those things. With that, I yield back to my friend.

Mr. YARMUTH. There is some other history we haven't talked about tonight yet, and that is the background of this controversy. Because what we fail to remember as we debate this issue, and obviously I think we want to deal with this prospectively, we want to make sure that this country has the power, the government has the power and authority and tools it needs to provide legitimate security for this country.

□ 2300

But this program started right after September 11, 2001, and continued for 4 years before it was exposed by the New York Times. So this was a long-standing violation of the law, a deliberate avoidance of the law by the administration. They could at any time after 9/11 have come to Congress and said, we want some additional authority. But they didn't do that. They knew

that it would be tough. Even a Republican Congress at that time might have looked askance at requests to do warrantless wiretapping, so they just did it by themselves for 4 years. Then, when it was uncovered, this Congress under Republican leadership rushed to pass the Protect America Act, a stop-gap measure because, obviously, it was embarrassing and they needed to do that.

But this is a longstanding deliberate ignoring of the law, and this is something that it doesn't matter whether the government sanctioned it; if companies did it and violated the law, as I said at the outset of my remarks standing right behind you, Mr. KAGEN, the words described in that dais, justice. And that is what this country has been built on. And this is a long-standing violation that needs to be redressed, and we shouldn't just say, because the government asked them to do something, that it is okay, that they broke the law. Because if that is the precedent we are setting, there is no end to the imagination of horrors that could happen if the government were able to immunize anyone for any violation of the law.

With that, I would like to yield again to CAROL SHEA-PORTER from New Hampshire who has joined us.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. I would like to point out that if the President and his supporters managed to cut out the judicial branch, then the authority for this would go to the Attorney General and the Director of National Intelligence. Our most recent former Attorney General was Alberto Gonzalez, and I think that we do not wish to put that kind of power into the hands of people who may not see the government's role the way that we do. So I have deep concerns about that. But, again, this is not an issue of what party you are in. This is an issue of whether you are an American and you believe in our Constitution or not.

I wanted to quote Andrew Napolitano, who was a New Jersey Superior Court Judge from 1987 to 1995, and is the senior judicial analyst at Fox News. He is upset about this as well, and he said: Those who believe the Constitution means what it says should tremble at every effort to weaken any of its protections. The Constitution protects all persons and all people. And, he said, if we lower constitutional protections for foreigners and their American correspondents, for whom will we lower them next?

And that really is the question. We stand our ground now, and we protect at least our American citizens from this eavesdropping.

The question earlier was, well, what do you have to hide? And I would say that even though you may not be placing phone calls that have anything to do with any government business, you may be having a conversation about your boss's wife or husband. You may be having a conversation about your husband's problem at work. You may

be having a conversation about your neighbor. And any of those conversations, if they were overheard, could be used against you. So it is not simply the kind of setting that we are talking about right now, not a grander setting, a setting where it is national security, but simply your right to privacy and for your neighbors not to know the kinds of thoughts and the kinds of words that you share with people in private phone conversations. So we have this obligation to stand here and protect all of us.

FISA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRALEY of Iowa). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 55 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. I thank the Speaker for the recognition.

It has been an interesting and entertaining hour that we have just been through. I came to the floor tonight to talk a little bit about the Middle East, but after hearing the comments for the last hour I would just remind my friends that the Senate passed a bill that passed with a fairly significant majority over in the Senate. And if the Senate-passed bill were brought to the floor of the House, we would have our FISA legislation reestablished. There are enough Members on their side combined with the Members on my side where the bill would pass without any difficulty. But it has been the lack of the will of the House leadership to bring this very important bill to the House and once again establish a modicum of protection for America, because, after all, despite all the lofty rhetoric we just heard in the last hour, it is not surveillance of American citizens on American soil, it is surveillance of individuals who are outside of America, outside the shores of America who are communicating with each other. But because of the nuances of the telecommunications system, those wires may pass through the United States, a server may exist in the United States, and therein the problem lies.

And it is important, because as I talk about the Middle East I am going to come back to this issue on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, because the lack of a functioning Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act is actually hampering some of our progress in the Middle East and I think it is important to draw that distinction.

Again, as I said, Mr. Speaker, I just returned a little over a week ago from a trip to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq. As a consequence, I was also in Kuwait briefly. But it is significant, and probably the first time where I have been in those three countries in that short a period of time. It is instructive to visit those countries in that condensed time period, because you really get a sense of how interconnected the successes and/or failures

in each of those areas, how interconnected those facts are. All of those regions have their differences. They are significantly different. But certainly the progress in one area helps progress in another, and lack of progress in one signals lack of progress in the other. And I certainly saw evidence of this in all three places where I visited. And, as the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words and I do have several pictures that I would like to share with the House this evening and I will be doing that.

First, in Afghanistan. The battle in Afghanistan is clearly interconnected in so many ways with our relationships with our NATO allies. In fact, in Afghanistan, probably in early 2004, just as the NATO handover was beginning, there was a lot of optimism that our NATO partners were engaging in this and NATO is going to function as an alliance. After 9/11, NATO activated article 5 for the first time in its history: An attack on one country was equivalent to an attack on all countries, and we would all respond in kind. So America had been attacked, and here in early 2004 with the arrival of the German troops, we saw the beginnings of the NATO alliance coming and bringing its full weight to bear in Afghanistan. Now it hasn't worked out quite the way we had all hoped it would have, because some of our NATO allies are somewhat recalcitrant, and they really need to begin thinking long term about the stability and the impact of stability in the Middle East and how that impacts the security of the world at large. It is not just for that one narrow area of the world; it is much more widespread.

Now, no question about it, American, British, Canadian, Dutch, and Polish soldiers are doing great work and they are fighting against the Taliban in southern Afghanistan. Other areas with other components of the NATO alliance, it is not working quite the same way. In many ways it is regarded as a humanitarian mission rather than a military exercise. But I must stress, this is not a humanitarian mission, it is still a military exercise. Until the Taliban and the resurgent elements of al Qaeda are repulsed and removed, it will remain a military exercise. And the future of NATO depends on how well each of those individual countries could work together through this admittedly very difficult period. If we act together in strength, if we act as an alliance, I don't think there is any doubt that ultimately success will come. But if the activity continues to be fractured, the work becomes much more difficult; and the results will be fractured, the alliance is at risk and, as a consequence, the enemy will be emboldened. That's a shame. Because, remember, the Taliban in Afghanistan is not a popular insurgency. These are individuals who have been seen as oppressive and repressive. When they were thrown off, it was great jubilation by the people in Afghanistan, and there

is no joy in bringing the Taliban back into people's lives. The Taliban does employ military age males more or less as day laborers, puts a gun in their hand and gives them a charge to do something. But the reality is, if there were other work available, these individuals would just as soon be doing other work and feeding their families in other ways because, again, the Taliban is not a popular insurgency.

One of the things that of course was stressed a great deal in our visit in Afghanistan, our visits with General Rodriguez at the Bagram Air Base was all of the activity that takes place along the border. And certainly, when we went into Pakistan, those same themes were played out again. Not surprisingly, the perspective of the individuals, military generals in Afghanistan, was a little bit different from the political leaders in Pakistan. Suffice it to say there is a lot of activity going on along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, and we see reports of this in our newspapers from time to time. There has been an increase in military activity on our part in some of those areas, and I think that is a good thing. I think they have removed some people who were continuing to cause great harm in the area. But at the same time, as we saw in the trip in Pakistan, it creates some difficulties in other areas.

Now Pakistan had just completed a rather large and historic election when we arrived there on February 22. President Musharraf, who had been the leader of Afghanistan, was a military general. Of course in 1999 he was responsible for a coup and deposed the prime minister, Sharif. President Musharraf has pretty much been the single and solitary ruler in Pakistan now for the last 7 or 8 years. His party lost a majority of seats in the parliament in the last parliamentary election. We did meet with President Musharraf. He was quick to point out that he had won his election the October before, so it wasn't about him not winning an election, it was about the elections in parliament. And Mr. Musharraf I think correctly pointed out, as did other leaders that we talked with, that the good news out of the election was it certainly was a repudiation of the more radical Islamist elements, that there was some concern that they were going to gain a greater foothold in the Pakistani parliament. And, in fact, the party of Benazir Bhutto, now under the hands of her husband, Mr. Zardari, had won the majority of seats, the People's Party of Pakistan had won the greatest number of seats in parliament and it appeared very likely at the time we were there that he would indeed put together a coalition government with Mr. Sharif, the former prime minister, and that would then be the ruling coalition in Pakistan.

The fate of Mr. Musharraf was at that time still pretty much in the balance. There had been a Senatorial delegation in just a few days before we

were through who had suggested, I think it was in the newspapers phrased as a graceful exit. Mr. Musharraf recognized and there was acceptance and recognition that his role of necessity was going to change, but at the same time this is an individual who does care a great deal about his country and, of course, he has been a good ally and friend to the United States. And Mr. Musharraf did feel very strongly that he wanted to continue to play a role in the stability of his country. Mr. Musharraf's perspective of the border areas, the federally administered tribal areas between Afghanistan and Pakistan was again a little bit different from General Rodriguez's over in Pakistan. From Mr. Musharraf's perspective, they had been pursuing a good deal of military options. Not all of those had been successful and there was a concern on the part of the Pakistani military whether or not they were in fact actually trained and equipped to follow through with those missions, and certainly training and equipping the Pakistani army is something where the United States may continue to play a role for some time, though I would stress that the actual military presence in Pakistan is very, very minimal.

□ 2315

But the federally administered tribal area has become very problematic from the standpoint of terrorism. It is where the Taliban exists and where the remnants of al Qaeda are hiding out, and there are attempts to regroup and retake territory within the country of Afghanistan, and clearly it is an area that deserves a great deal of attention.

Mr. Speaker, I did promise to show some pictures. This is a picture of myself and Senator HUTCHISON from Texas meeting with Mr. Zardari. This is Benazir Bhutto's widow. We were that day in Pakistan discussing the role his coalition government would play in the future.

At the time we were there, it was not settled who the new prime minister would be. Obviously it would be someone who was elected in the People's Party of Pakistan because they held the largest number of seats in the Parliament. Mr. Zardari is someone I had never met before. In our discussions, he said all of the right things and in the right way. Obviously, in any situation like this, the follow-through is what is critical, so the next several weeks and months are critical for the stability of the country of Pakistan.

But Mr. Zardari was very gracious to have us into his home and meet with us. Remember, just a few short weeks before he had undergone a fairly wrenching personal episode with the loss of his wife after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, and they appeared to be doing their best to recover as a family. And now, given the additional responsibilities of the governance of Pakistan, but he did seem to be growing into that role, and I will tell you that was reassuring to watch that.

Of course we were not able to meet with Mr. Sharif that day. We did meet with President Musharraf on that trip, but we were not able to meet with Mr. Sharif. Again, this is an area that will bear close scrutiny and watching over the next weeks and months because, again, as I will stress, each of these areas are so interrelated and so tied together.

Clearly the Afghanistan-Pakistan border area is one issue, but there are other links to other areas where terrorism is problematic that come out of that federally administered tribal area. The Spanish have discovered recently a link between some of their home-grown terrorists and the federally administered tribal area of Pakistan. Likewise, the Germans have discovered some terrorist links to Pakistan via Turkey.

In Britain, several of the terrorist groups within Great Britain can be traced to the federally administered tribal area, that border area between Afghanistan and Pakistan. So it is clear that terrorist activities taking place in that region of Pakistan are having a direct and profound effect on the security of European countries and certainly our NATO allies.

The terrorist activity has direct and dire consequences on foreign elections. We saw that happen in Spain several years ago when the March 11 bombings obviously or significantly influenced the outcome of the elections in that country. That behavior in turn led to a new government that then subsequently withdrew its troops from Afghanistan. And subsequently I think the mission was certainly not strengthened by that exercise.

But all in all, I would say it was a very informative trip, and I am grateful to President Musharraf and grateful to Mr. Zardari for meeting with us on relatively short notice during that trip. And there is no question, it was very informative to have that level of discussion.

I also made my seventh trip into the country of Iraq during that congressional delegation. I had last been in July of this past year, July of 2007. At that point I wasn't quite sure what I was going to find when I returned to Iraq that time. I found the situation to be much better than I expected it to be, and I will say that in the intervening 6 or 7 months since I was last there, the situation has improved even more.

No question about it, troop morale has always been good. I have never seen a problem with troop morale in any of the trips I have taken into Iraq. And in this past trip, it was nothing short of spectacular.

One of the things that was perhaps a little different about this trip and something that I really had not been able to do on previous trips was venture directly into some of the neighborhoods in and around Baghdad. The reason we were able to do that was because of the establishment of the joint security stations. These are the areas where American troops are embedded

with Iraq security forces and Iraqi policemen. They are there side by side day in and day out. This was the concept that General David Petraeus brought to Iraq a year ago when the famous surge or reinforcements were brought into that country. It was a strategy not without some risk and certainly many of us were justifiably concerned about that.

I know in my trip into Iraq in July in the C-130 sitting with troops as we were going from Kuwait City into Baghdad, several voiced real concern that, you know, we are going to be living side by side with the Iraqis. If there is an interruption of fuel or material or food, then certainly we could be at risk in these situations because no longer will we be going back to the base every night. You could sense there was some concern.

The situation has been one that has been enormously successful. And as a consequence, the Iraqis have gained a great deal more confidence in the American troops that are there and their ability to provide security and to react quickly. And Iraqi citizens are coming forward with much more information, information about the location of IEDs, information about the bomb-making factories, and information about people who may be doing things that are harmful to a neighborhood. So it has been an overall improvement in the relationship between regular Iraqis and the American soldiers and an improvement in our ability to gather that all-important intelligence to be able to fight this war in the way it should be fought.

Again, I would stress that it is our men and the Iraqis living side by side.

Here we are just arriving at the joint security station. We are getting a briefing there just after arrival. At that point I think they were going over the briefing on the number of IED attacks, and there was basically a Google Earth map with all of the IED explosions plotted out on the map. Red ones were where people were hurt, and blue ones where a bomb went off and no one was hurt, and yellow was where the bomb was discovered after it went off.

July and August, those photographs were literally covered with dots of one color or another. And then going through month by month, August, September, October, the numbers diminished rapidly such that in December and January, there were very few dots on the map of any sort at all. And certainly you could see in a very graphical fashion the effect of having our troops embedded on the ground and living side by side with the Iraqis.

We had seen this in the summer, in the trip in July in the city of Ramadi out in Anbar province, and now that has been fairly widely reported that there has been the Anbar awakening and the Sunnis who previously would have perhaps partnered with al Qaeda to work against the Americans had changed allegiance and changed sides and saw now the Americans as their

helpers and their friends, and the city of Ramadi was markedly different in July of 2007 from July of 2006. And as a consequence then, this same sort of activity now going on in the area of Baghdad that would have been just absolutely impassable 6 months before in the month of July, and we were now able to walk around on the streets.

This is within the living quarters that the soldiers have there. The Minnesota National Guard had done some refurbishing and furnishing of the barracks there. They had tried to make it a little more homey. You can see the ubiquitous widescreen television at the top. This is a bench that had been fashioned out of some scrap wood that was around. And they had done a wonderful job as far as making the living conditions as good as could be expected.

Again, the morale of our soldiers was unlike anything I have ever seen. Clearly they understand what they are doing, and clearly they understand that they are very close to achieving success. It is something that I wish almost every Member of Congress could go over there and see in these joint security stations because it really is a moving experience.

As a consequence of these activities, al Qaeda that was so prevalent in Anbar province and along the Euphrates River Valley have been diminished to a minimum amount. Al Qaeda in Baghdad is significantly diminished as well. There are still some problems in the area around Sadr City, but with some of these embedded areas moving into that area, we will perhaps see some improvement there as well.

The former Sunni insurgents have turned their back on the insurgency. They are cooperating with coalition forces. That cooperation again is yielding good intelligence. In fact, in another part of this particular base where we were, this police station we were in, we got to see some of the surveillance activity as it was going on, and remarkable, remarkable efforts by our soldiers, by our men.

At one point a device had gone off and caused some injuries in the marketplace, and one of our young men painstakingly went back through the photos and tapes and actually discovered some physical characteristics of the individual that looked as if he may have planted the device. And then partly by luck but partly by good detective work, found that same man in a marketplace later on, brought him in for questioning, and certainly we were able to make the case of the connection between that individual and the bomb that had gone off.

One of the great things was that although the detective work was done by our soldiers with their equipment, when it came time to apprehend this individual, he was actually apprehended by the Iraqi police and brought in by the Iraqi police so the citizenry could see that their police force was up and running and functioning.

A good news story all along. But one disturbing note was on further study of

some of those surveillance photos, apparently this individual who had planted the explosive device had actually had his 3-year-old daughter carry the device to the area and place it in a trash receptacle and that is how the device came to be where it was.

Clearly we are dealing with a type of evil that most of us don't understand and can't understand. But this is the type of individual, this is the type of evil that is present in some of these areas, and this is the work that our soldiers are doing to combat that.

Again, this is a police station in inner city Baghdad. Six months ago I couldn't have gone there. Certainly 2 years ago there is no way. But now the Iraqi police are taking over. People feel safe. They feel safe to approach local law enforcement. In fact, when we left the building from this police station, out on the street a group of Iraqi men came up and was eager to talk with us. One of the soldiers found a translator for us, and we engaged in quite a lively conversation. To be perfectly honest, it was gratitude that was expressed on the part of the Iraqis who were there, gratitude for helping get their neighborhood back, and gratitude for helping get their country back. Again, it is the type of progress that you almost can't believe if you can't go there and see it yourself.

Mr. Speaker, one of the funny things is if this had been a year ago and we were here talking about Iraq, we would be talking about having yet another vote to get us out of Iraq. It seemed like every week we had that type of vote here on the floor of the House. And we are not doing that so much any more. I wonder why. Perhaps because things have gotten so much better there.

The news stories a year ago, day in and day out, a bad news story out of Iraq. Well, now you don't see those stories every day. You see odd stories like Ahmadinejad from Iran coming in to visit in Iraq, which I think is problematic. I wish it hadn't happened. But on the other hand, Iraq is a sovereign country and if Prime Minister Maliki wants to meet with Ahmadinejad, I guess. In fact, we have a Presidential candidate who said he will sit down with his enemies. Maybe Mr. Maliki had been listening to that Presidential candidate. I didn't think it was perhaps the wisest and best use of his time. After all, Mr. Speaker, a lot of the explosively formed projectiles that are so deadly, a lot of the IEDs and improvised explosive devices are made with materials that clearly come from the country of Iran.

□ 2330

And that has been problematic for many, many months. And Iran's activity as far as continuing some of the disruption in this area, Iran's activity, has indeed, I think, been problematic.

We hear a lot about the lack of political progress, and those talking points probably need to be updated. The Iraqi

parliament recently passed four major pieces of legislation. They passed the de-Ba'athification reform, they passed an amnesty bill, they passed a provisional powers law, and a national budget. No question about it, there's still a lot of work to be done and that budget execution is one of those things that I watch very carefully because I don't know, you know, quite honestly, with the infrastructure that is there with their banking system, it's very, very difficult to distribute money to the local areas where it is so desperately needed.

But nevertheless, they are making the efforts. In fact, there are four things that the Iraqi parliament did this past year. I don't know what our track record is. I think we banned the incandescent light. I don't know that we've done much more in the past year, and there's four things that they've done.

One of the biggest changes that I saw last July and one of the things that really gave me great optimism, that one day we would have in Iraq a stable country that was able to govern itself, provide for its own security, provide for its own people and be a partner for peace in the Middle East.

Last summer visiting the city of Ramadi where the local political leaders, the local political shift that had gone on in that country; to be sure, the central government in Baghdad has some problems and they're going to have to work through those problems; they're going to have to find solutions to those problems, as any country would. But the fact that local leaders, like a county commissioner, like a mayor, like a county administrator, these are the guys and ladies on the front line. These are the ones the citizens turn to for help when things don't work right, when things go wrong. These are the individuals that should be the first line of contact. And indeed, in the city of Ramadi last summer and then again in this neighborhood, the al Hamandiyah neighborhood in Baghdad, the local political shift was very much in evidence. The local leaders were stepping up and doing the work that is required of local leaders. Still some difficulty getting the funding from the central government, but my understanding on this last trip was that that had improved even from 6 or 7 months before. Obviously, again, that's going to bear watching. And there are lots of areas in need of improvement. But all in all, the progress is going in the right direction.

You see that in other things, too. The national electricity hours are up. Some small water projects that were so desperately needed have now been completed. Some primary health care centers have been constructed and more are to open, all signs of progress. That was work you just couldn't do a couple of years ago because the security situation just would not permit it.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I remember very well the arguments and discussions and

debate we had on the floor of this House just a little over a year ago in regards to what General Petraeus saw, what General Petraeus wanted to do, and giving him the ability, the tools to do that job consumed a lot of our discussion a year ago. But I've got to tell you, I'm glad we found the right man for the job. I'm glad we gave him the tools that he needs. And he certainly seems to be pursuing success with all due dispatch.

It's hard to know what the next steps are. You hear a lot of people talk about the troop drawdown that was essentially the surge, and as those numbers come back down are we going to come down below that. We're going to have to have a wait-and-see period. Obviously, in my mind, my opinion, those decisions should not be made by those of us here in the House. Those are decisions that should be made by the military generals on the ground.

We did have an opportunity in this trip, as we did last summer, to meet with David Petraeus at some length. We met with the general. We also met with Ambassador Ryan Crocker, a true patriot who's given now a year of his life to be in that country and to provide stability in that country. Things have not always gone to his liking, I'm sure, but nevertheless, I think he can point to a great deal of success.

I remember a year ago so clearly, you know, you could take data points almost and make whatever kind of case you wanted to make in Iraq. And General Petraeus stressed to us a year ago that it would be important to look at trend lines over time, that you just simply couldn't look at a collection of data points and make a decision.

When we visited with General Petraeus at the American embassy in Iraq, we kind of saw a preview of what he's likely to present to Congress when he comes back in March or April to give his interim report to Congress. He had a variety of charts up. You could see that the trend lines again were all moving in the right direction as far as number of attacks, as far as attacks on citizens, attacks on soldiers. The trend lines for things like electricity and water were going in the right direction, which was up. All in all, the story coming out was very positive. At the time we were there, something had just occurred which was a point of not some insignificant concern, the activity of the Turkish troops on the northern border which had the potential to be very destabilizing because, of course, the Kurdish regiments in that area have been functioning very well, and the fact now that they were being faced with some Turkish soldiers who had come across the border to deal with some terrorism aspects that they thought were going on along the border, clearly that needed to be managed and managed very quickly and apparently has been. But it did have the potential to become much more serious than it was.

I stated early on in the hour that there might be a place to draw the

FISA, Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, back into the discussion. And certainly that came up during our discussion with the general and the ambassador at the American embassy, or at the embassy in Baghdad that night.

Again, remember, we're talking about not surveillance on someone who's in Dallas calling someone who's in Washington. We're talking about surveillance on someone who is in perhaps one of those federally administered tribal areas in Pakistan or someone who's in Afghanistan communicating with someone in Iraq, because that method of communication may be putting up a Web site. There may be an embedded message on a Web site. But because that Web site may be carried on wires that go through the United States of America, then suddenly it becomes something that is under the jurisdiction, in some people's mind, of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. And in order to find out who put the Web site up, you'd have to go through the FISA Court to get that information. But these Web sites tend to be rather ephemeral. They don't stay up that long. But it's problematic because you can't know who put up the Web site. You can't know who visited the Web site. And if you need to, you can't take it down without going through a 72-hour process in the FISA Court.

A little less than a year ago, when some of our soldiers were kidnapped in Iraq, we gave their captors a 10-hour head start because of issues with the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and having to go through the courts to get permission. You can't fight a war that way. We're either serious or we're not serious. And I think because of the concern that I heard over being able to protect not just our troops over there, but protect American citizens here at home, I think this is a critical piece of legislation.

Again, if we would just simply take up the legislation as passed by the Senate, passed overwhelmingly in the Senate, there are enough Members on my side, there are enough Members on the other side that this bill would be passed and America's protection could once again be more secure. In the meantime, we're playing a very dangerous, dangerous game, not only with our homeland security here in the United States but also as it turns out with our soldiers who are doing so much for us over in Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

We talk about a war on terror, but the reality is we're fighting a war against radical Islam. Terror is one of the tactics that's used in that fight. I don't think there's any question that we need to keep our focus on each of those countries, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, certainly redouble our efforts in Afghanistan and really begin thinking long term. You know, we hear people who want to have an 8-month time line. They want to talk about, be-

tween here and November, the election day in November.

The enemy doesn't have a time line that's that short. The enemy has a time line that's years, decades or longer. And you almost have to think in those terms to be able to satisfactorily prepare and satisfactorily protect our country, because if you're just short-term focused on what happens between now and election day in November, that's probably not going to be sufficient for protecting America. Our enemies are thinking in terms of 100 years. Maybe we need to think in terms of 100 years. Certainly, our America and our allies have to be able to match and keep up with them every step of the way.

Each of these battles is winnable. There's no question. From a tactical and strategic standpoint there is no one who can stand up against the United States, so the battles are winnable, but they're not yet won.

Again, success in one conflict means success in the other. Failure in one means failure elsewhere. You know, in fact that's not just the Middle East. That's in the United States and possibly extending to other freedom-loving nations in the world.

It is not time for us to pull our forces down and just think about coming home. We are very close to, again, establishing on the ground in the country of Iraq a country that is responsible to its people, provides for their benefit and their welfare, is a stable partner for peace in the Middle East. Those are worthwhile goals and we need to continue to pursue those.

It is a time that calls for statesmen and not politicians. It does require a vision that does encompass a time line that is longer than just the next 8 months.

I can't say it often enough. You're going to have to look to the next generation. You can't just focus on the next election because that's the wrong perspective to have.

I want to thank our troops who are working over there day and night in our behalf. It is sometimes seemingly thankless work, but again, I would stress, well, let me just show you one more picture, Mr. Speaker. And although these individuals are dressed in military uniforms, they're actually Department of Defense civilians. They work on the mine resistant ambush protected vehicle facility near Camp Victory just outside of Baghdad. These vehicles, and you can see one in the background, a very heavily armored vehicle. They are built to withstand the mine blasts and the IED blasts. And you see a group of very, very dedicated individuals standing there around that vehicle, very proud of the work they do. Most of these individuals, again, the men and women are civilians from my home State of Texas, not in my district, but up in northeast Texas, the Red River Army depot near Texarkana. In fact, most of the people that we see in the picture are very

likely constituents of my neighbor and good friend RALPH HALL. But again clearly proud of the work they are doing. They understand the value that they bring, the benefit that they bring to our soldiers by providing this type of vehicle. They don't have the best shock absorbers in the world, but they are certainly functional and certainly are providing a great deal of protection for our troops. I can't say enough about the wonderful people that are defending us in all three countries. Also in Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates. We had a brief refueling stop in the United Arab Emirates and got to meet with some soldiers there, a wonderful group of people who are working their hearts out on behalf of their country. The least we can do here in the United States Congress is offer them our faithful support until their mission is complete.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. CONYERS (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today until 7:30 p.m. on account of weather delays.

Mr. ORTIZ (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today until 5 p.m.

Mr. TANNER (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today until 12:30 p.m.

Mr. POE (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today after 12:30 p.m. and March 6 on account of official business.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. ELLISON) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. ELLISON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SPRATT, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. FOXX) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BURGESS, for 5 minutes, March 12.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, March 12.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, March 12.

Mr. DREIER, for 5 minutes, today and March 6.

Ms. FOXX, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCCOTTER, for 5 minutes, today and March 6.

Mr. BRADY of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 44 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, March 6, 2008, at 10 a.m.