

HONORING THE INDEPENDENCE OF BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

(Mr. CARNAHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, I would like to take this time to congratulate the citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina on their 16th anniversary of independence.

It is an honor for me to represent the largest Bosnian-American population in the United States, as well as cochair the bipartisan Congressional Caucus on Bosnia with Congressman CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey. Our Bosnian-American neighbors who have come to St. Louis and the other parts of the U.S. have contributed a great deal to our country.

I am proud that on April 7, 1992, the United States was one of the first nations to recognize the newly independent Bosnia-Herzegovina. As we honor the anniversary of their independence today, let us reaffirm our support for Bosnia's progress toward Euro-Atlantic integration and remember their long history of multi-ethnic and religious tolerance.

I would like to applaud their democratic orientation, and strongly encourage the further strengthening of government reforms with respect to human rights, rule of law and free market economy.

I once again congratulate the citizens of Bosnia-Herzegovina on the anniversary of their independence, and I look forward to further collaboration between our two countries.

THE STRATEGY OF DEFEAT

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, as positive progress continues against America's enemies in Iraq, the vocal, timid and meek here at home promote a strategy of defeat and retreat. Victory to these retreatists is not an option because they plan for abandonment of the Iraqi people and failure for America's fight against those who murder in the name of religion.

These war alarmists wish to capitulate in this war. They want to redeploy the troops, which means withdraw our military while they are in the midst of success. This strategy of defeat will not bring peace to Iraq or America. It will not stop the extremists, but increase their determination for more violence against the innocents. It will not make us safe at home, but encourage those who hate us to kill again. And those vile zealots will rightfully claim America doesn't have the stomach to fight for the God-given principles of liberty.

President Kennedy told the world that America will pay any price, support any friend and oppose any foe to defend liberty. We do not fight for our-

selves alone. This war is more than for our cause alone. We fight for the human cause of all peoples to be free. That is what this war is about.

And that's just the way it is.

PUTTING A POSITIVE SPIN ON THE WORST MILITARY FIASCO IN AMERICAN HISTORY

(Mr. MORAN of Virginia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker are understandably trying to put a positive spin on the Iraq war. But the reality is that this has been the worst military fiasco in American history. But one of the questions I would like them to answer is how, when the Iraqi government has over \$56 billion of revenue this year, they have the gall to ask the American taxpayer for another \$170 billion?

They have \$40 billion in reserve that they have gotten from oil being over \$100 a barrel. The American taxpayer is paying more than \$3.30 a gallon for gas, and yet Iraq wants another \$170 billion? They have got \$10 billion in reconstruction funds. Yet we are going to continue to pay for all their needs? But that is what we are doing. We are paying for everything from military training, all the way down to garbage pickup, with American taxpayers' money, when they have got tens of billions of dollars that they choose not to spend.

This is a disgrace, Madam Speaker. This policy has never been worthy of the sacrifice of our military families, let alone their loved ones in uniform.

SUPPORT VICTORY, NOT DEFEAT

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, this morning I joined many of my colleagues from both political parties with over 400 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans at an event organized by Vets for Freedom. This non-partisan organization is dedicated to supporting our veterans by achieving victory in the global war on terrorism to protect American families by defeating terrorism overseas. I am proud to stand with these patriotic Americans.

Their visit to Washington comes on the eve of General David Petraeus' and Ambassador Ryan Crocker's presentation to the House of their report on Iraq. I hope my colleagues will listen to General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker with an open mind.

As a grateful veteran with two sons who have served in Iraq, I know these two men serve the best interests of our troops and the safety of American families. They deserve attention to what they have to say.

The old, failed talking points that "the war is lost" or "so the surge is a

failure" do a disservice to this debate. Those claims have been soundly refuted by the facts on the ground, as I saw last month on my ninth visit to Iraq. Let's be sure our policy going forward is based on the facts.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th.

SUPPORTING THE BRAVE AMERICANS IN HARM'S WAY

(Mr. WAMP asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WAMP. Madam Speaker, as I closed the rally today with 400 veterans in support of our troops and their mission in Iraq and Afghanistan, I quoted John Stuart Mill, who said, "War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of moral unpatriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. A person who has nothing for which they are willing to fight, nothing they care more about than their own personal safety, is a miserable creature who has no chance of ever being free unless those very freedoms are made and kept by better persons than themselves."

Those better persons are our Nation's veterans, the men and women in uniform, and today may God almighty, Jehovah God, bless and keep those brave Americans in harm's way on our behalf.

APPROVE THE U.S.-COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT

(Mr. HERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HERGER. Madam Speaker, now that the Colombia trade agreement is before Congress, I hope that all Members will weigh its benefits carefully and approve it with a strong bipartisan up-or-down vote. The United States is the largest manufacturer and exporter in the world and new markets are essential to our workers, 42 percent of whom are employed by companies that are involved with trade.

The Colombia trade agreement would level the playing field for American workers and grant our exporters the same fair access that Colombian producers already enjoy into the U.S. market. It would also strategically strengthen Colombia's fight against narcoterrorists and help them reject the influence of Venezuela's anti-American strong man, Hugo Chavez.

I urge support of the U.S.-Colombia TPA.

SUPPORT THE TROOPS IN IRAQ

(Mr. YOUNG of Alaska asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Madam Speaker and my fellow colleagues, today is the day with General Petraeus to recognize that with all the rhetoric on this floor, that we should listen to the troops. They are the ones that are sacrificing. They are the ones that I believe have firsthand knowledge of what is occurring in Iraq.

I have a letter that I am going to read:

Dear Congressman YOUNG:

I am an Alaska Army National Guard soldier serving in Iraq voluntarily on one of the 10 'surge' Embedded Provincial Reconstruction Teams, based at Camp Taji. My team works in the Taji and Abu Ghraib districts, and soon, Tarmiya. Our surge military forces, along with the greatly improved Iraq Army, Police and local Critical Infrastructure Security Forces have won the battles. Al Qaeda is gone from our districts. Now we need the time to win the war. The security situations are set and 180 degrees turned around from pre-surge. I've seen it happen and am living it daily. Do not let the United States lose this part of the Global War against Terrorists. This campaign in Iraq needs to play out and be a visible win for our country. Me and my fellow Servicemembers and the Civilians of DOD and State are here to make it true. We need your support. Thank you for your time and attention. WE ARE WINNING.

Most Sincerely,

Mike Bridges, Colonel,

Deputy Team Leader, EPRT Baghdad
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VETS FOR FREEDOM

(Mr. GINGREY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, this morning I was honored to join with Senator MCCAIN and other Republican and Democratic Members of both the House and Senate to welcome over 400 veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan that were here for a rally in support of all those who are risking their lives on the front lines in this global war against terror.

This morning's rally marks the single largest gathering of Iraq and Afghan veterans since the war began. Make no mistake, these heroes were gathering in support of victory, not a politically driven withdrawal, which would ensure defeat.

These veterans are so committed to success in Iraq and Afghanistan that they have formed a nationwide group, called Vets for Freedom, with a mission of educating the American public and Congress about the importance of achieving success in this global war on terror and what the failure to do so would mean for our Nation's security.

Every Member of this body should, this week, meet with these veterans,

talk to them, learn of the benefits of their firsthand experience in Iraq and Afghanistan. In the words of the Vets for Freedom, it is time to put "long-term national security before short-term partisan political gain."

Again, I thank the Vets for Freedom, as well as General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker, for their great service to this country.

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, according to the Energy Information Agency, the United States imports about 60 percent of its oil today and that number is expected to go up to almost 80 percent in the next 10 years. As a country, we need to reduce our dependency on foreign fuel sources and start implementing alternative energy sources and programs that can be found here in the United States, like coal.

Imported fuel such as crude oil and natural gas are costing the country millions of dollars a year and accounts for about one-third of the United States trade deficit. Imported fuels also account for about 17 percent of an increase in America's energy consumption from 2004 to 2005.

Now liquid coal can be developed for \$50 a barrel. Compare that with \$107 for oil today. Not only does this innovative fuel cost us less, but also coal is one of the most abundant natural resources in the United States. As Congress continues to explore the use of alternative energy sources, we need to look closely at coal to liquid.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

APRIL 7, 2008.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker, The Capitol, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on April 7, 2008, at 10:33 a.m.:

That the Senate agreed to S. Con. Res. 73.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

LORRAINE C. MILLER,
Clerk of the House.

UNITED STATES-COLOMBIA TRADE PROMOTION AGREEMENT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 110-103)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United

States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Ways and Means and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

I am pleased to transmit legislation and supporting documents to implement the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion Agreement (the "Agreement"). The Agreement represents an historic development in our relations with Colombia, which has shown its commitment to advancing democracy, protecting human rights, and promoting economic opportunity. Colombia's importance as a steadfast strategic partner of the United States was recognized by President Clinton's support for an appropriation in 2000 to provide funding for Plan Colombia, and my Administration has continued to stand with Colombia as it confronts violence, terror, and drug traffickers.

This Agreement will increase opportunity for the people of Colombia through sustained economic growth and is therefore vital to ensuring that Colombia continues on its trajectory of positive change. Under the leadership of President Alvaro Uribe, Colombia has made a remarkable turnaround since 1999 when it was on the verge of being a failed state. This progress is in part explained by Colombia's success in demobilizing tens of thousands of paramilitary fighters. The Colombian government reports that since 2002, kidnappings, terrorist attacks, and murders are all down substantially, as is violence against union members.

The Government of Colombia, with the assistance of the United States, is continuing its efforts to further reduce the level of violence in Colombia and to ensure that those responsible for violence are quickly brought to justice. To speed prosecutions of those responsible for violent crimes, the Prosecutor General's Office plans to hire this year 72 new prosecutors and more than 110 investigators into the Human Rights Unit. These additions are part of the increase of more than 2,100 staff that will be added to the Prosecutor General's office in 2008 and 2009. To support these additional personnel and their activities, Colombia has steadily increased the budget for the Prosecutor General's Office, including by more than \$40 million this year, bringing the total outlay for that office to nearly \$600 million.

In negotiating this Agreement, my Administration was guided by the objectives set out by the Congress in the Trade Act of 2002. My Administration has complied fully with the letter and spirit of Trade Promotion Authority—from preparation for the negotiations, to consultations with the Congress throughout the talks, to the content of the Agreement itself. In addition, my Administration has conducted several hundred further consultations, led congressional trips to Colombia, and last year renegotiated key labor, environmental, investment, and intellectual