

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

TRAGIC ANNIVERSARY OF "MISSION ACCOMPLISHED"

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, today marks a tragic anniversary. Five years ago President Bush delivered his infamous "Mission Accomplished" speech aboard the USS *Abraham Lincoln*.

Across this country, Americans are holding rallies and vigils to mark this occasion. And members of the International Longshoremen and Warehouse Unions are giving up a day's pay and they are marching in the streets to show their opposition to the failed policies of the Bush administration and of the cost of those policies.

We all remember that the President put on a green flight suit and white helmet and arrived in the copilot seat of a Navy Viking jet. Then he stood at a podium beneath a big "Mission Accomplished" banner and he spoke.

He said the search for weapons of mass destruction had already begun, and he declared that "major combat operations in Iraq have ended."

Obviously, the American people didn't get the real facts that day, Mr. Speaker. So here's what should have been said. He should have said: "My fellow Americans, our soldiers have performed with great skill and courage. But, frankly, the administration doesn't have a clue what to do next."

It didn't have a plan for the occupation. It didn't have an exit strategy. And the people who actually understand the history and culture of Iraq were warning us that there were going to be insurgencies and civil war. He should have said: "Major combat operations have not ended—they have just begun."

Today I joined with my Out-of-Iraq Caucus colleagues, MAXINE WATERS and BARBARA LEE, to send a Dear Colleague Letter that describes the terrible human cost of the bungling in Iraq. It shows that over 96 percent of all American deaths in Iraq and over 98 percent of all casualties have taken place since the "Mission Accomplished" speech.

But you don't have to look, Mr. Speaker, at the cumulative devastation of the past 5 years to know that the occupation is a disaster. Just look at what happened in April, April of 2008, last month: Fifty American soldiers died, the highest number in 7 months. Thousands of innocent civilians were killed or injured in the bloody battle at Sadr City which continues to rage. The Pentagon was forced to extend the "stop-loss" policy because our military is stretched to its limits.

And as the administration acknowledged that al Qaeda is growing strong-

er in its safe havens in Pakistan, the drumbeat for war against Iran grew louder.

Here at home, the occupation continues to be a factor in driving gas prices higher. The Iraq recession continues in full swing. And every week, billions of dollars continue to be spent on military operations in Iraq that are desperately needed for domestic programs right here.

Sheer incompetence has surely been one reason for this. But the most important reason for our failure in Iraq is the fatally flawed national security policy. It has been a policy marked by arrogance, by the belief that America can go it alone and has the right to strike anywhere and anytime it pleases. And by the idea that military power alone can assure our security.

I hope we will use this "Mission Accomplished" anniversary date in a positive way so we can learn the lessons of the past 5 years and dedicate ourselves to a new foreign policy that will serve us much better. This new policy must be based on diplomacy; international cooperation; the rule of law; rejection of the doctrine of preemption and the use of torture; and, a commitment to helping other nations of the world to build a better life for their citizens.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, on this "Mission Accomplished" day, we must ask ourselves: What is America's mission? The American people believe that our mission is to stand up for the values of democracy, for human rights, and for peace. Those are the values that the dock workers are standing up for today. Those are the values that have been ignored and predictably resulted in disastrous results.

□ 1600

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia).

Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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.)

SUNSET MEMORIAL

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I stand once again before this House with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is May 1, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand. That's just today, Mr. Speaker. That's more than the number of innocent lives lost on September 11 in this country, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,883 days since the tragedy called *Roe v. Wade* was first handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of its own children. Some of them, Mr. Speaker, died and screamed as they did so, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over the vocal cords instead of air, no one could hear them.

And all of them had at least four things in common. First, they were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone, and each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each one of their mothers, whether she realizes it or not, will never be quite the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever. Yet even in the glare of such tragedy, this generation still clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims, those yet unborn.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it's time for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves of why we are really all here. Thomas Jefferson said, "The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government." The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution, it says, "No State shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law." Mr. Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here.

The bedrock foundation of this Republic is the clarion declaration of the self-evident truth that all human beings are created equal and endowed by their Creator with the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Every conflict and battle our Nation has ever faced can be traced to our commitment to this core, self-evident truth.

It has made us the beacon of hope for the entire world. Mr. Speaker, it is who we are.

And yet today another day has passed, and we in this body have failed again to honor that foundational commitment. We have failed our sworn oath and our God-given responsibility as we broke faith with nearly 4,000 more innocent American babies who died today without the protection we should have given them.

Mr. Speaker, let me conclude in the hope that perhaps someone new who heard this Sunset Memorial tonight will finally embrace the truth that abortion really does kill little babies; that it hurts mothers in ways that we can never express; and that 12,883 days spent killing nearly 50 million unborn children in America is enough; and that the America that rejected human slavery and marched into Europe to arrest the Nazi Holocaust is still courageous and compassionate enough to find a better way for mothers and their unborn babies than abortion on demand.

So tonight, Mr. Speaker, may we each remind ourselves that our own days in this sunshine of life are also numbered and that all too soon each one of us will walk from these Chambers for the very last time.

And if it should be that this Congress is allowed to convene on yet another day to come, may that be the day when we finally hear the cries of innocent unborn children. May that be the day when we find the humanity, the courage, and the will to embrace together our human and our constitutional duty to protect these, the least of our tiny, little American brothers and sisters from this murderous scourge upon our Nation called abortion on demand.

It is May 1, 2008, 12,883 days since Roe versus Wade first stained the foundation of this Nation with the blood of its own children, this in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

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

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

OUR WORSENING HEALTH CARE CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, we are in the midst of the "Cover the Uninsured Week," and I rise to remind the Chamber of the worsening health care crisis that we face as a Nation, and propose a solution to one of the biggest challenges of the 21st Century facing us.

Lack of health insurance often denies necessary medical care. Forty seven

million Americans are uninsured. This problem is not limited to the poor or the unemployed. Researchers have estimated that about four-fifths of the uninsured are either employed or members of a family with an employed adult.

As well, there are an additional 50 million Americans who are underinsured; that is, they have coverage that would not protect them from catastrophic medical expenses. Simply put, an increasing number of Americans lack adequate health insurance because they and their employers simply cannot afford it.

Despite the challenges of the war in Iraq and the slumping economy, we all agree that the uninsured need to be covered. Even the health insurance companies have their own plan for covering the uninsured. I'm glad that we're on the same page, after all these years.

The real question we face is, how do we go about covering the uninsured? And how do we ensure that every American has access to quality medical care when they need it?

I strongly believe in a single-payer national health insurance, an approach that has been too often marginalized in debates on this issue, even though it has been successfully employed in almost every industrial nation except our own.

Mr. Speaker, it's time for Congress to consider single-payer, not only as a viable option to cover the uninsured, but as the preferred solution to fix our broken health care system. And make no mistake about it, it is in very bad shape.

According to a January 2007 article in the Journal of Health Affairs, France, Japan and Australia rated best, and the United States worst in new rankings focusing on preventable deaths due to treatable conditions, in 19 leading industrialized nations.

The article revealed that if the United States health care system performed as well as those top three countries, there'd be 101,000 fewer deaths in the United States each year.

Equally disturbing, the Institute of Medicine reports that 20,000 Americans die each year as a direct result of having no health insurance. How can we, in the Congress, who receive fairly decent health care, tell 47 million uninsured Americans that they cannot have access to health care?

With the knowledge that 20,000 Americans die each year without health insurance, how can we, in Congress, who do have health insurance, not place universal health care as a front burner issue in this chamber?

This is a moral challenge that we all must pick up. And incrementalism will not work. Expanding a broken system or fixing parts of it will not work. We must approach the health care solution the same way a physician approaches the treatment of disease. Doctors do not employ treatments only because they are easy or feasible. They choose

evidence-based solutions based upon peer-reviewed research in order to employ the most state-of-the-art care available. And so I propose we take the same approach to crafting a universal health care plan.

So today, I ask the following question: What further disaster must befall us before we face the crisis of the uninsured and the underinsured?

How many more people must die due to the inability to receive care in the world's healthiest Nation before we, in Congress, take action and create a truly universal health care system?

For those who believe that we are not ready to have a universal health care system, and must delay the formation of a comprehensive, national health insurance program, I ask you to consider the following evidence that demonstrates why we can ill afford delaying action on a universal health care system.

Health care horror stories are cases in which the result is so tragic that it shocks the conscience. We hear about them almost every day, in the newspapers, magazines, the Internet, television, radio, personal encounters with our friends and neighbors.

In the movie "Sicko" we, as a Nation, saw firsthand how even those with health insurance suffer under the current, for profit, employer-based private health insurance system.

In my office, I receive scores of health care horror stories each month, and have binders in my office of health care tragedies that we have collected over the last 8 years. In fact, when Michael Moore was doing research for "Sicko" he received 25,000 health care horror stories himself, after he made an appeal for those horror stories on his website.

I'd like to read a health care horror story sent to us by Adrienne Campbell from Michigan, a story, that, unfortunately, millions of Americans who are underinsured or uninsured can relate to. Here's her story.

My sister, who is 22 years old right now, was diagnosed with cervical cancer, the same cancer I had at the same age. She graduated from college back in December, so she is off my dad's insurance.

Jobs are hard to find here in Michigan, so she's working two part-time jobs, and neither of them provide insurance for part-time workers.

She has to go through what I did, but instead of actually being able to get medical treatment right away, then having to pay for it, she has to put off until she and the hospital can work out a payment plan. They told her the soonest they might be able to perform the surgery will be in April.

We've been calling around seeking other options. She's at Stage 4. I was at Stage 2, when I went through my ordeal, so she's in much worse condition than I was; which worries me.

This is unacceptable. It's like I am living my horror all over again, only this is my sister. This is why we have