

that we hold dear: life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. My continual prayer for America is that we never forsake the Judeo-Christian values that ensure these freedoms remain a centerpiece of our great Nation.

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

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

IRAQ

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

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, recently I met with veterans in New Jersey, some of whom had served in the Second World War, and earlier in the day that I met with them, I had returned from a fact-finding trip to Iraq with Representative THOMPSON of California, a colleague on the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

I told these veterans that they would not recognize this war in Iraq. From a technological standpoint, the kind of battlefield sensors and intelligence analysis capabilities available to our troops in Iraq are so far beyond anything that was fielded by the military in the Second World War or, in fact, even in more recent conflicts. That's the good news.

The other thing that they would not recognize, the not-so-good news, is that unlike say the Second World War, the United States cannot control the outcome in Iraq or achieve success because we do not know who the enemy is and what constitutes success.

While part of our trip involved classified briefings in which we examined how the intelligence community is supporting our troops, we also had the opportunity to meet at length with General David Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker to discuss the situation on the ground, including the status of the political reconciliation among Iraq's warring factions. The two gave a positive report and spoke of a great deal of progress.

Two outstanding patriots, a good general, a good diplomat, but the presentation that America is making progress toward a successful outcome in Iraq makes sense only if we continually redefine what we mean by success. And for over 5 years, we've been redefining both our rationale for invading Iraq and how we propose to measure success.

First, it was to go after those responsible for 9/11. Then it was to remove Saddam Hussein from power and track down his WMDs. And then it was to bring stability to the region. And then it was to bring free elections and bring all the warring factions together in a

model of democracy for the Middle East. Then it was to create a road to peace in Israel through Iraq. And then it was to give the Iraqis more time to organize their government. Now, it seems to be to reduce the number of members of al Qaeda in Iraq, the AQI, which was, of course, zero before it all started.

These repeated rationalizations and redefinitions serve no one's interests, particularly the interests of our men and women of our Armed Forces who we've sent in harm's way in Iraq.

In Baghdad, I met with active duty soldiers, including some from New Jersey. American troops are performing superbly in Iraq under difficult conditions. As I told them, they, and the New Jersey National Guard members who will be deploying later this year, deserve not just our gratitude, but all the support they need to do their job, the wherewithal they need to do their job, and I would say just as much support when they return home as veterans.

Of course, we want our soldiers to succeed. We want the Iraqis to be peaceful and prosperous. We want terrorists and other enemies of the United States to be defanged and defeated. But for that to happen, it must be in Iraq, at least the Iraqis, the Iraqi political factions who must take the lead in ending their civil war.

It's impossible to hide the fact that the limited security gains achieved since last fall have not been matched by political reconciliation on the part of the Iraqis.

Unfortunately, Iraq's central government continues to lack legitimacy in the eyes of its people, as the recent combat in Basra and Baghdad have clearly shown. It is clear that the Iraqi government is, so far anyway, unwilling or unable to take the steps necessary to reach a political settlement that will end the violence.

One of the reasons I voted against the war resolution to go into Iraq in the first place was that Iraq was not a threat to the United States in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and that attacking Iraq would unleash forces we could not control. I was not alone in making those arguments, which tragically have been validated by events.

My latest trip to Iraq has, sadly, reinforced my belief that success is being redefined only once again, and what we need to do is to take decisive action to end our combat involvement in Iraq and refocus our efforts on destroying al Qaeda and eliminating the conditions that breed international terrorism and refocusing our resources on pressing domestic and international needs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. RICHARDSON). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KELLER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

FARM BILL

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

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, today, the House of Representatives debated the conference report on what we in Kansas call the farm bill. Here in Washington, it's now called the Food, Conservation, Energy Security Act, and I note that the word "farm" is now missing from the farm bill.

As I indicate to Kansans, there probably is no more important piece of legislation that this Congress will consider than the 2008 farm bill from a Kansas perspective. Certainly, not every Kansan is a farmer, not every Kansan is a rancher, but agriculture is the backbone of the Kansas economy, and policies that we determine here today in the House of Representatives and tonight later in the Senate affect the Kansas economy and a way of life that we have revered in our State for generations.

Agriculture is not only a business. It's not only a way of earning a living. In fact, it's a very difficult way of earning a living. It is the opportunity that we have in our State for sons and daughters to work side-by-side with moms and dads. It's the opportunity for us to pass on values from one generation to the next.

And today, Madam Speaker, I worry that the legislation that we will soon be sending to the President is inadequate to meet the needs of Kansas producers and American agriculture.

In the 2002 farm bill, we passed a security net, a safety net for our farmers, and it's a three-pronged approach to making certain that our farmers are secure and have an opportunity to survive in difficult times, whether those times are difficult because of low commodity prices or difficult because the weather does not cooperate.

And today, Madam Speaker, we chose to reduce that security, that safety net that provides Kansans a future.

I had two criteria in trying to determine whether or not the farm bill was something I should vote for. One: Is this farm bill better? Is the 2007, now 2008, farm bill better than the one that was adopted by Congress in 2002? And clearly, the answer to that is no.

And the second criteria comes from listening to farmers for the last 2 and 3 years about what a new farm bill should look like. In fact, I listened to American producers from across the country. Since the passage of the last farm bill, I've chaired or been the ranking Republican, Republican leader on the subcommittee responsible for all farm programs and participated in 15 hearings across the country. And what I heard time and time again, especially from the folks back home is, whatever you do, JERRY, make certain that we don't lose the direct payment and make certain that crop insurance remains a viable option for us to protect

ourselves from risk. And unfortunately, once again, those two criteria were not met today.

So Madam Speaker, I pledge to my colleagues in the House of Representatives, and particularly my friends on the House Agriculture Committee, to continue to work in a very strong and bipartisan way to see if we can't improve the lives of farmers in Kansas and States across the country.

I served on the conference committee that provided the report that we have had before us today, and I offered amendments and supported amendments that I think would make significant improvements in the 2008 farm bill. They were rejected on straight, party-line votes, and it's a sad day for me because I've always enjoyed my work in the Agriculture Committee because I care about farmers and ranchers, and I care about their way of life. But never has our committee been partisan, and again, I pledge myself to work with my colleagues to see if we can restore the days in which we were in this together on behalf of American agriculture.

Madam Speaker, it's my belief that if we're going to spend as much money as we spend in this farm bill, which is a significant sum of money, we ought to spend it in much more wise and prudent ways than this conference report provides. We owe it to farmers across the country, and we owe it to the taxpayers of this Nation.

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 Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

FIGHTING CRIME

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

Mr. DENT. Madam Speaker, fighting crime is an issue that is important to most Americans. That is because it is an issue that has a tremendous impact on a community's quality of life.

I think most Members of Congress recognize this simple fact. However, this Congress needs to take action in order to address this problem. On our side of the aisle, we've tried to do our part. Republicans have offered some 100 bills to help fight crime, but so far, only three have been considered on this floor.

These legislative efforts should not be piecemeal, but should instead be

part of a grand strategy, to wit: we need to aggressively target those individuals who are responsible for promoting criminal activity in our society.

Our focus should not be on promoting efforts to decriminalize certain drugs, but instead on targeting and jailing drug dealers.

Our focus should not be on protecting the rights of criminals, but instead on protecting the rights of their child victims. More needs to be done, for example, to combat the scourge of predators who stalk young people over the Internet.

Finally, our focus should not only be on adult offenders, but on youthful ones as well. Gang members, some of whom are as young as 12 and 13, and we see intergenerational gangs as well, are extorting money, dealing drugs, and committing acts of violence. They need to be stopped, and that is where my bill, H.R. 3157, the Anti-Gang Task Force Act of 2007, comes into play.

H.R. 3157 will help our local law enforcement communities combat the scourge of gang violence. It authorizes \$20 million for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2011 to establish new multi-jurisdictional anti-gang task forces, bringing together State and local prosecutors with Federal officials from the FBI, DEA, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, DHS, and others.

Gangs are mobile, and they often cross jurisdictional lines in order to facilitate the dealing of drugs or to avoid detection by local law enforcement authorities. Thus, a multijurisdictional approach is clearly necessary in order to stop the proliferation of gang violence and gang activity.

My district encompasses a good portion of what is called the Route 222 corridor.

□ 2015

This corridor bisects five cities—Easton, Bethlehem, Allentown, Reading and Lancaster—located in four southeastern Pennsylvania counties. It is uniquely situated in that it is linked directly to New York City, approximately 80 miles away via Interstate 78 and through other easily accessible roads, including Route 222 to Philadelphia, which is 60 miles to the southeast.

So gang violence along the Route 222 corridor, primarily involving drug trafficking and armed robberies, dates back more than a decade and has been a chronic problem affecting each of the five cities within this corridor. The roadways that have allowed commerce to thrive in the region have also strongly benefited the gangs, who can move between the cities with relative ease, thereby making their operations much more difficult to detect and to track. As a result, the 222 corridor has been plagued by gang activity.

Fortunately, we're not standing idly by and letting the gangs take over. The Route 222 corridor is one of six sites

around the country that has received funds under the Project Safe Neighborhoods program. This Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) initiative involves a cooperative law enforcement effort between the counties and cities along the corridor, and there have been some notable successes.

First, there have been successful prosecutions of members of the Mafia El Don Gang, which has conspired to distribute more than 50 kilograms of cocaine in the Lehigh Valley. Meanwhile, two members of the 314 and a half Gang, allegedly responsible, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office, for approximately 15 to 20 bank robberies in the Valley, have been indicted. In addition, the initiative is committing extensive resources to outreach of both at-risk youth and their parents in order to discourage young people from joining such gangs. And we have seen intergenerational gang activity in my community.

The Congress would do well to emulate the efforts of the U.S. Attorney's Office and the local District Attorney's offices and law enforcement agencies that are working hard to fight the gang problem in my area. More than talk is required if we want to curb gang activity and end gang-related violence, we need action. That action should take the form of legislation, legislation that targets criminals, promotes Federal-State cooperation, and that comes from both sides of the aisle.

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 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 Missouri (Mr. HULSHOF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HULSHOF 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.)

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

(Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania 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 North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.