

been an exciting month for anyone with an attachment to the University of San Joaquin Valley, are those who happen to love our Nation's pastime, baseball.

The character, camaraderie, preparation, and ultimately the performance and success of the team flows from Head Coach Mike "Bait-Soul" Batsole and his wonderful staff. He was chosen this year 2008 Collegiate Coach of the Year.

One very unique thing about this team is that every player is from California. In fact, many of the players come from surrounding communities like Clovis, Hanford, Visalia, Bakersfield, and Turlock. Fresno State athletics prides themselves in recruiting local talent from Valley high schools and junior colleges.

And those young men are the models for student-athletes around the Nation. Seven seniors and one junior will graduate within 9 semesters, and Steve Susdorf was given Western Athletic Conference All-Academic awards four times in his career with the Bulldogs. These classroom accomplishments should be commended. Student athletics at their finest.

There were five Bulldogs who made this year's College World Series All-Tournament Team, and they are Erik Wetzel, Steve Susdorf, Steve Detwiler, Justin Wilson, and Tommy Mendonca. Congratulations.

Tommy Mendonca, from Turlock, CA, also was named the College World Series Most Outstanding Player and was recently named to the 2008 National Collegiate Team. He comes from strong Portuguese Valley roots, and I enjoyed watching him play this season.

Finally, we again want to congratulate the Fresno State baseball team on a season well played, and tip my hat to the University of Georgia and all the teams that participated for an outstanding series and season.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.)

H. CON. RESOLUTION 362

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

Mr. GILCREST. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak today on Resolution 362 that is circulating in the House and its impact on policy in the Middle East.

As a result of Resolution 362 and its tightening of sanctions on Iran in a more broader way, will that have a positive impact on America's policy in the Middle East? Will it have a positive impact on the politics in the Middle East? Will it have a positive impact on Iran as far as the conflict between our two nations is concerned?

I will say, in my judgment, Mr. Speaker, that Resolution 362 will exacerbate, make much more difficult, the problems in the Middle East, the relationship of Iran with its neighbors in the Middle East, and the relationship

of Iran with the United States, and the relationship of Iran with the country of Israel. Let me try to explain why.

If we look at the Middle East right now in a very objective fashion, what is going on in the Middle East right now?

The geopolitical balance of power in the Middle East right now is fractured. We are focusing on the conflict in Iraq. We need as a Nation to focus objectively on the Palestinian-Israeli question, to resolve that issue, to reduce the number of recruits for al Qaeda and the Taliban.

We need to understand that Saudi Arabia, a Sunni country, does not want Iraq, a Shia country, to become an Iranian satellite.

We need to understand that Iran, who lost more men dead in a conflict with Iraq just a few years ago than we lost in World War I, World War II, Korea, and Vietnam combined, wants to have some influence in the Middle East and certainly with what will go on in Iraq.

What will influence the direction the Middle East will take in the decades to come? There is violent conflict there. There is political conflict there. There is mistrust in the Middle East.

Let me use a quote from Sam Rayburn, former Speaker of the House. "Any mule can kick a barn door down, but it takes carpenters to rebuild that door and that barn."

We need carpenters. We need diplomats. More conflict, more restrictions, more sanctions is going to further exacerbate the problem in the Middle East and its relationship with the country of Iran.

One other quick comment. Iran is not an Arab country. Iran is a Persian nation that speaks Farsi, that does not speak Arabic. It is a nation of Shias with their own brand of Islam.

Knowledge and an informed policy in the Middle East, a surge of diplomacy, can make a key difference. Let me go back and express some precedence of the past about diplomacy and where it worked.

When Nikita Khrushchev said he was going to bury the United States, what was Eisenhower's response? He invited Nikita Khrushchev to the United States to tour the Nation, and it began to lessen the conflict between the two countries.

What did President Kennedy do when there were deployable nuclear weapons in Cuba aimed at the United States? He negotiated his way out of that conflict and saved a catastrophe.

What did Nixon do after Mao Zedong said it would be worth half the population of China being destroyed if we could destroy the capitalists in America? What did Nixon do? He had a dialogue. He went to China.

What happened when we did not have a dialogue, some understanding of Ho Chi Minh? A million people died.

Today in the Middle East we certainly need a strong military, we need a strong intelligence. But the aspect that is missing in the Middle East is what Eisenhower said was so critical in

foreign policy; that is, consensus and dialogue.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of Members in this house that have started a long time ago, a couple of years, beginning a dialogue with the Iranians. Just last fall, 58 Members of this House on both sides of the aisle signed a letter to the parliament in Iran asking for a parliamentary exchange; 58 Members of Republicans and Democrats. That letter was hand-delivered by some of us in Lisbon to Iranian parliamentarians. They took it to Iran. And what is their response to us? They want a dialogue. There are members of the Iranian parliament that want a dialogue. Consensus and dialogue.

We need more carpenters. Vote against Resolution 362.

H.R. 5925, RECONCILIATION FOR IRAQ

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, there is an old saying: Everybody complains about the weather, but no one ever does anything about it. That is pretty much what we are doing in Iraq.

In testimony before Congress and from press conference to press conference, administration officials have said that the most important item on our agenda for Iraq, right after security, is reconciliation. In fact, U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker said before the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Armed Services Committee that reconciliation is perhaps the most critical challenge that Iraq faces right now. Even the Iraq Study Group, a bipartisan panel of recognized leaders in foreign policy and governing, wrote that: National reconciliation is essential to reduce further violence and maintain the unity of Iraq. And its report recommended that diplomats work to energize countries to support national political reconciliation in Iraq.

But this is not just the goal of the United States, Madam Speaker. The Iraqis themselves are calling for reconciliation. Before a meeting of the United Nations, Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki said, and I quote him, he said, "Reconciliation lays the foundation for political, social, economic progress, and the security that we strive for."

This is not a Democratic or a Republican issue, Madam Speaker. It isn't a Sunni or a Shia or Kurd issue. It isn't an American or Iraqi issue. Reconciliation is an issue that has something to do with all of us. It is the pathway for stability and peace in Iraq, and it is the pathway throughout the region.

One news agency has dedicated itself to providing real resources, training, and assistance for reconciliation in Iraq. Since the year 2004, the United States Institute of Peace, the USIP, has been working in Iraq at the national and local level building peace

community by community and neighborhood by neighborhood. USIP has focused on preventing sectarian violence at the local level, developing leaders in schools, universities, government, and civil society, promoting the rule of law, engaging women in public life, and increasing regional stability. All this with a tiny staff, only three USIP staff members and eight Iraqi staffers.

Despite the scarcity of resources, 120 Iraqis have been trained to be reconciliation facilitators. They will go into communities to help to work towards real solutions, making neighborhoods safer, promoting transparency and accountability, and so much more. The work they do is amazing and it is awe inspiring.

Sadly, the resources available are meager in comparison to what we are spending to wage war. That is why it is time to bring our troops and private contractors home, to give Iraq back to the Iraqi people. And that is why I, along with my colleague from Connecticut, CHRISTOPHER SHAYS, introduced H.R. 5925, International Partnership for Reconciliation in Iraq Act of 2008. This legislation will ensure that USIP will have the funding and support it needs to continue and to expand.

I urge all of my colleagues to do something: Cosponsor the bill, H.R. 5925, so that we can work with the Iraqi people, so we can work within the international community, and we can reconcile that area. I urge you to cosponsor H.R. 5925. Enough talking about the problem. It is time to do something.

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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.)

RAPE OF A LITTLE GIRL

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, she was 8 years old. She was asleep in her own room, in her bed dreaming about whatever little girls dream about. She thought she was safe in her home. Suddenly she was awakened by the demon from the night. Patrick Kennedy of Louisiana was on top of her, having his way with her, this petite little angel. Kennedy was someone the little girl supposedly could trust; after all, he was her stepfather.

This little girl was raped. So violent was the rape she fainted and the next thing she remembered she woke up in an ambulance speeding to Children's Hospital.

Official court records state, "When police arrived, they found the victim

on her bed wearing a T-shirt and wrapped in a bloody blanket. She was bleeding profusely from the vaginal area. The victim was transported to Children's Hospital. An expert in pediatric forensic medicine testified that the victim's injuries were the most severe he had ever seen from a sexual assault in his years of practice. A laceration to the left wall of the vagina separated her cervix from the back of her vagina, causing her rectum to protrude into the vaginal structure. The injuries required her to have emergency surgery."

The little girl survived this attack by the barbarian and lives, even though she has been sentenced to a life of mental torture, physical pain and emotional trauma that she may not ever recover from. Her physical scars will never disappear.

The child rapist was tried under Louisiana's law that specifically allows for the death penalty for criminals that choose to rape the most innocent among us, children. The law was passed by the legislature, signed by the Governor and is the wish of the people of Louisiana. A jury of 12 citizens heard the facts and they all agreed that Kennedy should die for his decision to rape his daughter. Several other states, including Texas, have the death penalty as a possible punishment for child rapists.

This case has been reviewed by numerous courts, and has taken 5 years to reach our Supreme Court.

In a decision this week by Justice Anthony Kennedy—no relation—the Supreme Court said the Louisiana law is just too severe and overruled the will of the people of Louisiana and a unanimous jury when he imposed his own moral code saying no one can be executed under these circumstances unless the villain also kills the child, otherwise it is a violation of the cruel and unusual provision of the United States Constitution.

Although the jury was unanimous in ordering the death penalty, the Supreme Court split in its decision 5-4 with the majority siding with the evil-doer.

Justice Kennedy focused on the fact that the victim survived the assault as the reason not to execute the rapist. In other words, the defendant got a break because the little girl had the will to survive.

When I was on the trial bench in Texas, I had a rape victim once tell me that rape was a fate worse than death. In the eyes of this little girl, she probably agrees.

When the "cruel and unusual" phrase was put in the Constitution, it was put there and based on constitutional history to outlaw torture and maiming of criminals. As history reflects, States decided what was appropriate punishment based upon these guidelines.

The five justices who sided with the rapist don't seem to have lived in the real world or have real life experiences. They don't seem to provide justice for

victims, only leniency for criminal defendants.

I spent 22 years on the felony trial bench in Texas and heard over 20,000 cases. The Constitution was the basis for every decision I made. I saw those charged with the worst acts people can commit, and I saw the brutalized victims of crime. I only mention this experience because trial judges see the world as it really is, not how we wish and hope it to be. Trial judges see real people every day.

Unfortunately, eight of our nine Supreme Court justices do not have the benefit of this experience and have never been a trial judge and seen the effects of crime on people. They have spent much of their time in elite ivory palaces as law school professors and appellate judges removed from the world, second-guessing legislatures, trial judges and juries.

I doubt if Justice Kennedy has ever been to Louisiana or talked to a rape victim or a rapist, or a jury, for that matter. Now Justice Kennedy says the verdict of death is just too cruel and unusual for us that live in a sophisticated society to allow. His ruling is a misinterpretation of the Constitution.

Justice Alito said in his dissent that the death penalty laws should be allowed for child rape "if they reflect society's evolving standards of decency." The State of Louisiana set the evolving standard for child rapists in Louisiana, and said leave our children alone or face the death penalty.

Society's standard was trumped by five black-robed justices who want it their way. They are wrong.

And that's just the way it is.

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.)

WHO WILL SAVE ZIMBABWE?

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

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, we are about to see the world sit by silently, not silently perhaps, but ineffectively, and allow one of the most outrageous abuses of human rights that we have seen in a long time to go forward.

The president of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe, is engaging in a pattern of oppression and tyranny and thugery and despicable conduct towards his own people. He lost a preliminary election for the presidency despite every effort he could make to rig the election. Rather than allow the second round to go forward, he has ramped up the terror to the point where the man who got more votes than he in the first round understandably said he wouldn't participate in a run-off election which