

Last week, Robert Dreyfuss wrote an article in *The Nation* that I would like to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. He explains that the CIA is currently training Syrian rebels, some of whom have Sunni fundamentalist ties, at the same time that it is fighting Sunni rebels in Iraq. Recently, dozens of Syrian soldiers fled to Iraq, only to be killed by Iraqi Sunnis. He asked the question:

When will the United States learn that it doesn't know enough about the Middle East to go charging in there, seemingly without a clue about what it all means?

So here we are: 10 years of neoconservative hawks preaching that we can franchise American democracy and freedom; 10 years of quicksand diplomacy; 10 years of wrong answers, and we still don't know the question.

What has been the cost of all of this? And I don't mean financially. Because, yes, we've spent probably a trillion or more on this war, or will. Yes, as we speak, we are cutting food assistance to kids in this country and funding for R&D that would drive our economy. But we can't appropriate a sum of money to fix the real cost of Iraq. We can't pay back the lives of 4,486 American men and women who have died there, or the roughly 2,000 broken soldiers who came home and took their own lives.

The wounded—physically and mentally. The soldiers who didn't know how not to be a soldier. The families living with a hole in their hearts, and the families living with someone they no longer recognize. Ten years of young men and women leaving their families, living in hell, and coming home to unemployment and to homelessness. To a country that has forgotten it's at war at all. To a country that seems to think a yellow ribbon magnet on their bumper is the only kind of support that our troops need.

And the cost in Iraq? Untold deaths. Let me rephrase that: unknown deaths. We can only guess at the destruction that we have left in our wake: 115,000 Iraqis? 600,000? You can find a number. What was the long-term impact of that on their environment, water, and health. What happens when someone lives in constant fear of becoming collateral damage?

Today, Iraq is a sad shadow of a society that once boasted the best infrastructure in the region. Instability and violence fester on this very day, and now it teeters on the brink of an inevitable civil war.

This is the legacy of our last 10 years, and I still don't understand why. I hope this anniversary will remind us that a whole new generation of veterans are waiting to help reintegrate into civilian life. I believe it's time to elevate our level of commitment to these veterans.

I am introducing a bill to create a commission on veterans care to investigate what we as a society can do to help our men and women come home. I hope it will remind us that no lives, re-

gardless of nationality, should be taken lightly. I hope it will remind us as to why the next time. And I hope it won't take another war to get that answer.

#### THE CIA TAKES OPPOSITE SIDES IN SYRIA AND IRAQ

Mr. McDERMOTT. What, really, could be more bizarre than this: as the United States ramps up its aid to Syria's ragtag rebels, whose backbone is comprised of radical Islamists and Sunni fundamentalists, some with ties to Al Qaeda, the CIA is busily engaged in combat inside Iraq with the very same radical Islamists and Sunni fundamentalists, some with ties to Al Qaeda.

Yep, that's right.

We're backing the same guys in Syria that we're fighting in Iraq.

Of course, we shouldn't be involved in Iraq in any way, shape or form, but try telling that to the CIA. According to the *Wall Street Journal*:

The Central Intelligence Agency is ramping up support to elite Iraqi antiterrorism units to better fight al Qaeda affiliates, amid alarm in Washington about spillover from the civil war in neighboring Syria, according to US officials.

The stepped-up mission expands a covert US presence on the edges of the two-year-old Syrian conflict, at a time of American concerns about the growing power of extremists in the Syrian rebellion.

The *Journal* notes that this isn't an accident. It was the result of a carefully thought-out White House decision:

In a series of secret decisions from 2011 to late 2012, the White House directed the CIA to provide support to Iraq's Counterterrorism Service, or CTS, a force that reports directly to Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, officials said.

The CIA has since ramped up its work with the CTS—taking control of a mission long run by the U.S. military, according to administration and defense officials. For years, U.S. special-operations forces worked with CTS against al Qaeda in Iraq. But the military's role has dwindled since U.S. troops pulled out of the country at the end of 2011.

The paradox, obviously, is that Maliki, the guy we're helping in Iraq, is an ally of Iran's and is sympathetic to President Assad of Syria. That's because were the Sunni-led rebels in Syria to seize Damascus and topple Assad, they'd turn their wrath next door against the Shiite-led Maliki regime, and funnel weapons and fighters to support the Sunni-led rebels in Iraq.

That's not stopping the United States, though, from boosting the fortunes of the Syrian rebels by funneling aid and support to them and coordinating the flow of weapons from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey. Meanwhile, as *The New York Times* has been reporting for a while, the same CIA that is trying to squash the Sunni rebels in Iraq is actually training Sunni rebels in a secret program in Jordan, to fight in Syria.

Oddly enough, the rest of the media hasn't picked up on the *Times* reports on the CIA training efforts in Jordan, and the *Times* itself hasn't elaborated. How many gangsters are in the CIA training in Jordan? What are they doing?

It all comes together in the recent reports that dozens of Syrian soldiers, loyal to Assad, who fled into Iraq recently, were then massacred by Iraqi Sunni crazies.

We blundered, bungling, into Iraq in 2003 without knowing really a damn thing about the country we invaded. When will the United States learn that it doesn't know enough about the Middle East to go charging in there with guns, seemingly without a clue about what it all means?

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#### A CALL FOR A BALANCED BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I arrived here in Washington, D.C., to serve the people of Montana and my country with a bit of a different resume than many folks have here in Washington. You see, I've spent the past 28 years in the private sector working to grow businesses, having to balance a budget and create good jobs.

I loved my job in the private sector. But when I looked at Washington and the path our economy and our country was on, I knew that things needed to change. So I ran for Congress because the challenges facing our Nation were far too great to just sit back on the sidelines.

As Montana's small businesses know, you can't spend more than you take in. Year after year of Federal deficits with no end in sight doesn't lead to prosperity, doesn't lead to growth—it leads to financial ruin.

I'm also the father of four great kids—two in college and two in high school. They know that as a family, we have to plan ahead for the future. We need to create a budget and then live within our means. These are the same principles that my parents passed down to me. These are the values that Montana families live by each and every day.

Those values are exemplified in Montana's own State legislature, where the only constitutionally required duty is passing a balanced budget. In fact, when our legislature in Montana adjourns in just a little over a month, they will have given Montana a balanced budget, just like they did last year and the year before and the year before that. It seems simple: live within your means and spend no more than you take in. But it's not so easy here in Washington.

Right now we're presented with two very different visions for our country, two visions that will lead to two very different outcomes for this country.

One vision calls for more taxes taken out of the pockets of hardworking American families and more government spending, which adds to the trillions of dollars in debt that will be handed down to the next generation.

Our friends on the other side of the aisle talk about a balanced approach, but they refuse to even balance their own budget.

Our vision calls for a stop to Washington's failed policies and reckless spending. It says American families and small businesses understand you can't spend more than you take in, that you need to balance your budget. It's time for Washington to do the same.

This vision seeks to protect the things that we value most, to keep the promises that we've made to our seniors and to our veterans—I'm the son of a U.S. Marine—while at the same time allowing us to leave a better future to our kids and our grandkids. That's the vision I want to work toward, and that's why I'm proud to support the House Budget Committee's proposals which we will be voting on later this week.

This isn't about passing a budget for one year just one time. This is about creating lasting solutions that help grow our economy and put our country back on track. That's what this budget will do.

#### SAVING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFazio. Mr. Speaker, as I speak here on the floor, the American Society of Civil Engineers is releasing a report card for America's infrastructure.

The gentleman who spoke before me talked about the legacy that we leave to our country and about growth in the Nation. Well, this is an incredible legacy we're leaving and creating, which is an unbelievable deficit in our Nation's infrastructure. We've gone from No. 1 in the world post-World War II with the Eisenhower era, the national interstate program, to No. 26 in the world. We are spending less of our gross domestic product on infrastructure investment than many Third World countries. It's not only an embarrassment; it is hurting our economy and our growth.

Now, if your kid came home and said, Hey, Dad, guess what? I got my report card. Here it is. Good news. Good news. Oh, it's good news. I went up to a D-plus. A D-plus—that's where America's infrastructure is.

We have a projected deficit over the next 7 years of about \$1.6 trillion. That's an unbelievable, unimaginable number, \$1.6 trillion. That's as much money as the war in Iraq cost us, an unnecessary and wasteful war. We can't afford to invest in our infrastructure, but we're rebuilding the infrastructure in Afghanistan. There's something wrong with this picture.

According to the American Society of Civil Engineers, if we don't address this investment gap in all of our infrastructure, by 2020 the economy will lose \$1 trillion in business sales, 3.5 million jobs will be lost or foregone and there will be \$3.1 trillion less in gross domestic product. If we invested \$1.6 trillion, we would get 100 percent return on our investment and 3.5 million more jobs. Not bad, but the people on that side of the aisle don't believe in rebuilding America's infrastructure. They have some wacko theory here of what they call "devolution." We shouldn't have a national transportation policy, no. It should be done by the 50 States. Well, we already tried that. It didn't work too well. That's when Dwight David Eisenhower said we needed an national interstate system, and we built it. Now it's falling apart.

There are 140,000 bridges that need substantial repair or replacement and 40 percent of the pavement on the National Highway System is at the point where there are potholes big enough to put your car in. Maybe if the White House limousine falls in one of those holes we'll get a little more action down there in terms of funding our infrastructure. I've been trying to get them to take a position on this.

We are looking at something even more extraordinary. In 2015—we've been paying for infrastructure out of a trust fund. It hasn't added to the deficit. But it raises taxes. Oh, my God. We can't have taxes for something like that, can we? Not on that side of aisle.

Well, if we don't do something about it, the trust fund is going to drop below zero sometime in 2014, which means we are not going to invest any more in our National Transportation System. For one year we'll go from \$50 billion, which is not sufficient to even deal with the deterioration, let alone build out a better, more efficient 21st century infrastructure, to \$7 billion. That's hundreds of thousands of jobs gone. That's an acceleration in the deterioration of the system.

We're going to have to talk about revenues. It's the only way to solve that problem, unless you want to devolve it to the 50 States and have the States build interstates that don't match up or maybe they won't build the interstates at all. We don't know what kind of plan is coming from that side of the aisle. But I do know that we need to make these investments. As I already pointed out, we can get a 100 percent rate of return.

It's pretty simple. We would just index the existing gas tax, which hasn't changed since 1993. Yeah, we're paying nearly 4 bucks a gallon. It will be 5 bucks a gallon by Memorial Day. And the money is going into the coffers of ExxonMobil and the other big oil companies. It isn't going to repair infrastructure.

We haven't raised that tax in 20 years. If we just indexed it to construction cost inflation and indexed it to fleet fuel economy, we could issue

bonds paid off by that increment on the gas tax. It would be about a penny a year a gallon. When I was driving to work one day and they were changing the cards up there, they were raising it a nickel a gallon just as I drove by. At a penny a gallon, I think most Americans would be willing to pay for that if they knew it was going to save 3.5 or create 3.5 million jobs and put this country back on track and get rid of some of the delays and the congestion and the detours and all the other problems we have.

So let's pay attention to this scorecard, to this report card. If your kid came home with a card like this, you'd do something about it. Congress better do something about it.

DONALD FOISIE—1ST CALVARY DIVISION  
SOLDIER—PATRIOT—  
TEXAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it was June 1950 when the North Koreans decided they would invade their neighbors to the south, South Korea. The war had started—even though the world community called it a "police action"—but it was a war, and of course South Korea was in trouble. They called 911, and as it has been in history, when you call 911, the United States answers. The Americans went to South Korea to protect our ally South Korea.

In August of the same year, some Americans were occupying Hill 303. Most Americans have never heard of Hill 303. Let me tell you about it.

Hill 303 was being occupied by the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division of the United States Army. It was a small group because America didn't have a lot of troops in South Korea. We weren't ready for this war. The North Koreans, with the aid of the Communist Chinese later, overran the hill—and the Americans, some stayed, some withdrew. One of the individuals who stayed on that hill was a friend of mine by the name of Donald Foisie.

Donald Foisie and his other comrades refused to give ground. The hill was overrun. The North Koreans took the hill. Donald Foisie and one of his friends hid in a rice paddy. They used bamboo canes to get air, and they stayed there for a long time. Unbeknownst to him, 45 other American soldiers had been captured by the North Koreans. And after they were captured, they were lined up in front of a ditch, with their hands tied behind their backs, and they were machine-gunned down in that gully. Later, the Americans retook the hill. They found Donald Foisie and found his murdered comrades.

That was in August of 1950. Things haven't changed much in the Koreas. The North Koreans still have sights on South Korea, but that's another story.