

the administration has done nothing to reverse it.

At a time when families are traveling to see their kids graduate from college, fly across the country to take care of their elderly parents, and make business trips to help support their families, these delays are inexcusable. That's why House Republicans voted twice to replace President Obama's sequester with reasonable and responsible spending cuts—because we wanted to prevent things like this from happening.

So I encourage all of you when you travel home this week to talk to people in your hometown airports, take pictures and engage the people you meet about what they're experiencing and then tweet those stories using the hashtag: #ObamaFlightDelays. And, above all, please join me in encouraging the administration to stop playing politics with the American people.

FAA FLIGHT DELAYS

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

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, this week, the Chicago Tribune published an editorial that stated what many of us have known for months: the administration is playing political games by attempting to make the sequestration as painful as possible on Americans, especially traveling Americans.

The FAA furloughs announced this week, they're not just wrong, they're irresponsible. The bottom line is the FAA has the flexibility to find money and minimize the impact to the traveling public. Even more concerning is that the FAA has chosen not to implement the furloughs in a way that could protect the most critical air traffic control operations and facilities. They are indiscriminately furloughing everyone in the FAA.

Air traffic controllers are being furloughed at the same rate as non-controllers, and furloughs are being applied at the same rate regardless of the airport size. Waterloo in Iowa is not Chicago O'Hare. The FAA needs to manage better, and they need to do it now.

There is still time for the administration and the FAA to reverse course on these decisions and start making the right decision instead of trying to simply score political points by playing the political game of chicken.

FAA FLIGHT DELAYS

(Mrs. WAGNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, we have seen these political games played before with sequestration, and the American people have responded unfavorably every time. This decision to furlough air traffic controllers by the FAA is no different.

Staff shortages as a result of these furloughs led to more than 2,250 flight delays in the first 2 days alone, greatly—inconveniencing the schedules of many people trying to travel across our country. These delays are all unnecessary.

There are \$2.7 billion in nonpersonnel operational costs that the House Transportation Committee has identified and which could be examined before furloughs that ultimately hurt the American people. The FAA and this administration have decided to inconvenience the American traveler instead of using its flexibility within the agency to enact these cuts in a responsible manner.

When air traffic controllers are being furloughed, yet workers helping implement ObamaCare have been unaffected, it becomes clear on where this administration's priorities are.

I am very concerned with Democrats using this latest example of a manufactured crisis to cut workers, not waste.

FAA FLIGHT DELAYS

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

Mr. LAMALFA Mr. Speaker, we live in a representative Republic, and so the people expect us at our different levels of government to go to Washington, go to your local State capitals and get the job done and do it right. We appoint people to get these jobs done for us that you expect, whether the President does the appointments or somehow the House and the Senate approve them. And yet Washington, D.C., has fallen down on the job; this administration has fallen down on the job on this issue of FAA and air traffic controllers and delays that can affect real American people.

It's really shameful that we are manipulated in such a way, because what we've seen in recent years, actually since 1996, the budget for FAA has increased 110 percent. And now in this fiscal crisis, this country has seen where everybody is having to cut back, whether personally in our own lives or in government, that we're finding ways to try and trim the cost of doing business of government a little bit.

A 4 percent cut in FAA resulting in 40 percent of our flights being delayed, that's an outrage. It should be an outrage to every individual that we're being manipulated this way at a time, with a \$16-plus trillion deficit, we can't get this right.

So, missed connections, we're hurting the American public with these delays. We've got to do better. I ask the administration to do better.

CPC HOUR: IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, first, let me just say I'm very pleased to anchor this Congressional Progressive Caucus Special Order on Iraq with my colleague from California, Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS.

Let me also take a moment to thank Congresswoman WATERS, who is the founder of the Out of Iraq Caucus. Congresswoman WATERS had the vision and the determination to pull together Members of the House who really needed some space, who needed to be able to provide legislative strategies and to beat the drum to end this war in Iraq. The country owes Congresswoman WATERS a debt of gratitude, and we thank you very much for that.

I also want to acknowledge Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, who retired from Congress at the end of last year, but who loomed so large during this Special Order, given her incredible leadership in working to end the war in Iraq and to bring our troops home. She is and remains our sister in arms when it comes to working for global peace and security for our children, all of our collective work.

It was no wonder that many observers called Congresswomen WATERS, Woolsey, and myself "The Triad," but it was actually Congresswoman Woolsey who coined this term in our formation.

□ 1520

We are here today to reflect back on the 10-year anniversary of the start of the unnecessary, immoral, and costly war and to remember and pay tribute to the sacrifices of our troops, those who lost their lives, the injured, their families, and their loved ones, many of whom are still grappling with the scars and the impact of the war. We are also here to reflect on the costs of this war in blood and treasure. On the costs of this war: \$800 billion, 4,486 soldiers, an untold number of Iraqi civilians, countless refugees, and also on the lost opportunity costs of this war to our country.

Instead of spending \$800 billion on Iraq, we could have created jobs, rebuilt our crumbling infrastructure or invested in our schools to provide every child with a 21st century education. Sadly, this list goes on and on. It is especially painful when we understand that this war never should have happened in the first place. It was a war of choice. It was unnecessary; it was immoral; and it was wrong.

Over 10 years now in the run-up to the war, there were those of us in Congress and millions of people in the antiwar movement who fought the launch of this war. We had questions about weapons of mass destruction claims. We pushed for hearings; we called for a full debate; and we called to halt the rush to war.

In October 2002, the Bush administration pushed for invading Iraq. During that time, I was on the Foreign Affairs Committee. I proposed an amendment, which the Rules Committee made in

order. We brought that amendment to the floor, which would have required the United Nations to continue with weapons inspections. At that time, I stated on this House floor that unilateralism is really not the answer. If Iraqi weapons of mass destruction are a problem to the world community, yes, we must confront it. We must do so through the United Nations, and we must determine whether or not there are weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. There were 72 of my colleagues who voted in favor of this amendment, which would have led us to the same conclusion that so many soldiers lost their lives and limbs to reach—that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. We all know the tragedy that followed.

The Bush administration launched its war of choice, claimed its “mission accomplished,” and chose to send pallets of shrink-wrapped cash and more of our brave young men and women to fight on and on—despite the fact that there was no real military solution to the quagmire that the Bush administration created.

It is important to remember that this war did not go unchallenged, that there was a tremendous groundswell of opposition and that that was critical in demanding its end and in helping to bring it to a close, finally, under President Obama. In Congress, this opposition was centered around the Out of Iraq Caucus, which Congresswoman WATERS, whom I mentioned earlier, founded, and Congresswoman Woolsey and I helped cofound. This was in 2005. Together, we held ad hoc hearings that the Republican congressional leadership refused to hold or participate in. We held press conferences, wrote op-eds, and took the floor to sound the alarm.

Here I need to acknowledge, as I know Congresswoman WATERS will—because I know this is a very important benchmark to acknowledge—that Congresswoman Woolsey on this point delivered 441 floor speeches over the last decade to call for the war’s end.

We worked with our grassroots allies, like MoveOn, Win Without War, Progressive Democrats of America, the Friends Committee on National Legislation, United for Peace and Justice, Peace Action, and with great leaders like Tom Hayden and others, to help build a movement to bring our troops home.

I recall vividly when we marched here in Washington, D.C., past the White House, with hundreds of thousands of protesters in opposition to the war. These marches and rallies and actions happened all across this country. I have to say, in northern California and especially in the East Bay and in San Francisco—the entire Bay Area of California—they were really at the forefront of this effort. Of course we worked the legislative process as hard as we possibly could. There were many members of the Out of Iraq Caucus who led important legislative efforts to end the war:

I recall clearly the efforts of Congresswoman Woolsey, who offered the very first sense of Congress resolution calling for an end to the war and to bring our troops home. From what I remember, she received approximately 132, 133 votes for that resolution, but that was another defining moment;

There was a resolution that I offered very early on to repeal the doctrine of preemption—that’s preemptive war. In other words, let’s start a war to prevent a future war, which the President claimed in waging the war in Iraq;

There was the McGovern amendment, led by Congressman MCGOVERN, who led on the effort to bring a responsible end to the war by calling for a timetable;

Then, of course, my annual Lee amendment: to limit the funding for the safe, timely, and orderly withdrawal of our troops. What this Lee amendment was trying to accomplish was to stop the funding and to end combat operations but to protect our troops and contractors and bring them home.

One of my amendments, the Lee amendment, eventually was signed into law, which was to prohibit permanent bases in Iraq. Now that is and was and continues to be the law of the land. There were so many other efforts led by members of the Out of Iraq Caucus—from amendments, to resolutions, to letters, and to floor actions.

I want to yield now to my colleague from California and just, once again, thank her for her tremendous leadership in case she has to leave early before this hour ends.

Ms. WATERS. I would like to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for Congresswoman BARBARA LEE.

I want to thank her for having the vision to organize today’s activities and to say to me and to our other friend Lynn Woolsey: let us not let this moment pass without reminding this country that it was 10 years ago that we were involved in the invasion of Iraq. Let us talk about the consequences of that, and let us do everything that we can to continue to be a voice for peace.

I want to thank you, BARBARA LEE, not only for today, but I am reminded of the courageous action that you took when you warned us, when there was legislation authorizing the use of military force, that we should have all been against it. However, you were the lone vote in the House of Representatives who voted against that authorization. So I thank you for your work, for your guidance, and for your leadership.

You are absolutely correct. In June of 2005, I became the chair and a founding member of the Out of Iraq Congressional Caucus, along with you, Representative BARBARA LEE, and, of course, our friend Representative Lynn Woolsey. As a matter of fact, we became known as “The Triad.” I want you to know that a combination of actions that we took helped to galvanize

this Congress and to increase attention on this very issue. I will never forget the over 441 speeches that were made on the floor by our friend Congresswoman Woolsey. She is not here today because she has retired, but we will always remember the care and concern that she gave to this issue.

On March 19, 2003, the brave men and women of our Armed Forces were ordered into service in Iraq. In the following years, nearly 4,500 of those servicemembers did not return home to the United States, and tens of thousands would come back wounded, injured—their lives changed forever.

I voted against the war authorization in the first place, and in hindsight, I know there are many Members who also wish they had voted against it. It was in that spirit that the Out of Iraq Caucus was established: to bring to the House of Representatives an ongoing debate about the war in Iraq and to urge the return of U.S. servicemembers to their families as soon as possible. The Out of Iraq Caucus provided a real voice in Congress for the individuals and groups who supported these efforts.

We had a membership of nearly 80 Representatives from diverse constituencies. As a caucus, we kept in close communication with congressional leadership and with committee chairmen to drive Congress toward our objective of ending the war in Iraq. We also worked with other congressional caucuses and national organizations to hold hearings, press conferences, and town hall meetings to educate the American people and to pressure the Bush administration to conclude the war in Iraq.

□ 1530

At the time, our most important legislative goal was to end the Iraq war and bring our troops home to their families. Our work helped define the national debate on how this could be accomplished.

We again organized community rallies against a war, we marched in parades, we held press conferences, we worked with the mothers of many of our young men and women who were in the war, who were serving in the war, and we worked with many of the veterans organizations.

I, too, offered a series of legislation to buttress our opposition that our troops must be safely and speedily redeployed from Iraq and that we must work to restore peace in Iraq.

I introduced bills such as H.R. 3134, Responsible Security in Iraq Act; H.R. 5488, Iraqi Displacement Coordinator; H.R. 7215, Human Costs in Iraq Act; H. Res. 1326, Honor Iraq’s Sovereignty; and, of course, H. Res. 1519, Press Freedom in Iraq.

On the 1-year anniversary of the founding of the Out of Iraq Caucus, I launched a campaign to inform the public about H.J. Res. 73. Ms. LEE, you will remember John Murtha, the former Member of this House who is now deceased who introduced H.J. Res.

73, now known as The Murtha Plan, which established a reasonable timetable for the redeployment of our troops from Iraq. We all worked with him on that legislation, and we honor him even today for his wisdom and his foresight.

I want to do just one thing before I have to leave, and that is read a letter to President Bush that we all sent funding only for redeployment of troops, if you recall. By the following year in 2007, we as a caucus delivered a letter to President Bush signed by 92 Members of Congress, which stated our intent to only support war funding for the safe and orderly redeployment of our U.S. troops from Iraq.

In the letter, we cited the tremendous human and financial costs of the President's failed Iraq policy. And because of you, BARBARA LEE, I'd like to share this letter because you are in the leadership of this. It said:

Dear Mr. President: We are writing to inform you that we will only support appropriating additional funds for U.S. military operations in Iraq during fiscal year 2008 and beyond for the protection and safe redeployment of all our troops out of Iraq before you leave office.

More than 3,600 of our brave soldiers have died in Iraq. More than 26,000 have been seriously wounded. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis have been killed or injured in the hostilities and more than 4 million have been displaced from their homes. Furthermore, this conflict has degenerated into a sectarian civil war; and U.S. taxpayers have paid more than \$500 billion, despite assurances that you, your key advisers gave our Nation at the time you ordered the invasion in March 2003 that this military intervention would cost far less and would be paid from Iraq oil revenues.

Remember that?

We agree with a clear and growing majority of the American people who are opposed to continued, open-ended U.S. military operations in Iraq, and we believe it is unwise and unacceptable for you to continue to unilaterally impose the staggering costs and the soaring debt on Americans currently and for generations to come.

Sincerely,

And it was signed by all 93 Members at that time.

Our efforts gained momentum; and by late 2008, President Bush signed the Status of Forces agreement, which mandated that the U.S. shall completely withdraw from Iraq no later than December 31, 2011, and all U.S. combat forces shall withdraw from Iraq cities before June 3, 2009.

As a caucus, we continue to hold hearings and briefings, as well as speaking on this very floor until President Obama, who initially opposed the war, approved an 18-month redeployment plan that would begin in September of 2009 and end in December of 2011.

Ms. LEE, I'm sorry that I'm going to have to leave the floor because I have a meeting scheduled with the members of our caucus of the Financial Services Committee. But I'd like to say before I leave, again, thank you for your leadership; thank you for your wisdom;

thank you for having always been identified as a woman of peace, a woman who understood and believed and worked for peace and who has always believed that whatever our differences are in the world, that we must find ways to have the kind of diplomacy that can resolve these differences.

Some people think that this is not possible, but I know that those of us who believe this will continue to fight and to work for peace on Earth and goodwill toward all men and women.

Ms. LEE of California. Congresswoman WATERS, thank you so much for that very eloquent and profound statement and for your kind remarks. Let me just say to you also that you have been a woman who has always believed that peace is possible and peace is patriotic. So I just want to thank you for your leadership, for being here with us, and just say how proud we are that you are our Financial Services ranking member also. Thank you.

Let me take a moment now to yield to the gentleman from California, Congressman MARK TAKANO, who has been way out there in terms of opposing this war from day one.

Thank you again for being here.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

Mr. TAKANO. I want to thank the gentlelady from California for yielding me some time.

I'm going to switch subjects a little as I want to rise today to express my support for the immigration proposal released last week by the bipartisan group of Senators called the Gang of Eight.

While this bill is not perfect and I have serious doubts about several provisions in it, it shows that both sides of the aisle can work together on issues facing our Nation, that Democrats and Republicans can work together.

I am pleased that the proposal provides a pathway to citizenship, a fast track for DREAMers, an increase in the number of high-skilled worker visas and an opportunity for immigrants, who have been deported on non-criminal grounds, to apply for readmittance if they have a spouse or children in the United States.

I do, however, have some concerns regarding the legislation, including the fact that it fails to address binational eligible LGBT families.

More than a dozen countries allow same-sex partner-sponsoring, including Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Israel, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and many more.

The United States should be no different.

Keeping these loving families apart is wrong, and it's bad for the economy.

Take the story of southern California residents Brian and Michael. They met in 2005, became engaged next year in Paris and were married during the brief window during which same-sex marriage was legal in California.

Brian, who's been an educator for over 20 years, teaches humanity

courses at a magnet school during the day and at Los Angeles Community College at night.

His husband, Michael, came to the United States from Malaysia on a student visa in 2005, and since then has been the perfect example of the kind of immigrant we want to keep here. He has earned a master's degree in nursing and is currently working on a doctorate in the same field.

Michael and Brian have shared their lives for almost 10 years and cannot even travel internationally to see Michael's family because of the visa restrictions placed on them.

What's going to happen to Michael when he completes his education? Are we really going to break up this family? Are we really going to send a well-trained medical professional back?

The debate on reforming our immigration system is not over. I plan on working with Members of Congress from both sides of the aisle, from both Houses, to ensure that binational LGBT families are given the same opportunities as everyone else.

□ 1540

Ms. LEE of California. Let me go back now to the 10th anniversary of this unfortunate war, Mr. Speaker.

I'm going to introduce now into the RECORD tonight a timeline of some of what we have talked about tonight because they should be remembered and because these efforts and the efforts of the movement that ended this war finally did make a difference, although obviously not as quickly as we wanted; but we did make a difference together.

After years of speaking out and as the toll of the Iraq war stretched the patience of the American people, public opinion started turning. People began asking what were we doing in Iraq. Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, as the Bush administration told us. Iraq had not been involved in the 9/11 attacks, as suggested by the Bush administration.

Then-Secretary of State Colin Powell made a presentation at the United Nations that was greatly misleading, stating that Iraq possessed extremely dangerous weapons of mass destruction. Some of you may remember the smoking cloud that he talked about. It was just really very, very tragic. He described biological weapons factories on wheels, and estimated that Iraq had between 100 and 150 tons—no, I believe it may have been 500 tons—of chemical weapons stockpiled. All of those claims about weapons of mass destruction turned out to be false.

Secretary of State Powell's own chief of staff, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, later said about his own participation in the deception at the United Nations, he said:

I participated in a hoax on the American people, the international community, and the United Nations Security Council.

Iraq did not present a clear and present danger to the United States. Secretary Powell and his staff, they

knew this. President Bush, he knew this. Vice President Cheney, he knew this. But they wanted their war and they deceived the United Nations and scared the American public to justify their war of choice.

I distinctly remember the day in May 2003, 10 years ago next week, when President Bush stood on the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln and proclaimed "Mission Accomplished." Of course, the mission was far from accomplished. The war was to drag on for another 8 years.

President Obama committed to ending the war during his campaign; and he, of course, did as President. While the war in Iraq is over, its legacy continues and the lessons still have yet to be learned. We need to look closely at the decisions made, understand the mistakes and misjudgments, and ensure that we never again repeat such a tragedy.

In Ghana, in the Akan language of Ghana, there is a mythical bird that's a symbol. It's called Sankofa. It's a bird flying forward looking back, and the message is that in order to not make the same mistakes as we move forward, we have to look back and we have to know our history. We have to know where we have come from, what we have done in order to move forward, and we should learn from those mistakes. Sankofa.

The Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction issued its final report to Congress just last month, detailing billions and billions of dollars lost to waste, fraud, and abuse. The occupation of Iraq was characterized by poor planning by the Bush administration, who ignored State Department and USAID analysis envisioning protracted U.S. involvement in Iraq requiring substantial spending for many years.

The Pentagon was left in charge of managing postwar Iraq, and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld famously underestimated the resources needed to stabilize the country. When Lieutenant General Jay Gardner told Secretary Rumsfeld that the United States might need to spend billions of dollars to rebuild Iraq, Rumsfeld responded:

If you think we're going to spend a billion dollars of our money over there, you are sadly mistaken.

Well, of course, it was Mr. Rumsfeld who was sadly mistaken, and the American public who was sadly misled, and the Iraqi people who sadly suffered from the chaos and destruction unleashed by ideologues who used Iraq as a laboratory for a light-footprint war.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, those lost opportunities and tragic mistakes are not behind us.

I would like to take a moment now and yield to my friend and colleague, a woman who has consistently been against the war and has stood for peace all of her life, Congresswoman SHEILA JACKSON LEE.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. I thank the gentlelady from California, and I particu-

larly thank you for your astuteness on bringing us together. If I might reflect on memory lane that was very painful, we traveled a lot together, and I think of the moments in history on the Iraq war. The rising up of the American people was powerful, from San Francisco to places in between, to the quarter of a million people that walked down 53rd and 57th Street in New York on a cold morning in January.

People all over America recognized that it was not these brave men and women that you see here. And I brought pictures of wonderful families and men and women who were called to serve who we continue to honor and appreciate. I thought it was important to acknowledge that our soldiers have families. We see it all the time. My district is near Ellington Field, and it is increasingly becoming a base utilizing the talents of young Americans who are willing to volunteer. So I take this 10th anniversary, as well, to pay tribute to them and those who still serve in foreign fields around the world. We know that they still serve in Iraq and Afghanistan.

So we come here today on the 10th anniversary simply to ask the question: Why? And when we ask the question why, it is not a selfish question on behalf of Members of Congress. It is a question on behalf of those brave men and women who, no matter who calls them as Commander in Chief and for what cause, they accept the cause. For that reason, it is imperative that we understand the battle into which we send them.

In the Iraq war, it was alleged there were weapons of mass destruction. We have come to a fairly complete conclusion that there were no such weapons. We all knew Saddam Hussein, and none of us adhered to his despotic and horrible governance. But I will tell you, my colleagues thought the same thing, that our approach should have been different. The bloodshed not only of the young men and women that you see here, some of their comrades were lost, but the millions, the numbers of Iraqi people who themselves, their lives were lost and of course still continue to be in danger.

The Iraq war saw more than 4,400 brave men and women who wore the United States uniform make the ultimate sacrifice, and tens upon tens of thousands who in actuality were wounded. Over 32,000 of the men and women who came home suffered wounds. But as we know, those numbers have risen. Some 3,000 of the wounded call Texas their home, 500 lost their lives. We know the scars that were left on families—mother, fathers, children, and wives. We realized that we needed to make a better judgment.

As the tragedy unfolded in Boston, one of the emergency physicians, one of the medical professionals, said they knew exactly what it was because they had been to Iraq, and they understood the sound of the IEDs. How many of our brave men and women encountered

these makeshift IEDs that tore through their body and either killed them or completely amputated or caused the amputation of their arms or legs and the disfigurement of their face. We see them now. We call them wounded warriors. We call them heroes, and certainly those who followed in Afghanistan.

But this 10th year reminds us to ask: Have we made the progress that we should have? The gentlelady spoke of the moneys, \$800 billion that has directly contributed to the Nation's deficit, and the amount of money that was supposed to be used for restoration; and because there was no infrastructure in Iraq, we made our Army personnel be the little government.

□ 1550

We made soldiers be the ones that had to interact with the village leaders and the chiefs, and carry monies to them. No, nothing accounted for; just good intentions, following orders. But we cannot account for those dollars. We don't know if they made a difference. We don't know if they helped bring Iraqis home. We don't know if they helped build schools or hospitals.

So I think it is important to note that when we make decisions regarding war, we need to think about soldiers holding their families and loving their families. We need to think about the better way to go, and we need to ask those whose war we fight—Saddam Hussein is gone—the people whose war we fight, the conflict between the Shiites and Sunnis.

We need to understand our history as to whether or not a war that would see the loss of all these brilliant young people, divide families, whether or not we can bring some measure of peace, some comfort, some stability.

And I'd venture to say today that we have not. And I say this to the head of Iraq, the leader, Mr. Maliki, for his participation in the ongoing conflict in Iraq, because that is the case.

There is no coming together of the Shiites and Sunnis. There is a cluster of a government that hides in the walls, that does not go out and try to bring peace to the people. And I give you one example, Mr. Speaker, that troubles me over and over again—it is the Iranians who left Iran.

We know the conflicted issues and alliances were all, if you will, misunderstood; old alliances, friends and enemies. We understand that. But this is supposed to be a peaceful nation now, and there are Iranians who fled the despotic Iran, and have become, in essence, enemies of Iran.

They started out in Camp Ashraf. They were called rebels and terrorists. They have now been vindicated, and they're not called that anymore.

But let me tell you what the present government of Iraq allows. They allow, in the camp that was Camp Ashraf that is now Camp Liberty, bombs to go in from the Iraqi soldiers. They allow no medical care to come into that particular camp.

Just yesterday, the Friends of Iran, American Iranians were here, and they had 10 people or more, their faces, who had died in that camp because the government of Iraq, the government that we shed blood for, that we asked to be a peaceful nation, is, in essence, attacking people on their soil who are unarmed, who are not interested in war, who fled because they'd been persecuted.

And they don't allow them to get access to cars, access to hospitals, and so people die from sicknesses because they could not get care.

When we go into battle and send our troops into battle, shouldn't we ask the question of what is the ultimate result?

We understand that democracy in its structure that is here in the United States cannot only be the structure that fits every community, every nation, every faith. But what I would say to you is that we bring one of those C-130s, big C-130s that many of us have rode on to go into Iraq. And I spent many hours there, nothing in comparison, of course, to those who served, but I'm grateful I had the opportunity to go and serve and see those individuals who served, and to sit down with those from Texas and to break bread with them.

When we land one of those C-130s, why don't we know, and shouldn't we know our purpose, our goal, what is our ultimate direction that we would like to see?

Not the dominance of the United States over this nation that we help but to be able to know that they, too, stand for democracy and peace.

I want to thank the gentlelady from California for allowing me to share this time with her, and to say, it's important to remind us of the 10th anniversary, one, to say thank you, for when we land these C-130s and these men and women come out ready for battle, they are wearing our uniform and our flag but, at the same time, we must ask the question, for what? For what results? For what long-range results? For what peace? For we owe that to them.

I ask that we consider those in Camp Liberty and we find relief for them. I thank the gentlelady very much.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in solidarity with my fellow members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus to speak in recognition of the 10th Anniversary of the Iraq war. I want to thank my colleagues, Representatives LEE and WATERS for anchoring this Special Order.

On March 19, 2003 President Bush launched invasion of Iraq ten years ago under a cloud of questions about the motivations for the invasion. Today we see the toll of this war on our young military men and women, their families and communities across our nation.

First and foremost, I would like to thank our troops who served in the Iraq war, but more broadly I would like to thank all members of the armed forces for their courage and heroism under circumstances that few of us could imagine. As members of Congress we have, regardless of our view of the wisdom of entering into armed conflict with Iraq, have always

stood in strong and unwavering solidarity with our troops.

Part of our role as representatives in Congress is to give voice to the plight of our constituents that include men and women in the armed forces—many of them served tour after tour after tour without break; and in the beginning of the war had insufficient equipment to protect them from IEDs which cost the nation countless lives and left many with traumatic life changing injuries.

We cannot forget their sacrifice and heroism in the face of what was asked of them. In April of last year the great city of Houston, which I am proud to represent, hosted a Bayou City-style parade honoring the homecoming of the American troops. This gesture of thanks defines the support that Houston has for our troops in any situation.

During the course of the Iraq War more than 4,400 brave men and women in uniform made the ultimate sacrifice and over 32,000 were wounded. Of these brave men and women more than 500 of the fallen and 3,000 of the wounded call Texas their home.

In 2003 I fought with many of my colleagues in the Congressional Progressive Caucus to ensure that the order to proceed with the Iraq War did not pass the House, but our efforts were not successful.

Although we have withdrawn from Iraq it is imperative to understand that the withdrawal is not synonymous with the end of the war on terror. It has been my stance since the beginning of the war that there are different steps that must be taken to combat terror—which include diplomatic and humanitarian efforts.

The war also had an economic cost to our nation, which we are still paying and will continue to pay until our colleagues on the other side of the aisle resolve to battle the economic threat at home with the vigor of the fight against a less than creditable threat many thought they saw in Iraq 10 years ago.

The monetary cost of the war exceeded \$800 billion, which directly contributed to the nation's deficit that is now trying to be mended by the Sequester. More worrisome, the long terms costs from the results of the war are expected to exceed \$3 trillion.

Since our withdrawal, insurgencies have erupted across the country of Iraq. Iraq has been seen to gravitate towards Iran, a nation that has openly been hostile towards U.S. mission, and one that has proven to be a source of destabilization in the area.

The remedies to these issues once again come from intelligence and diplomatic channels that do not include invasions like the one the United States so hastily entered into with Iraq.

The tactical withdrawal from Iraq can be seen with some high regard as a template for how to end the war in Afghanistan, and exit the region safely and decisively. As a nation we must turn away from this past decade of occupying countries in the name of fighting terror. These endless occupations delay the creation of opportunity within our own nation, which must be one of the priorities as we attempt to overcome the economic hardships facing the nation.

In closing, I would once again like to extend my deepest gratitude to our troops fighting across the nation on the 10th Anniversary of the Iraq War, and would like to thank my Congressional Progressive Caucus colleagues again for hosting this event.

In this post-Iraq time we must turn our attention to helping our men and women who have fought bravely overseas to ensure our freedom and the promotion of democracy.

Earlier this week a new Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic was opened in the Houston area, which will shorten the distance between Houston veterans and the care they need. The nearly 30,000 square foot establishment provides primary health care, mental healthcare, women's specialty care, x-rays, optometry, physical therapy, occupational therapy, ENT (ear, nose and throat) and audiology. The new center will have a fully operational laboratory by July, as well as a visiting cardiologist and surgical physician's assistant for minor procedures.

The new clinic is expected to service 7,000 to 8,000 veterans within its first year of operation and create more than 50 paying jobs.

The Houston area clinic is one of many Community-Based clinics that have been established in response to the growing number of Iraq and Afghanistan veterans returning from war. It is vital that we keep these veterans, and current soldiers, in mind as we develop policies to ensure their care and wellbeing.

Ms. LEE of California. Let me thank the gentlelady from Texas for that very profound statement and presentation. And just let me say to you that, as the daughter of a 25-year veteran of the Armed Forces, I am deeply thankful for your bringing forth the faces of our Armed Forces.

And also, talking about the obstacles now that they're facing upon their return, I'm especially concerned with the widespread and often undiagnosed incidents of PTSD and the alarming suicide rates among our soldiers.

The back claims, the Veterans Affairs losing records, denying claims that are clearly service-related. I want to acknowledge Congresswoman JACKIE SPEIER and her work in our area and throughout the country to try to address the backlog of claims of our veterans who don't deserve to be treated this way.

Since the invasion of Iraq 10 years ago, over 2,000 current and former servicemembers have committed suicide. The lessons from this tragedy cannot be any clearer. It's a lot easier to get into war than to get out of one.

It's my hope, Mr. Speaker, that this reckless and shortsighted decision will mark a turning point in American history, and that we will be more careful about war and use all of the tools of American power, as Congresswoman Woolsey so eloquently talked to us about and introduced over and over again, SMART security that should be used in resolving disputes, including diplomacy.

Let me ask you, Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentlewoman has 21 minutes remaining.

Ms. LEE of California. I would like to know if the gentlelady from Texas has anything else to say. Otherwise, we will close.

Let me just use a bit more time and say that there's no military solution in

Afghanistan either, so we must absorb that fact and learn, again, what we learned in Iraq. And we need to bring the war in Afghanistan to an accelerated end.

We need to stop throwing good money after bad, poorly conceived and poorly managed reconstruction efforts, and bring our troops home now.

And we need to repeal the 2001 Authorization For the Use of Military Force, which Congresswoman WATERS mentioned, which I voted against right after the horrific events of 9/11. This overly broad blank check has underwritten the past decade of perpetual war.

I have a resolution, H.R. 198, it's the Repeal of the Authorization For the Use of Military Force. This will remove one of the underlying legal justifications for targeted drone killings that has been invoked over and over again, this time, targeted killings, to justify a wide range of activities, including warrantless surveillance and wiretapping activities, and, yes, a blank check for war anywhere, any time, for any length of time.

I hope those who are listening and who care about this, go back and read that resolution of 9/14. What it said was the President, and I'm paraphrasing now, but it was the President is authorized to use force against any nation, organization, individual, deemed connected to terrorism and the 9/11 attacks.

Now, this was in 2001. 2001. No end game, no timetable, a blank check, perpetual war until this is repealed. So Congress really needs to reassert its constitutional authority in the matters of war. Our Founding Fathers were very deliberate in placing war-making powers in this body. In a democracy, such as ours, we have this system of checks and balances.

On 9/14, we did not have a full debate. From what I remember, it may have been an hour, it may have been 2 hours. But we did not fully debate that blank check and what that meant by authorizing then-President Bush, now President Obama and any future President, to use force in perpetuity.

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We can no longer abdicate our constitutional duties allowing any President to engage in hostilities without debate, without oversight, and without accountability.

And I want to commend Senator DURBIN for conducting hearings this week looking at the constitutionality and the rationale for targeted killings using drones. This was a very important hearing. I was able to sit through some of that hearing, and it was very revealing. Actually, there was a young man from Yemen who received a State Department scholarship. He went to school here, had gone back to Yemen, and his village was devastated by drones.

So you can see what's happening now. There are more and more hos-

tilities, unfortunately, toward the United States, unless we get this policy straight about the lethal use of drones and have congressional oversight and debate and really exercise our constitutional responsibility to really declare war, if that's what we're going to do.

And so as we embark into this new age of modern warfare, we do need rules. We need oversight; we need accountability; and we need to develop an international legal framework on drones.

And we understand asymmetrical warfare and the new world in which we live. None of us have our head in the sand about that. We just need to make sure that Congress has a role in debating exactly how we're going to, if we're going to, and when the appropriate use of force is necessary.

For me, personally, I believe in SMART Security; and I know that that will lead to a world that our children deserve and is worthy of our children's future.

So let's put this decade of perpetual warfare behind us. We should bring our troops home. We should invest in our veterans and our children, create jobs here at home and really begin to invest in our future for the sake of our children and our grandchildren.

I have this chart here to show you just in terms of the fiscal implications of what these policies have brought. When you look at the deficit, with the war and the economic policies of the Bush era, the tax cuts, we're looking at this line right here. Had these unfortunate policies not occurred, our deficit would be down here. This is very clear. This was put forth by the Congressional Budget Office in February. These are their estimates.

It's very clear, I hope, to everyone that the failed economic policies of the Bush administration and the wars in Iraq are the major contributing factors to the economic crisis that we find ourselves in. And so, aside from the human toll that this 10-year war and the war in Afghanistan has taken, we have a real crisis now, an economic crisis in this country that we need to come to grips with. Our senior citizens did not cause this crisis. Our children did not cause this crisis. The poor, our middle class individuals, and families did not cause this crisis. And we cannot forget what has taken place over the last 10 years of this unbelievably terribly sad time in our history, where we lost so many lives and we lost so much time in terms of rebuilding our country for the future of our children.

I yield back the balance of my time.

KEY IRAQ VOTES FROM THE 109TH CONGRESS

H. CON. RES. 35 [109th]

Latest Title: Expressing the sense of Congress that the President should develop and implement a plan to begin the immediate withdrawal of United States Armed Forces from Iraq.

Sponsor: Rep Woolsey, Lynn C. [D-CA-6] (introduced 1/26/2005) Cosponsors: 34

Committees: House International Relations

Latest Major Action: 1/26/2005 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the

House Committee on International Relations.

H. RES. 82 [109th]

Latest Title: Disavowing the doctrine of preemption.

Sponsor: Rep Lee, Barbara [D-CA-9] (introduced 2/9/2005) Cosponsors: 15

Committees: House International Relations

Latest Major Action: 2/9/2005 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on International Relations.

H. AMDT. 214 [109th]

(A009)

Amends: H.R. 1815

Sponsor: Rep Woolsey, Lynn C. [D-CA-6] (offered 5/25/2005)

AMENDMENT PURPOSE:

An amendment numbered 26 printed in House Report 109-96 to express the sense of Congress that the President should develop a plan for the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from Iraq, and submit this plan to the congressional defense committees.

STATUS:

5/25/2005 6:20 pm: Amendment (A009) offered by Ms. Woolsey. (consideration: CR H4035-4040, H4043; text: CR H4035)

5/25/2005 7:53 pm: On agreeing to the Woolsey amendment (A009) Failed by recorded vote: 128-300 (Roll no. 220).

H. CON. RES. 197 [109th]

Latest Title: Declaring that it is the policy of the United States not to enter into any base agreement with the Government of Iraq that would lead to a permanent United States military presence in Iraq.

Sponsor: Rep Lee, Barbara [D-CA-9] (introduced 6/30/2005) Cosponsors: 86 Committees: House International Relations

Latest Major Action: 6/30/2005 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on International Relations.

H. AMDT. 750 [109th]

(A050)

Amends: H.R. 4939

Sponsor: Rep Lee, Barbara [D-CA-9] (offered 3/16/2006)

AMENDMENT PURPOSE:

An amendment to prohibit the use of funds from being available to enter into a basing rights agreement between the United States and Iraq.

STATUS:

3/16/2006 4:39 pm: Amendment (A050) offered by Ms. Lee. (consideration: CR H1107-1110; text: CR H1107)

3/16/2006 5:04 pm: On agreeing to the Lee amendment (A050) Agreed to by voice vote.

H.R. 5875 [109th]

Latest Title: Iraq War Powers Repeal Act of 2006

Sponsor: Rep Woolsey, Lynn C. [D-CA-6] (introduced 7/25/2006) Cosponsors: 26 Committees: House International Relations

Latest Major Action: 7/25/2006 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on International Relations.

SECOND AMENDMENT RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mrs. HARTZLER. When I was 10 years old, I got my first job. It would require skill and perseverance and patience, and it would have a real potential economic impact on our family hog farm. My dad hired me. He paid me 15 cents a unit.