of al Qaeda in Iraq, as reported by the National Intelligence Estimate.

Mr. Speaker, the GAO testified before the House Armed Services Committee, upon which I sit, last week that only three of the 18 benchmarks established by the Congress have been met. Four have been partially met, and 11 have not been met at all. Specifically, only two of the nine security-related benchmarks were met, two were partially met, and five not met at all.

Furthermore, in a hearing before the House Armed Services Committee on Thursday, September 6, the Jones Commission made clear that political reconciliation is a key component of resolving the issue of sectarian violence. Accordingly, political reconciliation requires the diplomatic and international support of the global community. Presently, the President and this administration's efforts to gain this pivotal support are less than adequate. The Bush administration, as it has done in the past, continues to try to buy the patience of this Congress and the American people by pulling for excuses.

Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago I expressed my disapproval of the war by voting against the United States military operations in Iraq.

Today, I still remain unwavering in my support of our troops and the urgent need to make a responsible and timely redeployment of our men and women in uniform as a means to end the continued bloodshed.

I urge my colleagues to support our troops, support saving taxpayer dollars, and support the victims of September 11 by ushering in measures that will ensure diplomatic multilateral and bilateral support for political reconciliation in Iraq. A more focused and more determined strategy that will refocus and better utilize our efforts to fight the global war on terror is necessary to ensure that the victims of September 11 have not died without adequate retribution.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her 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 gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

DEMOCRACY, FREEDOM, AND JUSTICE WILL REIGN IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to come to the floor today as we commemorated one day early the 6 years since 9/11.

Most of us just came from the steps of the east side of the United States Capitol bringing back memories of how we went together, united, on that day, September 11, 2001, to show the world and to reinforce America's values that we would not be deterred, democracy would reign, freedom would reign, and justice would reign in this Nation.

But I come this evening to again express my deepest sympathy for those families that still mourn and those who still bear the emotional scars and, of course, those who remain injured from that fateful day. I remember being here in the United States Capitol in a meeting. Of course, our minds would never have imagined and could not conceive of what we were about to expect as we heard people running through the Capitol knocking on doors, not being able to explain just what was happening.

Of course, those who wished to continue the day's business did not understand that our lives would never be the same. We finally recognized that there was something out of the ordinary happening. As we, in essence, escaped from this building without much information or understanding, watching over our shoulder the billowing black smoke of the Pentagon, rumors abounded. There were thoughts, suggestions, rumors or facts that planes were heading for a number of places, including the United States Capitol in Washington, DC.

On that day, we saw the loss of lives of those in the Twin Towers and the airplanes in the skies. We are reminded of those souls who steered that plane away from the United States Capitol that landed in the fields of Pennsylvania. We hold all of these souls dear to our heart. Over the weekend, I was able to catch, as I was passing by our television, a documentary on engine 54 in New York. It is my understanding that all 15 of those that were on duty on that day lost their lives.

Today I stand to salute all of the first responders and to highlight the firefighters who went into those buildings and never came out, and all other rescuers who likewise went into the buildings and never came out.

As a member of the Homeland Security Committee, we vowed, after the creation of this committee, to never have this happen again. Unfortunately, there is much work to be done. We challenge, and we are challenged, to be dutiful and diligent in making sure that cargo on airplanes does not get unscreened by TSA, that we are assured that airports in the front and the back are secure, and that we are looking keenly at America's transportation system of buses, trains, and highways. We owe that to the American people.

Then, Mr. Speaker, as we listened to General Petraeus and to Ambassador Crocker today, we owe them a real war on terror and that is to be able to join with the world's allies, our allies, and fight the war on terror, fight it and win it in Afghanistan, find Osama bin Laden and bring a political reconciliation to Iraq so that we can bring our soldiers home. Fueling the fires of Al Qaeda and allowing them to come to Iraq in 2005 does not pay tribute to those who died on 9/11.

As I hold in my hand the American flag, I stand here today to recommit myself and to ask my colleagues as they come to this floor to recommit themselves to those lives that were lost, those families that mourn, that we will be a Nation united under truth, fighting the war on terror, making that our number one priority, and that we will pay tribute to the United States military, those who have served in Iraq, Afghanistan and places around the world, and make a final and important decision that the political reconciliation for Iraq must be in the hands of a sovereign people and a sovereign nation of Iraq.

It is time now to bring our soldiers home. The war on terror continues. We will never be daunted by that. We stand against the terrorists. But we must do it rightfully and truthfully. We must join together, win the war on terror, bring our soldiers home so that war can be broadened and we can be victorious on behalf of the people of the United States and those who lost their lives in that war.

REPORT ON IRAQ BY GENERAL PETRAEUS

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

Mr. GINGREY. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as the gentlewoman from Texas who just preceded me stated, we just completed a memorial dedication remembrance ceremony on the steps of the Capitol as Members on both sides of the aisle came together led by our distinguished Speaker, our distinguished majority leader, and our distinguished minority leader. We came together in a very bipartisan way to once again pay tribute to the lives that were lost, indeed, and to their families, and to our first responders and the lives that were lost on their part and, of course, the City of New York on that great tragic day, that