

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

CONGRATULATING THE INTERIM GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ ON ITS FORTHCOMING ASSUMPTION OF SOVEREIGN AUTHORITY IN IRAQ

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the previous order of the House, and as the designee of the majority leader, I call up the resolution (H. Res. 691) congratulating the Interim Government of Iraq on its forthcoming assumption of sovereign authority in Iraq, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of H. Res. 691 is as follows:

## H. RES. 691

Whereas in April 2003, the United States Armed Forces and other Coalition forces liberated the people of Iraq from the dictatorial regime of Saddam Hussein;

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483 (May 22, 2003) and the laws and usages of war authorized the Coalition Provisional Authority to govern Iraq on a temporary basis;

Whereas the Coalition Provisional Authority established an Iraqi Governing Council, broadly representative of the major geographic, ethnic, and religious groupings of Iraq, as well as a Cabinet, to assist in the governing of Iraq, and the Council was recognized by many members of the international community as a legitimate voice of the Iraqi people;

Whereas the United States and other Coalition members, in response to the desire of the Iraqi people for early self-government, worked with the Iraqi Governing Council to accelerate the transfer of power to the Iraqi people, with sovereignty to be transferred no later than the end of June 2004;

Whereas the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Iraqi Governing Council on March 8, 2004, agreed upon a Law of Administration for the State of Iraq for the Transitional Period that strongly protects the civil and political rights of Iraqis;

Whereas that Law and its Annex provide for a transition of power to an Iraqi Interim Government, for elections by the end of January 2005, for a Transitional National Assembly, which shall form an Iraqi Transitional Government and provide for the drafting and adoption of a permanent constitution, and, by the end of 2005, for a government chosen under the new constitution;

Whereas the Iraqi people have begun electing local officials in parts of Iraq under Coalition auspices and will have the opportunity to express their will in free and meaningful national elections for the first time in Iraq's history;

Whereas the United Nations Secretary General appointed a Special Adviser to conduct political consultations aimed at putting in place an Interim Government to assume sovereignty over Iraq;

Whereas the Iraqi Governing Council made recommendations about the composition of the Interim Government, after which, when the recommendations were accepted by the Coalition Provisional Authority, the Council dissolved itself;

Whereas on June 8, 2004, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1546, welcoming the formation and forthcoming "assumption of full respon-

sibility and authority by a fully sovereign and independent Interim Government of Iraq" and authorizing the multinational force under unified command to continue its activities;

Whereas the Coalition Provisional Authority will dissolve at the end of June 2004 and will not be replaced;

Whereas members of the United States Armed Forces, a total force consisting of active, reserve, and National Guard personnel, have performed their mission with great skill and courage, in the process being awarded at least 18 Distinguished Service Crosses, 6 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 133 Silver Stars, 16,551 Bronze Stars, and 4,161 Purple Hearts;

Whereas, as of June 23, 2004, 833 members of the United States Armed Forces, approximately 100 members of the Coalition forces, and many members of the Iraqi security services, have given their lives to advance the cause of liberty in Iraq, and thousands of members of the United States Armed Forces and Coalition forces, and many members of the Iraqi security services, have suffered wounds for that cause;

Whereas the families of American soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines, and Coast Guardsmen have made and continue to make enormous sacrifices for their country;

Whereas in addition, Coalition forces, civilians employed by or assisting the Coalition Provisional Authority, the Iraqi government and its employees, international organizations, and American and other international volunteers, as well as large numbers of Iraqis, have made and continue to make enormous efforts to reconstruct the country and improve the lives of the Iraqi people;

Whereas Ambassador L. Paul Bremer, III, Presidential Envoy to Iraq and Administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority, has ably advanced the international coalition's goals in Iraq of transforming Iraq into a safe, secure, stable, sovereign, democratic state that serves the interests of the Iraqi people;

Whereas the United States will be represented in Iraq by an Embassy led by Ambassador John D. Negroponte, and the United States will deal with the Government of Iraq on the basis of the sovereign equality of states under international law, including the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, to which both the United States and Iraq are parties;

Whereas after June 30, 2004, the Interim Government of Iraq and its successors, and United States Armed Forces and Coalition forces, will cooperate to meet ongoing security challenges and to extend security and stability to all regions of Iraq; and

Whereas the United States has never desired to exercise permanent sovereignty over Iraq and welcomes the formation of the Iraqi Interim Government and its imminent assumption of authority: Now, therefore, be it—

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates the Interim Government of Iraq on its forthcoming assumption of sovereign authority in Iraq;

(2) offers its continued support to the people and government of Iraq as they deal with the consequences of decades of misrule by the former regime of Saddam Hussein;

(3) expresses its gratitude to the United States Armed Forces for their ongoing valiant service to their country and commitment to the highest ideals and traditions of the American people;

(4) expresses its gratitude to the families of United States Armed Forces personnel, especially the families of those who have lost loved ones in Operation Iraqi Freedom and of

those wounded in the service of their country, for their sacrifices;

(5) expresses its condolences to the families of the innocent Iraqis who have been killed or wounded during the conflict, including those who were victimized by the illegal and terrorist tactics of the enemy, and despite the concerted efforts by the Coalition forces to minimize civilian casualties;

(6) expresses its gratitude to the Coalition forces, the Coalition Provisional Authority, the Iraqi Governing Council, the current Iraqi cabinet and government officials, and the many international bodies and voluntary organizations which have come to the aid of the people of Iraq in an effort to help them address the consequences of decades of misrule by the former regime of Saddam Hussein, as well as to the families of those mentioned in this paragraph, who have been lost in Iraq;

(7) offers its continued support to the United States Armed Forces, civilians associated with the United States Government, Coalition forces, and Iraqi security forces who continue to bear the burden of attacks from former regime elements, foreign and Iraqi terrorists, and other criminals who are attempting to undermine the interests of the Iraqi people and thwart their evident desire to live in peace;

(8) calls on the entire international community to promote the welfare of the Iraqi people by rendering, in addition to the generous assistance provided by the American people and, in varying degrees, by some nations, immediate, tangible, and generous assistance to the Iraqi people in the reconstruction of their nation, including, in response to requests from the Iraqi government coordinated with the command of the multinational forces, forces capable of assisting in the provision of security to the Iraqi people;

(9) reaffirms—

(A) that the United States Armed Forces operating in Iraq after June 30, 2004, will remain under the full authority, direction, and control of their American commanders; and

(B) the need to ensure that such Armed Forces will possess all necessary authority to fulfill their mission effectively and to provide for their operational safety; and

(10) urges the people of the United States and of other countries to celebrate the restoration of freedom to the people of Iraq through the efforts of the peoples of the United States, the Coalition, and Iraq.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, June 24, 2004, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE).

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my esteemed chairman for yielding me time.

□ 1445

I rise in strong support of this resolution.

On June 30, as all of us know, Iraq will assume control of its own destiny. Iraq will enter the post-Saddam era with the hope of the world resting upon them. No longer will the Iraqi people be subjected to a climate of fear and desperation. Saddam's murderous,

thieving cronies have been removed. Uday and Qusay's henchmen likewise will no longer be free to roam the streets, terrorizing people.

The challenge now for the Iraqi people and their new government is to set their future on a course of open thought, popular choice for their leaders, and freedom of action in which to conduct their lives.

The Iraqi people understand that with this new-found freedom comes responsibility, a responsibility to remember the interests of all Iraqis. Each and every Iraqi has a stake in that Nation's future, and now, with our transfer of sovereignty to them, that stake can be fully realized.

We are honored to have played a role in empowering the Iraqi people and supporting them in their efforts to rebuild their country after decades of corruption and oppression. They have the opportunity to make their Nation a shining light for all to see, not only in the Middle East, but around the world. A nation filled with talent beyond imagination, Iraq can create a climate of freedom and opportunities for others to emulate.

Yes, problems have arisen. Yet, we must acknowledge the positive developments that could not have happened without the brave men and women of the United States military and our allies. Through their courage, commitment, and sacrifice, we have managed to free an enslaved people. We have brought down a tyrant who has killed as many as 1 million of his own people. Thus, history will record that the United States brought a beacon of light and hope to a people that had only known misery, suffering, and brutality under Saddam Hussein.

The future will judge us to have done right by the Iraqi people, and for our own Nation as well.

We are, however, not naive about the challenges that lie ahead. Freedom and democracy take time and hard work. They take vigilance and dedication, dedication to truth and commitment to justice. These are things that come with patience.

The terrorists want to deprive the Iraqi people of their future, but Iraq can and will prevail. Iraq's chance is now. Let us stand by the Iraqi people as they struggle to enjoy these rights and liberties that they were denied for so very long. Let us be motivated by the knowledge that we have helped make the world a better place for the Iraqi people and for all.

As our beloved former President Ronald Wilson Reagan would say, "You and I have a rendezvous with destiny. If we fail, at least let our children and our children's children say of us, we justified our brief moment here. We did all that could be done," and that we have done for the Iraqi people.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of H. Res. 691.

On June 30, a momentous date in the history of Iraq, after 45 years of dicta-

torship and one year of occupation, a sovereign government representative of the Iraqi people is about to assume power in Baghdad. We take justifiable pride in the U.S. role in achieving that milestone, and we pay tribute to our soldiers who have achieved this incredible feat.

But there is no fooling ourselves, Mr. Speaker. The Iraq that Prime Minister Iyad al-Alawi and his colleagues will inherit is far from stable and it is far from prosperous, nor is it ready to assume full responsibility for its Nation's security. For the United States, the challenges of ensuring security, promoting reconstruction, and fostering liberal and decent governance will continue essentially unchanged for now. Whether we and the Iraqis look back at June 30, 2004 as an historic turning point for the good will be determined by our joint ability to meet those ongoing and gigantic challenges.

Mr. Speaker, developments on our home front encourage the hope that we can meet those challenges, as the positions on Iraq taken by leaders of both of our parties are fundamentally congruent. The administration has shown signs that it is willing to alter the course when necessary in order to get the job done. I am pleased that the President embraced the wisdom of acknowledging a major role for the United Nations. As a result of the United Nations unanimously-adopted resolution, the soon-to-be sovereign Iraqi government will have far greater domestic and international legitimacy than otherwise it would have.

I think it is important to underscore that the likely nominee of the Democratic Party for president, Senator KERRY, shares the basic vision, and I quote: "While we may have differed on how we went to war, Americans of all political persuasions are united in our determination to succeed. The extremists attacking our forces should know that they will not succeed in dividing America, or in sapping American resolve, or in forcing the premature withdrawal of U.S. troops. Our country is committed to help the Iraqis build a stable, peaceful, and pluralistic society."

The most important line in my quotation from Senator KERRY is as follows: "No matter who is elected President in November, we will persevere in that mission."

Mr. Speaker, success in Iraq is a bipartisan, national interest. Not only is the credibility of the United States at stake in the region and around the globe, but an Iraq collapsing into chaos would be a heart of darkness in the Middle East.

Mr. Speaker, Senator KERRY and President Bush are also on the same page in calling on our NATO allies to show solidarity by reinforcing our efforts in Iraq. Even though NATO nations may not have many deployable troops to spare, there is nevertheless much that they can do to. And the opportunity for NATO to make these im-

portant decisions in the highest-profile manner possible will present itself next week at the NATO summit in Istanbul.

As the NATO Secretary General said, we have a Security Council resolution, a fully legitimate interim government in Iraq; NATO has no excuse to slam the door in Iraq's face.

NATO States can and must provide training for the new Iraqi Army, and they should do so in Iraq itself without requiring Iraqi troops to go to a third country as some are suggesting.

One of the most brilliant of our military leaders, General David Petraeus, is leading the U.S. effort to train Iraqi forces, and his presence in that role should give all of us confidence in our ultimate success. But building a fighting force capable of defeating Iraq's fundamentalists and Saddamist thugs is a mammoth undertaking. NATO nations are ideally positioned to support the efforts of General Petraeus.

NATO troops can provide election security to support the all-important Iraqi elections in January. If Iraq is to hold its first free and democratic elections in its history, security is paramount.

Mr. Speaker, let us be clear. The European members of NATO, all of them, should not contribute to Iraq's security as a favor to us, even though the peace and prosperity that reigns in Europe today was won with American blood and American treasure. They should do it as a favor to themselves but, most importantly, to the Iraqi people. Europe's stake in the stability of Iraq and the Middle East is greater than our own. Europe borders the Middle East and is far more dependent on its energy resources than are we here in the United States.

Europe's moral credibility is also at stake in Iraq. For years, the States of the European Union, most of whom belong to NATO, have trumpeted their commitment to democracy. Now it is time for them to prove that this is more than rhetoric. When Iraqi President al-Yawar was in town recently, he told a group of us that the presence of European troops is crucial to Iraq. He emphasized that Iraq needs security forces from law-abiding societies where human rights are valuable to the people.

Mr. Speaker, Iraq is undertaking history's boldest experiment in trying to build a more free and open society. If Europe is not with us, its message to the Iraqi people and to the world is that it just does not care about democratic developments outside its borders.

I call on President Chirac and Chancellor Schroeder and other reluctant NATO leaders to stand up at the Istanbul summit and be counted on behalf of the Iraqi people and democratic values.

Mr. Speaker, we already have many fine allies, NATO and nonNATO alike, in our coalition in Iraq. Tony Blair's United Kingdom has shown extraordinary courage and leadership. South

Korea's determination was tested by tragedy just this week, and it proved itself a model of resolve. These nations are doing work from which all of Europe will benefit, and they too deserve Europe's, and that means NATO's, backing and help.

As the loyal opposition, we Democrats will continue to call this administration to account for its errors in Iraq. We will continue to offer constructive advice, as our duty demands, particularly from our position of oversight authority in the legislative branch. But all of us, Democrats and Republicans alike, are united in our commitment to achieving success in giving rise to a durable, pluralistic, more open and free society in Iraq.

It is not merely a simple matter of restoring sovereignty. George Bernard Shaw observed, "Liberty means responsibility. That is why most men dread it." The new stewards of the sovereign Iraq will prove that they are up to the task. As they do, we want them to know that we will stand by them.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we live indeed in a very historic moment in history, and our world is engulfed in conflict of a very new and terrible kind. But it is remarkably consoling to come together today in unity, and we are certainly in bipartisan unity, on a resolution taking note of some very important accomplishments in the quest for freedom in the near east.

This resolution is cosponsored by the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) as the ranking Democrat on the Committee on International Relations; the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), the chairman of the Committee on Armed Services; the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the ranking Democrat on that committee, as well as myself.

□ 1500

And that sponsorship should indicate the fact that there is agreement on the very important points made in this resolution. There is a new sovereign interim Iraqi government that is assuming power. Provincial governments are governing, courts are dispensing justice, political parties are forming, civil society is emerging, and independent media is operating, and preparations are being made for nationwide elections.

The interim Constitution states that Iraq's system of government will be republican, federal, democratic, and pluralistic and that federalism will be based on geography, history, and the separation of powers, not on ethnicity or sect.

On July 1, a new day will dawn on Iraq's future. Iraq will no longer be about the United States and its occu-

pying role. Rather, it will be about the new self-governing Iraq and the decisions Iraq's leaders will be making in order to further the democratic ideals and principles.

This resolution, as I say, is bipartisan. It congratulates the interim government of Iraq on its forthcoming assumption of sovereign authority. It expresses its gratitude to the United States Armed Forces on their valiant service to their country, expresses its gratitude to the families of United States Armed Forces personnel, especially families of those who have lost loved ones. It expresses its condolences to the families of the innocent Iraqis who have been killed or wounded. It expresses gratitude to the coalition forces, the Coalition Provisional Authority, the Iraqi Governing Council, the current Iraqi cabinet government officials, and the many international bodies and voluntary organizations which have come to the aid of the people of Iraq.

It offers continued support to the U.S. Armed Forces, civilians associated with the U.S. Government, coalition forces, Iraqi security forces, and all of the people who are collaborating and making Iraq a new and democratic state.

So this is something that I cannot imagine anybody not being proud to vote for. And I look forward to an affirmative vote.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, before recognizing our next speaker, I want to pay tribute to the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) for his leadership on this resolution and on this entire issue.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first let me thank our chairman, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), and our ranking member, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), for their leadership on the Committee on International Relations, a committee on which I am proud to serve, and for their consistent efforts to ensure that there is bipartisanship in this body and our committee.

Let me just say to them today that I respectfully rise to disagree with them on this issue. This resolution does, however, express condolences to the families of the dead soldiers and innocent Iraqis who have been killed in Iraq. Today, unfortunately, many more lives were lost. My thoughts and my prayers go out to these families and the families of all of those who have been wounded in this unnecessary war.

As a daughter of a career military officer, I know what it means to support our troops, and I do. However, this resolution paints a totally false picture of the situation in Iraq, the fact that it ignores the blamelessness of the President's claims that led us into this unjust war, and that it endorses a failed Bush policy in Iraq.

As an example of what I mean, let me just draw my colleagues' attention to page 4, the third paragraph down which says, "Paul Bremer, the administrator of the Coalition Provisional Authority, has ably advanced the international coalition's goals in Iraq of transforming Iraq into a safe, secure, stable, sovereign, democratic state that serves the interests of the Iraqi people."

This resolution also commits our troops to an indefinite period of time in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, this undue praise flies in the face of reality on the ground. Again, as I said earlier, just today it is reported that 92 people have lost their lives including three United States soldiers and more than 320 people wounded.

Moreover, this resolution completely ignores the false basis for the war and its cost. It also leaves out the fact that we were misled regarding the weapons of mass destruction and the alleged cooperation between al Qaeda and Iraq as it relates to 9/11. It makes it sound as if the occupation and the aftermath of this unjust war is a success.

Again, that ignores reality. We had choices; we had options. I offered an amendment that would authorize the United Nations to continue with this inspection process. Unfortunately, that failed. Now we have a resolution that celebrates the war. I respectfully disagree, and I must vote against it.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Armed Services, the cosponsor of the bill.

Mr. HUNTER. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for their wonderful bipartisan effort in putting this together and also my great colleague from the Committee on Armed Services, my partner, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), for his work and contribution.

I will be very brief, but there are two messages in this resolution. I think it is appropriate that this resolution follows the funding of our Defense bills and our Intelligence bills because those are the bills that give our forces the tools to get the job done.

I think we have done an excellent job in putting together bills that give the force protection, the surveillance capability, the extra troops that are going to be needed over the next several years, and the funding for those troops, and particularly that \$25 billion bolt-on that we did on the Defense authorization bill and the Defense appropriations bill.

So it is appropriate that this resolution, this message to the people of Iraq and the people of the United States, follow those funding bills because this is a very important message that the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON) and many others are sending.

The message to the American people can be found in this resolution that the command of American forces will remain with American commanders. That is very important to moms and dads and people who care about our uniformed people, that that chain of command will remain firmly in place, that we will continue to pursue our mission against terrorists, and that operation will be overseen and supervised by U.S. leaders. That is a very important message.

But to the Iraqi people there is also a message, and the message is that we are giving them a running start. We are handing over a country divested now of the leadership of Saddam Hussein. We are handing over to them a chance to maintain freedom in a very, very difficult part of the world. We are going to provide for them this military shield just as we have in other countries around the world as they stand up this free government.

But I think it is important for the Iraqi people to understand that too, and I think they do understand it, that this enduring, the endurance of this government in a very difficult neighborhood is going to require some real grit on the part of the Iraqi people and that no country, not our country, not any country, is guaranteed perpetual freedom.

We are giving them a running start. We have given them the sacrifice of many brave Americans and the continued sacrifice right through this day in terms of Americans KIA, killed in action, and wounded in action, as well as coalition partners, as well as many Iraqis. But they are going to have to take hold, and they are going to have to be able to lift that weight.

I hope that under the good leadership that is now forming, that is taking over on the 30th of this month, they are going to be able to make that transition. This is only when the Americans were in Iraq, one thing that can be said from the dawn of time until the end of time, only when the American came to Iraq did they have a chance to have a free and fair government. We are giving them this chance.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the distinguished ranking member of the Committee on Armed Services.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to follow my friend from California (Mr. HUNTER) in supporting this resolution. And I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the gentleman from Illinois (Chairman HYDE) for cosponsoring this, and I am a cosponsor along with you.

June 30 should be a proud day for the Iraqi people, but one for which they are continuing to pay a heavy price. Today's coordinated bloody attacks demonstrate how much of a challenge they still face.

We congratulate the interim Iraqi government on the upcoming assump-

tion of sovereignty. This is a great step, a real step toward a permanent government elected by the Iraqi people. I sincerely hope it works. Lasting peace and political progress will only come when Iraq is secure. This will remain an ongoing partnership between American forces and Iraqis for a long time.

I commend our troops; I commend their families. They have given so much and are feeling the real meaning of sacrifice every day. Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz confirmed to our Committee on Armed Services this week that our troops could be in Iraq for years.

We need a plan for our partnership with the Iraqis, to move the security of their country to them as soon as they are ready. Until then, I commend this resolution for its reiteration of the full authority of the U.S. commanders in Iraq over American forces. That is so important. I feel strongly that we should have a status of forces agreement. Without it, we need at least a clear statement that our commanders can do what they must do to protect our troops and accomplish their mission.

I join my colleagues in congratulating the Iraqi people. I urge strong support for this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK), my good friend.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I know that this is being carried on C-SPAN, but I think we should broaden our broadcast efforts. When we did the tax bill last week, I thought eBay should have been transmitting it. Today I think it really belongs on the Cartoon Network.

There is much in this resolution I agree with, but what is most important is what is left out. The gentleman from California, a very distinguished and thoughtful legislator, although, unfortunately, in the minority and not in a position to write resolutions, said that it is our democratic responsibility to express legitimate criticisms of the administration. I agree. Sadly, because the majority is in control, there are none of them in this resolution.

This resolution is a cartoon. It describes an Iraq that resembles nothing as much as Brigadoon. I expect maybe it will appear once every hundred years. I agree with many of the aspirations of this resolution. I agree that our troops deserve credit for the terrible situation in which they have been put. But if one read this resolution and had not read the newspapers or watched television about Iraq, one would not know what country was being discussed.

The gentlewoman from California alluded to our congratulating Mr. Bremer for ably advancing the goals of making Iraq safe, secure, stable, sovereign, and democratic. The Iraq that is safe, secure, stable, sovereign, and democratic, are there two countries

named Iraq? Is this Iraq anywhere near the Iraq that we have been worried about? I wish Iraq could become that. But to congratulate ourselves as if it already had is simply not accurate.

I am troubled by the procedures we are seeing. The majority obviously feels concerned that the public no longer shares its view so they have decided to legislate opinion. They have a pattern now of coming forward with resolutions which include some things Members agree with, like support for our troops and aspirations, and then they wrap into that a lot of misrepresentative, inaccurate descriptions of reality and then demand that people vote it. We are told if we do not vote for a resolution that talks about Iraq as a safe, secure, stable, sovereign, democratic state, that somehow we are not in favor of the troops. It is a misrepresentation of the situation of Iraq, and a grievous misuse of the legislative process.

□ 1515

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER).

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, we are daily inundated with the rhetoric of terrorists selling their singular savagery to the world as revolution. Yet, when did we cease to be a revolutionary country? Never.

One look about this weary, wanting world sufficiently reminds us it is we, the Americans, who were, are and continued throughout our democracy always must be the embodiment of the revolutionary ideals, powering the emancipation of populations throughout the globe.

Thus, today is this resolution offered and its adoption urged in order that we might hearten our Iraqi allies in this dark hour before the dawn of their democracy, in order that we might unmask the archaic barbarians of evil and find, not revolutionaries, but lying reactionaries; and, finally, hopefully, in order that we might recall our own indispensable, indisputable revolutionary role in the advancement of man.

Let us, then, pass this resolution and duly honor our revolutionary brethren, the Iraqi people, upon the occasion of the assumption of their sovereignty and the advancement toward their democracy, which like ourselves since our inception, they must win and keep.

I urge support of the resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), my friend and a distinguished colleague.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. FRANK) has pointed out that this resolution is being covered by C-SPAN. I would suggest it ought to be covered by the Science Fiction Network. Let us not be fooled by this bill, which endorses an illegal war which this Nation entered into based on lies and misrepresentation. Lest we forget, Iraq

had nothing to do with 9/11, with al Qaeda's role in 9/11. Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction. It was wrong to go in, and it is wrong to stay in. The June 30 sovereignty this resolution discusses is a hoax. What kind of sovereignty will Iraq have with 130,000 U.S. troops present? What kind of sovereignty does Iraq have when the U.S. is now selling Iraqi oil and spending the money as it sees fit?

This bill states that we are handing Iraq a safe, secure and stable state. In effect, it declares a desert an oasis, a swamp a garden, a lie the truth.

The continued U.S. occupation of Iraq will not end on June 30, and it is counterproductive. Make no mistake about it, when July 1 comes, the violence will continue, the attacks will not stop, and our troops will still be in harm's way. It is time for us to recognize the Nation went down the wrong path in Iraq. The policy is unsustainable and it is a failure. We cannot continue with it. It is time for a peace plan with an exit strategy. It is time for us to get the U.N. community involved and to bring our troops home. U.N. in, U.S. out.

We should not be fooled. We should vote against this resolution, and we should be looking towards bringing this Congress together with a new direction to truly have a peace plan with an exit strategy. This resolution does not do this. This resolution is a farce and should be defeated.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER).

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 691, and I would like to congratulate the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) for the leadership that he has provided and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) for the leadership that he has provided in not only this piece of legislation but in guiding our country through a very delicate moment of history.

Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen, and my colleagues, we are Americans. We are not Republicans. We are not Democrats. We are Americans today. Our country is at war with a force, a hostile force that hates everything that we stand for. That the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) of both parties are united in supporting this historic effort to defeat an enemy which would slaughter our people before our eyes and cut the heads off of American citizens and try to intimidate our entire Nation in order to make us cowards, the fact that we stand together is the one thing that gives us strength.

H. Res. 691 reaffirms that we Americans are standing together behind the central purpose of the operation in Iraq, which is nothing more or nothing less than providing the Iraqi people the means to determine their own destiny through the ballot box; and by taking this stand, we take a stand for democ-

racy that will be available to those in the Islamic world. It is a strategic move on our part but, yet, something totally consistent with our values as a people, as the American people.

Thus, it is fitting today that we stand, as I say, not as Republicans and Democrats, but we stand behind our President and this noble effort in Iraq to get rid of a tyrant who slaughtered hundreds of thousands of his people and help those people in Iraq establish a democratic government so that all our children will live at peace and this evil force of radical Islam that threatens us will be defeated.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER), our distinguished colleague.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, these feel-good resolutions that we passed last night and are considering today do not change the facts. The facts are that this country is not united. It is very divided over this war. The facts are we did not invade Iraq for the purpose of instituting a democracy. We invaded Iraq because we were told that Iraq threatened us with weapons of mass destruction and that Iraq was responsible, to some extent, for collaborating with al Qaeda and producing the catastrophe of 9/11.

We were misled into Iraq by the administration that either lied to the American people or led us into war by use of falsehoods stated out of ignorance. We are told by this resolution that we are creating a sovereign Iraq now; and, yet, on page 7 of the resolution the American troops there remain under American command. That is a slight contradiction. How can Iraq be sovereign when we control the military over there?

We are told that we are creating a democratic Iraq. Anybody who knows anything knows we are not going to have a democratic Iraq for many years, maybe decades. We will be happy to figure out a way to get out of this quagmire without leaving behind mass chaos, civil war, communal slaughter and betraying the Kurds a third time. We also know that this war in Iraq is a diversion from the real war against the Islamic terrorists who thrust war upon us, a war we must fight but that we are being diverted from. We know that it is harder to take the necessary action, if it may be necessary, if a real nuclear threat of nuclear proliferation arises perhaps in Iran because we cried wolf in Iraq.

How will we persuade Congress or the American people that we have to do something real if a real threat arises, not a phantom threat that we reacted to?

Our actions in Abu Ghraib and perhaps elsewhere still to be properly investigated have shamed this Nation and engendered further hatred of the United States across the world. So let us not celebrate this catastrophe. Let us not pass resolutions that do not bear any relation to the world. Let us figure

out how to get out of this catastrophe as best we can.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2 minutes to our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HINCHEY).

Mr. HINCHEY. Mr. Speaker, let me first say that I have a great deal of respect for both the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and for the work that they do here, and there is much in this resolution with which I agree. However, there is a lot in here that is misleading. In fact, I think that much of this resolution is an exercise in self-deception as well as an attempt to deceive others.

Let me just give my colleagues an example. We have here on page 4, the House of Representatives offers its continued support to the people and government of Iraq as they deal with the consequences of decades of misrule by the former regime of Saddam Hussein.

Well, that is interesting and right, but it does not say that we supported that regime of Saddam Hussein. Saddam Hussein took office in 1980. It was not more than 3 years later that the government of President Reagan sent Donald Rumsfeld to Iraq to begin a relationship with that country, and the relationship resulted in the transfer of billions of dollars of American material and money to the government of Saddam Hussein right on up to the advent of the first Gulf War.

Why are we not talking about that in this resolution, how we supplied the government of Saddam Hussein with money, how we supplied the government of Saddam Hussein with both conventional, biological and chemical weapons from the United States, from France, from Germany and from Chile, all orchestrated by the government under the administration of Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush? Why are we not talking about that in this resolution?

We are giving our sympathy and our condolences to the innocent people who were killed in Iraq. What about the innocent people who were killed unnecessarily as a result of this unjust, unnecessary war?

This is a war that will be a rock around the neck of this country for decades. It will be a long time before we get over the results of this. That is particularly true with regard to the treatment of prisoners in Abu Ghraib and Camp Cropper and others. Why are we not discussing that in this resolution?

There is much to be embarrassed about. This is not something that we should congratulate ourselves about. Try not to deceive ourselves either.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), the majority leader.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

I am just a little overwhelmed by the previous two speakers. What we are here for is a resolution that celebrates

successes in the war on terror. Yet, to make their arguments, they might as well go back to World War II and all kinds of things that have nothing to do with the war on terror, with the national security of this Nation, with trying to protect the American people, and while we are doing that, spreading freedom and democracy around the world, because, Mr. Speaker, next Wednesday, the whole world is going to stop what it is doing and it is going to look toward the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers, the cradle of civilization, and witness the miracle of democracy taking hold in Iraq.

For a generation, the proud and resilient people of that great nation were brutalized by a dictator. Today, they are free, and next Wednesday they will take up their God-given, human right to self-determination.

The resolution before us acknowledges all that has been won in Operation Iraqi Freedom and all that has been sacrificed in that victory. Words, of course, cannot replace the years lost to millions of Iraqi families during Saddam Hussein's reign of terror nor can they bring back the brave American heroes lost in battle since the war began last March.

Despite the finest planning, equipment and training in military history, servicemen and women of the American armed forces are still at war, and no matter how just and how necessary wars may be, they still rob us of the bravest and truest of the young.

Just as the miracle of June 30 will be a celebration of the Iraqi people, it will also be a celebration of the men and women who liberated them from evil and especially a celebration of the legacy of service left by those who will not make it home. That legacy, Mr. Speaker, is not one of grief and regret but of service, duty, love and courage. It is a legacy of honor which cannot be undone by the unyielding winds of history or the frantic storms of politics. It cannot be undone because we will not let it. Those young men and women will not have died in vain.

Therefore, this resolution affirms Congress' absolute support for democracy and freedom in Iraq and for the forthcoming Iraqi interim government sworn to provide both. It also reaffirms our commitment to see the job of stabilizing and securing Iraq to the end.

Terrorists remain in Iraq targeting Iraqi government officials and American and coalition troops.

□ 1530

Terrorists remain in Iraq, targeting Iraqi government officials and American and coalition troops. Those terrorists, like all terrorists in this war on terror, must be killed or captured before democracy can truly be secured in Iraq or anywhere else in the world.

In order for America's war on terror to succeed, Iraq's interim government, and ultimately the democratic government elected next year, must also succeed. Its success depends on the contin-

ued military, economic, and diplomatic support of the United States and the international community, which President Bush has pledged and garnered since before Operation Iraqi Freedom began. That support will remain in place as long as it is necessary, and I know all Americans hope for a strong and enduring alliance between the United States and a sovereign democratic Iraq.

Before I close, Mr. Speaker, there is one man who deserves special thanks in this debate, a man who stared down enemies and appeasers alike and marshaled the civilized world to victory in Iraq. Were it not for the courage and vision of George W. Bush, June 30 would be just another Wednesday in Iraq. Instead, it is a day to be remembered, fraught with danger, to be sure, a day, too, of unfinished business, but a day of pride in this country.

For June 30 is not the end of the road, but it is just another step along mankind's unending journey toward freedom. We will not be divided by our enemies or deterred from our goals in the war on terror in Iraq, Afghanistan, or anywhere else in the world, and that is due to the steadfast leadership of our Commander in Chief. Thank you, Mr. President.

So I urge all Members to support this resolution and send a signal of solidarity from the American people to the people of Iraq and to the nations around the world that all people who seek to be free are now and will always be our friends.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 2½ minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a soldier in the service of his nation never dies in vain. But that soldier's sacrifice should affirm the fact that criticism, diverse opinion, and the right to challenge government is precious and privileged and protected by the Constitution.

Might I add my appreciation to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the ranking member, and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) for the collegiality and the respect given to Members in this debate and the language of this legislation.

I oppose this war with every fiber in my body, but I believe today is a time to be able to emphasize elements of unity that will say to the world that we do want success. I believe there is failure; and so for that reason, for the record, I will indicate that I will not support pages 1 to 5, at the top; but I am going to support this resolution on the basis of the resolution, how we resolve.

What are we resolving? We recognize the people of Iraq, the most innocent. We are offering our support to them that they might survive and experience democracy. We are expressing grati-

tude to the Armed Forces and to the families, families who I had to sit with as they buried their young. And, as well, we are giving condolences to them for the soldiers who died on the frontline. No matter whether we have won or lost, their sacrifice will never be in vain.

I offer to the families in Houston my appreciation. But as I do that, Mr. Speaker, let me emphasize that our job is not yet done. I can assure my colleagues that I do not speak from the well of the House. I have been to Afghanistan. I have been to Iraq. I have sat with soldiers, and in so doing I have heard them say this is a frustrating job, but we are here in order to have the opportunity to press American principles.

But, Mr. Speaker, we did not press American principles by having an unconstitutional war, a unilateral and preemptive strike. We did not observe constitutional principles by allowing the U.N. inspections or not fulfilling our responsibility in Abu Ghraib, or have an exit strategy, or the intelligence failure when we went into the war on the basis of weapons of mass destruction.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand in the well of the House so that everyone will know I do not step away from my opposition to this war, but I stand alongside families, those who lost their young loved ones, those who still fight, and, yes, the Iraqi people, who, I hope, with a new strategy and a new opportunity, will face democracy in the 21st century.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this important statement of the people's House, congratulating the interim government of Iraq for its forthcoming assumption of sovereign authority and congratulating the United States Armed Forces and coalition forces for their sacrifice. I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and our chairman, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), for their usual and extraordinary and timely leadership on this issue.

When I sat in Baghdad in the coalition provisional headquarters on March 1, we sat with Ambassador Bremer across from the hall where was debated the interim Constitution of Iraq. Within 24 hours, these words would enter into the history forever of a free Iraqi people in the preamble of Iraq's transitional administrative law: "The people of Iraq, striving to reclaim their freedom, which was usurped by the previous tyrannical regime, rejecting violence and coercion in all its forms, and particularly when used as instruments of governance, have determined that they shall hereafter remain a free people governed under the rule of law."

The preamble of a new Constitution for a free and democratic Iraq. When just 2 years ago we think of the Iraq that existed on the world scene, Saddam Hussein was still imprisoning, torturing, and killing tens of thousands of innocent Iraqis; financially supporting and encouraging terrorism; illegally profiting from the U.N.'s Oil-For-Food program, denying millions of Iraqis needed medicines and food; and flouting and ignoring 16 different U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Thanks to the leadership of President George W. Bush and the sacrifice of U.S. and coalition forces, those days are over. And on this June 30 that we commemorate in this resolution, the United States will disengage and those words of that preamble will begin to become the reality of a new free and democratic Iraq.

And know this, Mr. Speaker. The people of Iraq are grateful. As we stood in the midst of 30 or 40 men and women in Basra the day before we were in Baghdad, I will never forget as people approached me one after the other, tears in their eyes, taking me by the hand and saying, please, when you go home to America, tell the people you serve that we will never forget what the United States has done for our people in Iraq.

The people I met in Iraq have an undying gratitude that will begin to express itself most eloquently in the advance of freedom and democracy for themselves and their posterity. I support this resolution. I embrace all that it celebrates, and I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their leadership in bringing it forward at this time.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS).

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time, and it is a privilege to speak on the resolution of two people for whom I have the utmost respect, the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on International Relations. I thank them for this resolution.

I have been in Iraq five times, and four of those times I have been outside the umbrella of the military as well as being under the umbrella of the military. I have talked to everyday Iraqis, attended a wedding, visited schools, hospitals, businesses, met with community and religious leaders, as well as visited the very poorest of the poor in their own homes, and slept in Iraqi villages. I cannot tell you how important June 30 is. There is not an Iraqi I spoke to who did not tell me they want this to be an Iraqi revolution, not an American revolution. They are eager to run their own country.

Now, we have made some mistakes. It is clear that we should have prevented the looting. It is also clear to me we should not have disbanded the government, the army or the police. Certainly the bad folks within should

have been taken out. So we have made some mistakes.

When you speak to Iraqis, they will tell you they are suspicious of the United States because to them we are strangers. As good a Nation as we are, and as important as removing Saddam is, they never had a government they could trust. So why would they trust a foreign government to lead them for a year? They blame the United States for the sanctions, not Saddam, ironically. And they also told me of the loved ones they lost when we told them to rebel against Saddam, but we left the Republican Guard in place to kill their loved ones. They are angry about this.

They would tell me all those things, and they mean them. But in spite of their suspicion and anger they are so grateful to be free from Saddam. The most important decision the President made was to say, against the opposition of some, on June 30 sovereignty will be passed to the Iraqi people in an interim government. It is their country, and they should run their own country and they are eager to do it.

I am so proud to be in the presence of those Iraqis who have taken the mantle of leadership. If you asked me are their lives in danger and how likely is it they will be there a year from now, I cannot tell you with any confidence they will survive. But they are willing to take on this task in spite of the dangers they face.

So I salute our troops for the 840 men and women we have lost and for the thousands that have been injured, I salute the Iraqi people, who have done everything they can to be free people and now have the chance to run their own country. I particularly appreciate that we have an opportunity to speak on a resolution that says, uncategorically, on June 30, the Iraqi people reign. They will run their own country. Ambassador Negroponte will not be a Mr. Bremer. He is our ambassador who is there at the invitation of the Iraqi people.

May God bless Iraq, may God bless the United States of America. I put my hand to my heart in appreciation for what we are doing and with appreciation and gratitude for the friends I have made with so many good and brave Iraqis.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), the distinguished whip.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me this time and for his work in bringing this resolution to the floor.

Two weeks ago, I had the opportunity to have a discussion with the new President of Iraq, President Yawar, about his vision of a stable, sovereign, and democratic Iraq. All of us who joined with him in this building that day were impressed by his resolve and, frankly, impressed by his courage, the courage of Prime Minister Illawi, and the courage of hundreds of others who have demonstrated great bravery and

resolve by taking the reins of the Iraqi Governing Council in the aftermath of Izzedeen Salim's assassination in mid-May, in the face of daily attacks, and this desperate attempt of tyrants and tyranny to prevail in a part of the world that has experienced tyranny for far too long.

□ 1545

Why, in the prime of their lives, are Iraq's new leaders risking everything, including their very lives, for such a cause? It is because, Mr. Speaker, they desire liberty. It is because they desire freedom. The men and women who will officially become Iraq's interim leaders June 30 all share a vision of their native land free at last of Saddam Hussein's brutal oppression. This vision respects the rule of law and will listen to the voice of the people. This government, of course, is one step toward elections and an elected government that we hope to see in Iraq in just a few months.

We should not forget that our Nation was built on the backs and the minds and the hearts and the hands of the same kind of brave and heroic figures. Two hundred twenty-eight years ago, 56 Americans challenged the British crown by signing the Declaration of Independence, risking their families, their fortunes and their lives for the cause, again just like Iraqis today, the cause of liberty.

Today, Mr. Speaker, in supporting the brave Iraqi leaders and the millions of Iraqi citizens who are standing up to the terrorists and insurgents for the cause of freedom for the Iraqi people, we recall the sacrifices made by brave Americans throughout history for our own freedom. We express our pride in the men and women of our Armed Forces who are making this day possible for the Iraqi people. Even after next week's handover, the cause of freedom in Iraq will continue to require sacrifices by the American people and by our brave soldiers. The American people must be prepared to help the fledgling government financially as it generates the type of infrastructure necessary to support a stable democracy. We must be prepared to encourage this government as it moves to free and fair elections.

Iraq is still a dangerous place. Terrorists continue to target our troops as well as innocent men, women and children in an effort to ruin Iraq's attempt at democracy. But democratic institutions are forming and our soldiers and civilian advisers continue to train Iraqi police and other security forces. During today's deadly terrorist attacks, the reports of Iraqi soldiers fighting side by side with their American counterparts demonstrate just how determined Iraqis are to destroy this insurgency and live in peace for the first time in 30 years.

Mr. Speaker, with today's resolution, the House reaffirms that the United States' motives in Iraq are founded on virtue. We do not desire any territory.

We do not desire an empire. We seek stability both at home and in the Middle East. The President's decision to intervene in Iraq was made in the best interests of Americans and Iraqis. Saddam Hussein is in a jail cell, no longer able to pursue weapons of mass destruction or encourage global terrorism that threatens the lives of freedom-loving people. Most importantly in the context of today's debate, Iraqis at last have the chance to demonstrate to the world that democracy can spring forth in the cradle of civilization.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and even beyond that, I urge all of us and all Americans to support this great effort, this great experiment in freedom that we encourage today and in the days ahead.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Robust debate is the hallmark of this body and this afternoon we had a sampling of it for which we are all pleased. The difficulty in dealing with the issues that we face in this world is that we do not confront elegant alternatives but exasperating realities. It is in that context that I wish to quote from the person who will be the nominee of the Democratic Party at the upcoming convention on his views of this resolution and of this undertaking. I am quoting from Senator KERRY:

"While we may have differed on how we went to war, Americans of all political persuasions are united in our determination to succeed. The extremists attacking our forces should know that they will not succeed in dividing America, or in sapping American resolve, or in forcing the premature withdrawal of U.S. troops. Our country is committed to help the Iraqis build a stable, peaceful and pluralistic society. No matter who is elected President in November, we will persevere in that mission."

Mr. Speaker, these are difficult days for our country, but we stand united in our commitment to our troops and in our commitment to our values. I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I want to thank the gentleman from California and everyone who has participated in this debate. As the gentleman from California said, robust debate is a hallmark of democracy and we have had that here. I have strenuously tried to keep politics out of this because I am so pleased this is a bipartisan resolution and truly it is one that is appropriate because it is a magnificent achievement to have a country such as Iraq under a dictator, a tyrant, turn into a working democracy where they are going to have free elections and have all of the additional assets that go with a democracy. I think it is a joyous occasion and one that no matter our differences we ought to be able to join in congratulating them.

Mr. Speaker, we did not start this war. On September 11, 2001, some peo-

ple declared war on us and committed an act of war. Does anyone doubt if they had access to nuclear materials they would have used them? And then we would mourn the deaths of 3 million people, not 3,000 people. Does anybody doubt for one minute that chemical and biological warfare agents, if available to these people, they would not use them? They could poison an awful lot of water systems in this country and paralyze this country. War is different today. It is not declared. They do not put uniforms on and march in formation. They sneak up on you in the dark and stab you in the back. And so if you wait for the smoking gun, you might find one of your major cities is the smoking gun.

The fact that Libya threw its cards on the table and said we will not pursue weapons of mass destruction is glossed over as though that was not a substantial achievement. The fact that weapons of mass destruction have not been found in Iraq does not mean that they were not ever there or that there were not programs to develop these things. And the history of Saddam Hussein is one that indicates he would use them in a minute given the opportunity.

We are in a terrible war. We cannot win a war like this unless we are unified. I would ask all of us, Republicans and Democrats, when we start to argue this issue, think. Is what we are saying going to help us or not help us in this struggle that may last for generations? It is very important, because we all have children and grandchildren whose future ought to be a prime concern. Everything in this resolution is non-partisan. It is praiseworthy. It recognizes one of the great accomplishments, the transformation of a country like Iraq into a functioning democracy and setting the example in that region of the world. And so let us join hands and acknowledge this accomplishment and join the Iraqi people in celebrating their new democracy.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, once again this House has passed a resolution celebrating the manner in which the war in Iraq has been fought, and the burgeoning democracy it has ostensibly established. In reality, H. Res. 691 speaks to the profound failure of the Bush Administration's Iraq policies and the lack of an appropriate rationale for invading another country: The war was fought because President Bush's desire to take down Saddam Hussein, not out of a desire to fight global terror; it was about a highly ideological plan to extend America's reach in the Middle East, not about ridding the world of nuclear weapons. In short, the war was about the Bush Administration's priorities—not Iraq's.

This resolution also expresses unequivocal support for our Armed Forces. We must be sure to honor the brave men and women who put themselves in harm's way; already 833 American soldiers who have died during the course of this conflict. Accordingly, I hope we will honor future veterans when they return home, as thousands of them will require prosthetic arms and legs, physical therapy, and years of health care for injuries incurred during the war.

H. Res. 691 is not without its merits. This resolution contains important language expressing condolences to the families of the innocent Iraqis who have been killed or wounded during the conflict. In fact, an estimated 12,000–14,000 unarmed, innocent Iraqi civilians have died since the United States invaded the country last year.

However, while I support many parts of this resolution, I am disappointed that the House Republican leadership has once again pushed for passage of a resolution the contents of which are either inaccurate or downright wrong.

An entire clause of this resolution is devoted to the claim that Iraq has been transformed "into a safe secure, stable, sovereign, democratic state that serves the interests of the Iraqi people." Secure? Stable? Sovereign? Iraq is none of these things, and it still won't be any of these things when the United States transfers authority back to the Iraqi people on June 30th. The Bush Administration needs to realize and admit to the American people that Iraq is neither secure nor stable, and will not be either of these things for a great many years. The Administration's policies in Iraq have been a colossal failure.

The fact is, President Bush and his Administration want to have it both ways. They want to appear to have finished up work in Iraq in time for the November elections, while at the same time maintaining over 100,000 soldiers there to ensure they maintain a high degree of control over the country's fate. Not to mention the new American Embassy overseen by the controversial John Negroponte will be the largest in the world.

Instead of continuing to pass resolutions of inaction, Congress should be pressing the administration to truly engage the international community to stabilize an insecure Iraq—particularly in light of the recent resolution endorsing the turnover of power back to the Iraqi people that was passed unanimously by the U.N. Security Council. We've already entered into a fight that has diverted resources from the real fight against terrorism and from important domestic programs. Now is the time for taking measures so that we do not repeat our mistakes. Now is the time we must invest in an international coalition before the international will to endorse our efforts in Iraq runs dry.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution for the transfer of sovereignty to the Iraqi people on June 30. June 30 will be the start of a new Iraq. Life for the people of Iraq will be a world away from the cruelty and tyranny of the regime that once ruled them for decades. A new sovereign, interim Iraqi government—representing the diversity of Iraq—will assume power, provincial governments will be put in place, courts will be overseen by Iraqi justices, political parties will be formed and preparations for national elections will be made.

After June 30, the U.S., under the leadership of Ambassador John Negroponte, will provide support to the new Iraqi Interim Government as it assumes control of managing day-to-day operations, preparations for new elections, and rebuilding the country's infrastructure and economy.

Leading up to June 30, infrastructure improvements—led by coalition forces—and the shift to self-government have already completely transformed the face of Iraq. Schools,

medical clinics and hospitals have been reopened. An army and more effective police force have been rebuilt. A fair judicial system has been constituted. And an interim constitution has been signed—laying the foundation for democratic elections.

The ability to transfer authority to a new sovereign Iraq only 14 months after liberation efforts began is a major step forward for freedom. We should be proud of our young servicemen and women and civilian contractors in Iraq for their work in liberating 25 million Iraqis from the grip of Saddam Hussein's regime and rebuilding a country that was in disrepair for nearly two decades. America appreciates their sacrifice and commitment to the security of our Nation. Those who have made the ultimate sacrifice to protect our freedom and defend America will never be forgotten.

Mr. Speaker, July 1, 2004 will be the dawn of a new day for the men, women and children of Iraq. This day will not mean an end to terrorist violence, but it will be a radical departure from the decades of governmental and personal abuse that existed under Saddam's ruthless regime.

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose H. Res. 691. My position is consistent with my opposition to our invasion of Iraq and my belief that any congratulations we extend to the interim government are muted by the reality of ongoing death and mayhem that occur daily in Iraq.

Additionally, I want to express my condolences to all of the victims of our invasion into Iraq. My heart is heavy for the Iraqi families that have suffered permanent losses as a result of the war and continuing insurgency efforts. Furthermore, I mourn for the families of U.S. and foreign military personnel; valiant soldiers, men and women, who have sacrificed their lives to promote the reality of freedom for Iraqis.

However, Mr. Speaker, I disagree with many of the notions put forward in the resolution because I believe some of them are simplistic, naive and wrong. While it is true that Iraqis have participated in elections, widespread antagonisms persist and violent behavior continues to be directed at our forces. Our soldiers are imperiled because of how and why they entered Iraq, in addition to their continued presence in Iraq. Second, the notion that Iraq is more secure now than before is also wrong. While it is true that the government of Saddam Hussein was toppled, Iraq continues to be a besieged nation. Violence is prevalent, and the victims of the bombings and assassinations are largely innocent Iraqis.

I appreciate the spirit in which the Resolution was drafted, but I strongly disagree with the underlying premise that we are celebrating the Iraqi freedom. Iraqis will not be free until they are capable of installing a representative government devoid of foreign intervention. Iraqis will not be free until they overcome the challenges of enfranchising diverse segments of its diverse population of Kurds, Sunnis and Shiites into a form of democracy that suits their needs and not the designs of the United States.

Finally, while June 30, 2004 is a monumental date for the people of Iraq. We should not delude ourselves, nor mislead the people of Iraq that in the near term, democracy will bear the fruit of liberty and peace that they have been promised. As a mother and grandmother who worries about the future of our

Nation and the world, I am ruled by my conscience, and my conscience dictates that I cast a "no" vote on H. Res. 691.

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to the order of the House of Wednesday, June 23, 2004, the resolution is considered read for amendment and the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the resolution. The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

CONTINUATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE WESTERN BALKANS—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 108-196)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

*To the Congress of The United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the FEDERAL REGISTER and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the Western Balkans emergency is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2004, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on June 24, 2003, 68 Fed. Reg. 37389.

The crisis constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting, (i) extremist violence in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on June 26, 2001, has not been resolved. Subsequent to the declaration of the national emergency, acts obstructing implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001 in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, have also become a concern. All of these actions are hostile to U.S. interests and pose a continuing un-

usual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the Western Balkans and maintain in force the comprehensive sanctions to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, June 24, 2004.

SPENDING CONTROL ACT OF 2004

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 692 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4663.

The Chair designates the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and requests the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) to assume the chair temporarily.

□ 1558

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4663) to amend part C of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 to establish discretionary spending limits and a pay-as-you-go requirement for mandatory spending, with Mr. BOOZMAN (Chairman pro tempore) in the Chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SPRATT) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE).

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, the most important job of the House Committee on the Budget which I have the honor of being the Chair is really twofold. First is to put together and pass in the House a responsible, realistic blueprint to guide the spending and revenue decisions for the Federal Government. We did that. We completed a budget over a month ago when this Chamber adopted the conference report for the budget for fiscal year 2005. Getting a budget is difficult enough. Now comes the second part of the job and that is to ensure that you stick to it. Getting the budget means that you have been able to get a majority of Members to agree on the levels for spending, on the levels for revenues and to bring together those very different ideas because, trust me, there is no such thing as a perfect budget by any stretch of the imagination. My good friend from Florida reminds me of that every once in a while.

□ 1600

But we do get a document that tries to mold and shape the hopes and