

December elections for the national assembly will be another important milestone for them as well as their nation.

At the same time, it is impossible not to reflect on the other milestone we reached today, the announcement of the 2,000th American casualty with the deaths of two Marines in Anbar province last week. All Americans mourn with their families and all that came before them. This announcement comes simultaneously with the coordinated bombings on two Baghdad hotels this morning by insurgents. We can see from this attack and other engagements with American forces that the insurgency continues. Defeating the insurgency will not happen with military force alone. And it will not happen by American hands alone. We know that the answer in Iraq lies in transitioning security responsibility to the Iraqis themselves. The administration has been saying this for some time.

The problem, from my perspective, is that the American and the Iraqi people, if they are going to stay with us until the Iraqi security forces are capable of taking over the job, must have a clear sense of progress. Iraqi security forces must be able to take the fight to the insurgents on their own and to inspire the confidence of the Iraqi people. Similarly, the American public must see that there is a connection between increasing capability of Iraqi security forces and a diminishing American commitment over time.

For this reason, I have proposed a clear formula that can be used by our military leaders and that can be explained to the Iraqi and American publics alike, that for every three Iraqi security force combat brigades rated level 1—or fully capable—an American brigade or unit of similar size, type, and mission should be strategically redeployed from Iraq. In terms of units, because a brigade is the smallest military unit able to support itself and fight independently, brigades should be the standard sized units used to measure Iraqi security force capability over time. Additionally, in terms of readiness standards, units rated at level 1 indicate that they have the capability to plan and fight independently, without any assistance from U.S. forces. In my view, 3 to 1 is the right measurement because an American brigade surpasses its Iraqi counterpart in both quantity of forces and in quality. I think this is a formula that makes sense, but beyond the numbers, it is important because it is a benchmark that is easy to understand and that sets reasonable, achievable standards for both our forces and the Iraqis.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I propose that we apply even more resources toward the training of Iraqi security forces to accelerate the effort. If more advisory teams would do the job faster, we should add them. All these advisory units should be staffed and equipped with our very best officers. Instead of staffing them in an ad-hoc manner, we should take those selected for com-

mand of U.S. units and assign them to advisory billets. These are the officers the services have determined to be their very best. Furthermore, we should make every effort to name next year's advisers today and get them in adviser and language schools now. We must make a combat adviser tour a highly career enhancing tour in the military.

Mr. Speaker, I believe like the President that we must leave an Iraq that is able to provide for its own security. Yet both to build the confidence of the Iraqis and to maintain the support of the American people, we must demonstrate a clear sense connection between increasing Iraqi capability and a diminishing need for American forces. This formula does that and I urge its serious consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the following letter I wrote to the President dated October 20 of this year.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES,
Washington, DC, October 20, 2005.

THE PRESIDENT,
The White House,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: The recent constitutional referendum, where Iraqis were able to cast their vote in the absence of large-scale violence, is an important milestone for the Iraqi people. I commend our forces for the role they played in helping to secure that vote.

I strongly believe that we share the goal of an Iraq able to provide for its own security. At the same time, both the American and the Iraqi people must have a clear sense of progress, given that the challenges to Iraqi security remain substantial. Iraqi security forces must be able to take the fight to the insurgents on their own and to inspire the confidence of the Iraqi people. Similarly, the American public must see that there is a connection between increasing capability of Iraqi security forces and a diminishing American commitment over time.

The latest quarterly report from the Department of Defense on "Measuring Stability and Security in Iraq" talks about the "criteria for withdrawing forces." While it discusses the considerations that will be taken into account in any redeployment and talks about "when conditions permit handing over security responsibilities," it is not specific nor does it give any measurement that the Iraqi or American people can use to see progress toward redeployment over time. If we expect the American people to continue to support continued deployments in Iraq, we should be able to explain the connection between the improvement in Iraqi capability and the reduced need for U.S. forces in Iraq over time more clearly.

I believe that we should set a benchmark that is easy to understand and that sets reasonable, achievable standards for both our forces and the Iraqis. In terms of units, because a brigade is the smallest military unit able to support itself and fight independently, brigades should be the standard sized units used to measure Iraqi security force capability over time. Additionally, in terms of readiness standards, units rated at "Level 1" indicate that they have the capability to plan and fight independently, without any assistance from U.S. forces. Therefore, I propose the following formula: that for every three Iraqi security force combat brigades rated "Level 1"—or fully capable—an Amer-

ican brigade or unit of similar size, type, and mission should be strategically redeployed from Iraq.

In addition to setting a clear benchmark, we need to apply even more resources toward the training of Iraqi security forces to accelerate the effort. If more advisory teams would do the job faster, we should add them. All of these advisory units should be staffed and equipped with our very best officers. Instead of staffing them in an ad-hoc manner, we should take those selected for command of U.S. units and assign them to advisory billets. These are the officers the Services have determined to be their very best. Furthermore, we should make every effort to name next year's advisers today and get them in adviser and language schools now. We must make a combat advisor tour a highly career enhancing tour in the military.

Mr. President, I realize there are a variety of reasonable ways to look at benchmarks for strategic redeployment, but I think any of them must clearly link to the development of Iraqi Security Force capability to the redeployment of American forces in a way that both the American and the Iraqi people can plainly see. That is why I think my method of matching the redeployment of an American brigade for every three Iraq brigades that reach Level 1 readiness has particular merit.

I stand ready to assist in this critical effort and share your pride in all that our fine troops have done in Iraq and around the world.

Sincerely,

IKE SKELTON,
Ranking Democrat.

REMEMBERING THE LATE HONORABLE BOB BADHAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember our friend and former colleague Bob Badham who passed away suddenly last Friday. While Bob was a private man, he dedicated his life to public service. He was a veteran of the Korean War and served with great distinction as a member of the California State legislature. He represented Newport Beach, California here in the United States Congress from 1977 to 1989, and he served on the civil service board in his hometown of Newport Beach until his passing last Friday.

Bob was a longtime friend and great supporter of President Reagan. They knew each other in Sacramento when Ronald Reagan was Governor of California and Bob was a member of the State assembly. Like the President, Bob was an optimist, a true American patriot, and a strong voice for freedom and democracy. As a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, Bob was an advocate for America's veterans, and he pushed for a more muscular and modern U.S. fighting force. He supported the defense buildup of the 1980s because he knew our country's strengths could not be sustained with weak Armed Forces. He firmly believed that communism was no match for a

strong United States military defending free people and our democratic system. Bob had vision and conviction and, Mr. Speaker, as we all know from looking at history, Bob Badham was right.

His work in Congress involved serious national security and international policy efforts, but all of us who worked with Bob remember that his sense of humor and sense of self never deserted him. He was a gracious colleague with a strong backbone and a big heart. I feel honored to have worked with Bob Badham and I am grateful for his friendship and his stellar service to this body and to the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, the thoughts and prayers I know of all of us here in the Congress are with his wife Anne; his daughters Phyllis, Sharon and Jennifer; his sons Robert, Jr. and William; their 11 grandchildren; and his brother.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material in the RECORD as it relates to the passing of our friend Bob Badham.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

HONORING THE LATE PRIVATE FIRST CLASS JOSE M. ROSARIO AND OTHER VIRGIN ISLANDS WAR HEROES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay homage to Private First Class Jose M. Rosario from Estate Campo Rico on my home island of St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands who was killed in Iraq last week.

Private First Class Rosario joined the Army shortly after completing high school with the desire to serve his country and with the dream, whispered only to his older sister Ruth, of one day becoming an attorney. He told his family how much he loved his job, the adventure of it, and most of all the fact that he was making a contribution to our Nation. They have all attested that he was happy fulfilling his mission as a member of the Fifth Squadron, Seventh Cavalry Regiment, First Brigade Combat Team of the 42nd Infantry Division. Like so many of the now 2,000 men and women who have given their lives for their country in the Iraq war, Private First Class Rosario was young, just 20 years old, and with a dream of a brighter future. He died, along with Army Specialist Russell Nahvi of Arlington, Texas, and Sergeant Arthur

Mora, Jr. of Pico, California, when their up-armored humvee was hit with indirect fire while on patrol in Balad, Iraq. And while his lifetime was short, Jose served his country with courage and with distinction and he has made his family and the entire Virgin Islands community very proud as he helped to make the entire Nation a better place by his sacrifice. Our prayers are with his mother Gregoria and all of the family.

Mr. Speaker, we in the U.S. Virgin Islands along with our sister territories send more men and women per capita to serve in our Armed Forces, and Virgin Islanders have served in every war and conflict from the Revolutionary War forward. Our Virgin Islands National Guard has been proud to serve and do so with distinction around the world. They currently have several units in Afghanistan and Iraq. Dr. Bob Thompson, a good friend of mine and chief of medicine at the Governor Juan Luis Hospital, just returned from a tour in Iraq. Sixteen members of the 620th are scheduled to return home later this week. The 652nd Engineering Company is currently serving in Afghanistan and will be there for another 6 months.

While home in August, I attended a deployment ceremony where the 610th and the 640th companies of the Virgin Islands National Guard, many of them young women, were preparing to leave for Iraq. They are currently at Fort Bragg being processed and the 107 men and women of the 610th are to depart in early November. The 640th will follow them shortly thereafter.

In addition, Dr. Hinman, the State Surgeon of the Virgin Islands National Guard, is at Fort Bliss processing for his 90-day rotation, and we have an MP security team at Fort Leonard Wood, all preparing to also go to Iraq. I pray that they will all return safely and whole. I also pray that the President will begin now to bring all of our troops home.

With our population of just over 110,000, the U.S. Virgin Islands has already lost five young men before Private First Class Rosario.

Daniel Wyatt, whose family splits their time between Wisconsin and St. Croix, and who spent what he called the best 2 weeks of his life in St. Croix before heading overseas.

Shane Goldman, whose memorial I attended and who had a tree and a small monument placed at Club St. Croix, a place frequented by his father and which he loved to visit.

Private First Class Jason Lynch from a large St. Croix family and the nephew of a close friend of mine Betty Lynch, a child I knew as he was growing up.

Staff Sergeant Kendall Thomas, slightly older than the others, from St. Thomas and I believe serving his second tour. We are proud of the men and women who have given their lives in service to their country.

We are particularly proud of Private First Class Jose M. Rosario and all of

the men and women from the U.S. Virgin Islands who have served or now serve. They do so proudly and with great dedication and loyalty. I would be remiss if I did not here note that neither they nor their fellow Virgin Islanders have the right to vote for the Commander in Chief, something which we are seeking to correct with House Joint Resolution 1, which I introduced on the opening day of this 109th Congress.

It is my hope that their sacrifice and that of all the other Virgin Islanders and American citizens in the offshore territories will be honored with its passage and ratification. May their example and that of all of our fallen resonate in all of our hearts and our country in their memory turn to peace and away from war.

TIME TO END THE WAR IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, 2,000 American troops have now lost their lives in Iraq. It is time to end this war. Let us bring our troops home and restore U.S. credibility in the world community. This war was based on fiction. That is a fact that is no longer disputed. There were no weapons of mass destruction and no ties to al Qaeda. There was no imminent threat. This administration, with the acquiescence of Congress, rushed into a war that, according to Secretary of State Colin Powell's former chief of staff Lawrence Wilkerson, has made our country more vulnerable, not less, to future crisis.

The Bush administration has stubbornly refused to reassess the situation. They have refused to listen to the words of military and diplomatic leaders who have warned that a continuing U.S. presence in Iraq will not calm the violence or lead to a more stable Iraq. The U.S. presence in Iraq is now a major part of the problem. Al Qaeda is in Iraq today because we are there. The abuse and torture by U.S. forces of detainees at Abu Ghraib prison and the near 3-year occupation by U.S. troops have made us an unpopular force in Iraq even among those who originally supported the U.S. invasion. We have spent over \$300 billion on the war with no end in sight. It is estimated that another 2 years of war will boost that amount to \$1 trillion. Our military is stretched to the limit, with much of the burden falling on our Guard and Reserves.

There are some politicians in Washington who say that, no matter what, we must "stay the course." I strongly disagree. It is worth pointing out that it is not Congressmen, Senators or members of the Bush administration whose lives are on the line in battle. It takes no courage for anybody in Washington to wave the American flag and