

law only when it is convenient and expedient. Our commitment to the Geneva Conventions gives us the moral high ground. This is true in both a long war against radical terrorists and a war for the hearts and minds of people from every religion and every nation. If we compromise our values, the terrorists win. As Senator McCAIN has said: "This is not about who the terrorists are, this is about who we are."

The United States was one of the prime architects of the Geneva Conventions and other international laws. Our goal was to protect prisoners of war in all kinds of armed conflicts and insure that no one would be outside the law of war. Coming shortly after World War II, they knew the horrors of war but they still chose to limit the inhumanity of war by establishing minimum protections of due process and humane treatment, even for those accused of grave breaches of the Conventions.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation has the finest military in the world. Our Nation also deserves to have the finest military justice system in the world. I oppose S. 3930 because it departs significantly from the tried and true procedures established in the UCMJ.

The United States has long served as the model for the world of a civilized society that effectively blends security and human liberty. When we refuse to observe the very international standards for the treatment of detainees, which we were so instrumental in developing, we provide encouragement for others around the world to do the same. Our British allies have demonstrated that these traditional principles can be adhered to without distinguishing the ability to provide for the security of its citizens. We must do likewise.

Mr. Speaker, the treatment and trials of detainees by the United States is too important not to do it right. In the words of Jonathan Winthrop, often quoted by President Reagan, "for we must consider that we shall be as a City upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us." Let us act worthy of ourselves and our Nation.

So, Mr. Speaker, I stand in opposition to this legislation. But I do not stand alone. I stand with former Secretary of State Colin Powell. I stand with former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs John Vesey. I stand with the 9/11 Families Opposed to Administration Efforts to Undermine Geneva Conventions. I stand with the retired federal judges and admirals and Judge Advocate Generals.

The bill before us is not the right way to do justice by the American people. I therefore cannot support it and I urge my colleagues to reject it. We have time to come up with a better product and we should. The American people deserve no less. The eyes of the world are upon us. Let us act worthy of ourselves.

MELANIE LOMAX

HON. DIANE E. WATSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise with great sadness to announce the untimely passing of my good friend Melanie Lomax.

The City of Los Angeles, California, and our Nation have lost one of the strongest advocates for civil rights. Attorney Melanie Lomax was a dedicated leader and committed fighter for the rights of the poor and voiceless.

When Melanie witnessed injustice towards others she spoke out vociferously regardless of who was involved. She was especially determined to hold the LAPD accountable for acts of excessive force and brutality while serving as President of the Los Angeles Police Commission.

Bright, articulate and focused, Melanie, god-daughter to former Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley, never wavered in her mission to help others. She felt deeply and emotionally about defenseless people and often found herself isolated while fighting unpopular causes. But she would always forge ahead in the cause of justice.

Melanie's untimely death is a substantial loss to all of us. It is hard to imagine anyone else stepping into the void she leaves with the same gusto, vigor, and fervor. She will be sorely missed.

RECOGNIZING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF AZERBAIJAN'S INDEPENDENCE

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, as Co-Chair of the Azerbaijan Caucus, I rise to congratulate one of our key democratic allies—the Republic of Azerbaijan—as it prepares to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of its independence on October 18.

Azerbaijan is one of the United States' leading allies on the war against terrorism, with the distinction of being among the first to offer our nation unconditional support; providing airspace and airport use for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. And, Azerbaijan was also the first Muslim nation to send troops to Iraq. Though bilateral cooperation on terrorism issues between the United States and Azerbaijan predates September 11, 2001, our relations were strengthened following their immediate, and heretofore unwavering, support against the war on terrorism.

Azerbaijan cooperates with the United States within international and regional institutions including the UN, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and NATO's Partnership for Peace program. Regionally, Azerbaijan works together with the United States within the framework of the Organization for Democracy and Development—GUAM which is comprised of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. GUAM was created as a political, economic and strategic alliance in order to collaboratively address common risks and threats and thereby strengthen the independence and sovereignty of its member states.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a standout nation among the South Caucasus countries, with a population of 8 million people and an ambitious economic policy. During the last decade Azerbaijan has been implementing structural reforms and adopting numerous laws and legislative changes, paving the way toward further integration with in the global economy. The nation has been moving toward a more diversified economy to achieve sustainable growth and to meet the social and development needs of its population.

Diversification of the economy and ensuring the development of non-oil sectors is a priority

for the government. This policy includes implementation of projects and programs that create favorable conditions for development of private entrepreneurship, attracting investment in non-oil sectors, creating new jobs, evaluation of potential industries and markets and development of infrastructure in the regions.

The last 15 years of independence has not been without challenges, but the country has grown stronger with each new challenge it faces. Let us today commend the Republic of Azerbaijan on their forthcoming 15th Anniversary celebrations. And, let us also commit ourselves to their continued development as a global partner against the terrorism, toward economic growth, diversification of energy resources, and strengthening stability and security in the region.

A BLUEPRINT FOR LEAVING IRAQ NOW

HON. JAMES P. MCGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 29, 2006

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, former Senator George McGovern and William R. Polk, founder and director of the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Chicago, have co-authored a new book, *Out of Iraq*, that is being released in October 2006 by Simon & Schuster.

I would like to share with my colleagues an excerpt published in the October edition of Harper's Magazine.

THE WAY OUT OF WAR

(By George S. McGovern and William R. Polk)

A BLUEPRINT FOR LEAVING IRAQ NOW

Staying in Iraq not an option. Many Americans who were among the most eager to invade Iraq now urge that we find a way out. These Americans include not only civilian "strategists" and other "hawks" but also senior military commanders and, perhaps most fervently, combat soldiers. Even some of those Iraqis regarded by our senior officials as the most pro-American are determined now to see American military personnel leave their country. Polls show that as few as 2 percent of Iraqis consider Americans to be liberators. This is the reality of the situation in Iraq. We must acknowledge the Iraqis' right to ask us to leave, and we should set a firm date by which to do so.

We suggest that phased withdrawal should begin on or before December 31, 2006, with the promise to make every effort to complete it by June 30, 2007.

Withdrawal is not only a political imperative but a strategic requirement. As many retired American military officers now admit, Iraq has become, since the invasion, the primary recruiting and training ground for terrorists. The longer American troops remain in Iraq, the more recruits will flood the ranks of those who oppose America not only in Iraq but elsewhere.

Withdrawal will not be without financial costs, which are unavoidable and will have to be paid sooner or later. But the decision to withdraw at least does not call for additional expenditures. On the contrary, it will effect massive savings. Current U.S. expenditures run at approximately \$246 million each day, or more than \$10 million an hour, with costs rising steadily each year. Although its figures do not include all expenditures, the Congressional Research Service listed direct