

military spokesman, General William Caldwell, stated this effort was a failure and had “not met our overall expectations for sustaining a reduction in the level of violence.”

Each of these instances has something in common. Each failed to improve the long-term security situation and the violence and death toll, which continues to rise. Even the Commander of U.S. Central Command has testified that top military commanders in Iraq do not believe increasing the number of troops is the right approach. He stated, in fact, more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more of their own responsibility.

We know the solution is not to send more troops to Iraq without a real plan to secure the peace. Fifty-five percent of Americans do not believe more troops can secure Baghdad, and 59 percent of Americans want redeployment of American forces, this includes two-thirds of the Latino population, who want our troops brought home. A study done by the Pew Hispanic Center found that 75 percent of Latinos now believe that the U.S. made the wrong choice in using military force in Iraq.

Americans, as you know, voted November 7 for a new direction in Iraq, and we must deliver that promise. Our Nation needs a policy to secure and stabilize Iraq, one that constructively engages in diplomacy and partners with our neighbors there. We need a plan that ensures that there are no permanent U.S. military bases in Iraq and a plan to decrease the U.S. presence there. We need a plan which investigates and punishes companies like Halliburton engaged in war profiteering and fraud, like the \$1.4 billion in unreasonable and unsupported charges by Halliburton which the Defense Contract Audit Agency identified.

We need a policy and a plan to put welfare of our service men and women first so that they come home, rejoin their families and receive the care that they deserve. This should also include services for all of our veterans, both men and women.

□ 1800

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIREN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. STUPAK addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ESCALATION OF TROOPS IN IRAQ

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker and Members, I come to the floor of the House this evening in advance of the President's speech that is scheduled for, I think, 9 p.m. this evening, where the President is going to announce his new

approach to dealing with the debacle that he has created in Iraq. He has coined it, “New Way Forward.” He has referred to it as a surge, but we all know what this is. This is an escalation.

The President of the United States is probably going to announce that the surge has already started. There are reports in the news already that about 90 advanced troops from the 82nd Airborne will arrive in Baghdad today, I believe. And so this so-called surge that the President has begun is one that is taking place without the support of the American people, without the support of many of the Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle.

Americans, and elected officials, in particular, are sick and tired of being misled, of not being told the truth, and trying to explain to our constituents what this war in Iraq is all about. Americans, basically, have come to the conclusion that this war has been mismanaged, that they have not been told the truth, that there were no weapons of destruction.

Oh, there were promises made. We were told by Mr. Rumsfeld that we would be welcomed with open arms; we would be seen as the liberators. The Iraqis see us as occupiers, and they want us out of their country.

We were told that we didn't have to worry about the cost of this war because there would be profits from the oil in Iraq that would not only help pay for the war but it would help to reconstruct the damage that has been done to Iraq by the occupation.

Oh, we were told not only would we have oil resources that would repay or pay for some of this damage, we were told that enough troops were going to be, Iraqi troops were going to be trained and that the numbers were growing and that they would soon be able to take over the security of Iraq.

None of that has happened. As a matter of fact, what we are finding is that our troops are being deserted in times of crisis and confrontation by Iraqi soldiers, that they are being undermined, oftentimes, by Iraqi soldiers, and that our troops don't know a Shiite from a Sunni from a Kurd. And they are very much so in harm's way because they really don't know what they are fighting, why they are fighting and why they are in Iraq.

But this President plans on sending about 24,000 U.S. troops to Iraq. Five brigades of U.S. troops, about 20,000 soldiers will be deployed to Baghdad to suppress sectarian violence. An additional 4,000 troops will be sent to the Anwar Province to pursue insurgents.

Responsibility for security, he says, in all of the country's provinces will be turned over to Iraqi forces by November 2007. Oh, haven't we heard those kinds of promises before.

How can we put any faith in the President of the United States, the Commander-in-Chief, who first refused to send adequate numbers into the war? They were being told by their

commanders and their generals that they needed more troops, but, no, Mr. Rumsfeld convinced, I suppose, this President that we didn't need it, and so we didn't send them. And now, at the 12th hour, we are talking about sending more troops.

It is too late. It is too late to have this escalation. We have lost. We have mismanaged. We have created an untenable situation, and there is a civil war going on in Iraq, and we can't manage it. We cannot undo the harm that we have created, and it does not make good sense to send our troops into harm's way.

Not only is our Commander-in-Chief sending more troops, the length of Army deployments will be increased from 12 months to 15 months. Marine deployment will be increased to 12 months from 7 months. In addition, the amount of time they spend at home to rest before returning to Iraq will be shortened.

Mr. President, mothers, fathers and families want their children and their relatives home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE PRESIDENT'S TROOP SURGE IS TANTAMOUNT TO AN ESCALATION OF THE IRAQ WAR AND WILL NOT MAKE AMERICA OR IRAQ SAFER

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let me thank you for your leadership and presence during this important debate and discussion.

I almost don't know where to start. Because when you begin to discuss the issue of Iraq, you must be very cautious.

One, the constitutional premise is that the President is the Commander-in-Chief. The immediate inquiries of the press of how are you going to translate the vote of the American people into action, you are just the Congress; the Commander-in-Chief has every right to command the troops. And might I say that this President has commanded the troops. As I visited Afghanistan and Iraq, every one of those soldiers has stood up and said, I was willing to come and follow the orders of my Commander-in-Chief. I respect them, thank them, thank their families.

That is why I feel a special obligation to begin to renew the energy and the outrage that many of us expressed during the debate of 2002 when we had hoped that we would have secured

enough votes to oppose the attack on Iraq.

But I am not here to recapture past failures or successes. What I am here to say is that it is imperative, it is the demand that the American people have made. Not that we follow opinion polls. For if you look at the opinion polls, 57 percent of the American people are dissatisfied with the way Iraq has been handled. Larger numbers than that are not supporting the escalating of the war.

So many might say, as I imagine the Commander-in-Chief will say tonight, I am not here to follow opinion polls. I do say that any elected person has a right to define their own anchor.

But what we are here to do is do right by the American people. We are here to do right by the 22,000 maimed soldiers who have returned who are in the Nation's hospitals, who we have not seen, with amputated arms and legs, those that I have seen in MASH units with imploded brains because of the IEDs. We are here to do right by the 3,000 plus who have died and the families who are mourning their loss. We are here to do right by the soldiers who have said, send me.

I believe that the plan that the President will offer tonight is a misdirected plan. It is a wrong plan. And let me tell you why. Upping or plussing or surging the troops should have happened 3 years ago. This is a war that has lasted longer than World War II. The idea of more troops without a mission is not effective.

Listen to the generals who have testified before our committees. Listen to the generals who have now been given early retirement, who did not agree with the plussing up. Why is it that the President has often said, I will listen to my generals, and all of a sudden these generals have been deposed?

And then, of course, the question is a realistic question. Twenty thousand troops for the city of Baghdad, now captured by the civil war? Not 20,000 troops to help us in Mosul or Tikrit, but 20,000 troops to go to Baghdad, a city like Mexico City, or a city that is like another, a huge teeming city, 25 million plus. And our soldiers will now be the police officers knocking on doors looking to drag people out of their houses. That is not a military operation.

And then, of course, let me say to you that we did an operation upsurge or plus from June to October 2006. The purpose was to secure Baghdad. But as the Baker Commission has indicated, and I hope the President has read, this is a sectarian civil war. There is a need for diplomacy instead of or in front of a military action.

I passed an amendment that said that the redeployment or the number of times that you have been redeployed should be taken into consideration before you are being called up. None of that will occur.

We don't have 20,000 troops; and our soldiers have been over two times,

three times, four times, more than any occurrence in Vietnam. In order to get the 20,000, we must redeploy soldiers who have been on the battlefield, who are battle worn, not individuals who refuse to serve their country but are battle worn and battle torn.

What are we for? I am for the rebuilding of the military. I am for the replenishing of our equipment. I want us to be strong on defense. But I am not for an escalating war that has no mission and no end.

We must have political diplomacy. We must not send our soldiers. We must have a new direction.

Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to speak on the most critical issue facing our country, the war in Iraq. This misguided, mismanaged, and costly debacle was preemptively launched by President Bush in March 2003 despite the opposition of me and 125 other Members of the House. To date, the war in Iraq has lasted longer than America's involvement in World War II, the greatest conflict in all of human history.

The Second World War ended in complete and total victory for the United States and its allies. But then again, in that conflict America was led by a great Commander-in-Chief who had a plan to win the war and secure the peace, listened to his generals, and sent troops in sufficient numbers and sufficiently trained and equipped to do the job.

Mr. Speaker, I say with sadness that we have not that same quality of leadership throughout the conduct of the Iraq war. The results, not surprisingly, have been disastrous. To date, the war in Iraq has claimed the lives of 3,015 brave service, men and women, 115 in December and 13 in the first 9 days of this month. More than 22,000 Americans have been wounded, many suffering the most horrific injuries. American taxpayers have paid nearly \$400 billion to sustain this misadventure.

Based on media reports, tonight President Bush will not be offering any new strategy for success in Iraq, just an increase in force levels of 20,000 American troops. This reported plan will not provide lasting security for Iraqis. It is not what the American people have asked for, nor what the American military needs. It will impose excessive and unwarranted burdens on military personnel and their families.

Mr. Speaker, the architects of the fiasco in Iraq would have us believe that "surging" at least 20,000 more soldiers into Baghdad and nearby Anbar province is a change in military strategy that America must embrace or face future terrorist attacks on American soil. Nothing could be further from the truth, as we learned last year when the "surge" idea first surfaced among neoconservatives.

Mr. Speaker, the troop surge the President will announce tonight is not new and, judging from history, will not work. It will only succeed in putting more American troops in harm's way for no good reason and without any strategic advantage. Troop surges have been tried several times in the past. The success of these surges is, to put it charitably, has been underwhelming. Let's briefly review the record:

1. Operation Together Forward, (June–October 2006): In June the Bush administration announced a new plan for securing Baghdad by increasing the presence of Iraqi Security Forces. That plan failed, so in July the White

House announced that additional American troops would be sent into Baghdad. By October, a U.S. military spokesman, Gen. William Caldwell, acknowledged that the operation and troop increase was a failure and had "not met our overall expectations of sustaining a reduction in the levels of violence." [CNN, 12/19/06. Washington Post, 7/26/06. Brookings Institution, 12/21/06.]

2. Elections and Constitutional Referendum (September–December 2005): In the fall of 2005 the Bush administration increased troop levels by 22,000, making a total of 160,000 American troops in Iraq around the constitutional referendum and parliamentary elections. While the elections went off without major violence these escalations had little long-term impact on quelling sectarian violence or attacks on American troops. [Brookings Institution, 12/21/06. www.icasualties.org]

3. Constitutional Elections and Fallujah (November 2004–March 2005): As part of an effort to improve counterinsurgency operations after the Fallujah offensive in November 2004 and to increase security before the January 2005 constitutional elections U.S. forces were increased by 12,000 to 150,000. Again there was no long-term security impact. [Brookings Institution, 12/21/06. New York Times, 12/2/04.]

4. Massive Troop Rotations (December 2003–April 2004): As part of a massive rotation of 250,000 troops in the winter and spring of 2004, troop levels in Iraq were raised from 122,000 to 137,000.

Yet, the increase did nothing to prevent Muqtada al-Sadr's Najaf uprising and April of 2004 was the second deadliest month for American forces. [Brookings Institution, 12/21/06. www.icasualties.org. USA Today, 3/4/04]

Mr. Speaker, stemming the chaos in Iraq, however, requires more than opposition to military escalation. It requires us to make hard choices. Our domestic national security, in fact, rests on redeploying our military force from Iraq in order to build a more secure Middle East and continue to fight against global terrorist networks elsewhere in the world. Strategic redeployment of our armed forces in order to rebuild our nation's fighting capabilities and renew our critical fight in Afghanistan against the Taliban and al-Qaeda is not just an alternative strategy. It's a strategic imperative.

Mr. Speaker, it is past time for a new direction that can lead to success in Iraq. We cannot wait any longer. Too many Americans and Iraqis are dying who could otherwise be saved.

I believe the time has come to debate, adopt, and implement the Murtha Plan for strategic redeployment. I am not talking about "immediate withdrawal," "cutting and running," or surrendering to terrorists, as the architects of the failed Administration Iraq policy like to claim. And I certainly am not talking about staying in Iraq forever or the foreseeable future.

I am talking about a strategic redeployment of troops that:

Reduces U.S. troops in Iraq to 60,000 within six months, and to zero by the end of 2007, while redeploying troops to Afghanistan, Kuwait, and the Persian Gulf. Engages in diplomacy to resolve the conflict within Iraq by convening a Geneva Peace Conference modeled on the Dayton Accords. Establishes a Gulf Security initiative to deal with the aftermath of

U.S. redeployment from Iraq and the growing nuclear capabilities of Iran. Puts Iraq's reconstruction back on track with targeted international funds. Counters extremist Islamic ideology around the globe through longterm efforts to support the creation of democratic institutions and press freedoms.

As the Center for American Progress documents in its last quarterly report (October 24, 2006), the benefits of strategic redeployment are significant:

Restore the strength of U.S. ground troops. Exercise a strategic shift to meet global threats from Islamic extremists. Prevent U.S. troops from being caught in the middle of a civil war in Iraq. Avert mass sectarian and ethnic cleansing in Iraq. Provide time for Iraq's elected leaders to strike a power-sharing agreement. Empower Iraq's security forces to take control. Get Iraqis fighting to end the occupation to lay down their arms. Motivate the U.N., global, and regional powers to become more involved in Iraq. Give the U.S. the moral, political, and military power to deal with Iran's attempt to develop nuclear weapons. Prevent an outbreak of isolationism in the United States.

Mr. Speaker, rather than surging militarily for the third time in a year, the president should surge diplomatically. A further military escalation would simply mean repeating a failed strategy. A diplomatic surge would involve appointing an individual with the stature of a former secretary of state, such as Colin Powell or Madeleine Albright, as a special envoy. This person would be charged with getting all six of Iraq's neighbors—Iran, Turkey, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait—involved more constructively in stabilizing Iraq. These countries are already involved in a bilateral, self-interested and disorganized way.

While their interests and ours are not identical, none of these countries wants to live with an Iraq that, after our redeployment, becomes a failed state or a humanitarian catastrophe that could become a haven for terrorists or a hemorrhage of millions more refugees streaming into their countries.

The high-profile envoy would also address the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the role of Hezbollah and Syria in Lebanon, and Iran's rising influence in the region. The aim would not be necessarily to solve these problems, but to prevent them from getting worse and to show the Arab and Muslim world that we share their concerns about the problems in this region.

Mr. Speaker, the President's plan has not worked. Doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result is, as we all know, a definition of insanity. It is time to try something new. It is time for change. It is time for a new direction.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. WELCH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WELCH of Vermont addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms.

MILLENDER-McDONALD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TIMES ARE CHANGING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, ladies and gentlemen that were watching or here in the gallery, I am a freshman Congressperson. I am from Tennessee. And last March I came up and I stood in that gallery and I looked down at this body and I wondered if I wanted to be a part of it. The decision was made partially by me by filing for office and waging a campaign. But the decision was eventually made by my voters in the 9th District in Tennessee who elected me. They elected 49 new Congresspeople, 41 of which are Democrats; and we have just completed our first week in office.

I felt like it was appropriate at the finish of this week, Mr. Speaker, to give some type of report to the people of what we have experienced as freshman Congresspeople. I don't come here like Alexander Haig might have and assume control. We have that freshman president, and I am not that freshman president, nor did I seek to be one. It is PAUL HODES from New Hampshire who is a very fine freshman legislator.

But a lot has happened in this week. We all came up here with a lot of interest in seeing America be better. And America is better. In just the one week we have been here, we have been privileged to be a part of this body. We have seen the first lady ever elected Speaker of a legislative body of this nature in the United States elected, NANCY PELOSI. It was a historic moment.

And earlier today one of our freshmen, Congressman BILBRAY, talked about the fact that some years ago on this date the resolution was introduced to give women the right to vote. That resolution passed in my home State of Tennessee in 1920, when Tennessee was the perfect 36, and gave women the right to vote.

It has been a long time, and a change was coming, and a change has happened. And it is great to have a woman, an opportunity seen with the election of NANCY PELOSI.

This week, we have seen changes in the way lobbyists and legislators relate, and that is one of the reasons why I think Congress has one of the worst reputations of any collective group of professionals or government officials in this country and why some of us were elected, to see a change in that culture. And ties were cut between lobbyists and legislators which never should have existed. I was proud to vote for that and see that as part of the 100 hours of change that the Democratic leadership is bringing about.

The PAYGO policy brings some fiscal sanity to what has otherwise been a kind of runaway process where this country is in great economic distress. We have had three different bipartisan groups that we have had orientation sessions with. In each one of those classes we have been told that our economic situation is dire. The same about our foreign policy and the same about our environment and our health care system.

There are difficult times in America. It seems good, but it really isn't. The underpinnings are not there.

This week PAYGO is important. Cutting the ties between legislators and lobbyists was important. And it was also extremely important what we did today. We passed the minimum wage.

And I can't go without quoting President Franklin Roosevelt, one of my heroes, who said, "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have too much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little." Today we provided for those that have too little and we did right.

And I want to quote Hubert Humphrey, a great American whose bust I looked at outside of the Senate, looked at with reverence. "The moral test of government is how it treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children; those who are in the twilight of life, the aged; and those who are in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped."

I think in the tradition of some great Americans we have acted today on the minimum wage. We will act on stem cell research and other issues. And we've acted on the 9/11 Commission reports. Most of this was done in a bipartisan manner. Not all of it.

And it has given me the opportunity, which I want to take today, to quote a line which I have read for years and thought about when I thought about these halls, not thinking of myself being a Member of this body, which is a great honor coming to me at a late time in life, after spending 24 years in the Tennessee State Senate.

"Come Senators, Congressmen, please heed the call. Don't stand in the doorway, don't block up the hall."

□ 1815

For he who gets hurt will be he who has stalled. There's a battle outside and it's raging. It'll soon shake your windows and rattle your walls. For the times they are a changin'. Bob Dylan, Robert Zimmerman, was right. The times they are a changin'.

There is a Democratic majority. I am proud to be of it, as are 41 other freshmen. I can testify today that America is in better shape than it was a week ago.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIRES). The gentleman is reminded to