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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord, our God, source of all life and love, the Members of Congress join with all the people of this Nation as we pray for our military troops deployed in harm's way in Afghanistan, Somalia and elsewhere, but especially in Iraq. Protect them, Lord. Strengthen them and guide them. Be for them a light, a mighty force and a safe refuge. Speak to their families words of consolation and assurance.

May all military efforts bring about security and peace and make this nation grateful and worthy of their sacrifice.

"Lord, be a stronghold for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of distress" both now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BISHOP of New York led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

OPPOSING THE PRESIDENT'S PLAN FOR IRAQ

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, the President's new plan is a plan for more door-to-door fighting, more civil war, more civilian casualties, more troop deaths, more wasted money, more destabilization in the region and more separation from the world community.

Does anyone in this administration have any sense at all? They are sending our troops into the middle of a civil war, setting the stage for a wider war.

The President is blaming Iran for attacks on Americans in Iraq; he is vowing to disrupt Iran. He is adding an aircraft carrier to the shores of Iran. He is promising to give Patriot missiles to our friends and allies. Isn't one war enough for this President?

Congress needs to challenge the position of the President, take necessary steps to bring our troops home. We need to begin talks with Iran and Syria, not blame them for our misguided war in Iraq. Diplomacy is the only way to avoid a widening war. If we follow this President's path of war, we will get more war.

OPPOSING THE PRESIDENT'S PLAN FOR IRAQ

(Mr. KELLER of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to discuss the troop surge in Iraq. I believe the motives of President Bush and other prominent leaders, such as Senator JOHN MCCAIN, who are pushing for more troops, are pure and well meaning. I believe they sincerely think this is the best way forward. Three years ago, I would have agreed with them. However, at this late stage, interjecting more young American troops into the crossfire of an Iraqi civil war is simply not the right approach. We are not going to solve an Iraqi political problem with an American military solution.

Regardless of how one feels about the war in Iraq or the proposed surge in

troops, as long as our American troops are in harm's way, it is our duty and responsibility to support these troops one hundred percent.

May God bless our troops and our country.

OPPOSING THE PRESIDENT'S PLAN FOR IRAQ

(Mr. BISHOP of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, after watching last night's Presidential address, I must question whether or not our President actually listens to anyone besides the same neoconservative ideologues who are the architects of the fiasco in Iraq and who have insisted that victory in Iraq is just around the corner.

Clearly the President is not listening to his top generals on the ground who have expressed doubt in the President's call for a surge in troops; nor is he listening to the advice of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, which has called for a redeployment of troops and additional training for Iraqi security forces; nor is he listening to the Iraqi people, 78 percent of whom say the presence of American troops is adding to, rather than controlling, the violence.

Most importantly, the President isn't listening to the American people, who sent a clear message last November that his policies in Iraq aren't working, and that a change of course is needed.

Mr. Speaker, I am opposed to the President's plan to escalate this war. I believe the solutions to the problems in Iraq are political ones. And I will support my colleagues in using the constitutional authority vested in the Congress to control our future involvement in Iraq.

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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SUPPORTING THE PRESIDENT'S PLAN FOR IRAQ

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Last night, the President addressed the Nation about the war in Iraq. No one is happy that we are at war, but we must remember that we were attacked by the terrorists; that the war in Iraq is critical to the global war on terror, and we must continue to fight and defend against the terrorists there as much as at home.

We must maintain our efforts to provide security and stability for the Iraqi government and its people until they are able to do so themselves. We cannot walk away or we will face increased bloodshed at home and abroad.

I applaud the President for recognizing the need for a new direction in the Iraq war in order to achieve this and presenting tangible alternatives to the problems we currently face there.

I support making sure that the Iraqis take the lead and act aggressively and swiftly against any violence. Prime Minister Maliki has issued a commitment to meet these challenges, and the President must hold him accountable to this pledge. It is my hope the proposals put forth will lead to success in Iraq.

Our troops deserve unwavering support, and this new direction the President has implemented must show progress. Now is the time to unite as Americans and not as partisan politicians.

I look forward to the day when a free and democratic Iraqi government and its people can defend themselves and be a model for others in the Middle East.

ALICE PAUL

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Alice Paul, a woman who dedicated her life to equality, to give her a Congressional Gold Medal.

Alice Paul was a remarkable person who made America more democratic by fighting for equal rights and creating opportunities for women to participate in politics. Thanks to Alice Paul, NANCY PELOSI was able to become Speaker of the United States House of Representatives. Even after her death, her influence continues to be significant on our society and culture.

Yesterday marked the day that on January 10, 1918, the House of Representatives first voted to give women the right to vote by approving the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Alice Paul spearheaded the effort to pass the 19th amendment, granting all American women the right to vote.

Because of Alice Paul's legacy, my daughters, Natalie and Jennifer, have the right to participate in the electoral process. My grandchildren and their children will forever have this right.

Alice Paul's contribution to America cannot be understated. Without her, women may not enjoy many of the rights they have today.

Please cosponsor this important legislation.

SOCIAL SECURITY FOR ILLEGALS?

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, in the darkness of back rooms and the whisper of secret phone calls, American citizens may have been betrayed. Has our government become the Judas?

For the past 2 years, our Federal Government has secretly negotiated and cooperated with the Mexican government to provide illegals a reward for breaking American law. Not only will illegal entry be forgiven by amnesty but, get this, illegals will be able to apply for and collect American Social Security. The cost of such betrayal is millions of dollars. Hardworking citizens are going to be robbed of Social Security money that they are entitled to. Now many Americans and legal immigrants may not receive Social Security benefits because they will be going to illegals.

Mr. Speaker, illegals are not citizens of this country, and they should not be taking the benefits entitled to law-abiding American citizens and legal immigrants. It is morally wrong to expect Americans to pay money to people that are not even supposed to be on our soil. Illegals should not receive Social Security benefits. The welfare of America is being sold for 30 pieces of silver.

And that's just the way it is.

ESCALATION OF FAILURE

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DOGGETT. President Bush has been wrong at every step along the descent into chaos in Iraq, and he is wrong once again. The terrible price for his repeated miscalculations is paid for by the blood of the brave, by hundreds of billions of dollars squandered and by greater insecurity for our families. He has no new plan, just an old delusion. This isn't a surge. It is a costly, long-term escalation that only endangers more young Americans.

Apparently the only troops he will bring home are the many generals who disagree with him. He has rejected the advice of the Iraq Study Group. He has rejected military counsel. He has rejected the voices of the people and their elected representatives. And we must firmly reject his escalation of what can only be called a spend-and-bleed policy.

STEM CELL BILL

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, today the House will consider H.R. 3, an expansion of taxpayer funding for embryonic stem cell research. And while today's debate is sure to be full of rhetoric about the promise of future cures, let's be clear from the outset about what is working and what is not. Embryonic stem cell research, that is, research that requires the destruction of a living human embryo, is yet to produce a single cure or treatment in humans. Not one. What many say is a false hope.

The good news is that there is an alternative that is not only successfully treating human patients but doesn't require killing little human embryos. In fact, what many consider ethical, adult stem cell research has now provided dozens of laboratory successes, successful treatments of human patients and even a handful of FDA-approved therapies.

Mr. Speaker, tax dollars are not unlimited. They should be directed towards methods that are proven to work and ethical research. H.R. 3 fails to do this.

IN SUPPORT OF EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, as a physician, a mother and a representative of many who would benefit from H.R. 3, in strong support of H.R. 3 which would expand Federal funding for embryonic stem cell research, increase stem cell lines and impose strict ethical guidelines. These stem cells would otherwise be destroyed. So this is not a faith issue, a theological conundrum or a partisan issue. It is a public health issue and one of maintaining this country's leadership in the world.

This bill is important to minorities and the Congressional Black Caucus because embryonic stem cell research will help reduce and even eliminate the health care disparities that now leave African Americans and other people of color more likely to be disabled or die from the diseases it can cure.

As a physician I have treated individuals with some of these diseases—Parkinson's, sickle cell, ALS and others—and despite using all we had available too often stood helplessly with their families as the conditions took their toll. Today we can change that and we must.

As a mother and a grandmother of three, I ask my colleagues to support H.R. 3 and create a healthier and better country for all of us.