

here is something to keep in mind: The American public already knows it is time to stop digging. Now they are ready to hear Congress say it out loud.

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

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

HONORING MUHAMMAD ALI ON HIS 65TH BIRTHDAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a man known as "The Greatest," Muhammad Ali on the occasion of his 65th birthday. We passed the legislation today, but unfortunately I didn't have a chance to speak. Those that know me know that I am a huge boxing fan, and Muhammad Ali is certainly one of the reasons why I enjoy the sport so much.

I can recall watching his fights and being in awe of his style and gracefulness in the ring. He was a masterful self-promoter, and won over throngs of fans and media alike with his charm and charisma. But it is his undeniable skill that kept him at the top of his game. His style is something that has often been imitated but never duplicated.

Muhammad Ali defeated almost every top heavyweight in his era, an era which has been called the Golden Age of Heavyweight Boxing. Ali was named "Fighter of the Year" by Ring Magazine more times than any other fighter and was involved in Ring Magazine "Fight of the Year" bouts more than any other fighter.

He is an inductee into the International Boxing Hall of Fame and holds wins over seven other Hall of Fame inductions. He is also one of only three boxers to be named "Sportsman of the Year" by Sports Illustrated.

But Muhammad Ali was more than an athlete, he was a revolutionary. He was a man that was not afraid to stand up for what he believed in. His prowess in the ring pales in comparison to his character and integrity as a human being. He refused to fight in the Vietnam war, famously stating, "I ain't got no quarrel with those Vietcong." His actions led to his banishment from boxing in the United States and forced him to fight abroad.

Near the end of 1967, Ali was stripped of his title by the Professional Boxing Commission and would not be allowed to fight professionally for more than 3 years. He was also convicted for refusing induction into the Army and sentenced to 5 years in prison. Over the course of those years in exile, Ali fought to appeal his conviction. He

stayed in the public spotlight and supported himself by giving speeches, primarily at rallies on college campuses, that opposed the Vietnam war. In 1970, he was allowed to fight again, and in late 1971 the Supreme Court reversed his convictions.

When I was a law student at Case Western Reserve University, Muhammad Ali was scheduled to speak. I was driving down the street in this little boxcar, and I looked out my window to the right, and who was walking down the street but Muhammad Ali. I rolled my window down in my modest way and said, "What are you doing walking down the street? Get in my car."

Muhammad Ali got in my car.

I had two little boys in the back seat, and throughout the ride to the campus he recited poetry to these two young men.

When we arrived at campus, I said, "Mr. Ali, do you have a ride back to the airport?"

He said, "No."

I said, "Now you do. You've got a ride."

So he spoke. We drove the young people home to their parents. One little boy got out of the car and ran up to the house and said, "Mommy, mommy, guess who is in the car? Muhammad Ali."

That mom slapped the little boy and said, "Stop lying and get in this house."

Muhammad Ali gets out of the house and goes to the door and knocks on the door, and the mother almost fainted.

So then I drive him back to the airport.

That was such a wonderful experience, to see this man of such great talent spend so much time with these young people.

I will never forget the opportunities that I had to meet Muhammad Ali. On another occasion he came to speak in Cleveland connected with Warith Deen Muhammad, the son of Elijah Muhammad. But Mr. Speaker, it is such a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the life of the man known as "The Greatest," Muhammad Ali.

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

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

THE KUCINICH PLAN FOR IRAQ

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, Congress is beginning to focus on the necessity to take a new direction with respect to Iraq. There are some in the administration who are saying well, there is no plan. What can we do? We have to stay the course. We have to send more

troops. We have to make a renewed effort.

Once again I am offering for the attention of this Congress a plan that I put together that meets the requirements of being able to bring our troops home and create stability in Iraq and reunite the United States with the world community in the cause of peace and security.

Here are the elements of the Kucinich plan:

First, the U.S. announces it will end the occupation, close military bases and withdraw.

The insurgency has been fueled by the occupation and the prospect of a long-term presence, as indicated by the building of permanent bases. A U.S. declaration of intention to withdraw troops and close bases will help dampen the insurgency which has been inspired to resist colonization and fight invaders and those who have supported U.S. policy. Furthermore, this will provide an opening for parties in Iraq and in the region to set the stage toward negotiations and peaceful settlement.

Second, the U.S. announces it will use existing funds to bring the troops and the necessary equipment home.

Congress appropriated \$70 billion in bridge funds on October 1 for the war. Money from this and other DOD accounts can be used to fund the troops in the field over the next few months and to pay for the cost of the return of the troops, which has been estimated at between 5 and \$7 billion while a political settlement is being negotiated and preparations are made for a transition to an international security and peacekeeping force.

Number three, order a simultaneous return of all U.S. contractors to the United States and turn over all contracting work to the Iraqi government.

The contracting process has been rife with corruption with contractors stealing from the U.S. Government and cheating the Iraqi people, taking large contracts and giving a few percentages to Iraqi subcontractors. Reconstruction activities must be reorganized and closely monitored in Iraq by the Iraqi government with the assistance of the international community. The massive corruption as it relates to the U.S. contractors should be investigated by congressional committees and Federal grand juries. The lack of tangible benefits, the lack of accountability for billions of dollars while millions of Iraqis do not have a means of financial support, nor substantive employment, cries out for justice. It is noteworthy that after the first Gulf War, Iraqis reestablish electricity within 3 months despite sanctions. Four years into the U.S. occupation, there is no water or reliable electricity in Baghdad despite massive funding from the U.S. and the Madrid Conference. The greatest mystery involves the activities of private security companies who function as mercenaries. Reports of false flag operations must be investigated by an international tribunal.