Al-Muhajir, Osama bin Laden's latest lieutenant in Iraq, said this. He said, ''The fire has not and will not be put out and our swords, which have been colored with your blood, are thirsty for more of your rotting heads.''

Sheik Hassan Nasrallah, the leader of Hezbollah, said this, ''We have discovered how to hit the Jews where they are the most vulnerable. The Jews love life, so that is what we shall take away from them. We are going to win because they love life and we love death.''

Mr. Speaker, then we hear Democrats in this body say things like, ''The savagery of the terrorists is not relevant,'' or even the most senior Democrat in this House is quoted as saying, ''I don't take sides for or against Hezbollah, or for or against Israel.'' The senior Democrat in the other body said, ''This war is lost.''

Mr. Speaker, that kind of blind relativism that deliberately ignores all truth and equates merciless terrorism with free nations defending themselves and their innocent citizens is more dangerous to humanity than terrorism itself, and it is proof that liberals completely misunderstand the enemy that we face.

Osama bin Laden's deputy, Al-Zawahiri, said this. He made it clear in his book, Knights Under the Prophet's Banner, al Qaeda's most important short-term strategic goal is to seize control of a state, or part of a state, somewhere in the Muslim world. He wrote, ''Confronting the enemies of Islam and launching Jihad against them require a Muslim authority, established on Muslim land. Without achieving this goal, our actions will mean nothing.''

For God's sake, I hope we're listening to people like that. Mr. Speaker, such a Jihadist state would be the ideal launching pad for future attacks on the West.

Bin Laden himself has stated, ''The whole world is watching this war and the two adversaries. It's either victory and glory, or misery and humiliation.''

Mr. Speaker, the terrorists regard Iraq as their central front in their war against humanity; and if we're to understand our enemy and this war, we must recognize Iraq as the central front in our war against Jihad. Our courageous and noble soldiers understand that, and our enemy certainly understands that.

Osama bin Laden himself said, ''The most important and serious issue today for the whole world is this Third World War. It is raging in the land of the two rivers, Iraq. The world's millstone and pillar is in Baghdad, the capital of the caliphate.''

Mr. Speaker, if Democrats are correct that this struggle in Iraq is not crucial to winning the war against Islamist Jihad, then for God's sake I wish they would explain that to the terrorists, because they don't understand it.

Brink Lindsey put this all succinctly. He said, ''Here is the grim truth: We are only one act of madness away from a social cataclysm unlike anything our country has ever known. After a handful of such acts, who knows what kind of civilizational breakdown might be in store?''

Mr. Speaker, we simply cannot deny that we are fighting a war against an insidiously dangerous and evil ideology that is bent on the destruction of the Western World, and they would like nothing better than to decapitate this country by detonating a nuclear blast 100 yards from here. To allow Jihadists to declare victory in Iraq will serve only to hasten such a day.

The free nations of the world once had opportunity to address the insidious rise of the Nazi ideology in its formative years when it could have been dispatched without great cost. But they delayed, and the result was atomic bombs falling on cities in the world, 50 million people dead worldwide, and the swastika's shadow nearly plunging the planet into Cimmerian night.

Mr. Speaker, Jihadists believe they have a critical advantage over the free world. They believe their will is stronger than ours and that they need only to persevere; and, Mr. Speaker, the words of neutrality and retreat have only encouraged them in that belief.

We must realize that this is a war that is fundamentally a battle between good and evil, between light and darkness, between individual freedom and totalitarian repression; and we must realize that our enemy is absolutely blinded with an absolute hate for all the Western World.

They also recognize that America is the flagship of human freedom, and if America allows terrorists to conquer us both on the battlefield and in our will to fight the result will be that humanity will be left to face a future that is dark beyond expression.

Mr. Speaker, I think that probably Ronald Reagan could close this in the best way. He said to our soldiers who nobly fought in Vietnam, ''Let us tell those who fought in that war that we will never again ask young men to fight and possibly die in a war our government is afraid to win.''

And I'm afraid sometimes that we forget the heroism of the past. So let me just close with a prayer that one of our great Presidents, Franklin Roosevelt, said many years ago, as today we mark the 63rd anniversary of the D–Day invasion to liberate Europe from Hitler's fascism. U.S. forces alone sustained over 6,500 casualties in that 1 day, twice what we've endured in 5 years in Iraq. Knowing the gravity of the operation, Franklin Roosevelt, one of the Nation's most liberal Presidents, said and allow me to close in those words:

''Almighty God: Our sons, pride of our Nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our republic, our religion, and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity. They fight not for the lust of conquest. They fight to end conquest. They fight to liberate. They fight to let justice arise, and tolerance and goodwill among all Thy people. They yearn but for the end of battle, for their return to the haven of home. Some will never return. Embrace these, Father, and receive them, Thy heroic servants, into Thy kingdom. And for us at home, fathers, mothers, children, wives, sisters, and brothers of brave men overseas, help us, Almighty God, to rededicate ourselves in renewed faith in Thee in this hour of great sacrifice. And, O Lord, give us faith. Give us faith in Thee; faith in our sons; faith in each other; faith in our united crusade. Thy will be done, Almighty God. Amen.''

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

Every Member of this body has an obligation to do their best to share their beliefs in what they think we face with the American people and their constituents. I believe that this problem in Iraq that we've got to do better with is not the end of this at all.

For some reason, God spared us again with the JFK plot and allowed us to actually interdict that before another September 11 or even worse happened. For some reason, He granted us grace, but it is a matter of time, given the conflicts that we face.

To the people, this Iraq conflict is a chapter in the war that is mounted against us, and it's not the end, anymore than the first bombing in 1993 of the World Trade Center was the end. We denied that it happened, but we weren't willing to address it, and September 11 happened. But Iraq is no different in the long-term conflict which is a generational struggle with radical Islam.

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HISTORY AND THE WAR IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HARE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) will control the remaining 12 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that, and I appreciate the gentleman from Tennessee for organizing this special order tonight. As I had the privilege to sit here on the floor and listen to each of the speakers, it was a good education for me to listen to the eloquent voices that stand up so well and speak for defending our freedom.

To take us towards the to the point towards conclusion of this hour, it is hard to pick up on that tone that was left by Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, the understanding of over 6,000 casualties on that first day. I presume that they were those killed in action on that day, and on D–Day landing on Omaha Beach and on Utah Beach and on other points there in Europe. That is a place and a location that will always live in the history of this country. It is a place of glory. It is a place where freedom was begun to spread back across Europe.

As I look at that, and I see these 60-some years hence the D–Day landing, I can't help but think that those countries in Europe that have experienced freedom the longest seems to hang on to that freedom the least, and those countries in Europe, particularly eastern Europe, that have lived under tyranny the most recently, seem to want to grasp that freedom and hang on to it and fight for it and defend it more aggressively.

That is reflected, I think, in the troops that are part of our coalition troops in Iraq. In one of my trips over there, I found myself standing with a British general down in Basra. I looked around his headquarters there, and I exempt the Brits from that definition, because they have been tenacious and stood with us in Iraq and other places around the world, but as I looked around, the uniforms and the national flags that were on the shoulders of the coalition groups, Great Britain there, Australia there, Romanians there, there were Danish soldiers there, Bulgarian soldiers there, as I recall, and the list went on.

If I remember right, it was eight different countries represented at those headquarters. I just gathered them together at random, lined them up and stood there and had their picture taken so that I could go back and reference which countries were represented.

But it surely appeared to me that the nations that had lived most recently behind the iron curtain, the one that had the least experience with freedom, were the ones that were the most likely to be there serving with and defending us and defending the freedoms of the people of Iraq and helping with the liberation that is there. That does not take away from the commitments that we have seen on the part of the British, and especially the Australians. They will let me know always that they have been with us in every war, and sometimes they beat us there. So I count them among our best friends and our best allies.

But here we are, with a debate that is going on continually here on the floor of this Congress. The questions that come to mind, as I listen to this discussion, I have to ask this question, what do liberals think? What are they thinking about? How can they draw a conclusion that somehow, even though Iraq is the central front in the war on terror, and that al Qaeda has streamed into Iraq to fight us there, in a way, a lot like the bug light. It is attractive, millions of them have been killed. They were captured and taken out on the field of battle there in Iraq. I would a lot rather have it there than here, and so would the American people.

But how can one argue that the war against terror is not in Iraq, it is anywhere else where they might be. We listened to the gentleman from Tennessee go through a long place of places around the world where the Islamic terrorists have attacked, a lot of times, free people. With that list, you have to know that this is a global war. These jihadists are attacking people, not like them, and their belief that they could expand, they should expand the caliphate at least around Western Europe and to the United States and presumably to the rest of the world, how can one conclude then that you would take a place off the map that has been paid for with the blood of American patriots, coalition force patriots and the blood of Iraqis, and the treasure, and say we are going to give it up.

We have liberated it. We have earned it, we have paid for it, and, now, we are going to give it up and hand it over to the terrorists because the war on terror is not in Iraq, even though Osama bin Laden believed it was there, and al Zarqawi believed it was there and al Zawahiri believes it is there.

It is obvious, General Petraeus has told us over and other again, that's where the central front is. In fact, Speaker PELOSI conceded that same point in one of her remarks here in a failed attempt to override one of the President's vetoes on one of their unconstitutional appropriations bills, but Iraq is the central front in the war on terror.

To argue that we should pull out of there and let that country become whatever it would become, and that would be the off limits, safe ground and territory for al Qaeda to set up shop, because, politically, it was a good argument to make.

All right, I can't follow that rationale, I can't follow that. If it is logical, someone has got to explain that to me. So we have a liberal approach to this. It is a law enforcement problem. Yes, we should go after Osama bin Laden in the mountains between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and we should do that.

But we can fight this war on many fronts. We are a nation that can do that. Before this is over, we will have to do it in many places simultaneously. But we dare not walk away from this country that we pitched our future with. It was the right decision to go in there. I regret we had to.

The President didn't have a choice, and honest historians will write that into the history books. But if we should walk away from there now, under any kind of ruse or under any kind of an excuse, they will claim victory, and, you would see, not just sectarian violence and the devastating bloodshed that would come from that until such time a dictator emerges, it can rule that part of the world, that's not the worst of things. It is a bad thing, but it's not the worst of things.

What I believe you would see happen is the Sunni triangle would become the haven for the al Qaeda terrorists. They would set up shop there, unchallenged. We wouldn't have a way to go in and challenge them, because if we're not willing to take them out and keep them out of there now, why would we ever have the will to go in and take them out later. You know that the price would be higher, but the will wouldn't be materialized.

So I believe al Qaeda takes over the Sunni triangle, and that would be the base of their operations, and they would seek to expand that base of operations. But, worse than that, as you have right now, you have Iranians fighting a proxy war against the United States in Iraq, and in Afghanistan.

In fact, the motion to recommit with instructions that Mr. PENCE offered today illustrated how Iran is engaging themselves into the operations and in the support of the Taliban and Afghanistan. But they have been engaged in this proxy war against the United States in Iraq for 2½ or perhaps 3 years.

So if we were to pull out of there, you would see the hegemony of the Iranians go into the Shi'a regions and the influence of that, get entrenched further in the Shi'a regions of Iraq. Those regions control 70 to 80 percent of Iraq's oil. That would put Iran in control of the oil in that region, and the Strait of Hormuz, through which 42.6 percent of the world's export oil supply flows.

They would be in a position to decide when their treasure chest is full of oil money, when they have purchased enough scientists and enough nuclear capability and when they have developed enough delivery capability to terrorize the rest of the world and attack the rest of the world with their nuclear capability, pick their time, shut down or shut off, I call it the valve at the Strait of Hormuz, the place where the oil has to flow through. Through that strait, they can control the economy of the world.

If that valve is shut down, that sends the United States, the effect of the cost of our oil price is going through the roof, $3 a gallon gas would be cheap if that would happen. That would put the United States into at least a recession, probably a depression.

China would follow us. They are starved for the energy the same way, and their economy is linked to ours. If we catch a cold, they sneeze, because they sell so much product to us. The biggest losers in this would be the United States, China. The biggest winners, Iran in their hegemony; and the Russians who have more oil than they know what to do with.

That's why Putin is opposed to our operations there, and that's why we are getting a lot of grief out of Putin. This outfit over here says somehow says we shouldn't fight this in Iraq. The worst scenarios are the ones that I have talked about, and I anticipate a nuclear Iran, an Iran that is committed to annihilating Israel, and an Iran that is committed to annihilating the United States.

That's the rationale that we are dealing with here. I wonder if they can actually think through this. But I also wonder why anyone would think that the voters have hired 535 liberal generals to micromanage a global war on terror. In fact, I'd ask anyone in this

Chamber, come down, and I will yield time to you, and you tell me, name me a single general that was a liberal, a successful liberal general throughout all the history of the world.

I defy you to name one, there isn't one. One has never existed. One will never exist. Liberal generals don't succeed, 535 micromanaging liberal generals certainly don't succeed. It's not Congress' business to micro manage war. It's our job to fund them and support them and equip our troops, field an Army and a Navy, and declare a war if the situation calls for it. We haven't done so since World War II.

That's our job in this Congress, and that's our constitutional limitations. We need to live by those limitations and not be busting our buttons believing that we can do something here that isn't getting done, maybe, to the satisfaction of the people on that side of the aisle or mine, for that matter.

But there is a tremendous amount at stake, and it is more than the lives that have been invested so far, those that have been lost so far. God bless them for that. Zach Wamp spoke well to that, but the destiny of America and the destiny of the free world and the destiny of western civilization are all on the line matched up against a belief that they are going to restore a caliphate and renew a 100 year-old conflict that has been taking place here in the war, here in the world for hundreds of years.

We have a western civilization belief, we believe in freedom, this has been a country that has been founded on Judeo-Christian principles. That's some of the foundation of our strength, free enterprise market economy is another one, belief in the rule of law, and the foundational principles that we have in this Constitution, all tied together, all at risk, all matched up against people that don't believe in freedom, people that believe in death, people that execute homosexuals and female adulteresses, by the way.

Many people on this side of the aisle have a different belief system. I don't know why they would want to ally themselves with the interests of those who want to restore the caliphate, stone women and execute homosexuals and destroy your freedom and your freedom of religion. All of that is tied up in the risk of this.

FIND WAYS TO COME TOGETHER ON IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ISRAEL) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, tonight we do something different. Tonight we may do something that may even be unprecedented. Tonight I am joined on the floor of the House by my distinguished gentleman and my partner from Long Island, the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) and we will be joined by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST) and perhaps others.

Tonight, for the first time that I know of, Republicans and Democrats take to the floor of the House to discuss Iraq, but not to criticize one another about Iraq, not to beat each other up about Iraq, not to cast aspersions and blame about Iraq, not to talk about what divides us on Iraq, but to find ways to come together on Iraq.

I don't think that's happened before on this floor, but I do believe that the American people have an unquenchable thirst for Democrats and Republicans not to take the time of this Congress for sloganeering and name calling and the impugning of motives, but to take the time of this Congress to have an intellectual debate over those issues, to take the time of Congress to really honor those troops and our veterans, and to discuss not what is left and what is right, but to discuss the way forward.

The gentleman from New York knows that every time the people from our districts and the American people tune into C–SPAN, what they see are Republicans and Democrats arguing and fighting and criticizing, attacking each other's ideas, impugning each other's patriotism, impugning each other's motives. Tonight is different, because we are not going to discuss what separates us and divides us, but we are going to discuss what, in fact, can unite us.

War in Iraq has caused an outbreak of war on floor of the House of Representatives, and tonight we declare a ceasefire. For me, this is not just a professional obligation, but, for me, it is personal, for two reasons.

The first is that several days ago I made a phone call to the father of Matthew Baylis. He was killed in Iraq last week. It was small arms fire in Baghdad. I have no idea whether Matthew Baylis or Matthew Baylis himself was a Democrat or a Republican or an independent or perhaps not registered to vote.

□ 2015

I don't care. I do believe that Matthew Baylis would want Republicans and Democrats to come together to talk about the way forward; that Matthew Baylis and those like him, who died in the service of his country, would want us to spend more of our time talking about moving our country forward than moving our country to the left or the right.

And the second reason that this is personal for me, Mr. Speaker, is because it's being organized by the House Center Aisle Caucus, which is a bipartisan group of 50 Democrats and Republicans who have come together, based on certain propositions. The first proposition is, we can disagree agreeably; that we can state our differences without calling each other names; that we can debate the issues without having this Chamber sound like a fourth grade elementary school auditorium that's run amok.

And the other premise of the Center Aisle Caucus, Mr. Speaker, is that Democrats and Republicans will disagree on perhaps as much as 70 percent of the issues, which means we have a fundamental obligation to agree on the 30 percent that's left.

The problem is that even when we agree we haven't moved forward, because we've allowed our disagreements to paralyze areas where we, in fact, have consensus. And so the Center Aisle Caucus, which was sponsored, actually which was founded by the gentleman from Illinois, Congressman TIM JOHNSON, and me and the gentlewoman from Missouri, Congresswoman JO ANN EMERSON, and the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE), the Center Aisle Caucus has been meeting on an ongoing basis to find areas of agreement. We recently met with the ambassador from Iraq to the United States, and he gave us some ideas.

Before I yield time to my friend from New York, I just want to focus on some of the principles that we do agree on.

If you would listen to the debate here on the floor of the House of Representatives, Mr. Speaker, you would think that there are actually Members of Congress who want us to lose in Iraq. There's not a single Member of Congress who wants us to lose in Iraq.

If you listen to the debate on the floor of the House, Mr. Speaker, you would think that there are actually Members of Congress who do not care about the lives lost in Iraq. There is not a single Member of Congress who has a callous disregard for the lives lost in Iraq.

You would think that there are two types of Members of Congress, either Members of Congress who want defeat or Members of Congress who want to be in Iraq forever. I don't know of a single Member of Congress who supports either option.

The fact of the matter is we are not the enemies, Democrats and Republicans. Americans aren't the enemies. The enemies are the people that we're fighting, and we need to focus on this.

And the Center Aisle Caucus has gathered and has endorsed several principles that we're going to discuss tonight, and I'll run through them quickly and then yield my time to the gentleman from New York.

Here are the shared principles that Democrats and Republicans who are interested in finding common ground have articulated:

Number one, we support our Armed Forces. We want to make sure they have adequate force protection. We want to make sure they have everything they need to keep them safe and keep them sound, and we want to bring them home as fast as possible.