

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

TRAGIC ANNIVERSARY OF
“MISSION ACCOMPLISHED”

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, today marks a tragic anniversary. Five years ago President Bush delivered his infamous “Mission Accomplished” speech aboard the USS *Abraham Lincoln*.

Across this country, Americans are holding rallies and vigils to mark this occasion. And members of the International Longshoremens and Warehouse Unions are giving up a day’s pay and they are marching in the streets to show their opposition to the failed policies of the Bush administration and of the cost of those policies.

We all remember that the President put on a green flight suit and white helmet and arrived in the copilot seat of a Navy Viking jet. Then he stood at a podium beneath a big “Mission Accomplished” banner and he spoke.

He said the search for weapons of mass destruction had already begun, and he declared that “major combat operations in Iraq have ended.”

Obviously, the American people didn’t get the real facts that day, Mr. Speaker. So here’s what should have been said. He should have said: “My fellow Americans, our soldiers have performed with great skill and courage. But, frankly, the administration doesn’t have a clue what to do next.”

It didn’t have a plan for the occupation. It didn’t have an exit strategy. And the people who actually understand the history and culture of Iraq were warning us that there were going to be insurgencies and civil war. He should have said: “Major combat operations have not ended—they have just begun.”

Today I joined with my Out-of-Iraq Caucus colleagues, MAXINE WATERS and BARBARA LEE, to send a Dear Colleague Letter that describes the terrible human cost of the bungling in Iraq. It shows that over 96 percent of all American deaths in Iraq and over 98 percent of all casualties have taken place since the “Mission Accomplished” speech.

But you don’t have to look, Mr. Speaker, at the cumulative devastation of the past 5 years to know that the occupation is a disaster. Just look at what happened in April, April of 2008, last month: Fifty American soldiers died, the highest number in 7 months. Thousands of innocent civilians were killed or injured in the bloody battle at Sadr City which continues to rage. The Pentagon was forced to extend the “stop-loss” policy because our military is stretched to its limits.

And as the administration acknowledged that al Qaeda is growing strong-

er in its safe havens in Pakistan, the drumbeat for war against Iran grew louder.

Here at home, the occupation continues to be a factor in driving gas prices higher. The Iraq recession continues in full swing. And every week, billions of dollars continue to be spent on military operations in Iraq that are desperately needed for domestic programs right here.

Sheer incompetence has surely been one reason for this. But the most important reason for our failure in Iraq is the fatally flawed national security policy. It has been a policy marked by arrogance, by the belief that America can go it alone and has the right to strike anywhere and anytime it pleases. And by the idea that military power alone can assure our security.

I hope we will use this “Mission Accomplished” anniversary date in a positive way so we can learn the lessons of the past 5 years and dedicate ourselves to a new foreign policy that will serve us much better. This new policy must be based on diplomacy; international cooperation; the rule of law; rejection of the doctrine of pre-emption and the use of torture; and, a commitment to helping other nations of the world to build a better life for their citizens.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, on this “Mission Accomplished” day, we must ask ourselves: What is America’s mission? The American people believe that our mission is to stand up for the values of democracy, for human rights, and for peace. Those are the values that the dock workers are standing up for today. Those are the values that have been ignored and predictably resulted in disastrous results.

□ 1600

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia).

Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina 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 Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO 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 New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey 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 (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SCHIFF 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 Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

SUNSET MEMORIAL

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I stand once again before this House with yet another Sunset Memorial.

It is May 1, 2008, in the land of the free and the home of the brave, and before the sun set today in America, almost 4,000 more defenseless unborn children were killed by abortion on demand. That’s just today, Mr. Speaker. That’s more than the number of innocent lives lost on September 11 in this country, only it happens every day.

It has now been exactly 12,883 days since the tragedy called *Roe v. Wade* was first handed down. Since then, the very foundation of this Nation has been stained by the blood of almost 50 million of its own children. Some of them, Mr. Speaker, died and screamed as they did so, but because it was amniotic fluid passing over the vocal cords instead of air, no one could hear them.

And all of them had at least four things in common. First, they were each just little babies who had done nothing wrong to anyone, and each one of them died a nameless and lonely death. And each one of their mothers, whether she realizes it or not, will never be quite the same. And all the gifts that these children might have brought to humanity are now lost forever. Yet even in the glare of such tragedy, this generation still clings to a blind, invincible ignorance while history repeats itself and our own silent genocide mercilessly annihilates the most helpless of all victims, those yet unborn.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it’s time for those of us in this Chamber to remind ourselves of why we are really all here. Thomas Jefferson said, “The care of human life and its happiness and not its destruction is the chief and only object of good government.” The phrase in the 14th amendment capsulizes our entire Constitution, it says, “No State shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law.” Mr. Speaker, protecting the lives of our innocent citizens and their constitutional rights is why we are all here.