

is the one that requires the Iraqi security forces to be completely independent of American forces, and that would mean logistics, intelligence, communication, supply, training, all of those things would have to be Iraqi. They're not going to be that independent, not this year or next year or the year after. You don't stand up a military like that in no time. It takes years to do that. But 17 of 18 benchmarks have been reached. The casualties in Iraq, and we had a tough time in Iraq here a little over a day ago. We lost four soldiers up by Mosul in a bombing. Regardless, as precious as those lives are and all of them that have been lost, since the first day of July, we've lost more Americans to accidents than we have to the enemy. Another measure of a definable victory in Iraq, achieved, Mr. Speaker, by our noble military under the leadership of Commander in Chief, President Bush, who had the clarity of vision and the courage and the leadership skills to order a surge when his advisors told him don't go there, Mr. President, this war can't be won. It's a definable victory today, by all of the metrics that I can identify, including a more than 90 percent reduction in civilian violence and sectarian deaths, so that they're almost immeasurable. The list goes on and on and on of the accomplishments in Iraq. And I charge and I challenge our current President of the United States to sustain the achievements of his predecessor or be judged by history as to have failed. That, Mr. Speaker, is an important message for the American people to understand tonight, that level of success in Iraq.

We need to also understand what made this a great country; that's the free enterprise system and the accountability that's in. There has to be successes and failures for our system to adjust itself. That will not happen with trillions of dollars of borrowed money and this huge debt to resolve itself.

And I would point out, as a matter of an example, that when Bill Clinton was elected President in 1992, he came to this Congress in 1993 and he said, I want a \$30 billion economic stimulus plan because we have this recession that was brought about by Bush 41. I notice these new Democrat presidents always have a Bush recession to blame their economy on. But in any case, he asked for \$30 billion. And that \$30 billion was negotiated down to \$17 billion. I think that ended up over in the Senate, and finally they decided well that's not enough money to make any difference so we're just not going to do a \$17 billion economic stimulus plan. But \$30 billion was a lot of money to this Congress then. And that's why they debated it. And \$17 billion wasn't enough to make a difference. But today \$17 billion isn't even loose change in a \$2 trillion bailout/stimulus plan. That's how far we have come in a matter of two presidential terms, two different presidents, Mr. Speaker, to the point where \$17 billion, \$30 billion is loose

change in the maw of it all. And it will swallow us up.

And then, reverting back, Mr. Speaker, to the subject matter of Iraq, I'm a little disturbed that there's such a standard that has been raised that we should honor our troops and we should honor their families for the price that they paid, and a moment of silence on this floor is appropriate, an hour of silence would be appropriate, a long and enduring prayer every day for what they have done for our freedom and all of us would also be appropriate, Mr. Speaker. But that, brought out today by the same person that brought 45 different votes to the floor of the House of Representatives, those votes designed to underfund, unfund or undermine our troops is disturbing to me.

In the 110th Congress, we had brought by the Speaker of the House, these 45 votes to the floor that I said, underfunded, undermined or unfunded our troops. Some of those that I have in mind, supplemental appropriations H.R. 2642 that would prohibit establishing a permanent base in Iraq, among other things and reduce some funding.

We have another one, which is H.R. 5658, require the President to submit a report within 90 days of the bill's enactment for the long-term costs in Iraq and Afghanistan, including the cost of operations, reconstruction and health care benefits for how long, Mr. Speaker? Through at least fiscal year 2068 is what this report says.

□ 2300

That can't be constructive to tie the Commander in Chief up to produce a report that predicts costs until 2068. That undermines our troops, Mr. Speaker.

Here is another one. It followed along H.R. 5658, and it said that the United States Defender Act would have to be authorized by Congress in order to enter into any kind of an agreement with Iraq from a military perspective. Congress would have to authorize it. I don't think the Speaker of the House was going to allow the congressional authorization of those kinds of agreements. That undermined our troops again, Mr. Speaker.

Here I have H.R. 2082, which is to authorize funds for the intelligence portion of fiscal year 2008. It defines how we can interrogate prisoners. It's another way to handcuff the President of the United States and our military, whose lives have been in harm's way and remain in harm's way.

Here is another one on the same subject—on interrogation techniques and micromanagement. This Congress should not be trying to operate a war by micromanagement. The Continental Congress tried to do that. It's one of the reasons we have a stronger central government today.

The list of these kinds of transgressions goes on, Mr. Speaker. Here is another one.

The State-Foreign Operations Appropriations—Iraq Study Group estab-

lishes that. We know what came out of that. There is another one that reduces the spending, and it identifies the 18 benchmarks which I mentioned. On and on and on.

There were 45 different votes, Mr. Speaker, on the floor of this House of Representatives, 45 of those votes aside from the seven that were brought by Republicans, to recommit, defend or seek to overturn those. They all underfunded, unfunded or undermined our troops.

So a moment of silence is appropriate, but I cannot break from the thought that American lives have been put at risk and that we have lost some lives because of the actions on the floor of this Congress. These actions, Mr. Speaker, encouraged our enemy. In spite of all of this, we have a definable victory in Iraq today, and it is a definable victory that needs to be maintained by the current President of the United States and enhanced with a prudent utilization of the forces that are there and with a prudent transfer as the direction it is going over to the Iraqi security forces with a political, economic and military solution in Iraq so that they can sustain and defend themselves and can remain our ally in the Middle East to inspire the other moderate Muslim nations that are there.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I would yield back the balance of my time.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. MEEK of Florida (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today until 5 p.m.

Ms. HARMAN (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and February 11.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MALONEY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GOODLATTE, for 5 minutes, February 11.

Mr. FLEMING, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at his request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, for 5 minutes, today.