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House of Representatives

The House met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PALAZZO).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 13, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVEN M. PALAZZO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:20 a.m.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I'm back on the floor again to talk about bringing our troops home from Afghanistan.

I had the privilege and the honor to be at Walter Reed in Bethesda on Tuesday, and I talked to so many of our young men and women who have lost legs and other parts of their body and just continue to wonder why in the world the leadership of the House does not join together and call on Mr.

Obama to bring our troops home before 2014-2015.

Mr. Speaker, I'm holding up right now from The Wall Street Journal a rather lengthy article that says, "Afghan Opium Output Surges." That is real encouraging; our young men and women walking the roads of Afghanistan, getting their legs blown off, and yet the drugs in Afghanistan are surging. That's great news, I guess, for the dealers.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, on October 5 in a poll, it says one in three vets see Iraq-Afghanistan wars as a waste. And I read: "A new opinion survey says one in three U.S. veterans of the post-9/11 military believe the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are not worth fighting. Most of the vets polled by the Pew Research Center also think that after 10 years of combat, America should be focusing less on foreign affairs and more on its own problems."

I'm pleased to see Ms. WOOLSEY from California on the floor because she has joined many of us in the Republican Party and her Democratic Party in continuing to grow the opposition to staying in Afghanistan until 2014-2015.

Well, you might say, You keep saying 2014-2015. So I want to make reference to testimony of former Defense Secretary Gates. This was on February 16, 2011, and it reads: "By the end of this calendar year, we expect there to be less than 100,000 troops to be deployed in both of the major post-9/11 combat theatres, virtually all of those forces in Afghanistan.

"That is why we believe that beginning in fiscal year 2015"—Mr. Speaker, I'm going to read that one more time: "That is why we believe that beginning in fiscal year 2015, the United States can, with minimal risk, begin reducing Army active-duty end strength by 27,000 and the Marine Corps by somewhere between 15,000 and 20,000. These projections assume that the number of troops in Afghanistan will be signifi-

cantly reduced by the end of 2014, in accordance with the President's strategy. If our assumptions prove incorrect, there's plenty of time to adjust the time and schedule of this change."

Mr. Speaker, what that means is the end of 2014 becomes 2015; 2015 becomes 2016.

I have a poster here that ran in the Greensboro paper in a Sunday edition. They had put in their paper a letter from JIM MCGOVERN and me calling on the President to bring our troops home before 2014. The title says, Mr. Speaker, "Get Out." And the soldiers are bringing a flag-draped coffin off a plane.

I don't know how much longer we have to continue to spend \$10 billion a month to prop up a crook named Karzai. I just made reference to a Wall Street Journal article that opium surges. It's a corrupt country. It's never going to change. We might as well just face the fact that we won, bin Laden is dead, al Qaeda has been dispersed all over the world, and it's time to bring them home.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I'm going to be handing out to anyone that comes to my office a picture of marines carrying a flag-draped coffin, and I say call on the leadership all the way to the White House, to the House, to the Senate, and ask them to bring our people home.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will ask God to please bless our men and woman in uniform. God, please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. God, in Your loving arms, hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And I will close by asking God to please bless the House and Senate. I will ask God to give wisdom, strength, and courage to the President. And three times I will ask, God please, God please, God please bless America.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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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[From the Associated Press, Oct. 5, 2011]

POLL: 1 IN 3 VETS SEES IRAQ, AFGHAN WARS AS WASTES

WASHINGTON.—A new opinion survey says one in three U.S. veterans of the post-9/11 military believes the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are not worth fighting. Most of the vets polled by the Pew Research Center also think that after 10 years of combat America should be focusing less on foreign affairs and more on its own problems.

SYSTEMATIC TORTURE IN AFGHAN PRISONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. "One interrogator kept banging my head against the wall. "After 2 days, he tied my hands behind my back and started beating me with an electric wire. The interrogation and beating lasted for 3 to 4 hours into the night.

"For the next 2 days, I was tied up from both wrists to the bars of an iron door. From morning until lunchtime they put a hood on my head and hung me by my wrists."

Mr. Speaker, these are the direct quotes from detainees apprehended in Afghanistan and subjected to torture at the hands of Afghan intelligence officials and police forces. It's all documented in a report issued by the United Nations this week. What they found was systematic abuse that followed a pattern—not random or isolated incidents—a pattern at several different facilities, involving at least 300 prisoners.

There's more. Kicks to the head; beatings with electric cables, rubber hoses, and wooden sticks; electric shocks to the thumbs; threats of sexual abuse, some of them against children. And there are some even more graphic, gruesome details that I know we've read about that I'll spare my colleagues for now.

No Americans have been directly implicated in this. But as long as we're continuing a military occupation of Afghanistan and as long as we've taken on the task of training Afghan security forces, I don't see how we avoid the responsibility for these shameful acts of abuse and ritual humiliation. At the very, very least, Mr. Speaker, we're guilty of shoddy oversight and failure to instruct Afghan officials in humane interrogation techniques.

Of course, this kind of brutality is a gross violation of international human rights standards. But it's also well-documented that torture doesn't work. Torture, at the very most for a normal human being, will force that human being to confess to anything under such duress, and it's a complete failure as an intelligence-gathering strategy.

The war in Afghanistan has been going on for 10 years now. It's costing American taxpayers \$10 billion a month. How can we justify spending all this money, money that we need to invest in job creation right here at home,

on a policy and a mission that is leading to such barbaric acts. How can we continue to sacrifice blood and treasure on this war, a war that is being waged in such gross violation of our very American values?

I have never been more convinced it's time to bring our troops home.

□ 0940

IRANIAN CONNECTION WITH ZETAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in the last 2 days, we have been learning some disturbing information about the Nation of Iran and its dictator, Ahmadinejad. It seems as though, with the consultation with Iran and the drug cartels in Mexico, it was the idea that the Iranian Government, through one of its operatives, would commit a crime against the United States. We're learning more and more about this, but it's my opinion that the Iranian Government was in the middle of this attempted assault on American soil.

The idea that the Embassy down the street that belongs to the Saudi Arabians would be attacked, that the Saudi Arabian Ambassador would be murdered somewhere in a restaurant in Washington, DC, with a possible attack on the Israeli Ambassador, with a possible attack on the Israeli Ambassador and the Saudi Arabian Ambassador in Argentina, was being plotted by the Iranian Government against us is something that we should be aware of and conscious of and be very concerned about.

Thanks to good law enforcement, this terror plot was thwarted. But what if it had occurred? What if the will of this terrorist would-be to go to Mexico and meet with what he thought was a Zeta cartel member to smuggle explosives into the United States from Mexico that would be used in an attack in Washington, DC, what if that had actually occurred? Certainly, if the Iranian Government was involved in it, we would consider that an act of aggression against the United States.

And it's interesting to me that the Iranian Government was so bold that they thought they could do something like this and get away with it. Did they believe that the United States would not do anything about it? Did they perceive us to be so weak that we would not have shown them consequences for this action against this Nation? We don't know. But the truth is we should show the Iranian Government that there are consequences for an attempted attack such as this by the Iranian Government.

There are a couple of things that I think are important for us to realize. One, we should hold the Iranian Government accountable for this attempted attack on American soil, to show them that you must leave us alone no matter what your political

philosophy is. But just as equally disturbing is the fact that this operative—that I believe was dispatched by the Iranian Government—had the wherewithal to go to Mexico, our neighbors, and try to work with the drug cartels down there, and working in unison to come into the United States to commit a crime. Now, granted, the person that he was working with was not a Zeta cartel member. It was one of our own law enforcement officers. But the person thought he was working with the drug cartels. And the reason he was working with the drug cartels is because they, too, are at war with the United States, and they have easy access into the United States.

On a daily basis, the Zeta drug cartel—which I think is the worst of the worst in Mexico—comes into the United States and brings drugs and people, traffics humans, anything for money. And on a daily basis, they go back to Mexico and they take that money and they take weapons because they have access to our porous borders. If you want to get into the United States, hook up with one of the drug cartels and they'll get you in the U.S. And that's obvious what this Iranian operative was trying to do was to hook up with them. The drug cartels, for little money, will do anything, including commit murder in the United States.

So that should tell us that the border is still porous, Mr. Speaker. We hear that it's not, it's safe. It is porous, Mr. Speaker. There are portions that are safe, but the portions that are not safe are where the drug cartels go back and forth.

So, two lessons we should be learning are that the Iranian Government has it in for the United States—at least some people do in their government; two, that the border is porous, and we need to protect the national security of the United States' southern border.

So what are we going to do about it? We've heard that, well, we're going to impose some more sanctions to try to isolate Iran. Historically, sanctions have never worked any time countries have tried to use them. It is true that we could actually have some sanctions that would do some good, such as keeping Iran from having refined gasoline going back into the country, and maybe keeping crude oil from going out of Iran, but that doesn't solve the problem long term.

The long-term solution in Iran is a regime change. And let me make it clear, that regime change should be by the people of Iran who live in Iran and people who support the freedom fighters in Iran.

It's time that the regime of Iran be removed by the good folks who live in Iran. And the United States' policy publicly should be that we support those dissidents to get rid of the rogue regime of Ahmadinejad.

And that's just the way it is.