

here rather than a concept that would extend greater rights to terrorists on American soil than our own American soldiers would have.

I think it's a good day. I think it's a good day. People have heard me, Mr. Speaker, talk about how we have messed up what's going on in Afghanistan. The Taliban was defeated; they were routed. We had less than 1,500 Americans in Afghanistan when the Taliban was defeated. And so many Americans have forgotten, but for so much of the Iraq war people were saying—now, the way the Taliban was defeated in Afghanistan, that's the way to fight a war on foreign soil. You empower the enemy of our enemy, give them support. We gave them aerial support, we gave them embedded Special Ops and intelligence people that were a tremendous help. I've heard that personally.

The biggest hero of those battles, General Dostum, I met with again just last month. That was over in Afghanistan. They're our allies. For those that say you Republicans are a bunch of xenophobes or Islamaphobes, these are Muslim friends. They buried family and friends while Americans were burying family and friends because they had fought together. They initially defeated the Taliban, and they did it very effectively. Then we began to add troops by the tens of thousands, and we became occupiers in Afghanistan. We began to pour billions and billions and billions of dollars into Afghanistan. Then Pakistan began supporting the Taliban, and they continue to support the Taliban and we're continuing to support Pakistan.

Another good thing today was amendments that said, Hey, Pakistan, if you're going to keep funding our enemies and helping our enemies, we're not going to keep giving you any funds. That was another good measure that got bipartisan support today. That was a good measure.

But as long as we've got troops—I don't think President Obama has handled this very well in Afghanistan. I think he's gotten some bad advice. I think President Bush got some bad advice. But as long as we have troops on foreign soil, we should never again do what was done to our military in Vietnam, yank their feet out from under them and leave our allies to be killed.

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

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER
AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3308

Mr. CULBERSON (during the Special Order of Mr. GOHMERT). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 3308. My name was inadvertently added.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

UNDERSTANDING THE PLACE OF
THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA IN
OUR STRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BROOKS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) for 30 minutes.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor this afternoon as part of my series of talks designed to help Members of the House and Senate understand the place of the District of Columbia in our structure. It is an anomalous place. And when Members come to the House of Representatives, they must find it very peculiar that anything having to do with a local jurisdiction comes here at all.

The most important thing to remember as I speak this afternoon is that that anomaly got to be too much for the Congress, and 39 years ago the Congress sent back to the District the power to legislate for the District of Columbia. So if you hear Members say Congress can legislate for the District of Columbia, you must point them to the Home Rule Act of 1973.

It is true that on some matters the District cannot legislate for itself. Those matters involve things like imposing a commuter tax or changing the limits on how high buildings can be in the District, because we don't want to obscure the great monuments. But I assure you that the enumerated congressional powers over the District are quite small, and that none of what I have to say this afternoon is among those areas where Congress has said, only Congress itself should be able to legislate.

Yet my good friends on the other side insist upon imposing their own views on the District of Columbia quite undemocratically against our will. Even if you assumed that Congress could enact laws for the District of Columbia, no one would assume that Congress could—without any democratic accountability—enact laws that went counter to the laws the District had enacted.

Where are the small-government Tea Party members, the ones who are trying to teach the House of Representatives a lesson about pulling back even from Federal matters? You cross the line very seriously when you involve yourself in local matters where you yourself cannot be held accountable. Do you believe in democracy or not? It seems to me that the entire notion of passing a law and imposing it on people who have no say about it is a kind of authoritarianism that we ourselves criticize on this floor every single day in one fashion or another.

Twice this week, Republican Members disregarded their own basic principles and sought to interfere with the local government of the District of Columbia and its citizens against their will in the most undemocratic fashion. There was no respect for democracy, no respect for federalism, no respect for

their own principles. They moved forward to say that this was the way we would like it, no matter what you would like.

As you might expect, we took exception. I am very pleased with the outpouring of support we have received from all over the country regarding the way the District was treated in the attempt by Representative TRENT FRANKS to impose his views on reproductive choice for the women and physicians of the District of Columbia. And I appreciate the support I have received when many were shocked that I was not granted the courtesy of testifying at his hearing on his bill, which affects only my district.

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Let me say a word about that bill. Representative TRENT FRANKS is from Arizona. The sponsor of this same bill in the Senate—a bill to impose a 20-week limit on abortions for women in the District of Columbia—is from at least as far away, Senator MIKE LEE of Utah.

Senator LEE had hardly hit the ground—I think had filed all of nine bills when he filed a bill that would impose a 20-week limit on abortions in the District of Columbia. Not on Utah, but on the District of Columbia. Representative FRANKS' bill wouldn't impose this on Arizona. It's only on the District of Columbia.

There is nobody in this House that would not have taken umbrage at such undemocratic audacity, and so we did.

As for Senator MIKE LEE, he realized what he was doing wasn't exactly kosher because he introduced the bill, and though he is a new Member—and every new Member puts out a press release about what he's done—he didn't put out a release on this bill. So we outed him. We put out a release on his bill. And then his newspapers began to talk, and so then he put out a release.

I think what I am talking about will be understood when you see how this occurred. One thing that most Americans have learned to do is respect the differences on very controversial issues. And one of the most controversial is abortion, an issue that really turns off Independents in this country but captures the verve of the right wing to this day, even though the right of women to reproductive choice was declared decades ago in *Roe v. Wade*. And, of course, when they come at women, Democrats respond.

Under *Roe v. Wade*, a woman is entitled to seek an abortion at 20 weeks of pregnancy. In fact, the Supreme Court was at pains to say that it would not put a time limit on the number of weeks, that that's a matter of viability and a matter between the woman and her physician. Yet Senator MIKE LEE and Representative TRENT FRANKS sought to set the number of weeks on their own—in violation, of course, of the constitutional mandate in *Roe v. Wade*.

What are we supposed to do, sit down and take it?