

use of \$4 million of the \$5 million recently approved by the House for these purposes. (The remaining funds would be available to help the State Department implement Sec. 722, as described above.)

SUBTITLE C—ENHANCED CRIMINAL PENALTIES FOR METHAMPHETAMINE PRODUCTION AND TRACKING

Section 731. Smuggling methamphetamine or methamphetamine precursor chemicals into the United States while using facilitated entry programs

This section of the conference report is new. Even as more methamphetamine is being smuggled across the border, increased legitimate international traffic has forced the bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to rely on facilitated entry programs—so-called “fastpass” systems like SENTRI (for passenger traffic on the Southwest border), FAST (for commercial truck traffic), and NEXUS (for passenger traffic on the Northern border). These systems allow pre-screened individuals to use dedicated lanes at border crossings, subject only to occasional searches to test compliance with customs and immigration laws. This section of the conference report creates an added deterrent for anyone who misuses a facilitated entry program to smuggle methamphetamine or its precursor chemicals. An additional penalty of up to 15 years imprisonment is added to the punishment for the base offense. If convicted, an individual would also be permanently barred from using a fastpass system.

Section 732. Manufacturing controlled substances on federal property

This section of the conference report is new. This section clarifies that current penalties for cultivating illegal drugs on Federal property also apply to manufacturing synthetic drugs (such as methamphetamine). Methamphetamine “cooks” frequently move their operations to parks, national forests, and other public lands, causing serious environmental damage. This criminal penalty can help deter such destructive conduct.

Section 733. Increased punishment for methamphetamine kingpins

This provision of the conference report is new, and allows for easier application of the enhanced penalties of the “continuing criminal enterprise” section of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. §848). That section (commonly referred to as the “kingpin” statute) imposes life imprisonment on a leader of a drug trafficking organization convicted of trafficking in very large quantities of a drug, and receiving very large profits from that activity. This new provision reduces the threshold amount of methamphetamine (from 300 to 200 times the threshold for base violations) and profits from methamphetamine (from \$10 million to \$5 million), while still applying the life imprisonment penalty only to true “kingpins”—the ringleaders of methamphetamine trafficking organizations.

Section 734. New child-protection criminal enhancement

This provision of the conference report, which is new, punishes an offender who manufactures methamphetamine at a location where a child resides or is present, and imposes a consecutive sentence of up to an additional 20 years imprisonment.

Section 735. Amendments to certain sentencing court reporting requirements

This provision of the conference report is new and authorizes the United States Sentencing Commission to establish a form to be used by United States District Judges when

imposing criminal sentences in order to facilitate data gathering and reporting by the Sentencing Commission.

Section 736. Semiannual reports to congress

This provision, which is new to the conference report, requires the Attorney General to report to Congress on investigations and prosecutions relating to methamphetamine production.

SUBTITLE D—ENHANCED ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION OF METHAMPHETAMINE BYPRODUCTS

Section 741. Biennial report to congress on agency designations of by-products on methamphetamine laboratories as hazardous materials

This provision of the conference report is new, and requires the Department of Transportation to report to Congress every two years whether then-existing statutes and regulations cover methamphetamine by-products as hazardous materials.

Section 742. Methamphetamine production report

This provision of the conference report is new, and requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to report to Congress every two years on whether then-existing statutes and regulations cover methamphetamine by-products as hazardous materials.

Section 743. Cleanup costs

This provision of the conference report is new, and clarifies existing law imposing the obligation of restitution for environmental cleanup costs on persons involved in meth production and trafficking. The recent decision of the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals in *United States v. Lachowski* (405 F3d 696, 8th Cir. 2005) has undermined the ability of the Federal government to seek cleanup costs from methamphetamine traffickers who are convicted only of methamphetamine possession—even when the methamphetamine lab in question was on the defendant's own property. This provision would ensure that any person convicted of a methamphetamine-related offense can be held liable for cleanup costs for methamphetamine production that took place on the defendant's own property, or in his or her place of business or residence.

SUBTITLE E—ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Section 751. Improvements to Department of Justice Drug Courts program

This section of the conference report is new, and revises the Drug Court program statute to clarify the requirement for periodic testing, graduated sanctions when an offender tests positive, and a list of potential sanctions when a positive test occurs.

Section 752. Drug Courts funding

This provision of the conference report is new and authorizes appropriations for drug courts.

Section 753. Feasibility study on Federal Drug Courts

This provision of the conference report, which is new, directs the Attorney General to conduct a study on the feasibility of Federal drug courts.

Section 754. Grants to hot spot areas to reduce availability of methamphetamine

This section, which is new to the conference report, authorizes \$99 million for fiscal years 2006 to 2010 for grants to State and local law enforcement agencies to assist in the investigation of methamphetamine traffickers and to reimburse the DEA for assistance in cleaning up methamphetamine laboratories.

Section 755. Grants for programs for drug-endangered children

This section of the conference report, which is new, authorizes grants to States to assist in treatment of children who have been endangered by living at a residence where methamphetamine has been manufactured or distributed.

Section 756. Authority to award competitive grants to address methamphetamine use by pregnant and parenting women offenders

Section 756 is a new provision and authorizes the Attorney General to award grants to address the use of methamphetamine among pregnant and parenting women offenders to promote public safety, public health, family permanence and well being.

From the Committee on the Judiciary, for consideration of the House bill (except section 132) and the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

F. JAMES SENSENBRENNER, Jr.,
HOWARD COBLE,
LAMAR SMITH,
ELTON GALLEGLY,
STEVE CHABOT,
WILLIAM L. JENKINS,
DANIEL LUNGREN,

From the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, for consideration of secs. 102, 103, 106, 107, 109, and 132 of the House bill, and secs. 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, and 10 of the Senate amendment, and modifications committed to conference:

PETE HOEKSTRA,
HEATHER WILSON,

From the Committee on Energy and Commerce, for consideration of secs. 124 and 231 of the House bill, and modifications committed to conference:

CHARLIE NORWOOD,
JOHN SHADEGG,

From the Committee on Financial Services, for consideration of sec. 117 of the House bill, and modifications committed to conference:

MICHAEL G. OXLEY,
SPENCER BACHUS,

From the Committee on Homeland Security, for consideration of secs. 127–129 of the House bill, and modifications committed to conference:

PETER T. KING,
CURT WELDON,

Managers on the Part of the House.

ARLEN SPECTER,
ORRIN HATCH,
JON KYL,
MIKE DEWINE,
JEFF SESSIONS,
PAT ROBERTS,

Managers on the Part of the Senate.

IMPORTANT ISSUES TO THE COUNTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the privilege to be recognized on the floor of the United States Congress, and have this opportunity to address you on the issues that I think are important to this great country, this great country that all of us on the floor of this Chamber, all 435 of us, love so

much and so desperately try to do our best to represent.

Just a reflection upon the conclusion of the remarks made by the folks ahead of me in the previous hour and seeking to go to the new C words of cooperation and coming together. It is quite incongruous for me to try to understand how that would be when 1 or 2 hours a night there can be a relentless drumbeat challenging the motives, the integrity, the character and the intelligence, the planning and the convictions of the entire team over here on the Republican side of the aisle.

In fact, I said Republican here, and that is the first time that word has been said on this floor in over an hour that did not sound like a word that was based on some type of profane term.

This has gone on day after day, hour after hour, week after week, again relentlessly trying to undermine the hard work being done by the people here in the trenches, doing the work out on the floor, in committee, and behind the scenes.

There is an awful lot that goes on behind every one of those office doors in Congress. Many, many things are happening behind those doors; the staff that multiplies the efforts of the Member, the grapevine that is out here feeding this information; the network; the information-gathering process, the analysis of that; the input that comes from our constituents, and the trips back home of many of us every weekend to get our feet on the ground and look our constituents in the eye and listen to them to hear what they have to say.

I am one of those people that I am pledged to listen. I am pledged to hear what they have for input. But I am also pledged to owe my constituents my best judgment. My best judgment includes, if I happen to disagree with them, but I will absolutely lay out the case as to why and hear their rebuttal. So far we have had a pretty good working relationship over the years that I have had the privilege to serve here, Mr. Speaker.

Yet this undermining of our national effort that goes on continually is not conducive to coming together. It is not conducive to cooperation. It is not conducive to comity. It is not conducive to any type of cooperation that I can think of. It draws a bright line and drives a wedge between the two parties. We should try to find things we can agree on.

I heard the gentlewoman from Florida say there were only a handful of things when she was in the State legislature in Florida that she disagreed with, and that the two parties disagreed with, and the rest of that they came together and found common ground. Well, I am wondering if that was the case.

I have served in the State legislature myself, Mr. Speaker, and I did not find

that every one on the other side of the aisle sat their alarm in the morning, got up and read the newspaper to figure out what they could do to attack the other side. I did not see the State legislators focus their energies from the first sunup in the morning to try to identify what they could do to undermine the other side. They actually came to work to try to find how they could come together. They tried to find common ground and how to move their State forward. That is the way it was in Iowa, and I suspect that is how it was in Florida, at least I have not heard otherwise.

That is not the way it has become in this United States Congress. In fact, in the time I have been here, this is as partisan as I have ever seen it. There is as much partisan disagreement as I have ever seen.

An example might be our trade agreements, and the Central American Free Trade Agreement would be one. There was a time when we negotiated trade agreements and they were bipartisan agreements. There was a good sized group of Members from the Democratic side of the aisle that would support a free trade agreement. They believed in free enterprise. They believed in world trade. They knew if we traded with other countries, that whenever you make a deal with anyone, whenever it comes to free enterprise, if you trade a dollar with one entity or two or more entities, everybody involved in that circle all has to have profit. It is good for all of us, and that is why we agree to those trade agreements. But it has become a sharp, bright-line partisan issue.

Many, many more things have become partisan here in the last couple of years that, to my recollection, were not. And so to argue for cooperation is one thing, but the actions and the words over the months of this relentless effort here down on the floor have done the exact opposite. They have driven a wedge between us, Mr. Speaker. So that means we have to try to move this Nation forward sometimes without the help of the people on the other side of the aisle, and then it turns into a partisan debate. It also forces us to do the best we can with the votes we have to move this Nation forward.

So a free trade agreement is one thing. This Nation has a large economy and we can recover from a few mistakes and the few difficulties that come with partisan opposition to some of those things that were, before this, bipartisan.

But when it comes to a time of war, when it comes to a time that our United States military is deployed overseas and their lives are on the line 24/7, and have been ever since March of 2003; at a time when the destiny of the world hangs in the balance; at a time when the presence of the United States

in the Middle East itself has brought Lebanon towards freedom, and caused Qaddafi in Libya to turn over all his hold cards, to play his cards face up on weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, which had developed far ahead of where we thought it was, but Qaddafi contacted us and said I want to drop this. I do not want to play this game any more.

Our presence in the Middle East meant too much. The threat was so great, he figured we would find out about his weapons and go eliminate his weapons, so he decided he would simply cease to develop them and eliminate the foundations he had built for those weapons of mass destruction. That came because the United States has a positive image in the world, in spite of the message that comes from this other side of the aisle.

I have stood here on this floor, Mr. Speaker, for the third time, this is the third hour I have initiated to come down here and talk about the President's agenda, the Commander in Chief's agenda, the mission of our troops and the destiny of the entire world that is part of this plan that has been laid out by President Bush. I laid this out last night, Mr. Speaker, and I spent some time doing it in not necessarily a concise fashion, but a thorough fashion. And anybody that was listening should have understood.

I walked off this floor, perhaps after 10 o'clock last night, and another hour of this relentless criticism flowed down here again, and they picked up the same old drumsticks and began beating the same old drum with the same old song: WMD, WMD, WMD. Weapons of mass destruction. Everything that goes on is illegitimate because, according to them, it has been proven that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

Now, you would think that anybody that arrived in this Congress and went through the crucible and testing process and was elected to owe their best judgment to their constituents, as I do, would know one of the most simple principles of rational logic, and you do not have to be a Rhodes Scholar or a Harvard lawyer to know this, but many are and still do not know this; that you cannot prove a negative. Yet they continually say it has been proven that there were no weapons of mass destruction.

I would say tell that to the people up there in the region of Kirkuk and the area that is Kurdistan. Tell that to the swamp Arabs in the south; those that have lost perhaps 75 percent or more of their population because of the attacks of Saddam Hussein.

Try and carry on this argument as the trial of Saddam Hussein goes on and this 140 or so people that he allegedly murdered in the one small city because of the assassination attempt on him. When that becomes the larger,

there will be 180,000 or more deaths attributed to Saddam Hussein and the people who took orders from Saddam Hussein.

In fact, as I was in Baghdad in the month of August, I met with the judges that are trying Saddam Hussein today, and we talked about the upcoming trial. They could not be specific about it, in order to protect the integrity of the system, but I did understand and learn in that room that the charges of killing 180,000 people that are charged against the person whom we know, or are familiar with his moniker as Chemical Ali, that he protested and said, that is not true, I did not kill more than 100,000 people. It was not 180,000 people. So how do you kill 180,000, or even 100,000 people, which is apparently the confession of Chemical Ali, how do you do that without weapons of mass destruction?

How do you convince someone who lost their family in a gas attack in Halabja that Saddam Hussein did not have any weapons of mass destruction? I met a young lady that was raised up there near Kirkuk, in an area I will call Kurkistan, about an hour from Kirkuk. She has a friend who survived that gas attack in Halabja. He was able to get on a tractor and maybe went upwind and got away from it somehow and survived. A random act, I am sure, that kept him alive, and he probably wonders why he survived and not his family. His family was all wiped out in this.

I would submit that you could take that individual or any other survivors that are there, and if they could come down on this floor and listen to this, I think they would plug their ears. They would plug their ears because they would not know how to react to this relentless drumbeat of "there were no weapons of mass destruction."

Well, what caused all those deaths? Why is Saddam Hussein on trial? Why are there 180,000 people that have died and that are part of these court records and which will be part of this prosecution as it unfolds?

□ 1800

Why does Chemical Ali say "I did not kill any more than 100,000. I was not so bad." That is his defense?

There are more deaths than that. There are hundreds of thousands of deaths, and some of the Members of Congress have been to the mass graves. I have not seen those mass graves. I have been to Iraq a number of times, but I have not seen the graves. But I have seen the pictures, seen the film, and I have read the reports and I have talked to the people that have been there. I cannot be convinced that anyone can kill that many people without weapons of mass destruction. Hitler could not. Neither could Saddam Hussein.

So this drumbeat of no WMD, no WMD. Well, the King law of physics is

everything has to be somewhere. And since we do not know where it is, it has to still be somewhere. If you find something you lost, it is always in the last place you looked. So perhaps we just have not looked in the last place yet. Perhaps it is buried in Iraq. Perhaps it has gone to Syria.

We know before the Desert Storm operations in 1991, Saddam Hussein took his fighter jets and flew those to Iran. I remember the flight pattern that showed those jets going up and landing. I have never gotten a report that they ever came back. It may be that the ayatollahs in Iran kept them and maybe thought this is a nice way for us to get even for the war we had in the 1980s. He has a *modus operandi* of spiriting things out of the country when conflict is imminent.

So if he would fly the MiGs out of Iraq into Iran, why would people not presume that he would haul weapons of mass destruction out of Iraq into perhaps Syria, or why would they think that he would not bury those weapons of mass destruction when, in fact, we discovered a fully operational MiG-29 buried in the desert, not because of any intelligence report, not because of some detector, not because David Kay was over there scouring that countryside for weapons. No, we found that fully operational MiG-29 because the wind blew the sand off the tail fin. They buried it in the desert.

So he has an MO of bearing weapons and spiriting them out of the country when times get tough. Why would we presume that he did not do one or the other or both? We know everything has to be someplace. You cannot prove a negative. No one can honestly say with a rational mind that there were no weapons of mass destruction, because we know he used them at least 11 times. There are survivors from those attacks. The only way a rational person could contend there were not weapons of mass destruction would be to believe that Saddam Hussein used his last canister of gas on the Kurds and simply depleted his inventory and he decided not to rebuild it, but he decided to keep a system in place so he could reestablish that inventory any time he chose.

He kept the system in place for both chemical and biological weapons. We know that. That is all in the David Kay record and the Duelfer Report. It is the same report that came to this Congress that is being quoted by the other people that says it proved that they had no weapons of mass destruction. There was no proof that there were no weapons of mass destruction. What there was not was a great big warehouse full of weapons of mass destruction. In fact, we found some canisters of nerve gas and we found munitions designed for gas, small quantities, not great warehouses. Out of the million tons of munitions that we found in Iraq, some of

them were weapons of mass destruction components. Not in large volume. If there had been, we would have stacked them all up in the middle of a warehouse and brought in the inspectors, and maybe there would be a different story on this part.

But I would contend if that were the case, if there had been warehouses of weapons of mass destruction there, then these people who are continually pulling down our national spirit every night with this massive, relentless pounding of pessimism, and they need to get away from the "p" words over there and get to the optimistic words, they would have moved the bar. They would have raised the bar and said maybe there were weapons of mass destruction, but. And I do not know their argument. I cannot think like they do; and I am grateful I cannot. But they would have raised the bar.

Mr. Speaker, I submit this: if we ever get them now to set the standard on how to define a victory in Afghanistan and Iraq, if we could compel them to set a standard, then you would see that it would be such a high bar that they would know it could never be achieved. They would always find a way to define themselves away from that high bar because they will never admit that the President of the United States made a decision that could result in something that would be a fantastic result, a noble thing for this country to do, and an ultimate result that freed 50 million people and has every prospect of freeing hundreds of millions more throughout the Arab world, which is the only formula for ever getting to a victory on this war on terror.

No, they say we are in this war on terror and they will keep attacking us until we get out of the Middle East. We were not in the Middle East when we were attacked on September 11.

A couple other principles, Mr. Speaker. Since there was not a warehouse full of weapons of mass destruction that we have yet identified, and they make the allegation that they did not exist and do not seem to be quite up to that 8th grade level of "you cannot prove a negative," since that seems to be the standard, what is wrong with liberating 50 million people, 25 million in Afghanistan and 25 million in Iraq? That is a noble thing. Is that not something that the United States has done throughout history?

Do they not know that the Civil War was fought to save the Union? Do they not know that Abraham Lincoln's effort was to keep this Union intact? Do we not call it the war to free the slaves? Did we not liberate every black American, and it took a while to get it right, and we are still working on getting some of those pieces right. Do we call it the war to free the Union? No we call it the war to free the slaves. That was the result of the war. It was a noble thing.

I will pick up some of these other issues, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to go back to that; but I see my colleagues here on the floor, and I wonder if maybe the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is prepared to speak.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I want to make a few comments regarding our situation in Iraq.

You and numerous other Members of this body have been to Iraq to see firsthand exactly the situation, see the finest military that has ever existed from any country; and I met with those young men and women and all branches of the service, and to a person they were proud not only to be Americans but they were proud to serve in Iraq to free the Iraqi people from the tyranny that they have had for years, numerous years.

I think it is important that we remember our own history and how it is necessary to be eternally vigilant because of the issue and concept of liberty. Our own American Revolution took at least 7 years before this country became a free and independent Nation. Back then there were the naysayers and the quitters and the cut-and-run folks who wanted to give up and surrender and not fight for that liberty.

It is good our history reflects those people were not listened to by the vast majority of those people who lived in the colonies and gained freedom and an independent Nation as well.

In many ways since then, the same was true. Including back during World War II that we mentioned yesterday on this House floor that all started with another terrorist attack against this country, and the war was not going well for the United States at the beginning of World War II. Both the Japanese and the Germans had the upper hand. It is good that our history does not reflect that that greatest generation got tired of the war, quit and left that engagement but finished the job, finished the job for freedom as well.

The country has a plan. I think the plan is very simple. We are going to win the war, finish the job, and bring our troops home as soon as liberty is established in that democracy, that democracy that many people said would never exist, that does exist.

I was proud to be one of two Members of this body on January 30, 2005, when Iraq started that democracy with that parliament that occurred. People voted that day, and of course there are those who said they will never vote; they do not understand democracy. They will never come out and vote. And yet they did, even though there were over 50 Iraqis murdered because they chose to vote. Over 400 were wounded because they chose to vote, and they did it anyway because freedom is that important.

But it all occurred because we are there. Our troops are there. Our young

men and women are there doing what they can to have democracy in this part of the world that many years ago did not even understand the concept of it.

I appreciate the opportunity to make these comments. The last 2 days I have stood on this House floor and mentioned two people in my district, one a marine and one a soldier, who gave their lives for this country in Iraq, gave their lives for the Iraqi people, and gave their lives for freedom. Both of them and their families have reiterated to me personally how they believed in what they were doing because they were doing the right thing.

I appreciate the chance to make these comments. It is important that the American people focus, finish the job, win the war, and bring the troops home as soon as we can, but not until freedom is established.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas. I was not aware that you were actually on the ground in Iraq during the elections in January. What was it like to be in-country at that time?

Mr. POE. We started out in Fallujah that day. I was there with Mr. SHAYS. When the sun came up, we were wondering whether people would come to the polls. The whole nation was shut down to vehicular traffic. The only vehicles on the roads were Iraqi security forces and our military. Nobody else could be driving, so everybody had to walk to the polls that day, sometimes up to 2 hours.

After the sun came up, people started going to the polls. They walked. Not only did they walk, they took their families and their in-laws. They stood in line to vote. They voted. It was a very simple process. To mark the ballot, they put their finger in that ink that stayed on their finger for about 5 days. It was a mark. It was a sign not just that they voted, but it was a sign to the terrorists that if we see anybody with those purple fingers we are going to do harm to you. Yet the Iraqis when they finished voting, many of them, especially women who had never had the right to vote in their history, walked defiantly down the street holding up their hand and finger to show the world, especially the terrorists, that they were not going to be intimidated because freedom is that important.

So we traveled all over the country that day. Late that night we visited with the interim president of Iraq. And he said to us about midnight in a very somber, emotional way, but serious, that this day in Iraq would never have taken place if it were not for the American youth who were there. He was serious. He and the Iraqi people are grateful for this concept of freedom.

That is what the United States does. We did that in World War II. We set up those democracies in Germany and Japan. People said that would never

happen because of those totalitarian countries; yet those countries are democracies today. They are world powers, and they are our allies.

Who is to say that in a few years the same thing may not happen in Afghanistan and Iraq. I would not trade anything for being there on election day.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate that narrative. I wanted to be there that day. I was not able to set the trip up to make it work; but I recognize, as you clearly did and Mr. SHAYS clearly did, that was the best place in the world to be on that day.

Mr. POE. No question about it. It was a very moving experience.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I remember watching the pictures as they unfolded on television and the Iraqis coming out of their polling booths with their purple fingers in the air, proud that they had made a mark for freedom and defiant about the threat to their lives that was supposed to keep them away from the polls.

As I recall that day, 50 people were murdered, 108 polling places were attacked. And I believe on the October 15 elections, we were down to about 19 polling places were attacked. I do not know how many casualties there were. It is far safer for the ratification of the Constitution on October 15 than it was in January when you were there.

On top of that, you did not go to Baghdad or on up to Kirkuk or down to Basr or some place where it might have been more stable. You went to Fallujah. What a place to be to see that happen. I know that is a memory you will never forget.

□ 1815

I appreciate the gentleman's contribution down here night after night, the things the gentleman stood for, the things I stand for, and I sometimes wonder, if I have to check my conscience, I will go down to Texas and check with you.

I have a number of thoughts to roll out here. But I think before I go on into those thoughts, I have an opportunity, I see the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) here, my good friend, another individual that if I need to check my conscience, I know where to go down to Arizona and check with that. But also the gentleman's vision and his commitment to this country and this Constitution, he is a fine colleague that sits with me on the Constitution Subcommittee of Judiciary, where we stand up for those foundational values together.

Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS).

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING). I have to say that probably there is no way to explain what a precious honor it is in my life to be able to stand on this floor

with people like Mr. POE, and Mr. KING and the gentleman that stands on the Speaker podium tonight, Mr. McHENRY. These are people that I believe are Valley Forge Americans, and we are all very fortunate in this country to see them in this place.

Mr. Speaker, our brave men and women in uniform have always fought desperately to preserve those unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness that is endowed by the Creator himself. And that is exactly what they are doing right now in Iraq, and we should all be deeply grateful for that, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things that I am desperately worried about is whether the people in this body and in this republic itself truly understand what we are facing, not only as a Nation, but as a western civilization. The question we must ask ourselves is not whether we can win this war, we must win this war. The question now is what will happen if we do not.

Mr. Speaker, I am so concerned that this Nation does not really understand that we are at war with an ideology, an ideology that threatens the existence of the free world. This war did not begin on 9/11. This war began many years ago when certain Muslim extremists embraced a divergent Islamist dogma that dictates that all infidels must die. Our Nation was first attacked during its very beginnings in the late 1700s by the Barbary terrorists of the day. And more recently, we were attacked in 1979 in Iran. Our embassy and our marine barracks were attacked in Beirut in 1983. The first World Trade Center attack was in 1993, Mr. Speaker, and we still did not wake up to what was happening. Our military complexes and soldiers have been targeted throughout the world. The Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia in 1996. Our embassies were blown up in Tanzania and Kenya in 1998. We witnessed the attack on the USS *Cole* in 2000.

And Mr. Speaker, just 1 year later, on September 11, terrorists murdered 3,000 American civilians on our own soil. And I wonder, have we actually forgotten that? Since then our soldiers and contractors have been kidnapped and executed, their bodies mutilated and dragged through the streets. And we are not alone, Mr. Speaker. This is taking place throughout the world. In Serbia and Bosnia, soldiers, POWs and civilians were beheaded by Mujahadin. In Beslan, Russia, 186 children and 158 teachers and parents were slaughtered in a terrorist attack against a grade school. And just a few weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, in Indonesia, three young girls on their way to school were attacked and beheaded by Muslim extremists. Their names were Theresa, Ida and Alfreda. Churches are being attacked. Pastors have been kidnapped, tortured and beheaded, and it seems there is not a day that goes by without

some suicide bomber or some car bomb attack in Iraq. And we have witnessed the horrific bombings in Spain and London and Indonesia and Jordan and Israel. And just today, Mr. Speaker, in Bangladesh. We simply cannot deny that we are fighting a war against enemies with an evil ideology that is bent on the destruction of the western world. They are committed to killing us and any others they hold to be infidels. Mr. Speaker, we truly are at war, and to undermine the sacrifice and blood-bought advancements of our valiant American soldiers who are, at this very moment, fighting terrorists in Iraq is unconscionable, Mr. Speaker.

A Nation divided against itself cannot stand. Those of us in this body, along with all Americans, must unite against this evil. We must win this war in Iraq. We must give our troops our unequivocal support, and we must give them everything else in our power to finish this job. Our troops have never failed us, and Mr. Speaker, we, in this body must not fail them. If freedom is to survive, to allow Islamist terrorists to declare victory in Iraq is not an option. We must win and we cannot win if we leave before this job is done, because if we leave too soon, Mr. Speaker, we will not be able to just go on about our daily lives as we once did because the world truly has changed, and those without conscience are relentlessly seeking to destroy us. And we must not let them have even the slightest hope of victory, not ever, Mr. Speaker. God bless America.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I appreciate the gentleman's contribution to this debate. And you have really, you set the tone, I think, that I am going to need to have to carry out the balance of this time that we have here.

I think too about parts of history and how far back we go and how our military set such a tradition for so many years. And as I stepped away from this microphone the last time, I had taken us to this point, I think I made the point that it cannot be stated that there were no weapons of mass destruction and be rational about it, because you cannot prove a negative. And we know that they existed.

So setting that argument aside, I will just say when it comes out, it is bogus, they will pound on it until they get embarrassed and embarrass themselves. So we will hear it more. We will hear it every night down here. But one of the things that I can move along to, maybe expand this discussion a little bit is to go back then to that point that I was making earlier, that point about why we went to war in the civil war and what the objective of that war was.

Now, the objective was to save the union. And anything that you read about Lincoln in his earlier debates and his efforts and his decisions that he made along that process, it was a

super human effort all targeted to save the union. And part of freeing the slaves, yes, it was something that was in his heart.

He conceded that Dred Scott was actually a constitutional decision, but we needed to amend the constitution to eliminate slavery. Lincoln had so much respect for the constitution that he made that point. But he had so much respect for the binding nature of our Constitution that it was an irrevocable agreement between the States, that he was willing to stay at war and the cost in that civil war was over 600,000 American lives, over 600,000 American lives at a time when our population was perhaps a third of what it is today or less.

So that was the greatest loss of humanity ever in a conflict in this country, and yet, he stuck to the central purpose, save the union, save the union, save the union. In 1863, the subject came up on whether to sign the Emancipation Proclamation. A great and powerful leader and one of the most profound stories of leadership that I have ever read throughout history comes back to the question, as he sat down with his cabinet, and there was the Emancipation Proclamation to free the slaves, and he asked his cabinet, gentlemen, what say you? And they started on his left and it went around the table at the cabinet table and the first member of his cabinet said Mr. President, I advise you do not sign it, and here are the reasons why.

And the second and the third and the fourth and so on until it got around to the last member of the cabinet. And each member of the cabinet said, Mr. President, do not sign the Emancipation Proclamation. Some of the reasons were we are at this to save the union. Some other, well do not confuse the issue. Some of them were political reasons of the time that I do not have a feel for today. But as President Lincoln, in his singular motivation to save that union, listened to their recommendation, do not sign the Emancipation Proclamation, he said, well, gentlemen, the ayes have it. And he stepped forward with great courage and leadership and he signed the Emancipation Proclamation. He did not really free anybody south of the Mason Dixon line because we did not have jurisdiction down there at the time. We were at war with the South.

It didn't really free anybody north of the Mason Dixon line because the people north of the line were free. But what it did is it set up an image and a goal and a dream and it mobilized some people that had been mobilized for a long time to abolish slavery, and it became historically, looking back on that, now we are taught we fought the civil war to free the slaves. So how can it be that here we are today, when a civil war began to save the union, it ended to save the union, but history interpreted it to mean that it was about

the freedom of slavery, which I absolutely think it was worth the price. How can we sit here today and say we did not find mass quantities, great warehouses full of weapons of mass destruction, therefore all the rest of this is illegitimate. When did the United States decide that we did not free people? When did we decide that liberation of humanity was not a worthy cause? When did we decide that going to war, if it had multiple reasons, if one of those reasons did not meet your standard over here on the other side of the aisle, then all the rest of it is illegitimate.

There were plenty of reasons and whole constellations of reasons to go into Iraq and, in fact, there really was not a choice. If you sit down and analyze the circumstances at the time, there really was not a choice. Saddam Hussein did not give President Bush a choice. And I think, well, I do not know what Saddam was actually thinking. But if we went to the war to save the union in the Civil War and it became to free the slaves, and by the way, in about 1898, when the USS Maine was sunk in Havana Harbor, it is still at the bottom of that harbor, by the way, and the mast and the anchor are out here at Arlington Cemetery. But the Maine is at the bottom of the harbor.

And we went to war against the Spaniards because, and history can re-analyze this, we believed that we were attacked by the Spaniards and the ship was scuttled in a hostile act and that triggered the Spanish American War. Sure, there was tensions that brought that about and you can argue about the details. Some will say that the USS Maine really was not sunk by a hostile attack. Some will say it was an explosion in the magazine that sunk it to the bottom of Havana harbor. Some will say it was a pretext for war. We went to war just the same and defeated the Spanish in the Spanish American War that began in 1898. And I will tell you that one of the things we did as a result of that war, we went to the Philippines. Now, was that consistent with the reason for the war in the first place?

Was there something about sinking the Maine down there in Havana Harbor that would cause us to send the Marines to the Philippines? Well, you can argue that either way too, but I can tell you that I listened to a speech by President Arroyo of the Philippines a couple of 3 years ago here in Washington, D.C. at a hotel. She said thank you America. Thank you for sending the Marine Corps to the Philippines in 1898. Thank you for liberating us. Thank you for bringing us freedom. Thank you for teaching us your free enterprise, your way of life, your rule of law. Thank you for sending the missionaries over here that made us a Christian Nation. Thank you for send-

ing 10,000 teachers to the Philippines so that we would learn your way of life and the American values and we could learn English. And English is the national language of business and commerce. And today, 1.6 million Filipinos go throughout the world. They can get a job about wherever they want to because they have the language skills that are universal. They send their money back to the Philippines. A result of a detonation of an explosion in the hull of the USS Maine in Havana Harbor in 1898 where it sits at the bottom of that harbor yet today. The result are free people in the Philippines. When did the United States give up on liberating a people? When did we give up on our culture and our way of life and projecting that way of life throughout the world? When did we give up on our legacy of western civilization? Whose idea is that, to cut and run because what?

The reasons that you think maybe were what justified it do not quite uphold the way you would analyze that today. What kind of idea is that? What were the circumstances when we were attacked by Pearl Harbor? And by the way, September 11, 2001, I remember where I was, I was on the road on my way up to a county fair. My wife called me on the phone and said turn on the radio, there has been a plane that crashed into one of the Twin Towers. I turned on the radio and a few minutes later a second plane crashed into the Twin Towers. And the individual that was riding with me was a World War II veteran and the first words out of his mouth were Pearl Harbor. I will never forget that tone in his voice. The second plane into the Twin Towers made it clear it was not an aerial accident. It was a planned, stealth attack against civilians in the United States of America, the worst attack ever on our soil, and it was not against a military installation. It was against civilians. Pearl Harbor happened December 7, 1941. It was the anniversary just a couple of days ago, Mr. Speaker.

□ 1830

We went to war. We declared unconditional war against our enemies, and a few days later, Hitler declared war on us from Europe. Now we were involved in a two-front war. What was the objective of our declaring war on the Japanese in the first place? Unconditional war, that it would be total and unconditional surrender of the Japanese. Then we found ourselves in Europe, fighting a two-front war, which the Germans had found was not very successful, but for the United States it has been. We put troops on the east, we put troops in the west and in the South Pacific. And we were successful on both fronts of that war. Was there a clamor in this country at the time to say we were attacked at Pearl Harbor; what

are we doing fighting Germans? What was the idea of that?

And, by the way, all the people that were liberated around this globe as a result of the Second World War are all beneficiaries. Look at the Japanese today, their culture, their economy, their prosperity. The size of their economy compared with the rest of the countries' in the world is fantastic considering the population and the limitations that they have geographically living on that island. They are well off today as a country, and a big part of that has been the result of the reconstruction afterwards and the liberation that came to them. They were living under an imperialistic Japan.

So this idea that the American people do not liberate anyone, that freedom is not a goal of a war is just simply false throughout history.

And there are other examples throughout history, and I am wondering if the gentleman from Arizona might have one to add to that. I noticed the look in his eye.

I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) for yielding to me.

I have to say to the gentleman I am just sitting here cheering him on because I think he is dead on target here.

Always throughout history, our history, we have held to the notion in our Declaration of Independence that all men are created equal, that there is something intrinsically valuable about people and, therefore, their freedom was worth protecting and defending. And I think that when he has pointed out that we faced this battle between freedom and despotism for a long time, it is such a foundational issue.

And I am not sure that we all understand how the war has changed a little bit. The basic foundation is the same, but the war has changed a little bit with terrorism. When we were fighting in World War II, when the war was over, we had the Cold War, and in a sense we based our safety upon the sanity of our enemy. We had this thing called "mutually assured destruction." We had an enemy that cared about their own people, that did not want them to perish. So there was a peace in a sense because there was a concern about innocent human beings.

The kind of war that we face now is a war with terrorists who do not seem to have any sort of concern for innocent human life, and that makes them very dangerous. When they stand there and cut someone's head off, screaming before the world, I think that we need to understand we are up against a mindset that is either going to grow within the world or it is going to be crushed out of the world because if we let that thing get away from us, it could literally change everything.

And I think that is why it comes back down to this thing called Iraq. I

am not sure that we all understand that in the mindset of the terrorists that Iraq is sort of the frontline. It is a symbolic battle. And if we somehow fail in Iraq, we, I believe, will activate this ideology within the terrorist world that will cause them to be able to recruit more and essentially begin to germinate throughout the planet. And I am not sure that the country, or really the world, understands just how serious a challenge that we really face.

And so I think that the gentleman is right on to point out that there has always been this battle for freedom throughout history, and if we stop now, as our Forefathers fought for freedom for us so that we can stand on this floor in freedom, if we do not build our step in the stairway of freedom for our future generations, then we really fail the cause that we have called to action tonight and always on this floor.

And, again, I just think that the President has understood that. I think he understands that in order to fight terrorism that we have to be on the offensive, that we cannot let this ideology that if a knife that cuts someone's head off could become a nuclear weapon, how much it would change our concept of freedom forever. And we have to win in Iraq. We have to see that beachhead of freedom established in the Middle East. It could germinate and see the whole of humanity turn in a better direction if we continue to do our job here.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

He did bring up another war that I did not include in this when he mentioned the Cold War. The Cold War went on for perhaps 45 years, beginning shortly after World War II and ending, I am going to say, November 9, 1989, when the wall went down in Berlin. And it took about 2, 2½ years for freedom to echo all the way across Eastern Europe. But the liberation that took place at the culmination at the Cold War, and it was a glorious victory. We say a bloodless victory, and I have stood on this floor and called it a bloodless victory. But it was not without price. The mutually assured destruction, the millions of men and women that needed to be mobilized, the capital that had to be poured into the research and development to be ahead of the Soviet Union it came to the arms race, and not just the price in treasure but the price in blood as well.

There is a price in blood as a price to be ready, Mr. Speaker, and we do not often talk about it. I asked the Pentagon to put some numbers together for me so I had a sense of that. I wanted to know how many of our soldiers in uniform die in the line of duty not at the cause of combat but perhaps at the cause of an accident, a training accident, for example, an on-duty accident, an in uniform on-duty accident. And I had them look back through a whole

number of years, and I put that together and I boiled it down into a figure that I could at least commit to memory so that I could put it into proportion and talk about it in a way that made sense.

The number that they gave me worked out to be an average of 505 American lives lost every year during peaceable activities in uniform, deaths as a price to be ready to go into combat. Five hundred and five Americans a year. Now, that is the average that takes place during the 1990s up until the year 2001. The average prior to that, during the Cold War, I do not know that number, and their records were not very available. But I would suspect it would be greater, not less because we have more safety, not less, and we had more people in uniform, not less. But I took that number and just said 500 a year, and as the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) was talking, I multiplied it across the 45 years of the Cold War. And the number I came up with was 22,500 American lives. That gives us a sense of the magnitude of the price of winning the Cold War, not to add the treasure. That is the blood. That is the sacrifice. There is a price to be ready.

There is another whole price out here that is paid for our freedom that is never acknowledged by the pessimists on the other side of the aisle, and that is that price to be ready. And it is measured in this victory in the Cold War, 22,500 lives perhaps. A quick scratch here on the paper is all that supports that statement and some good information to support it. But with that number of lives, hundreds of millions of people were liberated in the aftermath of the Cold War. When the Iron Curtain descended down across Europe and those people lived for 45 years behind the Iron Curtain in a kind of a world where we were in full technicolor and they were living in black and white, it gives us a sense of how bad it was where they did not have free enterprise, did not have opportunity, did not have freedom. And today they do.

And, by the way, the most recent people who have achieved freedom are the ones that cherish it the most. They are the ones that are the most eager to be part of our coalition forces in Iraq to defend the freedom of the Iraqi people.

So this price for freedom has been great, but the value has been astonishing. The pessimism on the other side of the aisle has been stupendous. And I have brought some posters along to talk about what happens when we send a pessimistic message from this Congress; from the leaders of this country; from the people who are viewed, at least on the other side of the ocean, as the quasi-leaders of the United States of America. And I will start with Muqtada al-Sadr.

This individual here, Mr. Speaker, decided to put his own militia to-

gether, Sadr City, Baghdad, in a region south of Baghdad. And his militia attacked coalition troops, American troops. His militia did not fair very well, and it took some really severe, and he has decided a few times that he kind of likes getting involved in politics as opposed to being a general of a militia because it is far less hazardous to be in politics there in Iraq. But I was sitting in Kuwait City on one of my trips over there at night, waiting to go into Iraq early the next morning. I turned the television on to al-Jazeera TV. I always, when I am in a foreign country, want to know what is going on; so I turn on the local channel.

Al-Jazeera is the local channel for the Arab world. And there in Arabic out of his mouth came, with English subtitles, what I will never forget. And this is the date that I was sitting in that hotel room, June 11, 2004, al-Jazeera: "If we keep attacking Americans, they will leave Iraq the same way they left Vietnam, the same way they left Lebanon, the same way they left Mogadishu."

Where does Muqtada al-Sadr get an idea like that? What encourages him to continue the insurgency and the attacks on Americans and the recruitment of his people and his militia? What encourages him to raise the money and build the bombs and do the things that they have done? And this is not the worst enemy we have over there, by the way. He is not the biggest demon that we have. But it was just the circumstance that I heard this from the television screen while I was in Kuwait. Where does he get his motivation? Why does he think this is true?

Well, there is the legacy of Vietnam. And these people over here every night that are dragging down our administration and undermining our military are the political descendants of the ones that dragged down our devotion to our military and our support for them during the Vietnam era. In the aftermath of Vietnam when Congress voted to shut off all funding for all military efforts in all of South Vietnam and ground every airplane that was flying air cover over the South Vietnamese, and a few months later, we saw the North Vietnamese army sweep through there, and we were lifting people off the U.S. Embassy in Saigon.

Why? Not because the South Vietnamese would not fight any longer but because the will and the commitment to support them disappeared over here, and the rug was jerked out from underneath not just our military but underneath the military of South Vietnam. And in the aftermath, they say they saved lives. We know 3 million people died in that part of the world in the aftermath of not keeping our commitment with the South Vietnamese military.

That message resounds today and echoes throughout the Middle East,

echoes throughout al Qaeda. "The Americans will leave Iraq the same way they left Vietnam, Lebanon, Mogadishu." Is that hard to figure out, then? They watch American TV too. I imagine they turn on C-SPAN and watch this every night and cheer and pop their popcorn and they have a good time seeing that their argument is being supported on the floor of this Congress every night for 1 or 2 hours. They build more bombs, not less, Mr. Speaker. That puts American soldiers' lives at risk. Bombs cost American soldiers lives. That is on the conscience of the people that are leading this country in that wrong direction.

Now, on the chance that one might think that this is a coincidence that Muqtada al-Sadr just picked up this Vietnam idea on his own, maybe he read a comic book somewhere or watched C-SPAN or watched the Congress here and our Special Orders. Here is a statement made by Zawahiri, Osama bin Laden's second in command. He is al Qaeda. He is a more dangerous enemy than Muqtada al-Sadr. In February of 2004, in a letter to al Qaeda, he wrote: "The collapse of American power in Vietnam," they ran and left. It sent a message, did it not, to Zawahiri? We know it sent a message to Osama bin Laden. It sent a message to Muqtada al-Sadr. It sent a message also to other leaders of al Qaeda. It gave them hope. It gave them spirit. It caused them to have more energy, more courage, more will, more resourcefulness to attack coalition troops and to attack Americans. Is that a hard thing to figure out?

If that is a hard thing to figure out, Mr. Speaker, then I need to make this point very, very clear. In all of those wars that Mr. FRANKS and I talked about throughout this course of history, in the Civil War, in the Spanish-American War, in the Second World War, and the Cold War and other wars in between, what are the conditions by which a war is over? Not because somebody over here passes a resolution and says we are going to pick a date on when we are going to be deployed out, the cut-and-run date. We cannot set a date for the end of a war if the war is not finished. Wars are over when the losing party realizes and understands that they have lost. That is how a war gets over. You have got to convince the enemy that they cannot win, and you do that through violence.

Yes, all history knows that. But when it is a relentless pounding from the other side of the aisle and the quasi-leaders of the United States of America and they stand up here and say the war cannot be won, people like Zawahiri, Muqtada al-Sadr, Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, do they not hear that message? Is it not something that encourages them? Do they not think that the will of the American people is being broken because they

hear that relentless message every single day coming out of this Congress, coming out through the media? In fact, I would suspect that Saddam Hussein probably has a higher opinion of the United States of America than some of our mainstream media do, listening to some of them out there.

□ 1845

The pessimistic message that gets pounded out of here, that gets run through the mainstream media, that is supported by some people from the other body, that is supported by other leaders, quasi-leaders in this country, gets through to people like Zawahiri, Zarqawi, Muqtada Al-Sadr, Osama bin Laden. If you doubt that, Mr. Speaker, if any one doubts that, I have another poster for you.

There he is. The face and the voice of the Democratic Party, the leader of the left. One of the inspirational voices that mobilizes the other party for pessimism, negativism, and attacks. This individual whom we know pretty well, Howard Dean, DNC chairman, spent a lot of time in my home State of Iowa, about a year and a half in there.

He was there most of the time going through the counties and the cities. I will grant him, he worked very hard running for President. And this is the picture that I think has been made famous by that mainstream news media that finally did turn on one of their own. I do not think he quite deserved the hit that he took over that.

But that frustration from the scream, his failure to win the caucuses in Iowa and his failure to win the nomination on through that process did not really come from the scream. The scream was a result of, but the people who met him in the coffee shops and the living rooms understood the real man here, the man here that says, "The idea that we are going to win is just plain wrong."

Do you not think these other people I put up here see this man as a leader of the United States of America, the voice of the Democratic Party, the almost-majority in the House of Representatives? Of course they do. And they hear this message: the idea that we are going to win is just plain wrong.

Now, if you had seen your troops decimated like al Qaeda has, if you had watched 3,000 of them disappear from your ability to utilize them in combat, in battle, 3,000 every month, those that are either killed or captured, and you do not see that in the mainstream news media, that is a number that does not come out here anywhere that I can find. But I can tell you that that is the number that has been the average over the last several months, 3,000 of the enemy off the streets, killed and captured.

So that has got to be dispiriting to them. We are losing casualties. It hurts us. It breaks the confidence of the peo-

ple on the other side of the aisle. What would our confidence be if it were 3,000 of ours lost every month instead of the numbers that we are facing today?

So what happens? This man stands up and says the idea that we are going to win is just plain wrong. Well, if you are all beaten down after your 3,000th casualty for the month, and if you are looking for some optimism, here is the place to go. There are plenty of voices over here that bring this optimism for the other side.

They keep mentioning the Vietnam War. That is the only war that the liberals ever won; they just won it for the wrong side, Mr. Speaker, and are trying to win another one. They have got so much invested in failure in Iraq, they could not abide by that.

So I would ask this other side of the aisle, define victory. I will define it. We have had this sequence of it that took place. We listened to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) talk about being in Iraq during the elections, the first free elections in January, with the purple fingers in air, 8½ million Iraqis voted.

We went through sequence of liberations, martial law, a Coalition Provisional Authority under Paul Bremer and handed over to a civilian government until such time as they could set up the elections, which they did in January, and they elected then a provisional parliament, an interim temporary parliament whose job it was to write the Constitution. On October 15 then they ratified their Constitution.

And 10 days later we had leaders of this country that were speaking against the effort and undermining their freedom. And now here we are just a few days from a real election in Iraq that finally culminates this whole process and gives them a legitimate sovereignty in Iraq, one that will select a prime minister, gives them the ability now to take this massive amount of oil wealth that they have, market some oil contracts for development so that they can start to get this cash-flow coming back into Iraq, lift that country up.

They are just dilapidated and depreciated from 35 years of neglect. We have given them a little shot in the arm, \$18.5 billion. The number was wrong over here, by the way, last night. It was not 87 billion that went in there to rebuild Iraq. It was 18.5. The balance was for the military. But 18.5 billion of that, 12½ the Army invested, and the balance of that was scattered through some other entities. That was like the down payment on your house that gets them started.

They will be certified December 15. There is hope. There is freedom. We must stick it out.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to appear before the House again this evening. My colleague on the other side and I, we are here almost every night.

I just wanted to say the new government, of course the election will take place December 15. They will not be seated until March. I know that sometimes we are having to close and say things and we are under the clock. They are going to be seated in March. Then we are going to have to wait to see how they feel about us, the United States of America, not having a plan as it relates to being able to draw down our troops, allow a NATO force to go in. I just left there the week before. I met with General Dewey talking about the NATO force that is going to come in after hopefully we start to draw down our troops.

So we have to allow that process to take place. But I do appreciate some of information you shared tonight with Members of the House. Thank you for your service here.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but tell you that the 30-Something Working Group, we continue to work hard, not only working hard on behalf of the people that we represent in our given districts throughout the country, but also representing the entire population of the United States of America.

As you know, and I have mentioned night after night, this is truly the people's House. You cannot be appointed to the U.S. House of Representatives; you have to run. If someone resigns or leaves the House for some reason, a special election is set by the Governor.

If a Senator were to leave, as we see right now, the Senator of New Jersey was elected Governor of that State, he has to make the decision on who he wants to fill that seat. That will be by appointment. That individual will serve until that next election until that term is out.

But not in the House. So that is the reason why we are like on the frontlines of providing the American people with the kind of leadership that they deserve. Now, I want to talk a little bit about leadership and responsibility. I also want to compare, in a way, because, Mr. Speaker, I hope and I wish and my prayer is that there can be a paradigm shift here in the House of Representatives, a paradigm shift in a way that we can all work together in a bipartisan way on a number of issues.

I think the issues that we are facing now, there is a health care crisis in this country, could be addressed in a bipartisan way. I think some of the issues that some Members of the House brought up as it relates to Social Secu-

rity, we are definitely concerned about some of the issues that are facing Social Security.

But the majority side tried to ram it down the throats of the American people to privatize Social Security versus fixing Social Security in a way that it will be here for generations beyond the 50 years that it is already set to provide the services at today's levels to the recipients of Social Security, need it be disability or retirement or survivor benefits.

In a bipartisan way, we can move in that direction. That is what the American people want. As it relates to making sure that we can keep U.S. jobs on U.S. soil, we can do that in a bipartisan way. And I must say bipartisan, because when the Democrats were in the majority, we did do things in a bipartisan way. Right now we are under an environment, we are as partisan as we can be, not because we have the control to make ourselves partisan, it is the fact that we cannot have input in making sure here in this House on the Democratic side, we are not allowed to have the kind of input, because the majority believes so shall it be written, so shall it be done.

Just watch what we do. If you question us, we will insult you, or we would say, oh, well, you do not quite know what is going on. Oh, you just want to derail our plan. Why do we not have a unified plan for America? And that is what Americans are calling for.

I want to talk a little bit about the budget, talk about the responsibility that we must have as we start moving forward. We want this country to strengthen, not only in security, but also in unity, and make sure that we protect the environment, and make sure that we protect the homeland as it relates to homeland security, to make sure for the very individuals that are getting sand in their teeth now, be it Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan or Iraq, we have to make sure that we run this country in a way that it should be run, so that not only this generation but future generations can celebrate not only personal finance but also making sure that they are safe.

The Republicans passed the \$54 billion cuts in the budget. I must say that it is quite crippling, Mr. Speaker. The Republican majority will add to the deficit some \$8 trillion under what the majority calls, Mr. Speaker, a deficit reduction. We passed a budget of \$52 billion today. We took action today to increase the budget by \$8 trillion. That is according to the Department of Treasury.

It is important to also let every American know that this number is inching up. In the 108th Congress, it was lower. The beginning of this Congress, it was even lower. But now it is higher: \$6,983.89 cents every American owes as it relates to the debt. You

would have some believe or have Americans believe and some Members believe here in this Congress that we are doing the right thing by the American people by putting them further into debt.

It is almost like the high-interest credit card that you receive in the mail. I get them all the time. I mean, they mail credit cards to me. Sign right here. No problem. Interest free for the first 3 months. But in the fine print, I must say in this Congress on the majority side there is a lot of fine print. There is a \$75 annual fee that will be tacked onto the credit card even before you use it. Just by you signing it and mailing it back in, that is \$75.

And then the interest rate goes up, if you read the fine print, if you are late on one payment. It goes up to a 24 percent interest rate, because you signed that contract.

Well, the American people went into the ballot box on a given Tuesday in a given community to vote for representation, not for individuals to exploit the fact that they are here to represent them and turn their head when proposals are put forth that can help save the American taxpayer money in the short and long run.

And so we are going to talk a little bit tonight about what we call here in Washington, D.C., the Potomac two-step. We are going to talk about what some people call in parts of the country "hoodwink."

So we want to make sure that people understand what is going on here with third-party validators, not just fiction, not just what they say, or not just what some unidentified Member said on the floor. We are going to make sure that the Members know exactly what is going on, how it is going on, and when it is going on. It is going on right now.

I always say, Mr. Speaker, when the historians look at the 109th Congress, they are going to be looking at fiscal irresponsibility. They are going to say, how did this happen? How did we try to nation-build in Iraq when we had leaders, be it the executive branch or Members here in the Congress, say we are not in the business of nation-building? Now we are in the business of nation-building.

We are in the business of nation-building in a foreign land. We do not want anyone else to be a part of it. We do not want folks to come in and be a part of what we have to do to be able to allow the Iraqi Government to move in a direction so they can be self-sufficient. We must take the training wheels off the Iraqi Government.

Being a Member of the Armed Services Committee, I must add, Mr. Speaker, it is important that we give them some direction as it relates to security forces and as it relates to the responsibility of their very own government. And whatever internal conflicts