

This weekend I had the opportunity to see another fine example of servicemen and women, soldiers and sailors, working together at Guantanamo. But as we respect and appreciate their service, I have also had the opportunity to engage in conversation with these brave young men and women, Reservists, National Guard, and the one thing they understand is that what they are fighting for is freedom, and they are fighting for the availability and the opportunity for there to be public disagreement, dissent. That is the basis of our Constitution. That is why we love America.

So I rise today to simply raise questions; to applaud the improvement that has occurred in Guantanamo, but also to suggest that there needs to be transparency, there needs to be an understanding that there was a before and now an after. We need to be able to investigate thoroughly allegations of inappropriate behavior, abuse, by those in the FBI, the media and non-governmental agencies, to be able to clear the stain that might be on those who are working hard now.

A bipartisan commission could investigate by way of talking to the detainees; understand fully what the military tribunals mean and how they operate; whether or not detainees have a right to counsel; why they are being held indefinitely; why there are no charges; why there has not been a prosecution and a conviction; and to emphasize the Rasul case, which talks about access to the courts through habeas corpus proceedings.

Again, what I said very clearly is progress has been made, and I applaud that progress. But progress will be greatly made if we have an understanding through a bipartisan process of what Guantanamo means, and ultimately to prosecute the bad and horrific terrorists, for none of us want to see terrorists released. But for those who are able to return home, to be detained at home, to be held at home, to be kept off the battlefield so that those in Guantanamo do not pose a threat to our soldiers on the battlefield and to be held against them if they happen to be caught by the enemy.

□ 2245

I ask for a simple point that freedom means airing, freedom means the opportunity to ask questions and to get answers. I say that again tonight, as we heard the President speak to the American people.

First, I applaud the fact that the President has come to the American people; it is something that I have asked for time and time again. But, Mr. Speaker, let me simply say this: we need a success strategy in order to be able to have our troops come home. It is not a cut-and-run strategy, and I resent the interpretation that those of us who have asked for a success strategy that will bring dignity and respect to our troops and freedom to the Iraqi people are in any way cutting and running.

The strategies that the President offered tonight do not lead us on that pathway. The relating of the war in Iraq to the 9/11 tragedy, the horrific terrorist act, does not comport, if you will. We are fighting a War on Terror. We need all of our allies to help us fight it. We need the Iraqis, we need the Jordanians, we need the Saudi Arabians, we need all of them. But this ongoing conflict and war in Iraq with our soldiers entrenched where the Iraqi people and the Iraqi government has not reached out to diversify their government to include the Sunnis, to make sure that they are fighting collectively against the bad elements in a unified force, that is what is keeping us from peace. Embedding our soldiers and Iraqi forces is a good military strategy, but it is not a political end to this war. And, yes, we are looking for the writing of a Constitution, the voting on a Constitution, but we need a success strategy, a time that we can look toward for our troops to be able to come home.

It would be well to give military strategies that include training our national Iraqi forces, which I agree with, and I offered an amendment on the Floor of the House, working with conferees on the Defense Appropriation, to ensure that that occurs. I support the Skelton-Harman bill that talks about reinforcing the Iraqi forces, but that is not a success strategy. Again, there is no fear to being able to talk about the time of our troops coming home, acknowledging the brave stand that they have taken and the success that they have had in initially toppling Saddam Hussein.

I disagreed with this war from the beginning because I believed that it was not a constitutional war because Congress had not declared war. But I am prepared to work with the President now, to work with our colleagues in order to develop a success strategy that comes with honor and dignity.

What we had tonight leaves us empty because, in fact, I would hope that we could believe that the insurgency would go down. But we cannot expect that, in the backdrop of Secretary Rumsfeld clearly saying that the insurgents would be active for 12 years, and tonight we did not hear any solution to the violence of the insurgents. I believe that with the presence of military forces with the United States there, the insurgents will continue to rise.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to bring peace to this crisis in Iraq. We cannot do it without an effective success strategy for our troops and for America.

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR PEACE IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, it is interesting, my colleague was just

talking about the President's speech tonight and I happen to disagree with her. I thought it was a strong, resolute speech that we heard from the President. America needs to hear from him and America needs to know that this President will not cut and run. The world needs to know that the Americans are not going to cut and run.

I think that for the past few months Americans, and probably a lot of folks around the world, have heard far too much from the cut-and-run caucus on this Hill. It is time that we make certain that they know we are committed to freedom. We have a President that is not going to give in to the terrorists, and that is exactly as it should be.

Some say that by being aggressive, that by taking this War on Terrorism to the Middle East, that we are helping the terrorists and helping the insurgent recruitment efforts. These naysayers count every single person who goes out and joins and becomes a part of the insurgency but, somehow, they forget something, and they forget this: that as we are over there fighting and working to bring democracy and freedom to Afghanistan and to Iraq, that there are hundreds of thousands and millions of people that are joining us in working toward freedom, working to build a democratic ally for our children there in the Middle East, and that they are going to see a different life than the hundreds of thousands that have found themselves in mass graves in Afghanistan and in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, it is also interesting that many times, those on the left come in and they want to talk about a time line, give us a time line. Tell us exactly when we are going to get out of there. I always find that interesting, because many times I think that the liberals want a time line because they want to control it. They want to know exactly what is going to happen when, so they can micromanage it. Our military leaders need the ability to make those decisions that need to be made right there on the front lines. They do not need Congress micromanaging this war.

Also, we do not need to tell the terrorists, this is what we are going to do and this is when we are going to do it. We need to trust that leadership of our military and we need to believe in those men and women in uniform that are fighting.

My colleague also mentioned a trip that was made to Guantanamo Bay this weekend. I was also on that trip, and I will tell my colleagues, it is one of those things that kind of gets under my skin when I hear them say progress is being made at Guantanamo Bay. That insinuates that our men and women in uniform have done something wrong, and they have not, Mr. Speaker. I think it is important that the Members of this body, and also that the American people, know what Guantanamo Bay is about.

Guantanamo Bay is a detention center, and in that detention center are

held 520 enemy combatants. Now, an enemy combatant is not somebody that got picked up for shoplifting or for running a traffic signal. An enemy combatant is a person that has ties to known terrorist groups: the Taliban, al Qaeda. They are people that have participated in trying to tear us down. They are people that have participated in the September 11 attacks, the Khobar Towers, the first World Trade Center bombing. That is what we have at Guantanamo Bay.

We hear that we should send them back to their country. There is a reason we do not, and that is because an enemy combatant is not a uniformed soldier in an Army fighting for a country. An enemy combatant is a terrorist and, many times, we do not know what country they are from. The reason we do not send them back is because there is not a country that we are going to be sending them back to. It is an important distinction that we need to make.

Mr. Speaker, as we go through this week, as we talk about the President's remarks tonight, as we talk about the time at Guantanamo Bay, it is important to remember that it is our men and women that we need to thank for our freedom. It is their families we need to thank for their support.

AMERICA IS LOSING HER INDEPENDENCE

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, some people have loosely thrown the word "freedom" around here tonight. Well, America's freedom is declining because we are so increasingly dependent on imported petroleum. As oil prices rise, for super it is over \$2.50 a gallon now at the pump and historic levels of \$60 a barrel, I must rise tonight to say how sick I am of imported petroleum governing this economy. Look what it has done to our beloved republic economically, politically, environmentally, strategically. Rising oil prices control this economy. The lack of growth, every time that price ticks up, the stock market becomes very uncomfortable.

Oil prices keep us strategically locked to dictatorships all across this globe. That causes limitation in freedoms. What about the impact that oil prices have binding us to China and Iran now, looking at what is happening there, and the proposed Unocal purchase by China right at the ankles of Unocal's investments in Afghanistan right next door, as we become players in this 21st century oil market. America, wake up. Look at who gets the profit from your expenditures out of your wallet. Rising oil prices makes our economy vulnerable here at home. We lose more jobs, and the stock market remains very, very unsteady.

Rising oil prices mean we knock points off economic growth. Think

about who gets those profits off those rising prices as our young men and women in the armed forces occupy the Middle East and Central Asia where most of our imported oil comes from. Now, over 60 percent of what we consume is imported from abroad; a majority of what is used in this country is imported. We are not free.

In fact, our soldiers are guarding more and more every day oil and gas pipelines from Afghanistan to Georgia to Turkey to places most Americans have not been very familiar with. U.S. foreign policy and military involvements in these areas parallel that of our global oil corporations. Unocal is not the only one. Chevron, Exxon, Arco, the names go on.

Now, this week, the Communist-owned oil company of China has decided it wants to pay more for Unocal than it is worth. Unocal does not drill anything in this country anymore; their investments are all over the world. Remember, Afghanistan was a key transit route before we got there with the military, the 18,000 of our soldiers who are stationed there now; Afghanistan was a key transit route from Unocal from the Caspian Sea Basin. They have been at this a long time. Sadly, U.S. foreign policy in that country has mirrored Unocal's satisfaction with the Taliban government there. They tried to be friends.

In fact, Unocal had plans for a new pipeline winding a far-ranging path from Turkmenistan's gas fields to the Arabian Sea. The giant oil company built cooperative relationships with the Taliban government in Afghanistan, as did the United States Government. When we supported the Taliban, as recently as 1999, U.S. taxpayers paid the salary of oil-hungry Taliban government officials. Ask yourself about that.

But as soon as the Taliban began making things a little difficult for Unocal, demanding more money for infrastructure and access to some of the oil themselves in the summer of 2001, well, our government's position began to change on the Taliban. Shortly thereafter, the Taliban became much more vulnerable after the September 11 attack, and the Bush administration was able to secure support for invasion of that country, but then maneuvered a former Unocal consultant named Khalized to be the first ambassador to Afghanistan and, guess what? Now he was just nominated and confirmed as ambassador to Iraq. Strange coincidence.

Ask yourself, who gets the profits off the rising gas prices you are paying for. China has raised its bid to purchase the U.S. oil giant Unocal, and what a twist of fate this is. It was U.S. oil dependency that drew us to secure Central Asia for oil, and now we find ourselves in the awkward position of having China buy us out. China is trying to trump our energy investments in that area because it is right next door to them, trying to buy Unocal to ac-

cess what the U.S. had hoped to gain by the Central Asian invasion.

China is also courting favor with Iran. They are trying to trump us there to gain an energy edge as the Bush administration creates more barriers with Iran. Ask yourselves, who is getting the profits and why has the Bush administration made us more dependent on foreign oil, up another 10 percent, up to 63 percent now.

Mr. Speaker, America is losing her independence.

HONORING THE LIFE AND FRIENDSHIP OF STAFF SERGEANT JOSEPH BEYERS

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday, June 21, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SAXTON), our distinguished subcommittee chairman of our great Committee on Armed Services, introduced H.R. 256 in remembrance of the brave servicemen who perished in the disastrous April 24, 1980 rescue attempt of the American hostages in Iran. That was called Operation Eagle Claw.

I appreciate the gentleman for bringing this legislation to the Floor, mainly because it is such an important resolution, but also, Mr. Speaker, because it prompted me to call an old friend.

Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to pay tribute to the selfless service of that old friend from my childhood and a true American hero, Air Force Staff Sergeant Joseph J.J. Beyers.

□ 2300

I was reminded of my friend JJ because he was part of that rescue attempt, and he was one of the fortunate few who lived to tell about it. I had pretty much lost track of JJ after high school, although I knew, Mr. Speaker, that he was part of that rescue operation and I knew that he had been injured severely, burned severely, in critical condition for months, but that, thank God, he survived, and he recovered. But we had really lost track of each other for these many years until last week, after Mr. SAXTON introduced his resolution. I had an opportunity to track JJ down and to give him a call and to spend about 45 minutes talking to him about that operation and his life and what it meant to him and what it has meant to this country.

I want to share, Mr. Speaker, a little bit of JJ's life, our life as kids together growing up in North Augusta, South Carolina. We were both altar boys at Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church. JJ and I went to school together from the first grade.

Back in those days, Mr. Speaker, there was no pre-K or kindergarten. Everybody just showed up when they were 6 years old in the first grade. That is how long I have known that great American hero.