greatest drivers. He was the 1973 NASCAR champion and won 21 races, including the race in 1957 at Daytona. In addition to those accomplishments, Benny was the first driver to be a Cup competitor, to qualify for a race over 200 miles per hour, driving 200.176 miles per hour at the Winston 500 at Talladega Superspeedway in 1982.

Benny Parsons made 526 starts from 1964 until his retirement in 1988. With such an outstanding record, Benny was inducted into the International Motorsports Hall of Fame in 1994 and continued his passion by broadcasting from the pit and won a Cable Ace Award for best sports analyst on his first season in the booth.

I think that NBC sports champion Dick Ebersol said it best about Benny, commenting, ''Benny was a beloved and widely respected member of the NASCAR community. He was a great driver and a terrific broadcaster, but above anything else, he was a kind and generous human being. His character and spirit will define how he is remembered by all of us.''

Benny fought cancer to the end with optimism and grace, inspiring countless people. His compassion, generosity and charming personality will be missed. Benny had made North Carolina and NASCAR proud, and his memory will be a lasting one of inspiration and dedication.

CONCLUDING OUR INVOLVEMENT IN IRAQ AND BRINGING OUR TROOPS HOME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, today Representative WOOLSEY, Representative LEE and I introduced a bill that would conclude our involvement in Iraq and bring our troops home. The bill, H.R. 508, is entitled, Bring Our Troops Home and Sovereignty of Iraq Restoration Act of 2007. The bill has 16 original cosponsors. Representative WOOLSEY was on the floor a moment ago, and she shared with you some of the provisions of that bill.

I will reiterate, I will repeat, if enacted, the bill would repeal the use-of-force authorization passed by Congress in 2002 and requires a complete withdrawal of U.S. troops and contractors hired by the U.S. Government within 6 months of the enactment of this bill.

The bill authorizes the President to support an international stabilization force in Iraq, if the Iraq government requests such a force, but U.S. troops would not be permitted to participate in the international force.

It would turn security activities and military operations in Iraq over to the elected Iraqi government within 6 months of the date of enactment.

It would prohibit the U.S. from establishing permanent bases in Iraq.

It would cap the number of officers and employees of the United States assigned to the U.S. embassy in Iraq at 500.

It would accelerate the training and equipping of Iraq military and security forces, and pursue security and stability in Iraq through diplomacy.

It would provide assistance to the Iraqi government in recovering cultural and historical artifacts that have disappeared since the U.S. invaded in 2003.

It will do a number of other things, but let me wrap this up by saying it would fully fund veterans' health care, including mental health care, for our returning veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I am spending an inordinate amount of time on this issue, along with many of my other colleagues, and I have chosen to be a major cosponsor on this bill because I feel it is absolutely my responsibility to not only articulate what is wrong with this war, but to do everything that I can to encourage the President of the United States, the commander in chief, to bring our troops home.

I think it is important to do this because we have lost over 3,000 American soldiers. As a matter of fact, I think it is about 3,034.

I look at the continuing devastation in Iraq, and I see that just day before yesterday I believe over 100 Iraqis were killed and maybe twice as many was injured and we lost four more American soldiers.

□ 1815

This has got to stop. We are in control. We can stop this. I am encouraging our Commander-in-Chief to bring our troops home, and to pursue diplomacy, save lives. Because I believe if they continue down the path that they are going, we are going to have a real blood bath in a short period of time.

This surge, this expansion of the war that has been advocated and pursued and pushed by this President is absolutely the wrong thing to do. I know that he has been advised and he has accepted the advice that he is to go into Sadr City and he is to confront al-Sadr, who is the head of a tremendous militia. They have over 50,000 signed up in that militia and more coming each day. I don't want our American soldiers to confront that militia. I don't want our American soldiers in the middle of this civil war. I don't want these young boys who come from our cities and our towns and these young girls who come from our villages and our hamlets of America to be caught in between Sunnis and Shiites and Kurds. They don't know a Sunni from a Shiite. We don't speak the language. We haven't trained people. Even the soldiers that are supposed to be embedded doing the training can't speak the language. They are depending on interpreters. And let me tell you, even some of the soldiers that we are training in Iraq are turning their backs on us. They desert our soldiers in the middle of a conflict, in a confrontation. These are the ones that we are training, that we are depending on to take over the security of Iraq somehow. It is not going to happen.

We have to leave, and we should not be deterred from the mission of leaving because someone is going to accuse us of cutting and running. We know how these sound bites take place. We know what people do when they want to promote their position. They will mischaracterize what is being done. We have got to have the courage to stand up and stand up for our American soldiers.

I support and cosponsor this new bill. I would ask my colleagues to support it.

Today, Representative WOOLSEY, Representative LEE and I introduced a bill today that would conclude our involvement in Iraq and bring our troops home.

The bill, H.R. 508 is titled ''Bring the Troops Home and Iraq Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2007.''

The bill has 16 original cosponsors.

If enacted, the bill would:

Repeals the use of force authorization passed by Congress in 2002.

Requires the complete withdrawal of U.S. troops and contractors hired by the U.S. government within 6 months of the enactment of this bill. The bill authorizes the President to support an international stabilization force in Iraq, if the Iraqi government requests such a force, but U.S. troops would not be permitted to participate in the international force;

Turn security activities and military operations in Iraq over to the elected Iraqi government within 6 months of the date of enactment.

Prohibit the U.S. from establishing permanent bases in Iraq;

Cap the number of officers and employees of the United States assigned to the U.S. embassy in Iraq at 500;

Accelerate the training and equipping of Iraqi military and security forces;

Pursue security and stability in Iraq through diplomacy;

Provide Iraqi government assistance in destroying/cleaning up land mines, unexploded ordnance and depleted uranium shells;

Provide assistance to the Iraqi government in recovering cultural and historic artifacts that have disappeared since the U.S. invaded in 2003;

Provide compensation for Iraqi noncombatant civilian casualties—except for those individuals that participated in the armed insurgency after May 1, 2003; and

Fully fund veterans healthcare, including mental health care, for our returning veterans.

This bill stands in stark contrast to President Bush's proposal to send more than 20,000 additional troops to Iraq.

The President proposes more of the same, while we provide a way to remove our troops from the sectarian civil war in Iraq, return our troops to their loved ones and begin the process of restoring our credibility throughout the world.

EVEN THE SOLDIERS WILL TELL YOU: ''NOTHING'S GOING TO HELP''

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I voted against going to war in Iraq when Congress voted on this in October of 2002, and I am opposed to sending more troops there now.

President Bush has said that he is going to listen mainly to his commanders. I wish he would listen to Specialist Don Roberts, 22, of Paonia, Colorado, now on his second tour in Iraq, who told the Associated Press, ''What could more guys do? We can't pick sides. It's almost like we have to watch them kill each other and then ask questions.''

Sergeant Josh Keim of Canton, Ohio, also on his second tour said, ''Nothing is going to help. It is a religious war and we are caught in the middle of it.''

Saddam Hussein was an evil man, but he had a total military budget a little over two-tenths of 1 percent of ours, most of which he spent protecting himself and his family and building castles. He was no threat to us at all.

But even before the war started, Fortune Magazine had an article saying that an American occupation would be ''prolonged and expensive'' and would make U.S. soldiers sitting ducks for Islamic terrorists.

Now we have had more than 3,000 young Americans killed, many thousands more wounded horribly, and have spent $400 billion and the Pentagon wants $170 billion more. Most of what we have spent has been purely foreign aid in nature: Rebuilding Iraq's infrastructure, giving free medical care, training police, giving jobs to several hundred thousand Iraqis, and on and on.

Our Constitution does not give us the authority to run another country as we have in reality been doing in Iraq. With a national debt of almost $9 trillion, we cannot afford it. To me, our misadventure in Iraq is both unconstitutional and unaffordable.

Some have said it was a mistake to start this war, but now that we are there we have to ''finish the job'' and we cannot ''cut and run.'' Well, if you find out you are going down the wrong way down the interstate, you get off at the next exit.

Very few pushed as hard for us to go to war in Iraq as did syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer. Last week, he wrote that the Maliki government we have installed there cares only about making sure that the Shiites dominate the Sunnis. And he wrote, ''We should not be surging American troops in defense of such a government,'' Krauthammer wrote. ''Maliki should be made to know that if he insists on having this sectarian war he can well have it without us.''

There is no way we can keep all of our promises to our own people on Social Security, veterans benefits, and many other things in the years ahead if we keep trying to run the whole word.

As another columnist, Georgie Anne Geyer, wrote more than 3 years ago, ''Americans will inevitably come to a point where they will see they have to have a government that provides services at home or one that seeks empire across the globe.''

We should help other countries during humanitarian crises, and we should have trade and tourism and cultural and educational exchanges, but conservatives have traditionally been the strongest opponents to interventionist foreign policies that create so much resentment around the world. We need to return to the more humble foreign policy President Bush advocated when he campaigned in 2000.

We need to tell all these defense contractors that the time for this Iraqi gravy train with its obscene profits is over. It is time to bring our troops home, Mr. Speaker.

I wrote that in a column that ran last Friday in Tennessee's highest circulation newspaper, the Nashville Tennessean, but let me just add this: William F. Buckley, who has often been called the Godfather of Conservativism, wrote about 1½ years ago, ''A point is reached when tenacity conveys not steadfastness of purpose but misapplication of pride.''

Mr. Speaker, we cannot win a civil war between the Shiites and the Sunnis. There can be no victory for us in such a war.

Mr. Speaker, as a teenager I sent my first paycheck as a bag boy at the A&P grocery store as a contribution to the Barry Goldwater campaign. I have been a staunch conservative since high school. This war in Iraq went against every conservative position I have ever known. We need to return Iraq back to Iraqis and start putting our own people first once again.

WE CAN TRANSFORM COMMON DREAMS INTO THE COMMON GOOD

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, we each have our heroes. Gandhi is one of mine. Gandhi said, ''Be the change you want to see in the world.'' Those are words to live by and a philosophy to guide us in making laws that affect the American people.

I have been elected as a subcommittee chairman in the new Congress, and I think the American people and my House colleagues deserve to hear something about my vision about that responsibility.

I am elected to chair the Human Resources Subcommittee of the Ways and Means Committee. Human resources is really about America's safety net. This subcommittee has jurisdiction over many vital social and economic programs that support the American people. They are key portions of the Social Security Act, which include unemployment insurance, temporary assistance for needy families, supplemental security income, and programs to protect vulnerable and assist disadvantaged children. I don't think the present subcommittee name ''Human Resources'' really conveys the mission of that committee or the urgency, so we have decided to change the name to the Subcommittee on Economic Security and Family Support.

In one sentence, here is my vision of what this subcommittee can do in service of the American people: We can transform common dreams into the common good, and we have a social responsibility and a moral imperative to do it. We should at least begin an effort to cut poverty by 50 percent, and I intend to try.

Millions of Americans, many in families where both parents work, live in poverty today. That should be unacceptable in the richest nation in the world. The millions of children who go to bed hungry tonight, abandoned, abused, neglected, or just plain forgotten, it is a shame. We have got to remember. We have got to say to these children, ''You are not alone, and we will help.'' We can inspire innovations in child welfare for children in kinship care, for foster parents, for case workers, for family court workers, and countless other unsung heroes in America. ''We thank you for your service to the children and your communities and your family, and I don't think it is unreasonable to expect that your government does its part.''

I am not standing here as a Democrat. Good ideas don't begin with a political party label; good ideas begin with a commitment to something bigger than ourselves but involving all of us. It is the common good. No child should be alone in a country as compassionate as ours. We can start there, and then debate the ideas and programs that can deliver the common good. We can vow to cut poverty in half.

Just 2 days ago, we stopped to honor Martin Luther King, Jr. Let's not forget something Dr. King said: ''Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.'' That applies to every nation on earth, including the United States. The richest nation on the earth is poorer for every American who lives in poverty. There is work to be done, and we cannot deny it. We can make America the nation where social and economic justice applies to everyone regardless of their economic circumstance.

We admire the visionary work done by leaders who have come before us. These leaders believed we have an obligation to assist Americans who lose their job through no fault of their own. In the 21st century, changes wrought by a global marketplace should challenge us to reexamine and strengthen the support for American workers. Anyone who loses their job, especially an older worker, knows what I mean. America is a nation founded on the common good. It is the fundamental basis of this country, and every caring family, we take care of each other.

The safety net committee I chair is woven out of the social fabric that created America. We have been handed the