

readiness of Iraq forces, the progress of the country's reconstruction and political development, and the extent of international collaboration and support.

Where there are deficiencies, and the deficiencies are serious in all of these areas, the administration must provide benchmarks by which success can be measured and a plan specifying what it will take to reach our goals.

Glib reassurances from the President are dangerous, postponing and preventing corrective action and opening wider the credibility gap with the American public.

Those who commit troops to battle on behalf of this great country owe them and us an intelligent and realistic plan to succeed.

Members of this body should demand such a plan and a frequent, truthful accounting of our success in reaching its goals from the President and his administration. A midcourse correction in Iraq is worthy of our Nation's best efforts, and the window of opportunity is closing.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire how much time the gentleman has on his hour.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). The gentleman has 27 minutes remaining.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Would the gentleman be willing to yield me the remainder of his time?

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to yield the remainder of the time.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, should I just ask for unanimous consent since there are no other Members present in the Chamber?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The minority leader may reallocate the leadership hour.

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to do that, to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN).

STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 26 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I rise because what the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE), my friend, has said is terribly important to be said. And what is even more important is that it be made available to the public at large.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important, appropriate, to inform the gentleman and the rest of the Congress who may not be aware that the elements of the strategy for success, the identical language which the minority leader, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), has requested in the form of an amendment, has actually been included in an appropriations bill, the

Iraq supplemental appropriations bill, passed earlier this year.

That language was included in an amendment that I submitted to the Iraq supplemental bill. It also included the benchmarks that the gentleman has suggested, as well as even more specific information. We have received that report on the strategy for success, Mr. Speaker.

The most important elements of that report, in fact though, were included in an addendum which was classified. And so I and those who have seen the report are not at liberty to give the kind of specific information that at least I feel should be shared with the American public.

But I would like to address what was in the body of the report, which does in part respond to the very specific questions, as to Iraq's military capability, its economic viability, and its political stability.

The American people need to know whether in fact Iraq will ever be able to fully control its borders and provide security for its society and its economy. And we need to know how successful we have been in training and equipping Iraqi forces, because we have been working at that for more than 2 years.

The American people also need to know what has happened to the tens of billions of dollars that we have appropriated for economic reconstruction.

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Will Iraq ever be or is even close to being economically viable? Is its physical infrastructure in place so that its economy can rebound in a way that will provide economic opportunities for its population?

The American people also need to know, in addition to where Iraq is in terms of military capabilities and economic viability, how stable its government can ever be and at what point will the decisionmakers, the policymakers in Washington decide that its governance is stable enough to be able to return Iraq over to a democracy that is worthy of our military efforts.

Mr. Speaker, I oppose this war. I voted against it. I voted against most of the funding for it. I did vote for the Iraq supplemental because it included this language that I felt was vitally important, requiring what, while we do not call it an exit strategy, is certainly appropriately entitled "a strategy for success." That language was included and could only have been included if it was offered in a bipartisan, non-political context, without a whole lot of fanfare. But working with the majority we could get some answers to the questions that the American people, our constituents, are asking. We did not have those questions answered when we went to war.

I opposed the war because I felt that it was unjustified. I knew that Saddam Hussein had nothing to do with the attacks on 9/11. Suggestions to the contrary were a ruse. The reasons given were at best unjustified; at worst, deliberately deceptive.

I also opposed it because as our senior military officers will tell you we ought not go to war without a plan to win the peace. We had no plan to win the peace. And, in fact, the 41st President of the United States, George Bush, when he had the opportunity to go into Baghdad and take out Saddam when we had Saddam's Republican Guard on the run, he chose not to do so because his advisors, understanding the country, acting with foresight and knowledge of the political context within the Middle East, were afraid that we would be thrust into the role of an occupier. And they knew, and I think were absolutely right, that the United States should never be playing the role of an occupier, but always that of a liberator. So they chose not to go to Baghdad. The son chose differently with very different people advising him, and I think for different reasons.

But now that we are in Iraq, what do we do? That is what senior military officers are asking us. And it is certainly what the mothers and fathers of the young men and women who are fighting this war are demanding to know. They need to know what is our strategy. How long will we be there? How much more money is absolutely necessary to continue this military engagement? And they are getting none of those answers.

Unfortunately, I cannot disclose any of the specific information that has now been provided, but I certainly can share, at least with my constituents, the fact that in my judgment we are nowhere near being able to withdraw a substantial number of our troops in a responsible manner because, in my judgment, the Iraqi military is nowhere near being able to secure its borders. The Iraqi police forces are nowhere near being able to restore law and order in that country. The economic infrastructure is nowhere near being able to support a viable economy. And even the government is nowhere near being able to pass a Constitution that not just would be acceptable to the American people who have sacrificed so much to bring it about, but it is not even in the situation where it would be enduring and accepted by the vast majority of the Iraqi people.

Mr. Speaker, we are in a quagmire here. We need answers. We need answers from the people who put us in that quagmire. It is wrong to continue to be sending troops to a war that is this unwinnable, Mr. Speaker.

Now, I suspect what is going to happen, and it was further confirmed yesterday by the Secretary and by some of the senior military officers who have been in a consultation with them, that we will start a substantial withdrawal. But I think that withdrawal, I feel that withdrawal will be motivated more for political reasons than for military or foreign policy reasons. We have our fist in the middle of a beehive, and we are getting stung. The advisors that sent us there are not getting stung because they figure they can say or do anything