

There was no objection.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives has shirked its constitutional duties when it comes to the issue of Iraq.

The most solemn of duties that this body can undertake is the declaration of war, reserved to the United States Congress. Now, in the case of Afghanistan, the known perpetrators of the 9/11 attacks, Osama bin Laden and his collaborators in the Taliban, this Congress did act, with near unanimity. One person dissented. And we passed a resolution that was compliant with the War Powers Act and the Constitution of the United States to authorize an attack on Iraq and others who aided and abetted in the 9/11 attacks.

Now, if George Bush had had proof or had really thought that Saddam Hussein and Iraq were involved in 9/11, he would have needed no further authority. But, clearly, he had no proof, and he couldn't make the case. But he, nonetheless, wanted to attack Iraq. And Congress, reaching a new low point here, in my opinion unconstitutionally, vaguely delegated its solemn duties in the case of the making of war to the President.

Now, I don't believe that Congress can do that, but we did, and the President then, some 5 months later, used that very broad grant of authority to preemptively attack Iraq, ostensibly to remove weapons of mass destruction and the threat of Saddam Hussein, which later morphed into connections to 9/11, which later morphed into any number of other things, and which finally became we went into Iraq to bring freedom and democracy.

Now, since that time, this Congress, this Republican-led Congress, has refused to conduct any meaningful oversight of what happened about the distortion or the misuse of intelligence, about the huge scandals surrounding the more than \$10 billion which has disappeared in the so-called reconstruction effort or the actual conduct of the war itself, the unbelievable incompetence of Donald Rumsfeld and his cronies, and the impact on our troops in the military. Not one meaningful hearing. No debates here on the floor of the House.

So, finally, the Republican leadership says, well, we are going to have a meaningful debate. Now, let's see what they mean by meaningful debate. Tomorrow, the House of Representatives will take up a bunch of time, that is good, at least we are going to discuss it on the floor, but it will be to debate a nonbinding resolution; that is, something which has no force of law and no authority. It is a sense of the United States Congress.

And if you read that sense of Congress, you will find a nonbinding resolution which will not be amendable. No Democratic alternative or substitute will be allowed. What the Republicans wrote in secret will be voted on here on the floor of the House. That is it, up or down. This resolution, if you vote for

it, is a vote for the status quo. It is a vote for staying in Iraq indefinitely, perhaps a decade or longer. It is to continue the current policies with no end in sight.

On March 21, President Bush himself even said that the question of bringing home U.S. troops from Iraq will be decided by future Presidents. Future Presidents. Remember, unfortunately, he still will be President until 2 years from last January. Now, that is a pretty extraordinary statement for the President to make.

Now, I wish that the Republican leadership really wanted to have a full and fair debate. They could at least allow us to have and debate an alternative. I am a member of the Out of Iraq Caucus. I am a cosponsor of Representative JACK MURTHA's legislation, legislation that would lead to a thoughtful and appropriate redeployment of our troops, and would also say that we would be ready should they need to reintervene in a crisis situation in Iraq. But what it would do is get us out of the business of day-to-day getting between the Shiias, the Kurds, and the Sunnis.

Now, Bush administration said, well, we never could have predicted the Shiias, the Sunnis, and the Kurds wouldn't get along. Rummy said they would welcome us like liberators, with flowers and stuff. He just ignored the last 1,400 years of history, that is all. He also ignored the State Department and the intelligence agencies, other than the little select group he had who said the same thing.

And now, I believe that the Shiias, the Kurds, and the Sunnis, and many others, will not meaningfully move to share power, get their act together and develop a national government as long as we are staying forever, which is what the President and what this resolution says. So I believe that if we go down the path of adopting this resolution that there will be Members of Congress debating this issue years and years from today about what is the U.S. future in Iraq.

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

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IMMIGRATION

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to consume the time of Mr. JONES.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Nebraska is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, immigration has been the number one concern of many Americans in recent months. The House passed a bill last December which dealt mostly with

tough border security. It provided for more Border Control agents, a 700-mile fence, different penalties for illegally entering the U.S., and substantial penalties for employers who employ illegal immigrants.

The Senate, more recently, passed a bill with tight border security but also had language which addresses the problem of the 11 to 12 million illegal immigrants now in the United States. Some believe the Senate's three-tiered approach to dealing with undocumented workers now in the U.S. amounts to what many would refer to as amnesty. Their approach is as follows:

Those illegal immigrants that have been in the United States for 0-2 years would be deported; those who have been illegally in the United States between 2 and 5 years would have to return to the border for processing and then reenter the country receiving a work permit; those who have been in the country for 5 years or more illegally would be able to obtain a legal status by paying a fine and meeting some other requirements.

So many have been concerned about this because it does mean that you could enter the country illegally and gain a legal status while still in the United States, which again many people would refer to as amnesty. So there is obviously tension between the House and the Senate bills, and the concern right now is that there may not be a bill that will be suitable to both bodies that can be achieved in conference.

The big concern I think, in the House at least, is what has been referred to as the three-tiered approach in the Senate. And, obviously, most people who are here illegally at the present time are going to claim they have been here 5 years. It may be very difficult to ascertain how long somebody who is undocumented has been in the country because they are undocumented. It is very hard to ascertain what records are valid, which are not, and how long they have actually been here.

As a result, I have introduced legislation that could represent some common ground. This obviously will be controversial. No one agrees entirely on how we might go about bringing the two bills together, but I have introduced a bill called H.R. 4065, and the basic requirement are as follows:

It would require illegal aliens to return home to apply for a visa. In other words, they would have to return to their country of origin and apply at their home country consulate. Much of the paperwork could be done in the United States before they leave here, but it would have to be stamped in their home country. They then could reenter the country with a legal status and cross that border with papers as documented workers.

Secondly, this would provide for a 3-year visa which is conditional on continuous employment. It would be renewed every 3 years. This would be open to undocumented workers with, first, a demonstrated U.S. employment