

available to any terrorist who wanted to come in and take their weapons to use against our American forces.

The resolution refers to our "coalition," and, of course, our "coalition" is the United States, the United Kingdom, and a great deal of public relations. Because most of the other countries in the so-called "coalition" have contributed extremely meager resources. They have been there for public relations purposes to try to cover the fact that this was a go-it-alone invasion of Iraq.

And now the "impressive victories" of which this resolution speaks do not take into account that the number of deaths of young Americans is approaching 3,000; 3,000 human beings, 3,000 young people cut down in their lives, removed from their families. We approach another 20,000 who suffered grievous injury, who may never be quite the same because of the injuries that they suffered in courageous service to our country.

And that takes us to why this resolution is being presented in this form. Because from the outset this administration and the leadership in this Congress have never missed a chance to hitch a ride for their failed policies on the coattails of the courageous men and women who have been standing up for our country overseas.

□ 1845

They know their failed policies can't stand on their own merit, and so they buried them within a resolution honoring the sacrifice of our United States troops. I honor them, but say that our policy must change and must change now.

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

(Mr. BISHOP of Utah addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IRAQ

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

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the war in Iraq is a monster storm. It is a social tsunami battering the positive components of our potentially great society. The billions of dollars being poured into this war could solve dozens of major catastrophic problems that are facing our Nation.

Recently, a new report was released, authored partially by our own Science Committee, which said that we have a dangerously inadequate education system. When I came to Congress in 1983, Ronald Reagan was saying the same thing. He had a commission which came out with a report that said, our Nation is at risk. We still have not done anything of great substance to

deal with the problems that were highlighted. We still have not appropriated the money to build laboratories in public schools, junior high schools and high schools. We still don't have adequate libraries. We still don't have the money which pays salaries which would produce the science teachers that are necessary.

We have a crisis in health care. Forty million people are not covered at all and there are many others who are inadequately covered. We have falling standards of living with gross inequities. The assets that reflect wealth among black Americans total less than \$20,000 per family. \$120,000 per family for white Americans. Both standards are falling, not climbing.

I am a member of the Out of Iraq Caucus. I welcome the opportunity tomorrow to begin a debate which would at least allow us to discuss in an open forum the problems we are facing. Any discussion is important because this is such an important problem. We have employment problems that are mushrooming, we have all kinds of things that should be discussed, and now is the time for all Americans to come forward and make their contribution toward a solution known.

Common sense is welcome. It might shed a lot of light on some of the problems and offer some real solutions. Scientific expertise is welcomed. Mother wit. We need the fresh visions of the young and we need the seasoned wisdom of the elders. Everything we can do is needed in order to solve these problems. Let every question be set forth. Let every possible solution be stated. We Americans are faced with a problem which is far more complex than the inner workings of a nuclear bomb, I assure you. The present explorations of the vast universe by astrophysicists are not as challenging as the need for a meaningful solution to this war blunder in Iraq.

There are many possible questions and solutions that I would urge should be placed on the agenda for discussion. However, I want to focus on just two of them tonight. One is the distribution of oil revenues. The other is the arrangements for the sharing of power among the majority Shiites and the minorities, mainly the Sunnis and the Kurds.

Oil revenues. We need a transparent, open, full discussion of what are the arrangements that have been proposed, or are being proposed, or are already in place for the distribution of the oil revenues from the oil in the ground in Iraq. Oil is their greatest resource. They have one of the greatest resources in the world. They are number three or number four among the nations producing oil. Yet there is very little discussion about what we are doing. To what degree is Halliburton going to control the revenues as their payment for the reconstruction that they have done of some of the oil wells? To what degree are the oil companies going to control revenue because of

their arrangements for the pipelines and the shipping and the retail outlets in various countries? What is going to happen to the oil? These are questions that are being asked by the people of Iraq, I assure you. These are questions that are stumbling blocks, I assure you, in the completion of a government. Everybody in every section of the country wants to know how the oil revenues are going to be distributed. If I live in a province where there is no oil, will my area benefit? These things need to be dealt with.

Sharing power relates closely to this. We need to let them know they all share power. Regardless of whether they are Sunnis or Kurds or some other minority, the majority Shiites need to share power in some way.

We have a problem with sharing power across the world. There are many nations now struggling with this problem, so we should bring to bear all of our possible solutions and try to help resolve the problems in Iraq. We need the most creative approaches possible for power sharing which gives all Iraqis a stake in their new democracy. Ending the war in Iraq, ending the massive death and injuries, ending the waste of billions of dollars must be our number one agenda. These problems must be solved. We must pass and implement the Murtha resolution now. We must bring the troops home now.

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

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

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

(Ms. LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) is recognized for 5 minutes. (Mr. DELAHUNT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

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

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Once again it is an honor to address the House. The 30-Something Working Group is back again to share with the Members what we have been working on the last week and not only coming up with new ideas for America but making sure that we package the ideas that are clogged up in this process here from moving onto the statute books of the United States laws to allow Americans to live a better life and to also put forth policy that will benefit those that are overseas fighting on behalf of this country and what we have asked them to do.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we have talked a lot about fiscal responsibility. We have talked a lot about the lack of health care in the United States of America. We feel we have proposals that are on the table, ready to be considered if the Republican majority would allow it to be considered. Unfortunately, that has not happened. There has been a lot of discussion on the floor about Iraq, but there has also been a plan that was unveiled in the last few days to share not only with the American people but with the full House that if we can't work together in passing legislation in a bipartisan way that is going to help all Americans, not just Republicans, not just Democrats, not just independents, not just individuals that are wealthy, not just individuals that are poor, not just individuals that are making a way out of no way, to help all Americans so that we can move forth and we can find ourselves in a better situation than what we are in now, then we are willing to take the mantle and to have an opportunity to be the majority in this House.

We have the will and the desire to lead in the areas that we need to lead in. And we have this plan on housedemocrats.gov on the Internet for individuals to go on and take a look at what we are talking about as House Democrats.

When we have the opportunity to put forth this plan, if the American people see fit that that should happen, which I believe they will, hopefully they will, because the situation that we are in right now is dismal and presents a very, very challenging future for our children and for our grandchildren, because so many issues are facing this country in unprecedented ways. I think it is important that you take a good look at that. That's housedemocrats.gov.

In that plan which was unveiled by Leader PELOSI and other Democratic leaders in the Democratic Caucus this week, we talked about making health care more affordable for Americans. This is a major issue, Mr. Speaker, not

only for individuals that work on jobs, work for individuals but individuals that are providing jobs. They cannot continue to take on this health care burden without a true plan, a true leadership from the Federal Government. States can't do it alone. Local communities can't do it alone. We are going to have to do it in a way that is going to benefit the people and not the special interests. I think where we are right now, Mr. Speaker, is that the majority here in this House has benefited the special interests as it relates to health care. I think the American people and small business men and women are yearning for some leadership right now.

Also, when we look at lower gas prices to achieve energy independence, this is something that is very, very important. We have pieces of legislation out there that promotes alternative fuels, to see more of E85 so that we can have flex vehicles that are out there, and it is a part of our innovation plan. Again, going on housedemocrats.gov, you can download this information, share it with your friends, with your family, and other Members can take it to their staffs and say, we want to implement this. But, of course, that is not going to happen under the Republican-controlled House of Representatives because I don't think the will and the desire is there to really have true innovation in alternative fuels.

The other thing I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, and I think it is important, a part of our innovation plan that is also endorsed in comments by CEOs in this country, not just Democratic CEOs, independents, individuals who just lost faith in voting that are a part of major companies that are saying that the House Democratic plan, which will hopefully be a bipartisan plan once we are able to take control of this House with the help of the American people because of what is not happening here on behalf of the American people in innovation, they want us to be first in mathematics and science; they want us to be first as it relates to broadband access throughout this country; and they want us to be first in taking the lead and making sure that we push for energy independence in 10 years and develop that and make sure that we promote that through our legislation and through our appropriation. Not just giving dollars to the oil companies and saying, go ahead, we trust you, you do what you wish to do with the taxpayers' money while you continue to make record profits on the backs of the American people and we pay higher gas prices, and we are stuck in neutral with the engine running as it relates to true innovation.

I am not finished with our rollout, but I just want to point this out since I am mentioning profits. As you know, Mr. Speaker, I have read an article time after time again about the secret meeting at the White House in 2001 of the energy task force, that we know now that that task force meeting has

worked in the best way for the oil companies and in the worst way for the American people.

Again, I am not a Member of Congress with a conspiracy theory, but I just want to say that we have third-party validators that are here. My staff just handed me this and I think it is important that I read this off: White House documents show that executives from big oil companies met with Vice President DICK CHENEY's energy task force in 2001, something long expected by environmentalists but denied as recently as last week by industry officials testifying before Congress. The document obtained this week, November of 2005, the Washington Post, shows that officials from ExxonMobil, Phillips, Shell Oil Company and BP met in the White House complex with Cheney aides who were developing national energy policy, parts of which became law and parts of which are still being debated.

I am saying that, and I just want to point this out, Mr. DELAHUNT, and I am going to flip it over to you, sir. 2002, it is not a coincidence that profits were up. Profits is not a dirty word but when you have profits and, quote-unquote, price gouging and the American people putting \$10 in their tank at a time.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. And corporate welfare.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. And corporate welfare, you can't help but put this together. \$34 billion in profits for Big Oil, 2002. 2003, \$59 billion in profits. Looks pretty good. I think that meeting was worth going to. 2004, \$84 billion. This meeting is now something that will be placed in the annals of oil industry that this should happen prior to major profits coming on.

□ 1900

Then, on 2005, \$113 billion. This will continue to climb because the Republican majority doesn't have the will nor the desire to fight on behalf of the American people as it relates to energy, and the White House has shown that it has the will and the desire to allow special interests to come into the White House, write policy, and then come to the Hill and fight for that policy so that the oil companies can see this. Meanwhile, the American people are paying more for oil and for energy.

Then the individuals from the oil company have the audacity, and I am not going to blame them, because I think it is important that we put the blame where it should be. They don't have a Congressional voting card to vote for a policy to allow these prices to go up like this or profits to go up like this. It takes Members of Congress to do that, and I must say that I am proud to announce that a number, a supermajority of Democrats voted against this philosophy of oil companies having the opportunity on the backs of the American taxpayers, having their hand in the taxpayers' pocket and then, grabbing their wallet out of the other hand, they spend their money for necessities.