

longer the target remains on their backs. Instead of doing something immediately to remove these targets from our troops, the President is expected to propose escalating the number of our troops in Iraq by 20,000.

Now, regardless of how you spin this, either as a surge or a bump, it amounts to an escalation of the war at precisely the time we should be seeking to bring the Iraq war to an end. It is like the man who finds himself in a hole and decides that the best way out is to keep digging.

An escalation in troops won't change a thing on the ground. Iraq is still in a civil war, and we are still occupiers.

As reported yesterday, nearly 23,000 Iraqis died in 2006. This is just in 1 year. And even worse, over 17,000 of these deaths came in the second half of the year.

In escalating the number of troops, the President fails to address exactly how U.S. troops will referee this civil war. Are we to pick sides and support ethnic cleansing of one group over another? Adding more U.S. troops to this mess will prove not only ineffective, it is just plain foolish.

But this tactic is nothing new. The President has added troops in the past. There have been escalations during the Iraqi elections in 2005 and 2006 to shore up Baghdad security. The violence may have quelled for a moment but only to return with a vengeance, as we have seen.

Finally, the President's plan is futile. Some of the President's own advisors and experts have questioned the utility of a troop escalation. Their reasons range from the Iraqi government's inability to capitalize on new troops to the sheer folly of adding more troops to an already incendiary situation.

No such luck. In fact, a senior military official was quoted last month as saying adding more troops would be like adding kerosene to a fire.

General Abizaid, the top military commander in Iraq, testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee in November 2006. He posed the question of his commanders and generals. He said, If we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq? General Abizaid reported that they all said no.

Mr. Speaker, the President's own press secretary, Tony Snow, said yesterday that the President still wants to hear what Members of Congress have to say. Well, I tell you, we have listened to the American people. Over 60 percent oppose the idea of increased troop levels. We have listened to the President's own commanders. Escalating the number of troops won't change the facts on the ground. I think it is time for the President to listen.

Mr. President, Mr. President, Mr. President, bring our troops home and make sure that we have no permanent military bases in Iraq.

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END THE WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to give voice to tens of millions of Americans throughout our country who are looking for an end to the war in Iraq. I rise on behalf of our brave soldiers on our battlefield who have done everything our country has asked of them under terrible circumstances and who have made terrible sacrifices.

I rise on behalf of their families who have suffered great losses and who worry day and night for their safety and for the loved ones still in combat. I rise this evening to call on our President to give the Nation what it has deserved, a viable plan to safely bring this war to an end, to redeploy the American forces out of Iraq, and turn the future of Iraq over to the Iraqi people once and for all.

President Bush is soon expected to call for an escalation to the war in Iraq, seeking to deploy an additional 20,000 troops into combat. The President's plan would be just the latest in a series of flawed and tragic decisions that he has made regarding Iraq.

The President was advised at the outset of the war by one of his top generals to send a large American force in order to win. President Bush rejected that idea, and since then he has tried at different times a surge of American troops in an effort to win the war. Now, each time that effort has failed.

Now he appears ready to defy the odds and take great risks with the lives of others in order to try his plan one more time. The President has failed to make a compelling case for adding more troops into what is clearly the greatest American foreign policy disaster in half a century or even longer.

I applaud the efforts of House Speaker NANCY PELOSI and Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID, who have called for a new course in Iraq. On Friday they wrote: "Adding more combat troops will only endanger more Americans and stretch our military to the breaking point for no strategic gain. Rather than deploy additional forces to Iraq, we believe the way forward is to begin the phased redeployment of our forces in the next 4 to 6 months, while shifting the principal mission of our forces there from combat to training, logistics, force protection and counterterrorism."

I implore the President to seriously consider these views, and I implore him to also consider the views of the current and former military and political leaders of his own administration who have openly questioned sending additional troops to Iraq. For instance, on December 17 in 2006, former Secretary of State Colin Powell said, "I am not persuaded that another surge of troops into Baghdad for the purposes of sup-

pressing this communitarian violence, this civil war, will work."

On November 15 General Abizaid expressed, "I've met with every divisional commander. General Casey, the Corps commander, General Dempsey—we all talked together. And I said, 'In your professional opinion, if we were to bring more American troops now, does it add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq?' And they all said no."

The war in Iraq is a mistake from the beginning, and I voted against authorizing this war. But regardless of one's position then, clearly there is no sound basis now for increasing America's military presence in Iraq. The war has claimed the lives of over 3,000 American soldiers and has wounded more than 20,000, and it has clearly become a civil war.

It is unconscionable to ask one more American soldier to fight and die in a civil war in Iraq. The President must engage key nations like Syria, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and others in an effort to create a political solution in Iraq. The Nation opposes the ongoing war in America. There is still time for the President to change course, to reconsider his call for 20,000 more troops in Iraq, and to begin the redeployment of our troops and our forces now.

I salute those who continue to serve in Iraq. I salute their families and pledge to them my unyielding support and respect as we try to safely bring the war to an end.

Mr. President, listen to the people of the Nation which you govern. They have spoken, and they have spoken overwhelmingly. They reject the prolonging of the war in Iraq. They want our soldiers redeployed and brought home safely, and they want it done now.

Please, Mr. President, listen to the people of this Nation.

STATEHOOD FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House to inform the House that I have today filed a bill to give full voting rights in this House to the people of the District of Columbia, who are second per capita in the Federal income tax they pay to support this government, this House and this Senate, and who have fought and died in every war since the creation of a Republic, including the outrageous war where we now serve.

I come in gratitude that the House is now governed by my own party, which for decades has supported not only what my bill today would afford, a vote in the House, but a vote in both Houses, and I come to thank my own caucus for that support. But I also come in some frustration and with

some impatience. I come in frustration that I am still a second-class citizen in my own House.

Until I can represent the people of the District of Columbia as a full American citizen, this frustration and impatience will continue.

I had hoped to be able to vote on the bills we all ran on that are now before the House. I came to speak today, but once again, when the vote came, I could not vote. I couldn't vote because I was not even allowed the vote in the Committee of the Whole that I won when the Democrats were last in power.

My people in the District have chastised me for even trying to get the Committee of the Whole vote. They perhaps recognize that it is a hubris that I wished at least to vote in this House as we convened, and they are perhaps right. They tell me, we are not in any way interested in another second-class vote, ELEANOR. It is time for first-class rights for the people of the District of Columbia.

So I accept their chastisement and pledge to them that I will not rest, now that Democrats are in power, until Democrats do as they have always said, that they sought power to do, to give votes to the people of the District of Columbia.

I have tried everything, I have tried statehood, I have tried Committee of the Whole. It is time to try the real thing, Mr. Speaker, when there are 650,000 people who pay their taxes and have met every obligation, and are not recognized as citizens in their own House and send somebody to the House that is not even recognized to vote on this House, not even in the Committee of the Whole.

I come to express their frustration, to say I am leaving all that behind. I have introduced the bill they want. I accept their chastisement. We want our votes. We want it in the 110th Congress, and we want it now. I speak for them as a woman who knows what it means to be a second-class citizen, and who, once she left the District went to law school, said, I shall never again be a second-class citizen. Yes, I grew up in segregated schools in this town, in segregated Washington. That is what it meant to be a second-class citizen. Now to be a second-class civics citizen, after 200 years, has become too much to bear.

So I have introduced a bill to make it absolutely clear, as my people have said I must do today, that there is boiling determination among the people of the District of Columbia to get this vote. Not in January. We have respected the right of the Congress to come forward with the bills that are of great importance to the country, but those of us who believe that the vote is basic, is basic to Democrats, is basic to America, I believe we should move on after January and finally keep the promise that at least Democrats have made to the House and that I commend Republicans for getting us very close to in the 109th Congress.

This is the 110th, Mr. Speaker. This is the moment of truth. This is the moment when the Democrats have not only the opportunity, but the obligation to give a vote in the 110th Congress to the people of the District of Columbia.

REMEMBERING QUINCY BEAVER, SR.

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to announce the passing of a great American, Quincy Beaver, Sr. Quincy had been a resident of Carson, California, for 38 years. His contributions to his community, the State of California, and the world are legend. He was a passionate advocate for justice and equality and devoted countless hours working in political, civil rights and labor union movements.

Quincy's community and social activism span nearly 7 decades. Upon receiving an honorable discharge from the military in 1945, Quincy returned to Los Angeles where he immediately began to serve his community. Given his passionate commitment to service, he was presented numerous accolades and awards that are too numerous to list.

But a few of Quincy's leadership positions, honors and awards include Chair of the Employment Labor Committee of the Los Angeles chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality, referred to as CORE, board member of the South Central Welfare Planning Council, board member of the Charles R. Drew Community Advisory Council, founding member of the Carson/Torrance NAACP, and Chair of the chapter's First Executive Board, member of the Compton and Long Beach chapters of the NAACP, and board member of the Campaign for a Citizens' Police Review Board.

Quincy was a major player in the creation of the Southern California Free South Africa movement and a founding member of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Democratic Club, and elected its first president in 1972.

He worked in numerous local, State and national political campaigns; and during the 1972 campaign, Quincy formed the Black Workers for McGovern. In 1984, he founded and served as chairperson of the 31st Congressional District Jesse Jackson for President Campaign.

For the last 44 years, Quincy was a member of the California Democratic Council, CDC, a state-wide organization of Democratic clubs where he held numerous positions in the organization, including immediate past president.

Quincy was married to Geneva Phillips, who was his friend, his confidant, his caregiver, and the love of his life. They shared a passion for community

service and grass-roots politics. He was the proud father of four children.

We will sorely miss Quincy's unswerving commitment to community service, quality education, to jobs and to safe working conditions for all people. We will certainly miss his community activism. Dear Quincy, rest in peace.

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BLUE DOG COALITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening on behalf of the 44 member strong fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition. We are a group of fiscally conservative Democrats that are committed to restoring common sense and fiscal discipline to our Nation's government. During the 109th session of Congress, we had 37 members; in the 110th session of Congress, we have grown to 44 members, 44 fiscally conservative Democrats that share my vision of putting America on a path toward fiscal responsibility, putting America on a path toward accountability, and putting America on a path that will restore common sense to our national government.

As you walk the Halls of Congress, as you walk the Cannon House Office Building, the Longworth House Office Building, as you walk the Rayburn House Office Building, you will see this poster, Mr. Speaker; and as you see this poster, it will be a symbol that you are walking by an office that houses a Blue Dog member. You will find 44 of these posters in the Halls of Congress to remind the American people and to remind the Members of Congress and to remind all of us as we walk these Halls that our Nation is one that is tragically in debt.

The current national debt of these United States of America is \$8,690,905,471,722, and actually 43 cents. I just didn't have room to put it on the poster. I ran out of room. And for every man, woman, and child in America, your share of the national debt is \$29,005.60. It is what we have coined in the Blue Dog Coalition as the debt tax, D-E-B-T tax. It is one tax that cannot be cut, that cannot be repealed until we get our Nation's fiscal house in order.

Mr. Speaker, you might be thinking, Now, didn't President Clinton leave us with a balanced budget, the first one in some 40 years? Didn't we have a balanced budget from 1998 through 2001? Yes, Mr. Speaker, we did. But in the past 6 years, this Republican President and this Republican Congress has given us record budget deficit after record budget deficit.

On this chart you will see the four largest deficits ever in our Nation's history. The first rank was 2004 when our Nation wrote \$413 billion worth of hot checks. The second largest deficit