

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I will have an opportunity to talk about the war resolution, but this morning I would like to just talk for a second about energy independence.

Several weeks ago we heard the President announce part of his agenda for making America more energy independent. But the real question is, how do we get there? The President laid out a plan to place new draconian fuel-efficiency standards on our domestic automakers, which I believe is the wrong approach to energy independence.

It is the wrong approach because it would force our domestic automakers to invest in old technology and to stifle very exciting new technologies. Our domestic auto industry is nearing innovative breakthroughs, such as the usage of alternative fuels, new battery technology, and advanced hybrid vehicles.

I believe it is in our national interest to provide Federal support to advance the auto technologies of the future to help achieve energy savings. Both General Motors and Ford recently unveiled advanced plug-in hybrids that use a lithium ion battery. Helping that technology become commercially viable will advance our efforts to conserve energy by light years and to create great new jobs here in America.

If my colleagues want true energy independence and a thriving domestic auto industry, we must focus on the technology of the future.

IRAQ RESOLUTION

(Ms. CASTOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, over the last 2 days Republicans who support the President's troop escalation plan have had two main message points. The first is that the resolution opposing the President's plan is nonbinding and meaningless, and the second is that the resolution will be the "end of civilization," to borrow a term from a columnist. They cannot have it both ways.

What we are doing over these 3 days of debate is having a real discussion about changing the course of the war in Iraq. For those who support the Bush-Cheney escalation, this debate serves as a prime opportunity to explain why they think this escalation will work when four other surges have not worked.

It is a shame that some have ignored the merits of the resolution and focused on political calculation. In fact, several Republicans sent out a letter saying this debate should not even be about the Iraq war today. If we let Democrats force us into a debate on the surge or the current situation in Iraq, we lose.

Far from it, Mr. Speaker. No one will lose by having a debate. In fact, our great democracy benefits and the American people win by knowing that we are charting a new direction.

IRAQ RESOLUTION

(Ms. CLARKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I am very supportive of our troops around the globe and in particular those who are in harm's way in Iraq. I wholeheartedly support H. Con. Res. 63.

Mr. Speaker, in the President's January 29, 2002, State of the Union address, in regards to protecting America, responding to terrorist threats and capturing Osama bin Laden, he said, this is a regime that agreed to international inspections, then kicked out our inspectors. This is a regime that has something to hide from the civilized world.

States like these and their terrorist allies constitute an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world. By seeking weapons of mass destruction, these regimes pose a grave and growing danger. They could provide these arms to terrorists, giving them the means to match their hatred.

Secretary Rice, after being named Secretary to succeed Colin Powell, warned 6 months before the invasion in Iraq that Saddam Hussein could deploy a nuclear weapon, saying that the administration did not want a smoking gun. We want to know as New Yorkers, when will we find Osama bin Laden

IRAQ RESOLUTION

(Mr. MEEKS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, as the November election clearly showed, Iraq is the number one issue weighing on Americans' minds. A vast majority of people across the Nation strongly disagree with the President's plan to send nearly 21,500 additional troops into Iraq, and a bipartisan majority in this Congress has also voiced its opposition to this measure.

This week here in the people's House, we will have an opportunity to express our opinions on the troop escalation, and then we will have to vote whether or not we support the President's plan. The American people want a debate. And while there is one going on in this House, the Senate Republican leadership continues to block debate in the Senate.

One has to wonder what Senate Republican leaders are so worried about. After all, Republican Senators, like JOHN WARNER and CHUCK HAGEL, joined with Democrats to propose their own resolution opposing the troop escalation.

Are Senate Republican leaders really willing to stifle the voices of their own Republican colleagues so that they can continue to protect the Bush administration? It is time for real debate. It is time for a new direction on this war.

IRAQ RESOLUTION

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the debate taking place here in the House this week is long overdue. We are approaching our fifth year of this war. This is the first time Congress is debating the strategy President Bush wants to implement in Iraq. Congress can no longer stand on the sidelines, and the President has to know that to escalate the war in Iraq is not acceptable.

The President hopes this troop escalation plan will help secure Baghdad and reduce the sectarian violence that is ripping the country apart. But there is no evidence to support those hopes. In fact, on four different occasions, the President increased troop levels in Iraq, and every time these plans failed to calm the violence in Iraq.

Additional troops are not going to make a difference because there simply is not a military solution to the war in Iraq. The devastating sectarian violence is going to continue. But our troops should no longer be asked to serve as referees in a battle between religious sects that have been fighting for centuries.

IRAQ WAR RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). Pursuant to section 3 of House Resolution 157, proceedings will now resume on the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 63) disapproving of the decision of the President announced on January 10, 2007, to deploy more than 20,000 additional United States combat troops to Iraq.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When proceedings were postponed on Wednesday, February 14, 2007, time for debate on the concurrent resolution on that day had expired.

Pursuant to the resolution, it is now in order for a further period of debate on the concurrent resolution.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) each will control 6 hours.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished majority whip, the Honorable JAMES CLYBURN of South Carolina.

Mr. CLYBURN. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, the debate we join today is essentially over the matter of sending 20,000 more American troops into Iraq. Over the past 2 days, some deeply felt sentiments have been expressed in this Hall by some patriotic and honorable Americans from all walks of life and on both sides of the aisle.

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And I respect and appreciate the intensity of those feelings.