

not they suggest that this Congress and this President is not paying enough attention to the domestic concerns, woven into the crisis of where we stand today is the conflict in Iraq.

I think Americans understand Afghanistan more than we might think they do. They know that this Nation was attacked on September 11, 2001. They know that when the Nation is attacked, the Commander in Chief, leaders of this government have the responsibility of defending the honor and the security of America. They see Afghanistan as defending that honor and that security. They know that the Taliban, Osama bin Laden, those who collaborated were the basis of the attack against the World Trade towers and other sites in this country. They know that our lives have changed because of the horrific tragedy of 9/11. And they are willing to accept that. They faced up against new laws that seem to undermine their liberties, and within reason they are willing to acknowledge that things must change. I am grateful, however, that there are those of us who understand that the greatest success of a terrorist is to cause you to terrorize yourself. So many of us have asked to modify and assess the PATRIOT Act. We are looking to redo the FISA law that deals with electronic surveillance. But mostly in debating this question, Americans understand that their lives have changed.

But the Iraq War continues to be a questioning action by this administration. All of us have tried to give respect to the basis and the reason of this direction that this government took in the fall of 2002. I, for one, was very hesitant to speak about a war for oil. I recognize that there might have been many deliberations that have occurred that might have caused this administration to make this unfortunate leap of preemptive attack.

I have come full circle now, however, and I am enormously disappointed in the thought process and the respect not given to the American people. For the American people, over 56 percent, want this war to end, want these troops to come home, want to see a troop reduction.

So this debate today was not a frivolous debate. And the leadership of the Democratic Caucus, the leadership of this Congress took great pains to try to address this in a fair and dignified manner. They worked very hard to bring a concise document that spoke to the safety and security of the troops, the respect of the troops, the acknowledgment of their hard work; but yet to insist that a plan be laid out by this administration to reduce the number of troops in Iraq while at the same time ensuring that if there are outstanding conflicts, firefights, terrorists to be fought, that we'd have the troops on the ground.

I believe that this has been the most misdirected war that history will record. I believe that it beats out the Civil War, the War of 1812, World War I,

World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Persian Gulf. For any of those who opposed those wars, and I was not there for all of them, if there was any opposition for reasons that I don't know, this has to be the single most dangerous and devastating action that this Nation could have ever taken. There is no sense for it. There is no basis for it. But if there was a case that you could make, you could make the case that the military has done every single thing that it was asked to do.

So, Mr. Speaker, that is why I was moved to write the Military Success Act of 2007. It indicates that Congress recognizes that the military, in the invasion of Iraq, as authorized by a resolution given to the President in 2002, going into Baghdad was probably one of the best executed military operations in modern history, alongside of the Persian Gulf. The armed services successfully toppled the regime of Saddam Hussein.

And as I close, it lists a whole series of successes. And then it indicates that every single aspect of the 2002 resolution has been complied with. And, therefore, that means that the task of the 2002 resolution has ended. And it calls then for the troops to come home, for them to be acknowledged, for them to be given free, with no attachment, \$5,000 for each returning troop from Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, this was a difficult debate, but I think and know that we made the right decision. But we could do even more. We can affirm that these troops need to come home, and we can celebrate them for the heroes that they are.

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

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

#### THE 30 SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) is recognized for one-half the time until midnight as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

We are here tonight with part of the 30 Something Working Group, and we are going to talk about what this House has been doing this week. We are here, it's late into the evening, and we have been working throughout the day on a variety of issues, and we are going to be at work tomorrow. I wanted to talk with my colleagues tonight. And we are going to have a full house. We are going to be joined by Mr. MURPHY from Connecticut, Mr. MEEK from Florida, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ from

Florida, and Mr. RYAN from Ohio. We are going to have a discussion about some of the things that this House has been doing.

We took several significant votes this week, including the vote that was just discussed on Iraq. And we are going to discuss the policy in Iraq and the vote that we took today.

I wanted to start by talking about the President's veto earlier in the week of the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill. Now, the President has found his veto pen, something that on appropriations bills he had not used until this Congress. And I think it's instructive to begin this debate by reminding my colleagues, as if they needed reminding, that we are talking about an administration that took office after 4 consecutive years of record surpluses, 4 consecutive years of budget surpluses, that were forecast to continue as far as the eye can see. In fact, the 10-year projection for budget surplus beginning in 2001 was more than \$5 trillion of surplus over that 10-year period.

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Well, what have we seen instead of that? We've seen seven consecutive budget deficits in the 7 years of this administration, deficits that are forecast to continue as far as the eye can see. And instead of that \$5 trillion in surplus, we've seen more than \$3 trillion in deficits in just 7 years.

So, this administration that's now lecturing us on fiscal responsibility and vetoing our appropriations bills, criticizing us for spending, this administration saw more than \$8 trillion flip from a projected \$5 trillion surplus to \$3 trillion in deficit and counting. So, that's the context of what we're talking about.

So, we sent to the President the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill, which includes programs like low-income energy assistance, home heating, the LIHEAP program. Now, I don't think there's anyone in this country that has not been affected by the price of oil. And home heating is something in the Northeast where I'm from in Pennsylvania, and in Connecticut where Mr. MURPHY is from, and in Ohio where Mr. RYAN is from, the price of home heating has continued to skyrocket. And we're going to get into some of the numbers, but that's one of the things that's in this bill. Well, I don't think that's excessive spending, to help people who would otherwise have their heat turned off.

We're talking about funding for community health centers. We're talking about funding for Head Start, a program for early childhood education. Is there anything more important in this country than early childhood education, making sure our children get off to a good start and begin their educational careers in a way that we're able to ensure that they get off and they're positioned to have the best start possible.

Now, what about medical research, the National Institutes of Health?