

It is hard to know exactly what the administration is demanding in the negotiations because it has refused to share the information with Congress. Reports, however, and whatever we can find out, indicates that the administration is asking for unilateral authority over all U.S. military operations in Iraq, the right to arrest and detain Iraqi citizens, legal immunity for American military contractors, control over Iraqi borders and air space, and perhaps permanent bases, making Iraq a virtual American colony.

All this has brought a wave of protest from Iraqis of all political and religious stripes. It seems that we have finally succeeded in uniting the Iraqis against us. An Iraqi Government spokesman actually has said, "The Iraqi Government's vision differs from that of the Americans, who think the agreements will give them almost totally a free hand in Iraq, and that, as a military force, they must have absolute powers."

In addition, members of the Iraqi Parliament representing the majority of parties in that body wrote a letter to the Congress which was released just last week by my colleague on the Foreign Relations Committee, Representative DELAHUNT, the chairman on the Subcommittee on International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight. This letter includes a demand for the withdrawal of American troops. It said, in part, that "the majority of Iraqi representatives strongly reject any military security, economic, commercial, agricultural investment or political agreement with the United States that is not linked to clear mechanisms that obligate the occupying American military forces to fully withdraw from Iraq in accordance with the declared timetable, and without leaving any military bases, soldiers, or hired fighters."

Madam Speaker, by moving for a permanent military presence in Iraq, the administration is sending the wrong message to the Iraqi people. The American people are also getting that message, along with the rest of the world. It says to the Iraqi people that they will continue to live under foreign military occupation with no end in sight. It tells the American people that the occupation will continue to drain our resources at a time when our citizens are facing dire economic problems at home. And it proves to the world that the administration is determined to tie the next President to the failed policies of the past.

The best course for America is to begin the immediate, responsible redeployment of our troops and military contractors out of Iraq, as this House has mandated. But since the administration is clearly unwilling to do that, the next best thing is for Congress to demand full knowledge of the negotiations, with the right to approve any agreements.

Madam Speaker, the United States must give full national sovereignty

back to Iraq, and we must stop acting like an arrogant occupying power. After more than 5 years of bloody occupation, this is no time to talk about staying in Iraq forever. Instead, it is time to give the Iraq people back their independence. And it is time to bring our brave troops home.

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MAGINOT LINE OF INDIFFERENCE

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, the United States has gone to war numerous times to protect the sovereignty of nations. Sixty-four years ago on June 6, thousands of GIs went ashore in France because its borders were invaded by the Nazis. In fact, most of the European countries and north Africa had their sovereign borders overrun by the Nazis.

In the Pacific, the United States fought the Japanese because they had invaded the borders of our territories and the borders of China and Indochina. Americans died. Over 400,000 died protecting all of those borders during World War II.

After World War II, the United States defended the borders of Western Europe nations against that "evil empire" of the Soviet Union and Soviet Communism. In fact, we still have troops in Western Europe. Sixty years later, we still defend those borders. And that is a long time. Then there was the Korean War. In its aftermath with 50,000 Americans killed, we fulfilled our commitment to defend South Korea, and we still have 30,000 troops on that border with North Korea, 50 years plus defending someone else's border. We defend the borders of Iraq and part of the Balkans even to this day.

But Madam Speaker, I wonder why we don't have the same commitment to America's borders? Doesn't that bother anyone? Having been to the southern border of the United States numerous times and seeing the "Maginot Line of Indifference," I am puzzled why we seem to ignore the thousands of trespassers, or invaders, if I can use that term, that come from all nations and cross our border without permission.

When Mexico invaded the United States at Brownsville, Texas, in 1846, we went to war to defend the southern border. When the outlaw, now folk hero, General Pancho Villa and his bandits came into the United States from Mexico to commit crimes in New Mexico, the United States sent General Blackjack Pershing to go after him, even if it meant going to Mexico.

That was during a time when our sovereignty was important to the Nation and to the Federal Government. But the invasion now is much worse. Some estimates put the number of illegals in the United States between 15 and 35 million people. Why don't we have the same moral resolve we had in World

War II and Korea to defend our borders from this stealth invasion? It is the duty of government to protect the citizens of this Nation and the States.

I will read from the Constitution, something we probably ought to do more of in this Congress. Article IV section 4 of the United States Constitution says, "The United States shall guarantee to every State in this union a Republican Form of Government and shall protect each of them against invasion." Invasion means intrusion or encroachment. Why doesn't the Government just simply follow the Constitution and prevent invasion into the United States?

Now some Chamberlain appeasers want to just tell the illegals they can stay. After all, we can use the cheap plantation labor, the appeasers say. Never mind the crimes some of them commit, never mind how they take some social services without paying for them, never mind how some live off Americans and lawful immigrants. Never mind it is illegal to be in the United States without permission.

So why, Madam Speaker, do we defend the borders of other nations but not our own? The Feds say they are trying. But the proof, or the lack of it, is in the results. The border with Mexico is violent. The border is porous, and the border is being invaded. The most powerful nation in the history of the world can stop the secret invasion if it first had the moral resolve to do so, and second, the courage to do whatever is necessary to stop the onslaught of invaders.

Maybe we should even use the National Guard or returning troops from Iraq on our southern border. But doing so would take leadership that is committed in word and deed to protecting the sovereignty of this Nation.

The United States is worth it, Madam Speaker, even if the amnesty crowd and Mexican President Calderon doesn't like it.

And that's just the way it is.

CELEBRATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROBERT J. DOLE VA MEDICAL CENTER IN WICHITA, KANSAS

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

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise this evening to congratulate and to pay tribute to the Robert J. Dole Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center in my home State in Wichita, Kansas, for 75 years providing outstanding services and care to our Nation's heroes, our veterans.

Caring for those who have borne the battle is our Nation's utmost responsibility. And for 75 years, the Dole VA Hospital has helped our Nation honor this commitment. Let us take time today to pay tribute to the work of the Dole VA leadership staff and volunteers and the Kansas veterans they