

us to support a no-fly zone ought to participate with us in terms of making sure that no-fly zone is sustainable.

We cannot sit by and allow Qaddafi to kill more and more innocent people in a bloodbath, to use the power, air power, of his force to massacre civilians. We cannot allow that.

So I think the time is now. We can't keep waiting, because if we wait, it will be too long and the bloodbath will have already occurred. I think the time for action is now. Let's do it in conjunction with the EU and the Arab League.

□ 1540

SUPPORTING PUBLIC RADIO

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

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I'm standing here opposing the action taken by this House today and urging the Senate to allow the valued listeners of Metro Detroit's WDET to hear the best quality national programming, and here's why. What happens around the world impacts the quality of life of people living in Metro Detroit. The valiant listeners of Detroit's WDET deserve to hear this news and this programming.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to without amendment a joint resolution and a concurrent resolution of the House of the following titles:

H.J. Res. 48. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2011, and for other purposes.

H. Con. Res. 27. Concurrent resolution providing for the acceptance of a statue of Gerald R. Ford from the people of Michigan for placement in the United States Capitol.

END THE WAR IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCKINLEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. KUCINICH. March 20, 2003, 8 years ago, the United States launched a full-scale attack on Iraq. Many of us remember watching the images of shock and awe as violence was wreaked against the people of Iraq and, in particular, the city of Baghdad. That moment at which America arrived to express its military might had antecedents that we should study this evening.

I want to review, Mr. Speaker, the climate that was created for this Congress that caused this Congress to make a decision back in October of 2002 to go to war against Iraq—a war that was executed beginning March 20, 2003.

It was 9 years ago to this date that Vice President Cheney said the fol-

lowing of Iraq: "We know they have biological and chemical weapons." That was March 17, 2002.

On March 19, 2002, Vice President Cheney said: "And we know they are pursuing nuclear weapons."

On March 24, 2002, Vice President Cheney said of Saddam Hussein: "He is actively pursuing nuclear weapons at this time."

Later, on May 19, 2002: "We know he's got chemicals and biological and we know he's working on nuclear." That was Vice President Cheney on "Meet the Press."

August 26, 2002, speaking to the VFW's convention, Vice President Cheney said: "Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction. There is no doubt that he is amassing them to use against our friends, against our allies, and against us."

September 8, 2002, again, on NBC's "Meet the Press," Vice President Cheney said this: "Based on intelligence that's becoming available, some of it has been made public, more of it hopefully will be, that he has indeed"—he's speaking of Saddam Hussein—"he has indeed stepped up his capacity to produce and deliver biological weapons; that he has reconstituted his nuclear program to develop a nuclear weapon; that there are efforts underway inside Iraq to significantly expand his capability."

On September 8, 2002, on "Meet the Press," Vice President Cheney went on to say of Hussein: "He is in fact actively and aggressively seeking to acquire nuclear weapons."

March 16, 2003, a few days before the attack: "And we believe he has in fact reconstituted nuclear weapons."

I mention this, Mr. Speaker, because, for those Members who were not in the House of Representatives at the time of the October debate and at the time that the attack commenced and for those who are just citizens watching these events unfold, there was created in this country a climate of belief, a certainty, as to the grave peril which Saddam Hussein of Iraq was alleged to represent. That was the Vice President.

Now, the President, in various appearances and statements and in the legislation he presented to this Congress, the President made the following material representations with respect to Iraq. He said that Iraq was continuing to possess and develop a significant chemical and biological weapons capability. He said that Iraq was actively seeking a nuclear weapons capability; that Iraq was continuing to threaten the national security interests of the United States and international peace and security; that Iraq had demonstrated a willingness to attack the United States; that members of al Qaeda, an international organization bearing responsibility for attacks on the United States, its citizens, and interests, including the attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001, are known to be in Iraq. That attacks on

the United States of September 11, 2001, underscored the gravity of the threat that Iraq will transfer weapons of mass destruction to international terrorist organizations.

President George W. Bush represented to this Congress that Iraq will either employ those weapons to launch a surprise attack against the United States or its Armed Forces or provide them through international terrorists who would do so; that an extreme magnitude of harm would result to the United States and its citizens from such an attack; and that the aforementioned threats justified action by the United States to defend itself.

Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation as a Nation to defend ourselves. To provide for common defense is one of the foundational principles of this country in the preamble to our Constitution. Those who are charged with the responsibility of guiding the affairs of our Nation, the President and the Vice President—in this case, President Bush, Vice President Cheney—had a responsibility to be totally clear and honest with the American people. It is to their shame that they were neither honest nor candid with the American people and with this Congress.

Here we are on the eighth anniversary of the attack on Iraq. And I think, Mr. Speaker, it would be instructive for this Congress to have the opportunity to review what it is we were told in early October of 2002, when we voted as a Congress to authorize the President to take action against Iraq, action which commenced 8 years ago. Listen to some of these claims that were made. I will state the claims that were made and then I will rebut them.

□ 1550

We were told that, in 1990, in response to Iraq's war of aggression against an illegal occupation of Kuwait, the United States forged a coalition of nations to liberate Kuwait and its people in order to defend the national security of the United States and enforce United Nations Security Council resolutions relating to Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, the thing that was said then at that time in response: I pointed out that, in the Persian Gulf War, there was an international coalition. World support was for protecting Kuwait. There was no world support for invading Iraq.

The resolution that President Bush submitted to this Congress which resulted in the invasion of Iraq 8 years ago said: Whereas, after the liberation of Kuwait in 1991, Iraq entered into a United Nations-sponsored cease fire agreement, pursuant to which Iraq unequivocally agreed, among other things, to eliminate its nuclear, biological, chemical weapons programs and the means to deliver and develop them and to end its support for international terrorism;

Whereas, the efforts of international weapons inspectors, United States intelligence agencies, and Iraqi defectors

led to the discovery that Iraq had large stockpiles of chemical weapons and a large-scale biological weapons program and that Iraq had an advanced nuclear weapons development program that was much closer to producing a nuclear weapon than intelligence previously had indicated.

In advance of any attack, to answer what the President was saying, I pointed out more than 8 years ago: U.N. inspection teams identified and destroyed nearly all such weapons that President Bush referred to in his resolution. A lead inspector, Scott Ritter, said that he believes that nearly all other weapons not found were destroyed in the gulf war. Furthermore, according to a published report in *The Washington Post*, the Central Intelligence Agency had no up-to-date accurate report on Iraq's WMD capabilities.

The President said: Whereas, Iraq, in direct and flagrant violation of the cease fire, attempted to thwart the efforts of weapons inspectors, to identify and destroy Iraq's weapons of mass destruction stockpiles and development capabilities, which finally resulted in the withdrawal of inspectors from Iraq on October 31, 1998.

I pointed out back then, more than 8 years ago, that Iraqi deceptions always failed. Inspectors always figured out what Iraq was doing. It was the United States that withdrew from the inspections in 1998. The United States then launched a cruise missile attack against Iraq 48 hours after the inspectors left. In advance of a military strike, the U.S. continued to thwart the weapons inspections.

President Bush went on to tell this Congress: Whereas, in 1998, Congress concluded that Iraq's continuing weapons of mass destruction program threatened vital U.S. interests and international peace and security. It declared Iraq to be in "material and unacceptable breach of its international obligations," and urged the President to take appropriate action in accordance with the Constitution and relevant laws of the United States to bring Iraq into compliance with international obligations.

The President went on to assert to this Congress: Whereas, Iraq both possesses a continuing threat to the national security of the United States and international peace and security in the Persian Gulf, and remains in material and unacceptable breach of international obligations by, among other things, continuing to possess and develop a significant chemical and biological weapons capability, actively seeking a nuclear weapons capability, and supporting and harboring terrorists.

It was pointed out back then, Mr. Speaker, that there was absolutely no proof that Iraq represented an immediate or imminent threat to the United States. A continuing threat does not constitute a sufficient cause for war. The administration refused to provide Congress with credible intelligence

that proved that Iraq was a serious threat to the United States and was continuing to possess and develop chemical and biological nuclear weapons; and there was no credible intelligence connecting Iraq to al Qaeda in 9/11. Iraq didn't have anything to do with 9/11. Iraq had nothing to do with al Qaeda's role in 9/11.

The President went on to assert to this Congress in the resolution which was a call to war against Iraq that Iraq persists in violating resolutions of the United Nations Security Council by continuing to engage in the brutal repression of its civilian population, thereby threatening international peace and security in the region by refusing to release, repatriate or account for non-Iraqi citizens wrongfully detained by Iraq, including an American serviceman, and by failing to return property wrongfully seized by Iraq from Kuwait.

It was said at the time that the language of this resolution was so broad that it would allow the President to attack Iraq even when there was no material threat to the United States. The resolution authorized the use of force for all Iraq-related violations of U.N. Security Council directives, and the resolution cited Iraq's imprisonment of non-Iraqi prisoners.

This resolution would have authorized the President to attack Iraq in order to liberate Kuwaiti citizens who may or may not have been in Iraqi prisons even if Iraq had met compliance with all requests to destroy the alleged weapons of mass destruction; though, in 2002, at the Arab summit, Iraq and Kuwait agreed to bilateral negotiations to work out all claims relating to stolen property and prisoners of war.

So this use of force resolution enabled President Bush to commit U.S. troops to recover Kuwaiti property.

The President told this Congress: The current Iraqi regime had demonstrated its capability and willingness to use weapons of mass destruction against other nations and its own people; that the Iraqi regime had demonstrated its continuing hostility toward and willingness to attack the United States, including by attempting in 1993 to assassinate former President Bush; and by firing on many thousands of occasions on United States and Coalition Armed Forces engaged in enforcing a resolution of the United Nations Security Council.

It was pointed out back then, prior to Congress passing the resolution to authorize an attack on Iraq, that the Iraqi regime had never attacked nor does it have the capability to attack the United States. They couldn't attack us. The no-fly zone was not the result of a U.N. Security Council directive. It was illegally imposed by the United States, Great Britain, and France and not specifically sanctioned by any Security Council resolution.

The President went on to say: Members of al Qaeda, an organization bear-

ing responsibility for attack on the United States, its citizens and interests, including the attacks that occurred on 9/11, are known to be in Iraq.

But back in October of 2002, when we were having the debate on President Bush's war resolution, there was no credible intelligence that connected Iraq to the events of 9/11 or to the participation in those events by assisting al Qaeda.

The President told Congress back in 2002: Iraq continues to aid and harbor other international terrorist organizations, including organizations that threaten the lives and safety of American citizens.

It was pointed out back then, in response to President Bush's assertions, that any connection between the Iraq support of terrorist groups in the Middle East is an argument and was an argument then for focusing great resources on resolving the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. It was not sufficient reason for the U.S. to launch a unilateral preemptive strike against Iraq.

The President went on to say that the attacks on the United States of September 11, 2001, underscored the gravity of the threat posed by the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by international terrorist organizations.

It was pointed out again that there was no connection between Iraq and the events of 9/11. Yet think about this: there was a consistent effort to try to link Iraq to 9/11 and to al Qaeda's role in 9/11, but there was no connection. The President kept on insisting there was, as did the Vice President.

□ 1600

The President went on to say that Iraq demonstrated capability and willingness to use weapons of mass destruction, the risk that the Iraq regime would either employ those weapons to launch a surprise attack against the United States or its Armed Forces, or provide them to international terrorists who would do so. The extreme magnitude of harm that would result in the United States and its citizens from such an attack combined to justify action by the United States to defend itself.

The picture that was painted for the American people, for the Congress at that time was that we had no choice but to get ready to attack Iraq; and yet, back then, prior to Congress voting on a resolution to authorize use of military force against Iraq, an attack having occurred 8 years ago, on March 20, 2003, we knew back then that there was no credible evidence that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. There was no credible evidence that Iraq had the capability to reach the United States with such weapons.

In the 1991 gulf war, Iraq had a demonstrated capability of biological and chemical weapons, but didn't have the willingness to use them against the U.S. Armed Forces. Congress was not

provided with any credible information which proved that Iraq had provided international terrorists with weapons of mass destruction.

President Bush went on to assert that the United States could unilaterally enforce U.N. resolutions and that we could do so with military force. He went on to assert a chronology of international process; and when you look at where we are today, \$3 trillion, according to Joseph Stiglitz and Linda Bilmes, will be the minimum cost of this war.

One has to ask, what was going on in this Congress at the time? When we were told by the President of the United States and by the Vice President of the United States that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, it had the intention and capability of attacking the United States, the implication was that Iraq worked with al Qaeda to bring about 9/11. That's what they led this Congress to believe. That's what they led the American people to believe.

But you know what, Mr. Speaker, way back then I didn't buy a word of it, and there are other Members of Congress who didn't buy a word of it either. We know that there was no proof. We knew that there was no proof offered by the administration at that time that would give us a cause to go to war against Iraq, but we executed the war against Iraq. This is a great tragedy upon the Iraqi people and upon the people of our Nation, too.

We executed the war against Iraq that, according to Joseph Stiglitz, extrapolating from a study that was done by the Lancet organization, as many as 1 million innocent Iraqi people have died in that war. I want everyone here to wrap their thinking around this statement. Joseph Stiglitz in his book, "The Three Trillion Dollar War," wrote it with his associate Linda Bilmes, citing the Lancet report on civilian casualties in Iraq, extrapolated from that report and the figure that comes up is approximately 1 million innocent civilians lost their lives as a result of the United States' attack upon, and occupation of, Iraq.

People will criticize the Lancet study; and they will say, well, you know, that can't be true. But what they did was they looked at how many excess deaths occurred during that period, and they did a very comprehensive study; and they were able to come to this determination that these were all deaths that should not have occurred or they attributed them to the war. A million people. Why? Because this Congress was told that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and was going to use them against the United States of America.

Could I ask how much time is left, Mr. Speaker?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has approximately 35 minutes remaining.

Mr. KUCINICH. So I was saying, Mr. Speaker, over 1 million innocent Iraqis

died pursuant to the bloodshed and chaos that occurred during the Iraq war. How can anyone in public life who understands that not come into public forums and demand justice?

This Nation was led to war based on lies. The U.S. has already lost 4,439 of our brave men and women. We've had over 33,000 troops wounded. There are casualties on all sides here. And certainly some of the nations who closed ranks with the Bush administration, their sons and daughters also suffered as well.

It's hard to believe, though, that we could have known all that we knew in advance of passing the legislation and it was passed anyway; know all that we knew in advance of passing the legislation, the legislation's passed, and we go to war anyway; know all that we know today back then and still be in Iraq today, March 17, 2011. And I quoted to you at the beginning of this from Vice President Cheney 9 years ago. The Iraqis are still paying a price and so are the American people.

I'm going to say something on this floor, Mr. Speaker, that seldom gets discussed here, and that is, that I sincerely believe that President Bush, Vice President Cheney, Secretary Rumsfeld and others should be held accountable under international law for waging a war against people who had no quarrel with the United States of America at all.

□ 1610

There have to be international laws that have to be followed by U.S. officials, and, in fact, there are: the Geneva Convention, the U.N. Charter. There are express prohibitions against waging aggressive war.

It doesn't matter what this Congress blesses because of what we were told. The President, the Vice President, and the Secretary of Defense, they all knew better. They are all trying to cover their tracks right now with various books and PR tours, but they knew better. They put the lives of our young men and women on the line for a lie. They put the lives of 1 million and more Iraqi people on the line for a lie. They put over \$3 trillion of our precious resources here on the line for a lie.

I challenge anyone in this Congress to prove me wrong on any of this, because it is impossible to prove to the contrary the statements that I have made today about assertions that were made to this Congress, to the American people for a cause of war against Iraq, and they were all lies.

And now, Mr. Speaker, we are about to begin another year of occupation of Iraq. There is no question that occupation fuels insurgencies. There is no question that we are likely to be in Iraq for some time to come. Just in the last 24 hours, it was reported that while the U.S. troops who are there at this moment, 50,000 troops, are supposed to leave at the end of the year, there are problems with the negotia-

tions, that Mr. Maliki, his government, is stalled on appointing ministers, that the U.S. wants a contingency force of 10,000 to remain, that the State Department is increasing contractor presence of 17,000 at the cost of \$2.5 billion. We are not going to be done with this war for God knows how long.

We know the war in Iraq is being privatized. We know that all these private firms that are lining up to provide security in Iraq will be there for some time. As a matter of fact, it's in their interest to keep the environment unstable because they will keep making money.

So this handoff to the State Department occurs with much skepticism. But at this very moment, Mr. Speaker, it's not clear that we are truly going to be leaving Iraq. I mean, you are either in or you are out. You can't be in and out at the same time. You can't talk about going and you still have 10,000 troops there or 50,000 troops there. We are told that it's the end of combat operations. Well, some of the insurgents aren't getting that message, because they are still attacking our troops.

There have been 4,439 U.S. casualties, approximately 33,000 wounded. I have been to a number of funerals of young people who believed in this country, who loved this country, who saw service to this country as the highest purpose of their lives. I remember all of them, but there is one in particular that I want to share with you. It was a young man who, when he died in combat, his mother was notified that he would at last be made a U.S. citizen.

I grew up at a time when we were dealing with the Vietnam War. And years ago, before I got into politics, I was a copyboy at a newspaper in Cleveland called The Plain Dealer. My job at The Plain Dealer, among the things I had to do, I had to go out on what they called art runs to pick up pictures of young men, primarily, who were killed in Vietnam. I remember driving the company's car up to a house. And, Mr. Speaker, all these houses after a while, they look the same. The houses were wooden clapboard houses that needed a little bit of paint, and the front door was flapping a little bit in the breeze. There wasn't a latch on it. When you walked up the steps, the steps would creek, and you would see faded white curtains in the window with a shade pulled down and a blue star in the window, signifying that they had someone who served.

When I knocked on the door, people would invite me into their house, and I would sit on a worn sofa, a threadbare rug. At that time, they would have a picture of the President of the United States, often a picture of President Kennedy, who, by then, had been deceased, and a picture of Christ, you know, around the TV. I would sit down on their sofa, and they would go over the pictures. Then I would take one of those pictures to the newspaper so they could print it the next day to announce that this young person had been killed.

And I remember how incredible it was to be there at that moment when the family was in such incredible agony and grief and to get the feeling of their loss, just to feel it. Even thinking about it right now, I can feel it.

I went out and picked up so many pictures over the course of a year or so, just while I was doing that job; and it was just the same thing over and over again, people talking about how proud they were of their young person who served and wanting everyone to know how much they loved the country and how much they loved service.

Those memories stay with me. I mean, all of us who had friends who fought in Vietnam and didn't come back. They included people who I played baseball with, people who I just used to pal around with. And when you know people who get killed in war, it becomes personal. When you have family members who are out there and are exposed to that environment, it's very personal.

So here I am in the United States Congress. Here we are, 2011. And I think back to those times, and I think, you know, if we're sending these young men and women to put themselves in harm's way, we had better be right. We cannot afford not just to not make a mistake, but there cannot be any deception involved in things like that.

So, you see, when I talk about the importance of holding people accountable for the deceptions, I come from a place of great sadness about the tragedy of war generally, but the compounded tragedy of war specifically when it is based on something that is really not true.

□ 1620

Whether those of us in Congress voted for the war or not, we all have grave concerns for the safety of our troops. But there's a sense in which the troops themselves become hostage to the war. We had so many moments where we were told that we should vote to continue to fund the wars to support the troops.

Now, Iraq, March 20, 2011, the eighth anniversary. Afghanistan, already the longest war in our history, more than 10 years. How can we afford the lost lives anymore? How can we afford the deaths of innocent civilians? How can we afford the trillions upon trillions of dollars?

There's a point at which we have to ask ourselves some fundamental questions. If we didn't go to war to make America safer, why did we go to war against Iraq? I maintained then and I maintain now that oil certainly had something to do with it.

We have to ask ourselves, why are we still in Iraq? Why are we still in Afghanistan? Why are we continuing incursions along the Pakistani border? Why are we still debating whether to become involved militarily in Libya? Don't we, as Americans, get to the point where we just say maybe it's time we started taking care of things at home first?

Fifteen million Americans out of work. Think of how many jobs you could create with trillions of dollars. Fifty million Americans still don't have health care. Over 10 million Americans have lost their homes. So many Americans go to bed hungry. So many Americans can't afford to send their kids to decent schools. So much of our public education system is failing because they don't have enough resources.

And yet, we are spending trillions of dollars now on wars, one war based on lies, the other one based on a fundamental misreading of history. I mean, who in history has conquered Afghanistan? Well, maybe somebody can go back to Genghis Khan's time and answer that question, but you can't answer it in this century or the last century.

Now, the House just had 2 hours of debate today on the issue of Afghanistan and the war powers resolution. I'm pleased to see that more voted in favor of withdrawal this year than voted last year. It's a good sign, particularly since about two-thirds of the American people favor getting out of Afghanistan in the near future.

I mean, it's easy to understand why the American people feel that way. The American people have to be feeling, how can we afford these wars? How can we afford to spend \$1 million a year to equip a soldier in Afghanistan, or Iraq for that matter? Don't we have things to take care of here at home?

Mr. Speaker, I look at our cities, and all across this Nation, we have cities that are falling apart. Our infrastructure's falling apart. It's fair to say that we have trillions of dollars in infrastructure needs that are unmet. They're not being met because we're being told, well, we don't have enough money. As a matter of fact, some States are using the deficit to be able to crush workers' rights.

But we know that when it comes to these wars, these wars are contributing to the deficit. In one way or another, we end up borrowing money to keep these wars going. How can these wars be more important than everything else in America?

We know right now that occupations fuel insurgency in Afghanistan. Our presence there has caused the Taliban to become stronger. Our actions there help ensure the Taliban will have even more support.

General Petraeus himself, with respect to Afghanistan said, well, al Qaeda doesn't have much of a presence anymore. What are we doing there? How can we keep affording the kind of money that we're spending there?

The American people are saying it loud and clear. They want out.

But what I wanted to do this evening, though, is to bring us back to the time that Congress was faced with the decision about going to war against Iraq; that we were told things by Vice President Cheney, we were told things by President Bush.

Now they want to blame it on some character called Curveball. Look, when I was growing up if somebody was throwing you a curveball you knew what that meant. It meant that it wasn't coming at you straight. It was coming like this, okay?

It was almost somebody in the CIA was telegraphing to all of us, hey, this guy's a curveball. Be very careful about this pitch that he's making.

But anyhow, this character, Curveball, when it comes to WMDs, he said he made it all up. He said that he had a problem with the Saddam regime. He wanted to get rid of them, and he had the chance.

Now, there are those who would say, well, see, it was this guy. He said this. We were fooled. Right. Yeah. No. Those who were charged with the responsibility of taking this country into war against Iraq, they weren't fooled. They cooked the books with respect to the intelligence. They had the intelligence shaped to fit their preconceived designs to go to war. For them to try to maintain they were fooled would be an interesting defense.

The former head of the CIA in Europe, Tyler Drumheller, wasn't fooled. He warned against the reliability of Curveball. But the administration at that time, the Bush administration, offered no alternatives to the Congress.

So instead of accepting the truth that Iraq didn't possess WMDs, the Bush administration decided to pick and choose their facts in order to sell a war to the American people, at a cost of trillions of dollars.

When I think of the road that we have gone down, when I think, Mr. Speaker, that someone in the Bush administration, way back when we were about to attack Iraq, announced that he thought the Iraq war would cost \$100 billion, Larry Lindsey, he was fired for that. One hundred billion. Imagine now, this war's going to cost 30 times that, if not 50 times it, when you look at the long-term effect of caring, for the rest of their lives, for the soldiers who come back maimed.

□ 1630

Let's bring it back. On March 20, 2003, the United States Armed Forces at the direction of President George W. Bush commenced a very vigorous and violent attack upon the nation of Iraq and its people. That was the beginning of the Iraq war, and it was the beginning of the United States assault on and subsequent occupation of Iraq. And he did it because this Congress approved of it; and this Congress approved of it because we were told that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, that Iraq had the intention and capability of hurting the United States, and Iraq had something to do with 9/11 and al Qaeda's role in 9/11. Mr. Speaker, all false.

Now, the Bible says you shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. We are taught that truth crushed to the ground will rise again. We are waiting to be freed from the lies that

took us into war, but we cannot be free until we have a reconciliation with the people of Iraq. And we can't do that until we have truth. America is going to have to go through that period. We will never recover from 9/11 if we continue to move down the rabbit holes of war that were based on lies or based on a misreading of history and a misapplication of power.

So where do we go from here? Well, we have to get ready to leave Iraq and we have to get ready to leave Afghanistan, and we have to stop bombing the borders along Pakistan. And we have to start working with the international community on matters of security. And if we need to continue to track down anyone who is associated with mass violence against the people of our country or any other country, that should be a matter of international police action.

And we must stop the policies of interventionism. We must stop the reach for empire. It is destroying our Nation. It is destroying us morally, and it is destroying our capacity to be able to meet the needs of the American people for jobs, for housing, for health care, for education, for retirement security. We have to challenge the underlying premise about war being inevitable. Because as soon as people start beating the drums of war, there is an entire marching band and Shouter Society at the Pentagon and their people in the contracting business who are ready to try to make a case for war at any time and any place. We have to begin to critically analyze the mentality that issues forth that causes us to put so much of our resources on the line.

General Eisenhower warned about it. He served as President of this United States two terms, and he recognized in his valedictory that we should beware of the military-industrial complex, we have to be careful about what we are being told and the motivation of those from outside this Congress who are telling us certain stories about why we should go to war. It is time for us to try to come into resonance with our power to achieve diplomacy.

I am not naive about the world, but I also understand that if we do not try to exercise our capacity to relate to people in other places, people who may have different ideologies, different religions, different colors, creeds; if we do not try to pursue that, then we are destined to have more wars. But if we pursue what President Franklin Roosevelt called the science of human relations, then we have the possibility that we can move toward making peace, not war, inevitable.

It is that type of thinking that led me to bring forward a proposal to create a Cabinet-level Department of Peace. I know there are people who say, "Oh, peace. Right. Okay, Dennis. We got it. You want peace. Next." And they try to project peace as impractical.

Mr. Speaker, you want us to talk impractical? How about a war based on

lies that cost this country over \$3 trillion? That is impractical. How about a war that cost the lives of over 1 million innocent Iraqi civilians, a war that cost the lives of thousands upon thousands of our troops, and tens of thousands of our troops injured? That's impractical.

We need to summon our capacity and our capabilities to be able to take this Nation in a new direction that does not include a quest or reach for empire; that pulls back its military resources which are spread all around the world to the cost of tens of billions of dollars annually, and we need to start coming home, create peace at home. Let's look at gun violence in our society. Let's go to domestic violence, spousal abuse, child abuse, violence in the schools, gang violence, racial violence, violence against gays.

If we started to focus on addressing violence in our society, the causal nature of it, not just the symptoms of it, not just the effects of it, we may put ourselves on a path where we could in our Nation create what many years ago people called a New Jerusalem, a shining city on a hill, the potential to be able to have all of our material concerns met, and be able to have peace.

Frankly, I don't know any other way that we can do it except working towards peace. But we have to build structures of peace in our own Nation, in our own neighborhoods. That is what legislation to create a Department of Peace is about, not creating a new bureaucracy.

Think about it. If we spend more than \$1 trillion every year for wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the Pentagon budget all combined, wouldn't you think we ought to have a few bucks available to talk about how we can create a more peaceful society so we don't doom future generations to continue to support these endless wars?

We have to start redefining who we are as a people, and this is as good a time as any to begin to do it. We are on the eighth anniversary of the initiation of the war against Iraq, March 20, 2011.

In the last hour, Mr. Speaker, I have sought to create a review of the record of what was said at the time to bring about the war, how the President and the Vice President at that time did not tell the truth to the American people, did not tell the truth to Congress; how the consequences have been extraordinary for the people of Iraq, for the people of the United States; how many innocent civilians died; how we have to find a way to reconcile with the people of Iraq, how we will have to find a way to reconcile at some point with the people in Afghanistan the innocents who have died. How we have to recognize that there are some things in the world that are beyond our control, that we can't tell other people what kind of political system they should have. We cannot try to redesign the world according to what our idea of a democracy is.

Wouldn't it be nice if here in the United States we actually focused on

creating the fullness of the democratic process, which we were assured would have the chance to unfold with the independence of the United States and with the creation of our Constitution?

Mr. Speaker, I intend to keep bringing forth the truth of what happened that resulted in the United States being taken into war against Iraq based on lies, and I intend to keep bringing forward alternatives so that we can not just get out of Iraq and Afghanistan, but stop this reach for power abroad which comes at the expense of our vital needs at home.

□ 1640

AMERICAN ENERGY POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I wish every one of my colleagues and everybody in America would listen to this Special Order tonight, not because I want the attention, but I just think there are some facts that the American people ought to know and my colleagues ought to know about our dependence on energy from other parts of the world.

It really bothers me that we continue to depend so much on our adversaries or people that aren't our friends rather than we do on ourselves. We could be energy independent within a relatively short period of time, and I am talking about 5 to 10 years, if we just did certain things. So tonight what I want to do is I want to point out to my colleagues and anybody else that might be paying attention where the energy is in America, what it is, and how difficult it would be to extract it.

Now, right now, people that are paying attention in their offices know that we are paying \$3.60 or more for a gallon of gasoline. Diesel fuel is over \$4 a gallon. And my chief of staff went to the grocery store the other day, and he told me he bought two tomatoes and it cost \$5. He bought one avocado and it cost \$3.

People are telling me there is no inflation. That is baloney. The cost of food is going up. The cost of gasoline is going up. The cost of everything is going up, and in large part it is going up because the cost of energy is rising very, very rapidly. And it need not be that way.

I talked to a fellow the other day that came in to see me about new technologies, and he told me if we developed our coal shale, converted it into oil, we could lower the price per barrel of oil from \$105 a barrel to \$30 a barrel. Do you know what that would do to the price of gasoline if we were to do that? It would lower the price of gasoline from \$3.60 down to about \$1.40 or \$1.30 a gallon. And what do you think that would do to the economy and what