

The very first amendment to our Constitution is freedom of speech, our precious right to say exactly what we believe, even when those words challenge those who are in power. Maybe I should say particularly when those words challenge people that are in power.

Voltaire's words, quote, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it," is the spirit of the first amendment. And all of our great Presidents have defended that right to speak one's mind in this great country. And one of those eloquent statements was made by a Republican President, Theodore Roosevelt, who said, "To announce that there must be no criticism of the President or that we are to stand by the President right or wrong is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American public." Very strong words.

But now in an environment in which one party dominates the U.S. House, the U.S. Senate, the Presidency, and even the Supreme Court, those who challenge the policy decisions of the Republicans are being accused of being unpatriotic, of aiding and abetting terrorists, disloyalty to the Commander in Chief, of needing to apologize for voicing their views. And leading that effort has been the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY). And I think it is time to call him to account for his hypocritical comments and his effort to stifle important and legitimate debate.

We are now engaged in war, in a war in Iraq. And our young men and women as well as innocent Iraqis are dying every day. There is nothing more serious than this. Many of us have been critical of the decision to engage in a preemptive war of choice, not necessity, of the poor planning, of the lack of proper equipment provided to our troops, of the lack of accountability of the billions of dollars being spent, more than a billion per week, much of which has gone to friends of this administration and not to provide things like clean water and modern body armor to our troops. There are legitimate issues to raise whether one agrees or not.

But rather than deal with the substance, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) has, to put it bluntly, slimed the questioners. On March 20 of this year, Mr. DELAY said, quote, "This destructive rhetoric does nothing more than demoralize our troops and second-guess our Commander in Chief," unquote. But in May of 1999 while our troops were there fighting against genocide and ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, that same gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) said, quote, "It is a flawed policy, and it was flawed to go in. I think this President is one of the least effective Presidents of my lifetime. He has hollowed out our forces while running around the world with these adventures."

It was perfectly fine then for him to make this critical and, I would argue,

somewhat intemperate comment about his Commander in Chief in 1999 while our troops were engaged in conflict. But not now. Oh, no.

Last week during the debate on handing another \$87 billion to this administration that cannot seem to provide enough fresh water or sunscreen to our troops, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) said, "Let me just say that the old debating tactics of 'I support the troops but' is just not going to cut it this time. If you support the war, and you support the troops, you must, you must vote for this bill."

Well, that is a very, very different story, again, from what he said in 1999. Our leader, the Republican majority leader, came to the floor of this house, stood probably over there, and said to this body, quote, "This is a very difficult speech for me to make because I normally, and I still do, support our military and the fine work that they are doing, but, I cannot support a failed foreign policy."

Now last week, he is saying "no buts," and in 1999 he was all about "but he could not support a failed foreign policy."

Mr. DELAY can say what he wants because that is his right, not only as the majority leader or an elected Representative, but because that is the right of every American. But I have the right and we have the right, and I think an obligation, to demand that he act in the spirit of the oath that he took to uphold the Constitution, to take responsibility for the hypocritical and, I would say, unpatriotic remarks he has made for the purpose of demeaning and defeating his critics and critics of the failed policies of the Republican administration and Republican Congressional leaders.

I urge him, once again, to heed the wise words of the President from his own party, Teddy Roosevelt and let me repeat that quote, he said, Teddy Roosevelt, "To announce that there must be no criticism of the President or that we are to stand by the President right or wrong, is not only unpatriotic and servile, but is morally treasonable to the American public."

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) for her comments, and I may ask that we leave up that quote, if we could, from Teddy Roosevelt, because I think it says it all about what this special order is tonight and why so many of my colleagues have gotten up here and spoken out about the statements that have been made by the majority leader.

And if I could conclude tonight, I would like to conclude with a couple of quotes comparing what the majority leader said this year, in regard to the war in Iraq, and what he said a few years ago, with regard to the war on Kosovo, because I think that one of the greatest concerns I have is this notion that he has tried to spread that somehow if you do not support the war in Iraq or if you criticize this different as-

pects of the war or if you do not vote for the funding for the war in various ways, that you do not support the troops. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Everybody in this House of Representatives on the Democratic side, and I know on the Republican side as well, support the troops and want to do whatever we can to support the troops. And much of the controversy and much of the debate last week on the supplemental was about how best to support the troops. But at no point was anybody suggesting that we not support them, just how best to support them.

And the thing that is amazing about it is if you look up one of the quotes that the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) made this year with regard to the Iraq war, and this is the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) on March 20 of this year, a quote from the Washington Times where he said, "I think it is hypocritical to say on the one hand that you support the troops, while on the other hand you say the reason they are risking their lives was wrong. I think it undermines the effort and the unity this country ought to be showing right now." Yet just a few years earlier, talking about the Kosovo war, as quoted in the USA Today regarding floor votes on Kosovo, the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), then said, "It is very simple: The President is not supported by the House and the military is supported by the House." What he essentially was saying that you do not have to support the President in the war in order to support the troops.

And that is the bottom line. Everyone here on the Democratic side and the Republican side wants to do whatever is necessary to support the troops and to make sure that they are not unnecessarily in harm's way. But the bottom line is that you can support the troops and not support the President's foreign policy, either collectively in Iraq, or separately on different votes.

And I think it is very, very important for us as Democrats to continue to make that point. And we will continue to make it unless the majority leader stops his criticism and his comments relative to the patriotism of the Democrats.

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

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

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

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