

are fighting a war. And we need to be working to keep them as safe as possible until they are home.

For starters, we need to send a loud message to the insurgents that we will not occupy Iraq and that we will not control Iraq's oil—a message that we want to leave Iraq as much as they want us to leave. Instead, Mr. Speaker, the President has given every impression that the U.S. military has become an occupying force. We are in the process of building a gigantic new U.S. embassy in Baghdad that will span 104 acres, the size of nearly 80 football fields. This does not give the impression that we are winding things down in Iraq. It says to insurgents that we want a permanent military presence and it serves as a recruiting tool to sign up more insurgents. Moreover, it provides no incentives for the Iraqi government to assume more responsibility for the security of its country.

On my last visit to Iraq everyone I spoke with—privates, sergeants and the officers in charge of training the Iraqi security forces—want the Iraqis to assume more of the security responsibilities. Our military has done its job—more often than not in two, three or four tours of deployment—an unconscionable demand on our troops, an unconscionable demand on their families and an unconscionable demand on their communities. And make no mistake—it's taking a toll on our military. Continuous deployment in Iraq has hurt military personnel and their families, and strained recruiting and retention. Consider some of the latest statistics on active duty personnel and selected reserves as well as on recruiting and retention:

Each month the equivalent of one battalion is lost due to deaths and wounds.

All the Army's available active duty combat brigades have served at least a 12-month tour in Iraq or Afghanistan.

At least half of those combat brigades have completed their second tour of duty.

By next year the Army projects that it will be short 3,500 active duty officers, primarily captains and majors.

Approximately 3,500 airmen, as well as sailors, are currently performing Army missions they were not adequately trained to do.

Ninety-seven percent of the National Guard combat and special operations battalions have been mobilized since September 11th.

The average tour for National Guard members is 342 days.

Continuous deployment has damaged readiness for mission skills necessary in the war on terror outside those required in Iraq. Consider some of the latest statistics:

Forty percent of all the Army's and Marine Corps' ground equipment is deployed to Iraq. That equipment is wearing out 2 to 9 times the peacetime rate.

Humvees that are designed for 14 years of operation needs are being overhauled or replaced in just 3 years.

The Army has lost over 100 tanks and armored vehicles and over 1,000 vehicles since the start of the war.

If the war in Iraq ended today, it would take the Army more than 2 years to repair or replace its damaged equipment.

The Marine Corps has determined that equipment deployed to Iraq has suffered such significant damage and wear and tear that 80 percent of it will need to be replaced.

In excess of \$50 billion is needed to repair and replace equipment damaged or lost in Iraq for the Army and Marine Corps.

Mr. Speaker, stay the course is not a strategy for success and we're not doing our job by being a rubber stamp for the Administration. Each day, it becomes more apparent that the Administration does not have, nor has it ever had, a clear, concise and realistic strategy for ending large scale U.S. involvement in Iraq. The American people deserve a clear explanation of what we are doing in Iraq. They deserve to know what the President is going to do to reduce the incredible physical, emotional and financial burden that all Americans are bearing. If this Congress and the President expect the American people to continue making these sacrifices, then there must be a strategy for success.

Mr. Speaker, we must set the bar and identify what it will take for us to accomplish the mission in Iraq. When the Iraqi people conclude the process of amending their constitution, or by September 30, 2006, we must begin the process of redeployment as soon as practicable. This is a workable approach that tracks a timeline set by the Administration. That is why I have introduced H. Con. Res. 348, which would do just that. This legislation is a bipartisan, comprehensive plan to redeploy American forces out of Iraq and send a clear message to the Iraqi people that the United States has no plans to be a permanent occupying force and we have no designs on Iraqi oil. Six Republicans have signed onto this bill. This bipartisan measure has been introduced in the Senate (S. Con. Res. 93), making it the only bicameral approach to Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I did not support the President's plan to invade Iraq. I considered it to be an unnecessary distraction from hunting down those responsible for the attacks of September 11th. But, as the U.S. has entered its fourth year in Iraq, this is where we are and now we must find a rational and reasonable way out of this mess.

Mr. Speaker, this is not an honest debate about this important issue and while the majority plays politics our men and women serving in Iraq are in terrible danger.

Rhetorical attempts to obfuscate failed tactical decisions in Iraq with the global war on terror will do nothing to solve the problem that is before us today. Nor will it correct this body's failure to provide its constitutional oversight responsibility that has led to the billions of American taxpayer dollars that have either been misused or remain unaccounted for in our efforts to rebuild Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, global terrorism remains a grave national security threat to the United States. However, the war in Iraq and this resolution is a distraction from our struggle against terrorism. As the President continues his stay the course strategy in Iraq, the Taliban is regaining strength in Afghanistan. If we are to prevail in the war on terrorism we must refocus our efforts on terrorist hotbeds, such as Afghanistan.

The brave men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces are the best-equipped, best-trained and most professional fighting forces in the world. They have been performing their jobs courageously and honorably and their morale remains high. These men and women deserve our thanks and our respect. They deserve better than this sham resolution.

Mr. Speaker, give this House back to the people for real debate on our policy in Iraq.

IN MEMORY OF FIRST LIEUTENANT RYAN T. SANDERS, UNITED STATES ARMY

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Army First Lieutenant Ryan T. Sanders, an American hero who gave his life in defense of liberty and freedom. He made the ultimate sacrifice so that others might know freedom, and I am humbled by his bravery and selflessness.

First Lieutenant Ryan Sanders was killed on June 11, 2006 while conducting combat operations when a roadside bomb exploded near his Abrams tank in Baghdad, Iraq. He was 27 years old. First Lieutenant Sanders was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 66th Armor Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division at Ft. Hood, Texas.

In keeping with Eagle Scout tradition, he placed the safety and well being of others above his own. His family is dedicated to American ideals of freedom and democracy as he is the third of four sons to serve in the Persian Gulf region.

First Lieutenant Sanders is survived by his wife, Jennifer Sanders; his parents, Jim and Kay Sanders of Richardson; his brothers, Mike, Jeff, and Greg Sanders; and his grandparents, Truett and Joyce Sanders of San Angelo. I extend my deepest condolences to each of them.

First Lieutenant Sanders leaves behind a legacy marked by courage, integrity and character. May God bless and comfort all those he loved, and may they know the gratitude of the American people.

DAN DANIEL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, on June 12, 2006, the organizers of the Dan Daniel Charity Golf Tournament, held their 18th tournament at the Andrews Air Force Base Golf facility, named for our beloved and honored colleague from Virginia who died serving his 10th term in Congress. Dan Daniel's unqualified support for the fighting men and women of this nation is legendary.

Dan was the first Chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee, House Armed Services Committee and also served as the Chairman of the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Panel. He was a man who cared deeply about military readiness and quality of life issues, (exchanges, commissaries, child care centers, bowling alleys, libraries, and golf courses).

Dan was an avid golfer; and while this tournament is held in his honor . . . it is for the men and women who wear the uniform of the United States. This year, the tournament, together with Averett University, of Danville, Virginia, and the Professional Golf Association of America (PGA) hosted numerous special heroes from the Walter Reed Army Hospital and the Bethesda Naval Center to a special day of