

(k) Witnesses shall be afforded a reasonable period of time, as determined by the Committee or subcommittee, to prepare for an appearance before an investigative subcommittee or for an adjudicatory hearing and to obtain counsel.

(l) Prior to their testimony, witnesses shall be furnished a printed copy of the Committee's Rules of Procedure and the provisions of the Rules of the House of Representatives applicable to the rights of witnesses.

(m) Witnesses may be accompanied by their own counsel for the purpose of advising them concerning their constitutional rights. The Chair may punish breaches of order and decorum, and of professional responsibility on the part of counsel, by censure and exclusion from the hearings; and the Committee may cite the offender to the House of Representatives for contempt.

(n) Each witness subpoenaed to provide testimony or other evidence shall be provided the same per diem rate as established, authorized, and regulated by the Committee on House Administration for Members, officers and employees of the House, and, as the Chair considers appropriate, actual expenses of travel to or from the place of examination. No compensation shall be authorized for attorney's fees or for a witness' lost earnings. Such per diem may not be paid if a witness had been summoned at the place of examination.

(o) With the approval of the Committee, a witness, upon request, may be provided with a transcript of the witness' own deposition or other testimony taken in executive session, or, with the approval of the Chair and Ranking Minority Member, may be permitted to examine such transcript in the office of the Committee. Any such request shall be in writing and shall include a statement that the witness, and counsel, agree to maintain the confidentiality of all executive session proceedings covered by such transcript.

RULE 27. FRIVOLOUS FILINGS

If a complaint or information offered as a complaint is deemed frivolous by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Committee, the Committee may take such action as it, by an affirmative vote of a majority deems appropriate in the circumstances.

RULE 28. REFERRALS TO FEDERAL OR STATE AUTHORITIES

Referrals made under clause 3(a)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives may be made by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the Committee.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. BERKLEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

50,000 RESIDUAL TROOPS IS UNACCEPTABLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, last Friday President Obama declared that he has "begun the work of ending" our Nation's occupation of Iraq. The American people have waited a long, long time to hear those words. I welcome the President's announcement that he

will keep his promise to bring our troops home. The President also pledged to pursue sustained diplomacy with all nations of the Middle East, including Iran and Syria, and he promised to help resettle the millions of Iraqis who have been displaced by the conflict. I welcome these important steps as well.

But I am deeply troubled by other parts of the administration's withdrawal plan. It calls for an end to our combat mission in 19 months, but up to 50,000 troops will remain in Iraq after that time until the end of 2011, 3 more years from now, in fact. The administration is calling these troops a "transitional force." Well, you can call it what you want, but such a large number of troops can only be viewed by the Iraqi people as an enduring occupation force.

Madam Speaker, leaving 50,000 residual troops is simply unacceptable. So long as the United States is viewed as an occupier, the Iraqi people will not be able to reclaim their full sovereignty and they will not be able to achieve the reconciliation and unification necessary for long-term stability and for democracy in their country.

That's why I believe the best approach is to bring all troops out of Iraq by 2010 and coordinate the removal with investments in reconciliation and reconstruction efforts. The faster we promote unification of the Iraqi people and help them to rebuild their country, the sooner we will be able to bring all of our troops home.

I'm also troubled with the administration's plan for several other reasons. First, although the residual force of 50,000 troops may not have a combat mission, they will still be in harm's way. Over 35,000 American troops, Madam Speaker, have already been killed or wounded in Iraq. We do not need to add to the casualty list.

Second, the President said that there will surely be difficult periods and tactical adjustments during the withdrawal of combat troops. I worry that this means the withdrawal could be delayed. It might even mean that the administration might ultimately seek to renegotiate the Status of Forces Agreement and keep troops in Iraq beyond 2011. That would lead to the worst possible result, an endless occupation of Iraq.

Third, the administration has abandoned its plan to withdraw a brigade a month, with only 10,000 troops withdrawn this year. The great majority of the troops will be withdrawn toward the end of the 19-month period. This means that the troop level will remain essentially the same for well over a year.

Fourth, the administration has not called for the withdrawal of American military contractors in Iraq. They must be withdrawn as well because the Iraqi people see them as part of the occupying force.

And, fifth, keeping a large force in Iraq will continue to drain our Treas-

ury. We cannot continue to pour unnecessary billions of dollars into the occupation of Iraq when we need the money here at home to fight our recession.

Madam Speaker, the President has taken an important step toward developing a plan to leave Iraq, but the American people have waited long enough for our troops and military contractors to come home to their families. I urge the administration to produce a new plan, a plan that will end the occupation once and for all. That means withdrawing our troops and military contractors in 19 months, or even sooner if that could happen, without residual forces and without private contractors left behind.

BORDER WAR WITH DRUG CARTELS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I bring you news from the second front. As reported by Sara Carter, the enemy has more than 100,000 foot soldiers. And I'm not talking about al Qaeda and I'm not talking about the Taliban in Iraq or Afghanistan. I'm talking about the drug cartels south of the border in Mexico.

The Mexican army isn't much larger than 100,000; so the drug cartels have almost as many foot soldiers as the Mexican military. And the Mexican military, we understand, has been infiltrated by the drug cartels. And these drug cartels are violent.

There are two major ones. The Sinaloa cartel, also known as the Federation, and the Zetas cartel, which is known in America as the Gulf cartel. And they both operate down Mexico way.

There are four commodities that are being sold and traded across the U.S./Mexico border. Two commodities go north and two of them go south. Going north, operated by the drug cartels, of course, are drugs. Also, the drug cartels working with the coyotes are bringing people into the United States, both illegally done.

Going south are guns that the drug cartels end up using and, of course, that money, that filthy lucre that funds all of this process.

Right here, Madam Speaker, I have a photograph that was taken this past weekend in Juarez, Mexico, right across the border from El Paso, Texas. It's a population of about four times the size of El Paso. And the Mexican government has tried to do something about it. You see here federal police officers, a convoy, that goes for a mile, going into Juarez to try to control the drug cartels. Here you have peace officers or federal peace officers or military with M-16 rifles.

Madam Speaker, it's a war zone. It's a border war. And I commend the President of the Mexico for trying to

stop the violence on his side of the border. But we are naive to think it's not going to come to the United States because eventually it will. It is a national security issue, Madam Speaker.

Some say that Mexico will be a failed state because of the drug cartels' influence, and it's certainly a tough situation for Mexican nationals that live along the border. I've been on both sides of the border, and I've seen it's a tough situation for people who live there because they live in fear because the drug cartels are fearless and they would do anything to bring those drugs into the United States.

Our own State Department has issued a spring break advisory: Don't go to Mexico. It's not safe to go down there. There are beheadings of local and law enforcement officers. There are kidnappings of not only Mexican nationals but Americans that are being kidnapped now on our side of the border. It's a violent place, Madam Speaker. The United States now says that only Pakistan and Iran are more of a national security concern than Mexico. That's serious, and we should be concerned about it.

We now understand, of course, about the corruption in the Mexican Government. Even though President Calderon is trying to do what he can, you see, those drug cartels pay their criminals a whole lot more money than these federal peace officers get paid, and they switch sides and some of them even work for the federal government in Mexico. So he's put troops on the border. I'm talking about the President of the Mexico. He's put several thousands of troops on the border. Several thousand went into Juarez to try to stop the drug cartels from operating there.

More importantly, Madam Speaker, this is a national security issue for the United States. Both sides of the border are violent, and we need to do everything we can to deal with this problem.

The first thing we need to do is realize it's going on. In last year's election, neither person running for President ever mentioned the border problem. They didn't want to talk about that. It wasn't politically correct.

We have to deal with this issue. We have to help the Border Patrol. We need to change the rules of engagement. The Border Patrol, right now they can't shoot anybody unless they're shot at. They have got to take the first bullet; so they back off.

We need to help the sheriffs. One of the sheriffs down in Texas told me that the drug cartels outgun them, out-finance them and out-man them. They've got better equipment, more money, and more people. A deputy sheriff in South Texas makes about \$12,000 a year. A guy running drugs or guns across the border will make that much in 2 weeks. It's important that we help them.

And, of course, I think that we ought to put our troops on the border. If we put our troops, the National Guard, on the border, people will quit crossing.

Mexico is doing what it can with its military, but we won't do that because we might offend somebody.

Down the road the United States has to deal with the real problem, and that's the tremendous addiction Americans have for illicit drugs. We have to deal with that or this is all going to continue. But until we fix that problem, we need to stop the crime from coming into the United States.

It is time, Madam Speaker, that we realize the truth because the first duty of government is not building roads and bridges and sending money to museums and foreign aid. The first duty of government is to protect the people. That's the people of the United States. And our government needs to get with the program and send the National Guard to the border.

And that's just the way it is.

MARINE CORPS LEAGUE SUPPORT FOR REDESIGNATING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY AS THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY AND MARINE CORPS

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

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, the Navy and Marine Corps have operated as one entity for more than two centuries, and H.R. 24 would enable the name of their department to illustrate this fact.

For the past 7 years, the full House of Representatives has supported this change as part of the National Defense Authorization Act. This year I'm grateful to have the support of Senator PAT ROBERTS, a former Marine who recently introduced a companion bill in the Senate, S. 504. I hope that the Senate will support the House position and join in bringing proper respect to the fighting team of the Navy and Marine Corps. The Marines who are fighting today in Afghanistan and Iraq deserve this recognition.

Madam Speaker, last month I had the privilege of addressing more than 200 Marine Corps veterans and retirees at the Marine Corps League's mid-winter conference. The Marine Corps League has nearly 70,000 members nationwide, and their shared mission is preserving the traditions and promoting the interests of the United States Marine Corps.

As in years past, I spoke to their mid-winter conference about legislation introduced like H.R. 24 to designate the Department of the Navy as the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps. The Marine Corps League has proudly endorsed this legislation and has pledged to work with my office to secure its passage by the House and Senate. Over the years I have been encouraged by the overwhelming support I have received for this change from so many members and veterans of the United States Armed Forces.

I am honored to have the support of Michael Blum, the national executive

director of the Marine Corps League. He's a highly decorated combat marine, who served honorably off the coast of Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. He also served his country in the Philippines, Korea, and Vietnam. It is because of great marines like Michael Blum that I continue to champion this cause for the United States Marine Corps.

Madam Speaker, I want to also thank Senator PAT ROBERTS for joining me on the Senate side in this effort to rename the Department of Navy to the Department of the Navy and Marine Corps.

And before I close, I would like to point out the importance of this. There are many important reasons why this should take place. The history of both the Navy and Marine Corps, the fact that they are one fighting team. But, Madam Speaker, with our Marines and Army and other personnel dying in Afghanistan and Iraq, I want to show you exactly why and how this would be important to a Marine family who lost a loved one fighting for this great Nation.

I have a poster that is actually a letter from the current Secretary of the Navy. It's a condolence letter. Certainly I took the family's name out and the deceased's name. And I will read just one sentence, Madam Speaker: From the Secretary of the Navy, November 18, 2008: "On behalf of the Department of the Navy, please accept my very sincere condolences on the loss of your son Captain Joseph A. Marine." Obviously we substituted that last name out of respect.

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Madam Speaker, if this should become the law of the land, and it is so, so justified that we would have the Department of Navy and Marine Corps as one, one fighting team, this is what the condolence letter would say, Madam Speaker. It would say the Secretary of the Navy and Marine Corps, Washington D.C., November 18 of 2008, and it would say, "Dear Marine Corps Family: On behalf of the Department of Navy and Marine Corps, please accept my very sincere condolences."

Madam Speaker, this is only right. I want to thank the House of Representatives, Congressman and former Chairman of the Armed Forces Committee, DUNCAN HUNTER, and present Chairman IKE SKELTON for always supporting this legislation, and my many colleagues who have done so. This year, with the help of Senator PAT ROBERTS, I think this can become a reality.

With that, Madam Speaker, I ask God to continue to bless our men and women in Afghanistan and Iraq, to bless their families, to bless the families who have given a loved one dying for freedom. And I ask God three times, please, God; please, God; please God, continue to bless America.

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