

we learn about the population's reaction to the long-term presence of foreign troops on their soil? Could Afghanistan degenerate into a civil war along ethnic and religious lines, as happened in Iraq?

Is the Government of Pakistan a viable partner? Are they serious about helping us? Are elements of their military and security services still supporting the Afghan Taliban who are attacking our troops? What if President Zadari is overthrown, as has happened with previous leaders?

Will our allies actually provide the troops the President is requesting? And if they commit 10,000 troops and we have 90,000 troops, will it be seen as an international effort or an American war? If European countries' troop casualties rise sharply next year, will those nations pull out of Afghanistan and leave our troops to bear the future burden?

Should we pay for the war openly and up front? Or should we commit troops and consider how to pay later? How would we pay for such an escalation, including the long-term costs of caring for our wounded veterans? Is the Department of Veterans Affairs hiring enough psychological counselors to treat the number of veterans who need counseling and treatment for posttraumatic stress disorder? Do we even know how to treat PTSD of veterans who have endured two, three or more combat tours? What should we make of the fact that the estimated \$100 billion we'll spend on the war each year is equal to the cost of the health reform bill each year that we are debating now?

Are there alternatives to the President's approach that Congress and the Nation should explore? What is truly the best way to secure our country against future terrorist attacks? Are we putting the right emphasis on a military approach to counterterrorism policy? When extremists can transmit their ideology and recruit terrorists over the Internet and via extremist madrassas and youth groups, are we fighting on the right battlefield in Afghanistan? Are we doing enough at home to prevent future tragedies like the one that occurred at Fort Hood?

Fulfilling our constitutional obligations regarding matters of war and peace requires that Congress get answers to these questions and many more, and help the American people get these answers.

#### THE PLIGHT OF IRANIAN DISSIDENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I join my colleagues as a member of the Subcommittee on the Mideast and South Asia on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Today our committee debated a very important

initiative dealing with Iran sanctions. But it is interesting that we find ourselves in one domino effect after another: Iran, Iraq, and then, by extension, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Today I rise with a plea to this government and to the State Department to save those who are now huddled at Camp Ashraf in Iraq; this government that we have propped up, that we have seen thousands of our treasure lost in Iraq so that we could have a democratic government, so that it would have its own boundaries and its own sovereignty, so it would not be governed and be a puppet of some other country. But yet Iranian dissidents are now huddled, fearful for their lives. In fact, Assistant Secretary of State Jeffrey Feldman said, We're actually more concerned about an Iraqi desire to move Camp Ashraf to someplace else inside Iraq. The expectation is that they would try to forcibly move them to a different location in Iraq and that, too, would lead to bloodshed.

Iraqi authorities under Amnesty International says it must not forcibly relocate 3,400 Iranian opponents and that forced removals of the residents of Camp Ashraf would put them at risk of arbitrary arrest, torture or other forms of ill treatment and unlawful killing.

I've met with Iranians, their families, many of whom are in this camp, a niece, a mother, a brother, and they have no relief. They have no refuge but us. And so it is crucial that we intervene with the present Iraqi Government, seemingly sometimes a puppet of Iran, to not in any way cause the bloodshed and the loss of these dear souls.

All they wanted to do is to be in freedom. Yes, they have disagreement with the present government, but they are refugees in the world order; in the world sense they are refugees, fleeing oppression. And let me tell you where Iraq wants to send these huddled few thousand who simply want to be left alone, who have already been under the eye of the storm, who have seen loved ones lost, bloodshed inside the camp.

And where do they want to send them? To the east of this area is Al Busayyah and to the west is Al Shabaka, the resting place for tribes and migrants who live in the Iraqi desert. Moving sand hills, which in the summer reach temperatures of 158 Fahrenheit under the heat of the sun, prevent growth of plants and creation of waterways and toilets for the migrant tribes. Some of the small and large wild trees which cover a small part of the area are desperate to survive during sandstorms and the relocation of moving sand hills. Many of them have been trapped under the moving sand hills while many others, despite having deep roots, are taken in the sandstorm to locations dozens of kilometers away. This is where the members of Camp Ashraf will be sent—a vast desert of death.

And so it is imperative that this government that we have propped up, that

we have sent our soldiers to die for, don't have the authority to kill 4,000 Iranian dissidents who simply want to live in peace and alone. I hope that we can reach our government to provide safe solace for them, which is one of the reasons that I supported H.R. 2194, the Iran Refined Petroleum Sanctions, which deals with the question of who might attempt to supply refined gasoline to Iran or prevent them with the materials to enhance their oil refineries. This is to make a firm stance against Iran's nuclear proliferation, but it is also a stance against its human rights abuses and its penetration in countries around its area, including Iraq, where they cannot seem to be independent enough, that is, the Iraqi Government, that they would do the bidding of the Iranian despotic government and try to move these innocent persons—women, men and children—to a place where they will surely die.

I am grateful in the language that was submitted in this bill, H.R. 2194, that my language was kept that had to do with concerns of human rights in Iran and that this was put in the findings. It is important that we acknowledge that throughout 2009, the Government of Iran has persistently violated the rights of its citizens. Again I believe it is important for the United States to support the dissidents inside Iran who continuously charge the government with an irregular and illegal election. I hope that we can move forward in saving these lives.

Madam Speaker, as I close on Pakistan and Afghanistan, Pakistan is an ally to the United States in trying to bring peace to Afghanistan.

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

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

#### FRESHMEN REPUBLICAN HOUR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Wyoming (Mrs. LUMMIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. LUMMIS. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

This evening's Speaker is a fellow freshman and it is an honor to serve with you, Madam Speaker. Thank you for your time this evening as we proceed into Hanukkah and the Christmas season.

We are as freshman Republicans going to spend some time with you reviewing the episodes of the last 12 months: Where are we in terms of America's fiscal house? Where have we been in the last 12 months? And, more importantly, where are we going as we prepare for the new year 2010?