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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of New York).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 19, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRIS COLLINS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, this week is the 10th anniversary of the unnecessary war in Iraq. I urge my fellow Members and the American public to watch MSNBC's documentary, "Hubris: The Selling of the Iraq War," on Friday night of this week at 9 o'clock. The documentary sheds light on the manipulated intelligence that got us into Iraq.

Unfortunately, we have not learned from all we lost in Iraq, as President

Obama has also committed us to an additional 10 years in Afghanistan thanks to a strategic security agreement he made without Congress voting on it or even debating it.

This weekend I read two articles that really spoke to the corruption happening in Afghanistan. One was an AP article I read in my hometown paper titled: "U.S. Helicopter Crashes in Afghanistan Killing One." And the other is from The New York Times titled: "Afghans Protest U.S. Special Forces: Complaints about Night Raids Sparked Cause for Withdrawal."

I will quote from the first article:

The crashes come as United States officials are grappling with tough talk from President Hamid Karzai whose recent anti-American rhetoric has complicated relations at a time when international troops are withdrawing from the war.

The article continues saying:

Karzai started the week by accusing the United States and the Taliban of being in collusion on two deadly suicide bombings last weekend in an effort to create instability and give security forces an excuse to stay.

Karzai is one person we cannot trust, and yet we are funding him \$8 billion a month. The New York Times article states that Karzai issued a statement that "referred to U.S. forces in Afghanistan as 'infidels,'" echoing language used by the Taliban.

Mr. Speaker, I just do not understand why more Members of the House are not more concerned about President Obama's 10-year security agreement to keep our troops in Afghanistan until 2024—10 more years after 2014—2024. It makes absolutely no sense. We are financially broke as a Nation.

I am currently in the process of finding out exactly how much money it is going to cost the American taxpayer to keep our troops in this corrupt country for another decade past 2014. Whether the cost is \$1 or \$1 trillion is too much.

Congresswoman ROSA DELAURO and I have introduced H.R. 125, the Congress-

sional Oversight of Afghanistan Agreement Act of 2013, to make sure that the President does not bypass Congress as he continues to do, but gives us a chance to debate any security agreement that will keep our troops in Afghanistan past 2014.

Mr. Speaker, it is our job as Representatives to make sure the voices of the American people are being heard, and it is only fair that we have a debate in Congress on how long our country's future involvement with Afghanistan will continue.

Mr. Speaker, as always, I bring down a poster that shows the cost of war. In this case, you can see these marines, Mr. Speaker, carrying a coffin, a flag-draped coffin. How many more coffins have to be carried by the soldiers and the marines and the airmen and the Navy of this country when the American people demand that Congress pull our troops out of Afghanistan? It is too long to be there until 2014; it is too long to be there until 2024.

May God bless our men and women in uniform, and God please wake up Congress to bring our troops home.

10-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE IRAQ WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, although I rise to honor the 10th anniversary of the Iraq war, what I really want to do today is ask: Why? Ten years ago, I stood on this floor and said we were entering a war under false pretenses. No weapons of mass destruction later, I have never been so sad as to be right.

We took out Saddam Hussein with as much forethought as we gave to arming him just a few years earlier. We scooped him out of office and thought a new democracy would suddenly flower in its place.

☐ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., ☐ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Last week, Robert Dreyfuss wrote an article in *The Nation* that I would like to enter into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. He explains that the CIA is currently training Syrian rebels, some of whom have Sunni fundamentalist ties, at the same time that it is fighting Sunni rebels in Iraq. Recently, dozens of Syrian soldiers fled to Iraq, only to be killed by Iraqi Sunnis. He asked the question:

When will the United States learn that it doesn't know enough about the Middle East to go charging in there, seemingly without a clue about what it all means?

So here we are: 10 years of neoconservative hawks preaching that we can franchise American democracy and freedom; 10 years of quicksand diplomacy; 10 years of wrong answers, and we still don't know the question.

What has been the cost of all of this? And I don't mean financially. Because, yes, we've spent probably a trillion or more on this war, or will. Yes, as we speak, we are cutting food assistance to kids in this country and funding for R&D that would drive our economy. But we can't appropriate a sum of money to fix the real cost of Iraq. We can't pay back the lives of 4,486 American men and women who have died there, or the roughly 2,000 broken soldiers who came home and took their own lives.

The wounded—physically and mentally. The soldiers who didn't know how not to be a soldier. The families living with a hole in their hearts, and the families living with someone they no longer recognize. Ten years of young men and women leaving their families, living in hell, and coming home to unemployment and to homelessness. To a country that has forgotten it's at war at all. To a country that seems to think a yellow ribbon magnet on their bumper is the only kind of support that our troops need.

And the cost in Iraq? Untold deaths. Let me rephrase that: unknown deaths. We can only guess at the destruction that we have left in our wake: 115,000 Iraqis? 600,000? You can find a number. What was the long-term impact of that on their environment, water, and health. What happens when someone lives in constant fear of becoming collateral damage?

Today, Iraq is a sad shadow of a society that once boasted the best infrastructure in the region. Instability and violence fester on this very day, and now it teeters on the brink of an inevitable civil war.

This is the legacy of our last 10 years, and I still don't understand why. I hope this anniversary will remind us that a whole new generation of veterans are waiting to help reintegrate into civilian life. I believe it's time to elevate our level of commitment to these veterans.

I am introducing a bill to create a commission on veterans care to investigate what we as a society can do to help our men and women come home. I hope it will remind us that no lives, re-

gardless of nationality, should be taken lightly. I hope it will remind us as to why the next time. And I hope it won't take another war to get that answer.

THE CIA TAKES OPPOSITE SIDES IN SYRIA AND IRAQ

Mr. McDERMOTT. What, really, could be more bizarre than this: as the United States ramps up its aid to Syria's ragtag rebels, whose backbone is comprised of radical Islamists and Sunni fundamentalists, some with ties to Al Qaeda, the CIA is busily engaged in combat inside Iraq with the very same radical Islamists and Sunni fundamentalists, some with ties to Al Qaeda.

Yep, that's right.

We're backing the same guys in Syria that we're fighting in Iraq.

Of course, we shouldn't be involved in Iraq in any way, shape or form, but try telling that to the CIA. According to the *Wall Street Journal*:

The Central Intelligence Agency is ramping up support to elite Iraqi antiterrorism units to better fight al Qaeda affiliates, amid alarm in Washington about spillover from the civil war in neighboring Syria, according to US officials.

The stepped-up mission expands a covert US presence on the edges of the two-year-old Syrian conflict, at a time of American concerns about the growing power of extremists in the Syrian rebellion.

The *Journal* notes that this isn't an accident. It was the result of a carefully thought-out White House decision:

In a series of secret decisions from 2011 to late 2012, the White House directed the CIA to provide support to Iraq's Counterterrorism Service, or CTS, a force that reports directly to Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, officials said.

The CIA has since ramped up its work with the CTS—taking control of a mission long run by the U.S. military, according to administration and defense officials. For years, U.S. special-operations forces worked with CTS against al Qaeda in Iraq. But the military's role has dwindled since U.S. troops pulled out of the country at the end of 2011.

The paradox, obviously, is that Maliki, the guy we're helping in Iraq, is an ally of Iran's and is sympathetic to President Assad of Syria. That's because were the Sunni-led rebels in Syria to seize Damascus and topple Assad, they'd turn their wrath next door against the Shiite-led Maliki regime, and funnel weapons and fighters to support the Sunni-led rebels in Iraq.

That's not stopping the United States, though, from boosting the fortunes of the Syrian rebels by funneling aid and support to them and coordinating the flow of weapons from Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey. Meanwhile, as *The New York Times* has been reporting for a while, the same CIA that is trying to squash the Sunni rebels in Iraq is actually training Sunni rebels in a secret program in Jordan, to fight in Syria.

Oddly enough, the rest of the media hasn't picked up on the *Times* reports on the CIA training efforts in Jordan, and the *Times* itself hasn't elaborated. How many gangsters are in the CIA training in Jordan? What are they doing?

It all comes together in the recent reports that dozens of Syrian soldiers, loyal to Assad, who fled into Iraq recently, were then massacred by Iraqi Sunni crazies.

We blundered, bungling, into Iraq in 2003 without knowing really a damn thing about the country we invaded. When will the United States learn that it doesn't know enough about the Middle East to go charging in there with guns, seemingly without a clue about what it all means?

□ 1010

A CALL FOR A BALANCED BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Montana (Mr. DAINES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAINES. Mr. Speaker, I arrived here in Washington, D.C., to serve the people of Montana and my country with a bit of a different resume than many folks have here in Washington. You see, I've spent the past 28 years in the private sector working to grow businesses, having to balance a budget and create good jobs.

I loved my job in the private sector. But when I looked at Washington and the path our economy and our country was on, I knew that things needed to change. So I ran for Congress because the challenges facing our Nation were far too great to just sit back on the sidelines.

As Montana's small businesses know, you can't spend more than you take in. Year after year of Federal deficits with no end in sight doesn't lead to prosperity, doesn't lead to growth—it leads to financial ruin.

I'm also the father of four great kids—two in college and two in high school. They know that as a family, we have to plan ahead for the future. We need to create a budget and then live within our means. These are the same principles that my parents passed down to me. These are the values that Montana families live by each and every day.

Those values are exemplified in Montana's own State legislature, where the only constitutionally required duty is passing a balanced budget. In fact, when our legislature in Montana adjourns in just a little over a month, they will have given Montana a balanced budget, just like they did last year and the year before and the year before that. It seems simple: live within your means and spend no more than you take in. But it's not so easy here in Washington.

Right now we're presented with two very different visions for our country, two visions that will lead to two very different outcomes for this country.