We need bold action to bring our troops home.

Last month this House had the opportunity to take such bold action. We had a bill before us that would have fully funded a safe withdrawal of our troops and defense contractors starting within 90 days. This bill also would have provided for the social and economic reconstruction of Iraq so that the Iraqi people could look to their future with hope. And it would have supported diplomatic efforts and multinational efforts to restore security in Iraq. That plan of action made sense.

But instead of taking bold action, the Congress took the same old action and gave the President every single thing he wanted in the supplemental spending bill. There is no timetable for withdrawal, and the President doesn't even have to hold the Iraqi government accountable for failing to meet the benchmarks in the bill.

Mr. Speaker, every third grader in America is being held accountable for meeting his or her reading and math benchmarks under No Child Left Behind. We are demanding more from our 8-year-olds than the Iraqi government.

Mr. Speaker, the American people didn't send us here to go all wobbly in the knees and weak in the stomach when the moment of truth arrived. They sent us here to stand up to the President to end this war, and that is what we must do.

So let us begin to restore the good name of the Congress by overturning the original authority for the war. Congress didn't authorize this President to use U.S. troops to police a civil war, which is what Iraq has come to.

From here on, there must be one benchmark and one benchmark only. The orderly, fully funded, and fully protected withdrawal of our troops. They have done their duty. Now it is our time to do our duty for them.

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

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

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

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

IN COMMEMORATION OF D-DAY AND HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES: PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT'S PRAYER

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

Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, for those who question the role of religious expression and religious faith in our national history and in our public square, I rise tonight to read a nationally broadcast prayer that was read on D–Day, June 6, 1944, by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as our troops landed at Normandy. I am reading this prayer in the House tonight to both commemorate this event and to honor the men and women of our Armed Forces.

''Almighty God, our sons, pride of our Nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our republic, our religion, and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity.

''Lead them straight and true. Give strength to their arms, stoutness to their hearts, steadfastness in their faith.

''They will need Thy blessings. Their road will be long and hard. For the enemy is strong. He may hurl back our forces. Success may not come with rushing speed, but we shall return again and again; and we know that by Thy grace and by the righteousness of our cause, our sons will triumph.

''They will be sore tried, by night and by day, without rest until the victory is won. The darkness will be rent by noise and flame. Men's souls will be shaken with the violences of war.

''For these men are lately drawn from the ways of peace. They fight not for the lust of conquest. They fight to end conquest. They fight to liberate. They fight to let justice arise and tolerance and good will among all Thy people. They yearn but for the end of battle, for their return to the haven of home.

□ 1900

''Some will never return. Embrace these, Father, and receive them, Thy heroic servants, into Thy kingdom.

''And for us at home, fathers, mothers, children, wives, sisters and brothers of brave men overseas, whose thoughts and prayers are ever with them, help us, Almighty God, to rededicate ourselves in renewed faith in Thee in this hour of great sacrifice.

''Many people have urged that I call the Nation into a single day of special prayer. But because the road is long and the desire is great, I ask that our people devote themselves in a continuance of prayer. As we rise to each new day, and again when each day is spent, let words of prayer be on our lips, invoking Thy help to our efforts.

''Give us strength, too, strength in our daily tasks, to redouble the contributions we make in the physical and the material support of our Armed Forces.

''And let our hearts be stout, to wait out the long travail, to bear sorrows that may come, to impart our courage unto our sons wheresoever they may be.

''And, O Lord, give us faith. Give us faith in thee; faith in our sons, faith in each other, faith in our united crusade. Let not the keenness of our spirit ever be dulled. Let not the impacts of temporary events, of temporal matters of but fleeting moment, let not these deter us in our unconquerable purpose.

''With Thy blessing, we shall prevail over the unholy forces of our enemy. Help us to conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogancies. Lead us to the saving of our country, and with our sister nations into a world unity that will spell a sure peace, a peace invulnerable to the schemings of unworthy men, and a peace that will let all of men live in freedom, reaping the just rewards of their honest toil.

''Thy will be done, Almighty God. Amen.''

HAROLD ''HAL'' HART

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

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and passing of a great man and a gentleman, Harold ''Hal'' Hart. He was a teacher, a father figure, a mentor and friend to thousands across Oregon and thousands scattered indeed around the world whose lives go on as a testament to the goodness that Hal instilled in others.

A resident of Portland, Oregon, for most of his life, Mr. Hart lived a life that others could only dream of. Married to his high school sweetheart, Sally, and blessed with five daughters and eleven grandchildren, he never missed an opportunity to see the good in others. Nor did he miss an opportunity to bring out the best in others.

An attorney with an unabashed respect for the law, Mr. Hart worked tirelessly to mend the shattered lives of young people. He was seen by judges as the ''go to'' lawyer when a child was in need of help, working pro bono to aid countless adoptions, custody cases and child support cases. When asked why he cared so much and gave so much in this cause, he would say that everyone has the right to a happy childhood.

Outside of his professional life, Mr. Hart continued to give of himself. The founder and coach of Lincoln High School's Constitution program that won 13 consecutive Oregon State championships, including three national championships, and eight top 10 national finishes, he not only pioneered law-related education programs in the Portland metropolitan area, indeed, in that endeavor he was the Johnny Wooden of his field. One of his proudest moments, it was said, was when his students were given the opportunity to present their winning remarks to the U.S. Supreme Court, Members of the Senate, and to then Vice President Al Gore. Hundreds of his students have moved into the legal, teaching, government and service professions.

A noted softball coach who established girls' softball at Ainsworth Grade School and Lincoln High School, Hal Hart was coaching a women's team up to the last week of his life. He was

also a lifelong musician who supported himself through high school, college and law school playing clarinet and saxophone. As an adult, he played countless fundraisers with his jazz combo and the Providence Hospital Stage Band.

While Mr. Hart quietly went about helping others, never asking for anything in return except that those that he helped be good people, he was recognized by countless organizations for the works that he did. The effect of Hal Hart on his community and on the lives of those who knew him cannot be overstated. He was loved by his teams and beneficiaries, respected by his adversaries, and he will be universally missed.

While we have lost this great Oregonian, we find solace that so many others have been spurred on by his example. Throughout his years of teaching, he kept framed on his desk a few lines from Ralph Waldo Emerson, and they sum up his philosophy as follows:

To laugh often and love much; to win the respect of intelligent persons and the affection of children; to earn the approbation of honest citizens and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to give of oneself; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social position; to have played and laughed with enthusiasm and sung with exaltation; to know that one life has breathed easier because you have lived, this is to have succeeded.

Mr. Speaker, Hal Hart was a success by any measure and in so many different ways.

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

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

UNANTICIPATED GOOD RESULTS (WHEN WE LEAVE)

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, good intentions frequently lead to unintended bad consequences. Tough choices, doing what is right, often leads to unanticipated good results.

The growing demand by the American people for us to leave Iraq prompts the naysayers to predict disaster in the Middle East if we do. Of course, these merchants of fear are the same ones who predicted invading and occupying Iraq would be a slam-dunk operation, that we would be welcomed as liberators and oil revenues would pay the bills with minimum loss of American lives. All this hyperbole, while ignoring the precise warnings by our intelligence community of the great difficulties that would lie ahead.

The chaos that this pre-emptive undeclared war has created in Iraq has allowed the al Qaeda to establish a foothold in Iraq and the strategic interests of Iran to be served. The unintended consequences have been numerous. A well-intentioned but flawed policy that ignored credible warnings of how things could go awry has produced conditions that have led to a war dominated by procrastination without victory or resolution in sight.

Those who want a total military victory, which no one has yet defined, don't have the troops, the money, the equipment, or the support of a large majority of the American people to do so. Those in Congress who have heard the cry of the electorate to end the war refuse to do so out of fear the demagogues will challenge their patriotism and their support for the troops. So nothing happens except more of the same. The result is continued stalemate with the current policy and the daily sacrifice of American lives.

This wait-and-see attitude and a promised reassessment of events in Iraq late this summer strongly motivates the insurgents to accelerate the killing of Americans to influence the coming decision in 3 months. In contrast, a clear decision to leave would prompt a wait-and-see attitude, a de facto cease fire, in anticipation of our leaving; a perfect time for Iraqi factions to hold their fire on each and on our troops and just possibly start talking with each other.

Most Americans do not anticipate a military victory in Iraq, yet the Washington politicians remain frozen in their unwillingness to change our policy there, fearful of the dire predictions that conditions can only get worse if they leave. They refuse to admit the conditions of foreign occupation is the key ingredient that unleashed the civil war now raging in Iraq and serves as a recruiting device for al Qaeda. It is time for a change in American foreign policy.

But what if those who were so wrong in their predictions as to the outcome of their invasion are equally wrong about what might happen if we leave? Unanticipated good results may well occur. There is room for optimism. The naysayers have been wrong before and are probably going to be wrong again.

The truth is, no one knows exactly what would happen if we leave. Civil strife may last for a while longer, but one thing is certain, no longer will American lives be lost. That in itself would be a blessing and reason enough for doing so.

After we left Vietnam under dire circumstances, chaos continued, but no more American lives were lost. But, subsequently, we and the Vietnamese have achieved in peace what could not be achieved in war. We now are friends. We trade with each other, and we invest in Vietnam. The result proves the sound advice of the Founders: Trade in friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none. Example and persuasion is far superior to force of arms for promoting America's goodness.

It is claimed that we cannot leave until a new military faction is trained to fill the vacuum. But the question is, will there really be a vacuum, or are we talking about our proxy army being trained well enough to continue to do battle with the very strong militias already in place? Lack of training for the local militias has never been a problem for them.

The real problem with our plans to train a faction of Iraqis to carry out our plans for the Middle East is that the majority of Iraqis object and the army trainees are not as motivated as are the members of the various militias. The Kurds have a militia capable of maintaining order in their region. Sadr has a huge militia that is anxious to restore order and have us gone. The Badr brigade is trained to defend its interests. And the Sunnis are armed and determined. Our presence only serves to stir the pot by our troops being a target of nearly all the groups who are positioning themselves for our anticipated departure.

After we leave, just maybe the Shiites and the Sunnis will develop an alliance based on nationalism. They already talk of this possibility, and it could include the Badr brigade and the Sadr militias. A coalition like this could serve as an efficient deterrent to al Qaeda and Iran since they all share this goal.

Al Qaeda and Iran were not influential in Iraq before the invasion and would not be welcomed after we leave. There is cooperation now, motivated by the shared desire of the Sunnis and the Shiites to oppose our occupation. There's definitely a potential that the Iraqis may do much better in dealing with their own problems than anyone can imagine once we leave. Already there are developing coalitions of Sunni and Shiites in the Iraqi parliament that seek this resolve.

It is claimed by some that leaving the Middle East would not serve the interests of Israel. Israel with its nuclear arsenal is quite capable of defending itself under all circumstances. Its dependency on us frequently prevents it from taking action that otherwise may be in its best interests because we do not approve of such actions. Israel's overtures to Syria and other neighbors would not be road blocked by U.S. policy if we left the Middle East. With us gone Israel would have greater motivation to talk with other Arab countries as they did with Egypt. It just may be that Israel would accept the overtures made by the Arab League for a comprehensive peace. The Arab League might be an acceptable alternative to the U.S. influencing policy in the region.

We're told we can't let this happen or we'll lose control of the oil and gasoline prices will soar—exactly what has happened with our invasion. And if the neo-conservatives have their way there will be an attack on Iran. If that occurs, then watch what happens to the price of oil.

No matter who ends up controlling the oil they will always have a need for western markets. Instead of oil prices soaring with our leaving, production may go up and prices fall A change in our foreign policy is overdue.