

To: House Republican Members

From: House Majority Leader John A. Boehner

Date: June 13, 2006

Re: Confidential Messaging Memo – Floor Debate on Iraq and the Global War on Terror

This week, the House of Representatives will engage in a debate about the war in Iraq, the Global War on Terror and our efforts to strengthen our national security in a post-9/11 world.

The past week has brought news of several important, positive developments in Iraq and the Global War on Terror:

- U.S. military forces eliminated the terrorist Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, al-Qaeda's top commander in Iraq and a cold-blooded killer.
- The Iraqi government named new interior, defense and security ministers as part of the new government's continued progress.
- Just this morning, President George W. Bush traveled to Baghdad to meet the newly appointed Prime Minister of Iraq, Nouri al-Maliki and to discuss our growing partnership with the new democratic ally.

Clearly, these positive developments are the result of steadfast support of both our military and diplomatic efforts in Iraq and across the globe. We should not refrain from touting such progress

During this debate, our Republican Conference should be focused on delivering these key points:

The Importance of Our Actions

It is imperative during this debate that we re-examine the conditions that required the United States to take military action in Afghanistan and Iraq in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001.

The attacks we witnessed that day serve as a reminder of the dangers we face as a nation in a post-9/11 world. We can no longer expect oceans between us and our enemies to keep us safe. The plotting and planning taking place in terror camps protected by rogue regimes could no longer go unchecked or unchallenged. In a post-9/11 world, we could no longer allow despots and dictators like the Taliban and Saddam Hussein to ignore international sanctions and resolutions passed by the United Nations Security Council.

So, during this debate we must make clear to the American people that the United States had to take action in the best interests of the security of our nation and the world community. As Republicans who supported military action against Saddam Hussein and terrorists around the globe, the United States had to show our resolve as the world's premier defender of freedom and liberty *before* such ideals were preyed upon, rather than *after* standing witness to their demise at the hands of our enemies.

As President John F. Kennedy once stated so eloquently:

“The cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose, and that is the path of surrender, or submission.”

A Portrait of Contrasts

This debate in the House of Representatives gives our Republican Conference the opportunity to present the American people our case for strong national security policies whose purpose is to protect the nation against another attack on our own soil.

Similarly, we must conduct this debate as a portrait of contrasts between Republicans and Democrats with regard to one of the most important political issues of our era. Articulating and advocating our core principles will allow the American public to witness Members of Congress debate a fundamental question facing America's leaders:

In a post-9/11 world, do we confront dangerous regimes and the threat of terrorism with strength and resolve, or do we instead abandon our efforts against these threats in the hopes that they will just fade away on their own?

Republicans believe victory in Iraq will be an important blow to terrorism and the threat it poses around the world. Democrats, on the other hand, are prone to waver endlessly about the use of force to protect American ideals. Capitol Hill Democrats' only specific policy proposals are to concede defeat on the battlefield and instead, merely manage the threat of terrorism and the danger it poses.

These are troubling policies to embrace in a post-9/11 world. During this debate, we need to clarify just how wrong the Democrats' weak approach is and just how dangerous their implementation would be to both the short-term and long-term national security interests of the United States.

Resolve Will Triumph Over Retreat

As a result of our efforts during this debate, Americans will recognize that on the issue of national security, they have a clear choice between a Republican Party aware of the stakes and dedicated to victory, versus a Democrat Party without a coherent national security policy that sheepishly dismisses the challenges America faces in a post- 9/11 world.

Let there be no doubt that America and its allies in the war in Iraq and the Global War on Terrorism face difficult challenges. The American people are understandably concerned about our mission in a post-Saddam Iraq. There have been many tough days since Iraq's liberation and transition to a sovereign democracy.

Democrats are all too eager to seize upon the challenges we face as their rationale or motivation for retreat. As Republicans, we understand the diplomatic and national security hazards of such a move. We must echo the American public's understanding of just how great the stakes are in Iraq and our long-term efforts to win the War on Terrorism.

Building democracies in a part of the world that has known nothing but tyranny and despotism is a difficult task. But achieving victory there and gaining democratic allies in the region will be the best gift of security we can give to future generations of Americans.
