

ethic, and above all her commitment to a strong national defense built upon the confidence of our men and women in uniform.

One of my fondest memories with Congresswoman FOWLER is of a trip we took together in 1998 to visit our troops in Europe and the Middle East. I witnessed firsthand her willingness to listen to military personnel and act on their concerns. Congressional Quarterly has called TILLIE FOWLER a polite but persistent advocate. I would say they hit the nail right on the head with that description.

Her no-nonsense approach to policy is the reason she has enjoyed so much success over the past 8 years. When TILLIE FOWLER first ran for Congress, she told her constituents if they would join with her, together we will change Congress. Eight years later she has. She has been on the front lines of the battle to strengthen our military. She called on the President and Congress to address the fact that some of our military families qualify for food stamps due to low pay. In a speech earlier this year, Congresswoman FOWLER said the citizens who step forward and are willing to put their lives on the line for their country, for your security and for my security, are waiting in food lines and depending on charity to feed their families. How did this happen? How did we get from "the few, the proud," to "the few and the demoralized"?

TILLIE FOWLER has worked to strengthen the morale of our military. She began her battle before the Republicans had the majority, but she was no less fervent in her advocacy. This year we have seen the fruits of many of her labors. We have improved military readiness by approving a \$20 billion increase in funding to rebuild America's hollowed-out military. The hard work, leadership and dedication of Congresswoman TILLIE FOWLER made important changes possible. She is a woman who embodies the kind of leadership it takes to effect change. She kept her promises to the people of Florida. She not only changed Congress, she helped change America for the better by carrying out her duties with dignity and integrity.

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana 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.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GOSS 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 California (Mr. HUNTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HUNTER 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 Indiana (Mr. BUYER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BUYER 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 Utah (Mr. HANSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HANSEN 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 Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. COBURN 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 Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS

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, before I start my special order this evening, I too want to add very brief appreciation and respect for remarks for Congresswoman TILLIE FOWLER, for her service and for her leadership, particularly her leadership in issues where women were not traditionally known to serve. I worked with her, albeit recently, as a member of the Women's Caucus, which works in a bipartisan manner on many, many issues. She is certainly a great leader, very much appreciated, and I want to thank her for her service.

Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today and this evening rather reluctantly, because some might say that any position on this issue dealing with the Mideast conflict would pose the concern and possibility of being politically incorrect, but I am so moved by the violence and the seeming inability

to find common ground for an opportunity to continue the peace negotiations that I would like to pay tribute to a group of individuals in my community.

This article was noted in the Houston Chronicle on Monday, October 23, 2000, and the headline reads, "Faith Unite in Prayer for Mideast Peace." It seems that when nothing else works, it might be just a simple step for Americans to begin to unite in prayer in order to seek peace in the Mideast.

I remember as a teenager and young adult watching the Vietnam conflict and seeing on a regular basis the body bags coming out of that war. They are somewhat of the same feeling, though the numbers certainly have not reached that proportion. As I watched the controversy in the Mideast, this picture reflects the controversy of those running away in fear, but it does not reflect in totality the death, the loss of lives of dear children, the extreme violence, the extreme divisiveness, the fear, the hatred and seemingly the inability to solve this problem.

I believe it is important for both men who are at the center of this crisis to lead, to lead without fear and to demand an end to violence, and so I would like to share that my community, an extended community that is, determined that it was important to pray this past Sunday. The article states, as the bloodshed continued in the Middle East on Sunday, eleven children in the Woodlands lighted a single white candle and prayed for peace. This gathering was one of Muslims and Jews and Christians of various denominations, who gathered to remind us that if nothing else works that we might pray to end the violence on the other side of the world.

A feeling of helplessness, a feeling of hopelessness has descended upon us as we see the tragedy of so many children dying. Rabbi James Brant of Congregation Beth Shalom told the Woodlands audience, but Brant suggested that the prayers of different faiths united could lead to an end to the killing and to the hatred and misunderstandings that have caused this tragedy. Its hopeful message was received well.

It seems now that one would wonder that this blurred confusion really cannot even point us to how it started, but the great heinousness of it all is the fact that people are no longer at the table of reconciliation and peace. There can be no resolve, no happiness, no outright ability to live with the quality of life that all of us would welcome if there is not peace in the Middle East between these two entities.

No one will be happy. No child will live without fear. No one will worship without fear. So I believe that it is important to pay tribute to these two congregations that saw fit to have this at the South Montgomery County

Community Center, sponsored by Congregation Beth Shalom of the Woodlands, the Islamic Society of the Woodlands and Faith Together, a fellowship of religious communities.

It can be done. Religions can come together and seek peace. For nearly two hours those in attendance read from prayers, asked for peace, children of different faiths, and poems written by Palestinian and Israeli children were read.

Madam Speaker, I would simply say we need to do as the people of Houston have begun to do, to simply pray and unite around the idea that they must come back to the table of reconciliation and peace.

TRIBUTE TO THE HONORABLE TILLIE K. FOWLER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Madam Speaker, I wanted to come here this evening to pay tribute to our colleague who will be leaving us at the end of this 106th Congress, TILLIE FOWLER. Before I do that, I know that we have our colleague who will also be leaving us, JOHN PORTER from the great State of Illinois. Although I could not be here for his special order, in that I had a commitment, a debate in my County of Montgomery, I did send JOHN a letter. But I do want him to know his friendship is so very special to all of us, and the work that he has done for the National Institutes of Health, which is located in my district, is extraordinary. He will forever be remembered for that.

Madam Speaker, as we talk about TILLIE FOWLER, who will be leaving us, she certainly has been a proven leader for her constituents, a fellow Member of this Congress, and, for me, a very dear friend.

Congresswoman FOWLER is known in the Fourth District of Florida as an advocate for the military. Her position on the Committee on Armed Services has allowed her to keep a close watch on defense funding. She has pushed for legislation for our brave military personnel that improves salary, gains benefits for families and ensures that they are the best trained in the world.

She has done a lot of traveling to many of our bases to also make sure that there is not sex discrimination that takes place, and I applaud her for the singular fashion in which she handled that challenge.

Beginning with her appointment as Deputy Majority Whip, Congresswoman FOWLER has risen in the ranks of the leadership and become the voice of reason in this increasingly partisan Congress. As a member of the Republican Steering Committee, she has been a force in seeing that leadership's agenda goes through Congress, is deliberated, and perhaps get the amendments as appropriate so it comes out as something

we can all approve. The beginning of the 106th Congress saw her election as Vice Chair, making her the highest ranking woman in the majority party.

In addition, Congresswoman FOWLER was chosen as the Chairwoman of the House Page Board for her dedication to the outstanding experience and service that our page program provides, and also the fact that she believes in young people and making sure that they have experience, firsthand experience, here in Congress, which she sees, as we all do, as a very special institution.

Congresswoman FOWLER leaves the U.S. House of Representatives as a leader, as a proven legislator and as a friend to all of us. Her voice and her expertise are going to be missed. I applaud her accomplishments and wish her well in her future pursuits.

In reflecting upon her, she has always been fair, she has always been bipartisan, she has always been a coalition builder, and she knows how to wield a velvet glove to get things done.

Shakespeare's words perhaps aptly reflect TILLIE FOWLER: "Those about her, from her, shall learn the perfect ways of honor."

We again wish her well as she pursues whatever challenges and experiences she seeks, and hope that she will stay in touch with us.

THE STUPIDITY ISSUE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, we have reached the home stretch in the Year 2000 elections, and I think it is safe to say that one of the areas that is most critical to our voters deals with the environment. I hope that in the remaining two weeks that we are dealing with this election that it will be an opportunity for people to focus in on what the candidates stand for, what they would do if they were elected to our highest honor.

I think it is important to focus in on the environment, because it is one of the areas where people do not really have to guess about the differences between the two candidates. Somehow, in a number of areas dealing with this election, we appear to have sort of given a free ride on occasion dealing with the substance of these campaigns.

I found of great interest this morning the column that appeared in this morning's Washington Post by Michael Kinsley entitled "The Stupidity Issue." Kinsley is the slate editor who writes a weekly column for the Post, and he has done one of the best jobs I have seen in capturing the problems of Governor Bush and the representations that he has made in the course of his campaign.

Being delicate, either the Governor is having problems telling the truth, or his capacity to understand some of

these issues is truly at question. It is illustrated, and Mr. Kinsley goes on at some length to talk about the way that Governor Bush has talked about his partial privatization of the Social Security program is going to be paid out of surpluses in that program.

Now, since both candidates have pledged to protect the surplus, including Governor Bush, it is quite clear that the Governor is going to have to either renege on his promise that there will be no reduction in benefits for the people for whom these surpluses have been dedicated to be able to provide it, or they are not going to be able to provide the transition to cover the costs of privatization. There is no two ways about it.

Mr. Kinsley goes on at some length in the article. He had three others that I thought were really rather noteworthy, and I quote.

"When he," Governor Bush, "repeatedly attacks his opponent for partisanship, does he get the joke? When Governor Bush blames the absence of a Federal Patients' Bill of Rights law on a lot of bickering in Washington, D.C., has he noticed that the bickering consists of his own party, which controls Congress, blocking the legislation? When he summarizes 'it is kind of like a political issue as opposed to a people issue,' does he mean to suggest anything in particular? Perhaps that politicians, when acting politically, ignore the wishes of the people? How does he figure, if at all?"

Mr. Kinsley goes on further about Governor Bush declaring in the debate, "I don't want to use food as a diplomatic weapon from this point forward. We shouldn't be using food. It hurts the farmers. It is not the right thing to do. When just a few days later he," Governor Bush, "criticized legislation weakening the trade embargo on Cuba, which covers food, along with everything else, has he rethought his philosophy on the issue, or was there nothing to rethink?"

"Finally, when he," Governor Bush, "says that local control of schools is vital and criticizes his opponent for wanting to federalize education, and promises as president to impose various requirements on schools, when he complains that Federal money comes with too many strings, and then turns around and calls for after school funds to be used for character education, and then endorses a Federal law forbidding state lawsuits against teachers and so on, does he have a path through this maze of contradictions? When he," Governor Bush, "promises a Federal school voucher program, and then deflects criticism by saying vouchers are up to states, is he being dense, or diabolically clever?"

Unfortunately, we have seen this sort of approach by Governor Bush when we are dealing with issues in the Pacific Northwest, dealing with things like the