

opportunity together to ask questions. Some of those, as my colleague knows, were in closed session because we discussed security information.

I want to say to my friend that we were disappointed that we did not do that this morning. Both of our caucuses are partisan; they represent parties. We were disappointed that this briefing was given on a partisan basis. We do not think that is in the best interest of the country; we do not think it is in the best interest of this Congress.

Mr. Leader, I would urge you to, on behalf of your leadership, join with us in assuring that, A, we have a number of bipartisan briefings from the principals involved as to what is going on. Our public is concerned, my colleague's people, my people, very concerned about what is happening to our troops, very concerned about our success in Iraq. I say that, as my friend knows, as one of those who supported the effort, supported the funding of this effort. But all of us have to be concerned about the situation.

So I would ask the leader if he might comment on the fact that we have historically had under Democratic leadership, Republican leadership, bipartisan briefings. I would hope that we could continue to have such. As I say, I think it is in the best interest of the country.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding. I can appreciate his disappointment, but I need to point out to the gentleman that this is not limited to Republicans. The gentleman has already said that Dr. Rice would gladly brief his caucus. Just as the President meets with bipartisan leadership, he has meetings with bipartisan Members of Congress, he also has meetings with Republicans. And he has on occasion had meetings with Democrats. This is not limiting or closing out anybody. It is just in this particular case we invited the NSC director to speak to the Republican Conference.

We have had and have notified your leadership that bipartisan briefings will be held by the NSC director as bipartisan meetings, as the gentleman has pointed out, have been held by the Secretary of Defense, the Chiefs of Staff, the CIA, and many, many others. It is just an added briefing that we felt we wanted to have. And certainly, the NSC director made sure that the same courtesy was paid to the Democratic Caucus, and she is more than willing to come before the Democratic Caucus.

No one is trying to be shut out, but there are times when our caucus wants to talk to this administration and we ought to be allowed to do that as long as we get briefings and open briefings in a bipartisan way as well.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that comment. I understand his observation. The gentleman will remember one of the most wrenching caucuses in which I participated was a bipartisan caucus after we tragically lost those 18 members of the

service when the Black Hawk went down in Mogadisho, Somalia. And as you may recall, it was extraordinary. I think we must have had 350 of our Members in HC-5 in which Secretary Christopher and Secretary Aspin came and reported to us on the situation on the ground.

I understand what my colleague is saying, and he certainly has that right; but I think that the fact that we can meet together to get information together so that we are all getting the same information and hear one another's questions, hear one another's concerns, which reflect the concerns of the 280 million Americans, many of whom have young people overseas, and some, as he knows, because he has met with them as I have that are not so young in the National Guard and Reserve, we think it would be useful to do that in a bipartisan way together so that we could all hear the same information and therefore be able to work together to assist in solving what is a very difficult problem, ensuring to the greatest extent we can the safety of our people and the success of our mission.

But I thank the gentleman for his observations.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, APRIL 26, 2004, AND HOUR OF MEETING ON TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 2004

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today it adjourn to meet at noon on Monday, April 26, 2004; and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 27, for morning hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE HONORABLE NANCY PELOSI, DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
OFFICE OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER,
April 21, 2004.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to section 637(d)(1) of the HELP Commission Act (P.L. 108-199), I hereby appoint Mr. Lynn C. Fritz of California, Mr. C. Payne Lucas of Washington, D.C. and Mr. Jeffery D. Sachs of New York, to the Helping To Enhance The Livelihood Of People (HELP) Around The Globe Commission.

Best regards,

NANCY PELOSI.

SENATOR KERRY HAS THE SUPPORT OF VETERANS

(Mr. SMITH of Washington asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, throughout this Presidential campaign, we have heard from the Republicans repeatedly that they will not question Senator KERRY's patriotism. We all figured that was an empty promise, but it has been proven true in the well of this House this morning.

Several Republican Members came up and directly called into question Senator KERRY's patriotism based on his objections to the Vietnam War. And beyond that, we have even heard Republicans out on the airwaves questioning his service in Vietnam.

I do feel that there are many more important issues in this campaign that are legitimate to talk about. Senator KERRY has unbelievable support from veterans in this country. All 50 States have veterans for Kerry organizations that are strong and hard-working to support the Senator and, perhaps most tellingly, are the people who served with him in Vietnam. All of those people are supporting Senator KERRY regardless of their political stripes. Many are taking large chunks of personal time to go around and be supportive of him.

His record in Vietnam and his record afterwards should not be questioned, and it is being questioned by the Republicans. I think Senator MCCAIN said it best some time ago when asked about this and asked about Senator KERRY's protest against the war. He said that Senator KERRY's service in Vietnam fighting for our country more than gave him the right to protest the war if he thought it was wrong.

Senator KERRY honorably served this country in Vietnam, volunteered to serve, volunteered for combat duty, and he honorably upheld the traditions of this country when he came home and pursued his personal convictions to oppose the war. We should recognize that service.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURNS). The gentleman will refrain

from making improper references to individual Senators.

AMERICANS NEED JOBS

(Mr. RYAN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, another week has gone by in the United States Congress, and nothing has been done with unemployment benefits for unemployed workers throughout this country; 2 million to 3 million workers still do not have work. Thousands in the State of Ohio are losing their unemployment benefits every single day. And we sit here and we want to take pot shots at different Members of this body, different members of the Senate, candidates for President.

The real issues today are people do not have any place to go to find work. Those people that did have work have lost their jobs, and they are looking for unemployment benefits to feed their families. They want to send their kids to school. We have no manufacturing program in this country. We are bleeding jobs every day.

We better get our act together in the Congress. I think it is time for a change. I think we need to focus on what is most important here and what our job is here, and that is to take care of the American people.

CALLING SENATOR KERRY "HANOI JOHN" IS SHAMEFUL

(Mr. STRICKLAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STRICKLAND. Mr. Speaker, something happened on the floor of the House this morning that in my judgment is shameful, shameful, because the record of an American hero who shed his blood, who earned three Purple Hearts, a Silver Star, and a Bronze Medal was referred to on the floor of this House as "Hanoi John." Is that what we have come to in this House?

I would remind those listening that when the President of the United States found some reason not to show up for his responsibilities and when Vice President CHENEY said he had other responsibilities during the Vietnam War, it was Senator JOHN KERRY who took the bullets for this country and for us and our freedoms.

Shame on those, shame on those who would denigrate the record of a true American hero.

REPUBLICANS ARE UNWILLING TO MEET THE COMMITMENT TO VETERANS

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, by attacking JOHN KERRY's war record this

morning, the Republicans would revive the controversy of the war in Vietnam, yet they are unwilling to meet the commitment to the veterans of that war who are still waiting for the benefits they were promised. They will attack veterans of the war, and they will not help the veterans of the war in the way we promised when they went to war.

They have not yet repealed the disabled veterans tax. They are supporting \$1 billion less than we need to provide health care. The President is proposing to double the prescription drug cost for our veterans. And yet they have the temerity to attack a distinguished veteran of that war, one who has also voted to meet the commitments to the veterans of that war and the veterans who are coming home today. But they are not willing to pay that bill, they are just willing to attack.

NO BOUNDARIES

(Mr. BELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BELL. Mr. Speaker, are there no boundaries?

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Earlier today several Republicans came to the floor of this House of Representatives to attack the military record of Senator JOHN KERRY, to attack the military record of an individual whose medals alone would take almost all of my allotted time to name, to attack the military record of a man who risked his very young life for his country in Vietnam and was wounded on three different occasions, a man who risked his life to save others; and then when we he came home to the United States, decided he was not finished saving lives. Instead, he decided to stand with thousands of other Americans and question a war that had clearly lost direction.

JOHN KERRY's appearance before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations back then was a turning point in the debate on Vietnam, and he showed the same level of patriotism by taking that stand here at home as he did with his act of bravery in Vietnam. To attack him in this manner is simply shameful. But I guess in this day and age of politics, there are no boundaries, and regretfully we should not be surprised.

KERRY, HIGHLY DECORATED VETERAN

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, December 1968, JOHN KERRY gets wounded in the arm. He is awarded the Purple Heart. February 1969, KERRY is wounded again, shrapnel in the left thigh. He

is awarded a second Purple Heart. February 28, 1969, pursues a Viet Cong fighter, kills him and retrieves a rocket launcher, awarded a Silver Star. March 1969, a mine detonates the boat, wounding him in the right arm. He is awarded a third Purple Heart. He is also awarded a Bronze Star for saving a crew member.

As my colleagues have pointed out, Republicans came to this floor today to attack JOHN KERRY's military record. Shame on them. JOHN KERRY honors our men and our women in uniform. He honors the principles upon which this great Nation was founded. There are those who serve in the Republican side of this aisle who would do well to take heed and give honor to someone who served so well this great country of ours.

KERRY, A DECORATED WAR HERO

(Ms. SCHAKOWSKY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I was actually baffled to hear that some of my colleagues came to the floor this morning to criticize JOHN KERRY in his capacity as an enlisted soldier and war veteran. JOHN KERRY, the highly decorated hero, recipient of the Silver Star, Bronze Star, three Purple Hearts, Combat Action Ribbon, Navy Presidential Unit Citation, Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal and the Vietnam Campaign Medal, that JOHN KERRY was blasted and accused of being unpatriotic for being critical of the Commander-in-Chief during the Vietnam War.

I am baffled that my colleagues would even choose to go there because our current Commander-in-Chief has, what can I say, a less than heroic military career, and the majority of the Americans are more than a little concerned about a President who has sent our soldiers into battle without an exit strategy, without a post-Saddam plan and without body armor.

DANGEROUS DUTY FOR KERRY

(Mr. PALLONE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, JOHN KERRY volunteered for service in the Navy during the Vietnam War where he served as skipper on a swift boat that patrolled the Mekong Delta. Navy Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, who devised Operation Sea Lord, calculated in his biography that swift boat sailors had a 75 percent chance of being killed or wounded during a typical war. Under Sea Lord, swift boat duty was one of the most dangerous duties you could draw in the entire U.S. Navy. KERRY was wounded three times in Vietnam, received three Purple Hearts for those injuries. He was also awarded a Silver Star and a Bronze Star for his actions in combat.