

gentleman from Missouri would be that I think that the votes will be there on our side for, I hear a figure of very close to \$300 billion being mentioned. I think on this side of the aisle in talking to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR), we will be obviously substantially influenced by what the gentleman from Minnesota recommends as our ranking member but we would be very, I think, supportive and we could forge a significant majority to send that bill down to the President and have the President consider it.

As the gentleman knows, every \$1 billion that we have in that bill creates 42,000 jobs here in America. We believe that bill is very important. We would have hoped it would have passed last year, but I want to tell my friend that he and I have the similar responsibilities of trying to count votes and I think we will have the overwhelming majority of our people for a bill. If we just split the difference between the Senate and the House, which is essentially what is being talked about, I think we would support it on this side of the aisle. I hope the gentleman's Members would support it on his side of the aisle, we send it to the President and obviously the executive, a coequal but separate branch of government, would have to make its determination as to what it wanted to do. I do not know if that is a possibility but I think we could work together in a bipartisan fashion to get that done.

I yield to my friend if he wants to make a comment.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank my friend for yielding, and I share the gentleman's sense that an overwhelming number of Members of the House would like to get this work done, get this bill done this year. Of course this would not be the place for the gentleman and I to try to negotiate a number, but I think the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) are both working hard to achieve a result that gets that work going and allows the States and others affected by this to begin the contracting process and even begin some of the work. I am very hopeful at this point that we will get that number agreed to, get our friends on the other side of this building moving forward with us and get agreement from the White House as they need to ultimately sign whatever bill we pass.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, I think the gentleman has put his finger on the impasse, and that is the White House. I think frankly the Congress can reach agreement on this and I think we ought to. I urge the majority reaching consensus in the Congress and, as a separate and coequal branch of government, sending our judgment down to the White House. Obviously the White House then has its full prerogatives to exercise its judgment. But we have waited far too long on that, I believe.

The last question or the last inquiry I would make of the whip is there has

been a lot of talk, of course, about the middle-class tax cuts. I think both sides of the aisle feel very strongly that we want to make sure the middle-class tax cuts continue. In particular, we have focused on the child tax credit, as the gentleman knows. There has been a lot of discussion back and forth. That has been held up for a very long period of time, particularly extension to those families making up to \$26,000. There are some 200,000 service families, as the gentleman knows, that are not qualifying for the child tax credit at this point in time.

Can the gentleman tell us whether or not he has any optimism about that conference report coming back to us anytime soon?

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I would say in response to that previous comment that I am not sure that our friends on the other side of this building are as united yet as perhaps our Members are who represent the House side on the transportation number. We want to move forward there.

Chairman THOMAS tells me that he sees good work happening on the family tax package that the gentleman mentioned, the marriage penalty relief, the \$1,000 child credit, the 10 percent tax bracket, that new tax bracket we put in place. We think it is very likely that we could have that extension on the floor next week.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

ADJOURNMENT TO FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2004, AND ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2004 TO TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2004

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. on Friday, September 17, 2004; and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 21, for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. BLUNT. 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 Missouri?

There was no objection.

AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO DECLARE A RECESS ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2004, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING IN JOINT MEETING HIS EXCELLENCY AYAD ALLAWI, INTERIM PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it may be in order at any time on Thursday, September 23, 2004, for the Speaker to declare a recess, subject to the call of the Chair, for the purpose of receiving in joint meeting His Excellency Ayad Allawi, Interim Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq.

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

There was no objection.

HOURLY MEETING ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2004

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Wednesday, September 22, 2004, it adjourn to meet at 9 a.m. on Thursday, September 23.

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

There was no objection.

CONGRESS BESTS LOBBYISTS ONCE AGAIN IN CHARITY BASKETBALL GAME

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

Mr. QUINN. Mr. Speaker, I am here to report to the House and to the general public the results of last evening's sixth annual benefit basketball game between Members of Congress and the lobbying community here in Washington. I am here also to report that the outcome was a 58-41 victory for the Members of Congress.

I would like to mention the players, our bipartisan team of JEFF FLAKE, VITO FOSSELLA, HAROLD FORD, KENNY HULSHOF, DEVIN NUNES, TODD PLATTS, TIM RYAN, JOHN SHIMKUS, and TODD TIAHRT.

In the past 6 years I am also happy to report that the House Members have a 5-1 record after last night's game, but to report after 6 years that the game has raised over \$150,000 for charities here in Washington, D.C., particularly the Hortons Kids charity that services inner city young children.

Special thanks also, Mr. Speaker, to Mr. Paul Miller and others at the American League of Lobbyists, who worked tirelessly during the year to put the game together. As we go forward in the next year, hopefully we can do bigger and better things.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair

will postpone further proceedings today on any motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

EXPRESSING THANKS OF THE HOUSE TO AMERICAN POW/MIAS ON NATIONAL POW/MIA RECOGNITION DAY

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 771) expressing the thanks of the House of Representatives and the Nation for the contributions to freedom made by American POW/MIAs on National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 771

Whereas from World War II to the present, more than 88,000 members of the United States Armed Forces remain unaccounted for;

Whereas nearly 50,000 former American prisoners of war are currently living in the United States;

Whereas the United States owes a significant debt of gratitude for the sacrifice and hardships endured by former prisoners of war and missing personnel;

Whereas former prisoners of war continue to serve and inspire our nation;

Whereas National POW/MIA Recognition Day is one of the six days specified by law as days on which the POW/MIA flag is to be flown over specified Federal facilities and national cemeteries, post offices, and military installations; and

Whereas tens of thousands of American families have loved ones who are still listed as unaccounted for and daily endure tremendous hardship and emotional suffering: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes that National POW/MIA Recognition Day is one of the six days specified by law (pursuant to section 902 of title 36, United States Code) as a day on which the POW/MIA flag is to be flown over specified Federal facilities and national cemeteries, military installations, and post offices;

(2) extends the gratitude of the House of Representatives and the Nation to those who have served their nation in captivity to hostile forces as prisoners of war;

(3) recognizes and honors the more than 88,000 members of the United States Armed Forces who remain unaccounted for and their families;

(4) recognizes the untiring efforts of national POW/MIA organizations to ensuring that America never forgets the contribution of the Nation's prisoners of war and unaccounted for military personnel; and

(5) calls on all Americans to recognize National POW/MIA Recognition Day with appropriate remembrances, ceremonies, and activities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. SNYDER) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members

may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H. Res. 771, a resolution that recognizes the sacrifices made by prisoners of war and missing in action on National POW/MIA Recognition Day. The resolution is very straightforward and my colleague from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) and I are seeking to give proper acknowledgment to National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

Today, nearly 50,000 former American prisoners of war are living in the United States. These are family members, these are friends and neighbors, men and women who fought for our freedom and often suffered tremendous hardship during their detention. Today, we send a message from this Capitol that their contribution to the great story of America's freedom is not forgotten.

Since World War II, more than 88,000 members of the Armed Forces remain unaccounted for. Today we offer our sympathies to the families of these soldiers, sailors, airmen and women and Marines missing in action. Their family members are our family members, they are our friends and our neighbors, and they wait patiently for their loved ones to be recovered and returned home for a proper burial. It is hard for those of us who have not suffered or endured this type of hardship to imagine how these families deal with their grief. Again today, we pause to say that on behalf of the Congress and the American people, thank you. Thank you very much.

This legislation also recognizes that National POW/MIA Recognition Day is one of the six days specified by law on which the POW/MIA flag is to be flown over specified Federal facilities and national cemeteries. Flying this flag is a visible reminder of the sacrifices of our POWs and MIAs.

As many of my colleagues know, the recovery of MIAs has long been a passion of mine. In April of last year, I left the U.S. for Vietnam in the hopes of finding the remains of American soldiers still missing after nearly 30 years in the Vietnam War. Specifically, my hope was to recover the remains of Captain Arnold Holm of Waterford, Connecticut, whose helicopter was shot down over Vietnam in 1972. I met his widow several years ago and learned that for 30 years she had not had a funeral ceremony or a memorial service because she held out the hope that her husband's remains would be found and that he would be brought back home to Waterford, Connecticut.

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This trip was the first time that I had been back to Vietnam in almost 30

years, having served there in the U.S. Army in the 1960s and in the CIA in the 1970s.

I spent 2 days with American and Vietnamese officers, with the joint POW/MIA Accounting Command in the jungles near Hue, Vietnam. We recovered watches, boots, and other assorted items. But we were unable to recover the crash site or the remains of Captain Holm. This was an emotional mission for me, for my family, for the family of Captain Holm, and for his friends. And this mission continues. We will continue to search for the remains of our missing.

Several families in Connecticut have been blessed with the recovery of the remains of their loved ones, and this would include Robert Bush of Hamden; Legrande Cole of Danbury; Crosley Fitton of Hartford; Irwin Lerner of Stratford; Richard Rich of Stamford; John Brooks Sherman of Darien; Larry Thorne of Norwalk; and from my own district, Peter McArthur Cleary of Colchester, Connecticut, whose remains were identified February of 2002.

Every day that the POW/MIA flag flies over the Rotunda of this Capitol it is an important reminder to Members, staff, and visitors of the sacrifice made by American prisoners of war and the missing in action. However, on this important day, that flag also flies over the dome of our Capitol, an important reminder to the world that today we pause to commemorate National POW/MIA Recognition Day.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in support of H.R. 771 and commend the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SIMMONS) for presenting this bill to the House today.

The intent of this legislation, the intent of the country, is to honor the 50,000 former POWs and the 88,000 still missing in action, U.S. service people that have served this country so well and so honorably.

Yesterday was National POW/MIA Recognition Day, in which once a year we formally remember these very important people. It is such a tremendous honor to serve in the Congress and to represent Arkansas, but one of the great honors is the opportunity to meet such wonderful and great people. A person I recently met from Saline County, Bill McGinley, is the only person I had ever met who was presented the Purple Heart posthumously, and I got to talk to him about that experience.

How does that happen? On January 29, 1944, he was in a bomber and was flying over Belgium. In fact, the actor Jimmy Stewart was the squadron commander. Their plane was shot up. He and another man had to bail out, and he spent the next 9 months hiding out, helped by a family in Belgium that hid him. His family was first notified that he was missing, and he has this wonderful scrapbook that he shows me, the