

government. He devoted his energies to bringing the story to his readers without any fear or favor. He had no interest in "spin".

Mr. Speaker, over the years I have had the privilege of reading Matt Pommer's work, and interacting with him during my service as a state legislator. He is a professional in every sense of the word.

On a lighter note, Matt and I enjoyed the opportunity to work together as "extras" in the film "Chain Reaction" with Keanu Reeves and Morgan Freeman. We were told that Director Andrew Davis preferred to fill the role of "extras" with people who actually worked in the job they were portraying. When he looked for a real journalist, there is little wonder that he found Matt Pommer.

Thank you Matt, for the years of service you have provided to the citizens of the State of Wisconsin and the readers of The Capital Times.

HONORING THE SACRIFICES OF MILITARY FAMILIES

HON. ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Ms. SCHWARTZ of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, in the coming weeks, American families will come together to celebrate the holidays and the start of a new year. Together, they will reflect on the events of 2005, and prepare for the challenges of the year ahead.

Sadly, for many families, this season will be a difficult one, and I rise today to pay tribute to those American families whose lives have been personally impacted by ongoing military operations around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I offer my deepest gratitude to the families of the men and women who are currently serving our nation overseas. I add my prayers for their safety and well being. And, I extend my humblest sympathies to the families of those brave soldiers who have made the ultimate sacrifice on behalf of our country.

In particular, I would like to take this opportunity to honor four American heroes and their families who reside in the Thirteenth Congressional District of Pennsylvania.

Major Jeffrey Toczykowski, age 30, was killed during combat operations in Al Anbar Province, Iraq, on November 3, 2005. He was a dedicated soldier who had asked loved ones to remember that, if he was killed in action, that he died doing something he believed in and that he had no regrets. My thoughts and prayers are with his family in Ambler, Jenkintown, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Sergeant Francis Straub, Jr., age 24, and Specialist John Kulick, age 35, were killed when a mine detonated and their unit received small arms fire while investigating a rocket-propelled grenade incident in Bayji, Iraq on August 9, 2005. Both of these men answered the call to serve—Sergeant Straub had dreams of becoming a Philadelphia Police Officer and Specialist Kulick was the most senior member of the Whitpain Fire Department. My thoughts and prayers are with their families, who live in Philadelphia, Jenkintown, and Dillsburg, Pennsylvania.

Specialist Kurt Krout, age 43, was killed when an improvised explosive device detonated near his military vehicle in Anaconda, Iraq on August 6, 2005. He was a committed soldier who joined the Marines at age 17. He

had reenlisted as a member of the Pennsylvania National Guard in 1995, and volunteered for deployment to Iraq in June 2004. My thoughts and prayers are with his family in Lansdale and Spinnerstown, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Speaker, during this holiday season, I know the dedication of these soldiers will be remembered by their family, friends, loved ones, and the nation. And, I ask my colleagues, and all Americans, to join me in honoring their service and sacrifice for our nation.

VICTORY IN IRAQ RESOLUTION

SPEECH OF

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H. Res. 612 and to congratulate parliamentary election.

The citizens of Iraq who desire peace and a prosperous future have demonstrated their commitment to those goals by participating in three national Iraqi elections. Reports indicate that Iraqis turned out in unprecedented numbers to vote in yesterday's election. I congratulate them for braving the instability and violence on the streets of Iraq in order to cast their votes.

Today, instead of offering a resolution to express our congratulations and hopes for a democratic Iraq, the Republican leadership has chosen to play politics, offering a divisive resolution. H. Res. 612 does nothing more than reiterate President Bush's failed strategy for Iraq. While all of us support democracy in Iraq, the Republican leadership has rolled over democratic procedures on the House floor, denying Democrats an opportunity to amend this resolution.

In addition, rather than laying out an exit strategy, as was done by Congressman JACK MURTHA almost one month ago, the Republican leadership continues to ignore the growing chaos and violence facing our soldiers. The Majority refuses to even debate this critical issue. Staying the course is a recipe for disaster that endangers our troops and the Iraqi people.

The withdrawal of American troops should begin now. The new Iraqi government has been formed, and it must take responsibility for forging its own path toward stability and democracy. In polls, the Iraqi people have been clear: they do not believe coalition troops are providing stability and security, and they believe it is time for our troops to come home. The U.S. should provide diplomatic and financial support to an international effort to help the Iraqi government provide security and consolidate democracy.

I have been contacted by many of my constituents who understand that H. Res. 612 is nothing more than a political stunt. The Republican Congress is no longer fooling the American people. In overwhelming numbers, they think it was a mistake to go to war in Iraq; they think the Bush Administration mishandled the war; and they don't support this war. Our troops remain far from home, endangered by a growing insurgency. Now that Iraq has a democratically-elected government, it is time for our troops to come home in order to spend the holidays with the ones they love.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mrs. McCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, because of a family matter, I missed several recent votes. I would like the RECORD to reflect how I would have voted on those votes. Rollcall No. 639—Yea; Rollcall No. 640—Yea; Rollcall No. 641—Yea; Rollcall No. 642—Yea; Rollcall No. 643—Yea; Rollcall No. 644—Nay; Rollcall No. 645—No; Rollcall No. 646—Nay; Rollcall No. 647—Yea; Rollcall No. 648—Yea; Rollcall No. 649—Yea; Rollcall No. 650—Yea; Rollcall No. 651—Yea; Rollcall No. 652—Yea; Rollcall No. 653—No; Rollcall No. 654—Yea; Rollcall No. 655—Yes; Rollcall No. 656—No; Rollcall No. 657—No; Rollcall No. 658—No; Rollcall No. 659—No; Rollcall No. 660—Yes; Rollcall No. 661—No; Rollcall No. 662—Yea; Rollcall No. 663—Yea; Rollcall No. 664—Yea.

VICTORY IN IRAQ RESOLUTION

SPEECH OF

HON. BART STUPAK

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I regret that I must oppose H. Res. 612 because of my great respect and admiration for our men and women serving in Iraq. Resolution 612 endorses an open-ended commitment of U.S. troops in Iraq and embodies President Bush's latest attempt to justify the U.S. involvement in Iraq. The President and his Congressional allies claim that the Iraqi parliamentary elections were a "crucial victory" in establishing a democracy in Iraq. Thus, through this election, is "victory" in Iraq inevitable?

America has heard this type of reasoning before from President Johnson during the Vietnam War. In 1967, as the South Vietnamese freely elected their government, President Johnson then declared the Vietnamese election had established a democracy supported by the Vietnamese people. After this Vietnamese election, 38,000 more Americans died in Southeast Asia. Since May 1, 2003 when President Bush declared our "Mission Accomplished" in Iraq, approximately 2000 more U.S. troops have died in Iraq.

Under this resolution, the call to bring our troops home hinges on a "victory". What is the victory that the President and his Congressional supporters envision for the U.S. in Iraq? This is not a war like our grandparents fought. There is no country to hoist the white flag of surrender. There is no recognized political entity which the U.S. can sign a peace agreement with. Our brave military men and women are trying to build a democracy in a country that views our U.S. troops as occupiers and almost one half of the Iraqi people believe it is justifiable to kill U.S. troops! The U.S. military has been used to prop up a government being threatened by a guerrilla insurgency. With this Iraqi insurgency, I cannot envision an event, a goal or a date where the resolution's "victory" in Iraq can indisputably be achieved.

Every Member of the United States House of Representatives would have supported this

resolution if it did not contain paragraph six. Paragraph six of this resolution is a political attack to embarrass Congressman John Murtha who has called for a strategic redeployment of our troops from Iraq.

The Democratic House leadership offered an identical resolution without paragraph six but the Republican majority party rejected it. While the United States is attempting to establish a democracy in Iraq, but the majority party in the United States House of Representatives uses its power to stifle, embarrass, and silence voices of dissent to the War in Iraq.

The Republicans have no interest in presenting a unified show of support for our troops and in congratulating the Iraqis on their parliamentary elections. The Republicans are more interested in using our troops in Iraq and their families as a political issue than expressing the U.S. House of Representatives' sincere admiration and gratitude.

In closing, I would like to provide my statement on yesterday's parliamentary elections in Iraq:

I applaud the government of Iraq for this milestone election today. The people of Iraq are able to participate in a democracy by electing the leaders who will help shape their young government and institute laws to protect them. This is a giant step toward full accountability.

Election day in Iraq serves as much more than an opportunity to cast a vote to elect leaders; it serves as an opportunity for the people of Iraq to accept responsibility for governing Iraq. This responsibility extends beyond voting. Yesterday's vote marks the time for Iraqis to be accountable for themselves and their developing country.

The hopes and dreams of the Iraqi people will not be realized if the insurgency continues to disrupt Iraq's national unity. The overwhelming majority of the Iraqis are in tacit support of this insurgency as they view our U.S. troops as "occupiers" of their country. Nearly one half of the Iraqi citizens believe it is justifiable to kill U.S. troops. Since May of 2004, when President Bush declared "Mission Accomplished" in Iraq, approximately 2,000 more U.S. troops have died and more than \$150 billion in tax dollars have been spent to counter act this Iraqi insurgency.

I believe that in order for the principles of democracy to take hold in Iraq, the target of the insurgency, our U.S. troops, must be removed.

I believe the President must develop a plan to bring our troops home. I believe America should demand from the Bush Administration an Iraqi Accountability Plan that will set clear and measurable goals to entrust the country of Iraq to her people. The United States has provided the Iraqis with an opportunity for freedom, democracy and self-governance but, only the Iraqi people can set forth these principles in their land. Iraq's parliamentary election, which marks the birth of a promising democracy and the implementation of an Iraqi Accountability Plan, will enable its people to embrace and nurture its own government.

May God bless our troops and this great country.

THE ARMY'S FREEDOM TEAM SALUTE PROGRAM RECOGNIZES THE VALUE OF SERVICE TO NATION

HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mr. BUYER. Mr. Speaker, for 230 years, soldier citizens of the United States Army have answered the call to duty as guardians and defenders of America's Freedoms. Millions of these United States Army veterans selflessly served this nation. Their legacy of duty lives and grows ever more glorious in their continuing support of the United States Army mission and their service to country.

The United States Army recognizes and appreciates the sacrifices these courageous men and women have made in answering their nation's call to duty by choosing a life of service and fidelity to the values of their service. The people of the United States of America also recognize that they have incurred a great debt of gratitude to their soldier citizens, and to their spouses and families who support them as they serve us in the defense of freedom. America owes thanks to the employers who support the soldier citizens among their workforce, and to the veterans who stand by those who now wear the uniform.

General Peter J. Schoomaker, the Army's Chief of Staff, has said, "Soldiers and their families demonstrate the value of teamwork at home and in the field, ensuring that our Army is truly an Army of One."

The United States Army has created a program called Freedom Team Salute to recognize the essential contribution of these supportive spouses, families, employers, and veterans. Any soldier may nominate a spouse, family member, or employer for Freedom Team Salute recognition. This recognition includes a special Army lapel pin and decal, and a letter and certificate from the Chief of Staff and the Secretary of the Army. Veterans of Army service may also register for Freedom Team Salute recognition at the program's website: www.freedomteamsalute.army.mil.

I commend General Schoomaker and Secretary of the Army Francis J. Harvey for their leadership of our Army and for the Freedom Team Salute program. I ask all Americans to continue their support of our men and women in uniform as they defend freedom, and I commend to them the use of this excellent program as means of expressing their own gratitude.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on December 13th, I was serving on a jury in Colorado and so was not able to be present for several votes.

Had I been present, I would have voted as follows: Rollcall No. 623, H. Res. 487—Supporting the goals and ideals of Korean American Day—"yes." Rollcall No. 624, S. 1047—Presidential \$1 Coin Act of 2005—"yes." Roll-

call No. 625, H.R. 3422—Small Public Housing Authority Act—"yes."

THOMASVILLE TOPS IN SOCCER, TOO

HON. HOWARD COBLE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, Thomasville High School, located in the Sixth District of North Carolina, is known as a football powerhouse in our state. The Bulldogs have captured two straight high school football championships and six overall. In fact, the school is renowned for its entire athletic program. Last year, the school won three state titles, two for men's and women's basketball and one for the football team. Now it can add another state championship trophy in its overflowing display case—the men's soccer team won the school's first-ever title in that sport. On November 19, 2005, the Bulldogs soccer team defeated Manteo 4-3 in sudden-death overtime at the SAS Soccer complex in Cary, North Carolina.

"It's just an unbelievable feeling," third-year head coach Robert Yates told The Thomasville Times. "Just to make the playoffs, and then to get to the state championship game, and then to win it like that in sudden-death overtime, it's hard to describe." The player who was a team leader all year—Walter Cruz—came through again in the sudden-death overtime period to score the game-winning goal. Cruz, who earned the Most Valuable Player award for the game, told The Thomasville Times, "I can't explain the things that I feel. We made history in Thomasville High School soccer."

Joining Cruz in the history-making march to the title were teammates Rogaciano Augilar, Danny Alvarado, Adam Beasley, Eder Calva, Miguel Chavez, Adrian Hidalgo, Ji Soo Noh, Joel Ramirez, Roman Ramos, Jose Rios, Edberg Rodriguez, Yefrey Salazar, Victor Sanchez, Daniel Sandoval, Eloi Solis, Joel Torres, Zach Upton, Lazaro Vazquez, Marco Villa, and Rich Weaver.

Congratulations to head coach Yates, his assistant coach Martin Stanich and community volunteer George Solis, athletic director Woody Huneycutt, principal Dirk Gurley, the faculty, staff, students, parents, and fans of Thomasville High School on the first-ever soccer championship in school history. Thomasville has proved that in addition to football and basketball, the Bulldogs are tops in soccer, too.

BORDER PROTECTION, ANTITERRORISM, AND ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION CONTROL ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JUANITA MILLENDER-McDONALD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 16, 2005

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4437) to amend