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Senate

The Senate was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, December 12, 2005, at 2 p.m.

House of Representatives

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2005

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord of history and ever-present Master of destiny, Your providential care of Your people and eternal wisdom guide each Member of this Chamber in his or her personal responsibility as a leader in governing this Nation.

Yet You have brought together at this moment in history this diverse assembly as representative of Your free people to address with courage and deliberation the joys and the sorrows of the American people.

By Your gracious will, empower them to protect and defend the good times claimed by the American dream, and help them to deal with the shock, the terror, and the revelation that sudden attack and surprises cause Your people.

Lord, if Your people do not learn from the past, You will allow us to repeat some mistakes because You always lead us to lasting truth, now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. HEFLEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

I would like to remind the House that today is December 7, a day, as announced from this podium, that would live in infamy, because this country was not ready at that time to protect and defend its borders and defend its people.

I hope we have learned from the lessons of the past.

Mr. HEFLEY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

REMEMBERING PEARL HARBOR

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, around breakfast time on a stunning Sunday sunrise, Luke Trahin, a 22-year-old sailor from Texas, noticed large formations of aircraft darkening the glistening sky. He kept watching it until suddenly bombs from the Japanese invaders started dropping on Pearl Harbor Naval Base. It was December 7, 1941.

After the smoke cleared that morning of madness, the American battleships, the ships of the line were destroyed. 188 planes were destroyed. 2,471 Americans, servicemen and civilians were killed by this unwarranted terror from the skies.

Luke and his buddies in Hawaii quickly got organized and for 2 days, waited for the Japanese landing, but it did not occur. Luke Trahin stayed in the Navy a total of 6 years until World

War II was won by his greatest generation.

He is now 86 years of age and he lives in southeast Texas. He still wears his Navy blues and medals on Memorial Day, Veterans Day, and, of course, the 4th of July. He is a proud Pearl Harbor survivor.

To my friend, Luke Trahin, and all those who served the cause of freedom, and the 400,000 Americans who died in World War II, December 7, as FDR said, is a day that will and has lived in infamy. That's just the way it is.

AMERICA'S PRESENCE IN IRAQ

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, the President has been touring the country giving speeches to justify his Iraq war policy to a series of controlled audiences. But as the American public nevertheless lends an eager ear, it hears a muddled message.

Today it is the economy. But the fact is that in Iraq, the unemployment rate is over 50 percent. Oil, water, electricity is worse than pre-war levels.

Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA) has offered an alternative vision, immediate redeployment as soon as practicable, but with a military force over the horizon. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, that our bottom line needs to be, what policy is going to enable our once inexhaustible military to regain its strength and to

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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make this country, in fact, more secure?

And the reality is that our unjustified invasion and occupation of Iraq has, in fact, destabilized that country and has weakened our military and caused our country to be far less safe from terrorism.

FREEDOM IS NOT FREE

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, we heeded the call to action during World War II as the greatest generation battled oppression and led the effort to help Europe rebuild. Today, we are faced with a similar mission in Iraq, one that will help focus momentum in the region toward the causes of freedom and democracy.

Our men and women serving in Iraq are part of another great generation of patriots committed to a mission that became clear on September 11, 2001, another day that will live in infamy in our Nation's history.

Freedom is not free, but it is always worth fighting for. As John F. Kennedy once stated, the cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose is the path of surrender or submission.

We have the mission for victory in Iraq. Let us honor that pledge.

GENOCIDE IN DARFUR

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the words of our Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) this morning when he talked about a day that would live in infamy, referencing December 7.

I appreciate that we have an opportunity now to do something to make sure that this is not a day that lives in infamy, because today another tragic chapter is being written in Darfur in the horrifying history of genocide, which people on both sides of the aisle have condemned.

Indeed, the violence appears to be getting worse and 500 people a day are dying. Somehow, the money for the United States for the peacekeepers for the African Union has disappeared from the Foreign Operation Conference Committee. This would be a tragedy, if we did not meet our obligation to provide at least 7,700 peacekeepers for an area the size of Texas.

Every man and woman on the Hill today should do something to make sure that the Defense appropriation bill is not finally approved without meeting America's obligation to stop this genocide.

RECOGNIZING REAGAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in order to recognize El Magnet at Reagan Elementary School in Odessa, Texas, for their commitment to excellence in education.

On September 13, the Intel Corporation and Scholastic named El Magnet at Reagan a 2005 School of Distinction for demonstrating exceptional commitment to achieving innovation in education. They were selected from over 3,300 other participating schools from across this Nation for programs such as Crossing Borders which partners their Spanish classes with technology integration, and also allows students to serve as teachers.

El Magnet was also held up as an exemplary model for success here in Washington, D.C. in October 2005 at a gala for distinguished recipients, and was awarded \$10,000 in cash in a grant to continue their scholastic progress.

Not only do all of Reagan students pass the rigorous Texas Assessment for Knowledge and Skills Test, but the number of students scoring in the 90th percentile ranks Reagan in the top five schools in Texas every year.

The reputation of El Magnet Reagan extends beyond the Permian Basis in the State of Texas, and again on September 19, 2005, Reagan was named a 2005 No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon School by the Department of Education.

I congratulate the students and teachers, administrators and families of El Magnet at Reagan Elementary School. I wish them the best in the future, thank them for their hard work, and their dedication that have made these prestigious awards possible.

9/11 COMMISSION REPORT CARD

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

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, the distinguished members of the 9/11 Commission released a scathing report card on the lack of progress the administration has made in implementing their 41 recommendations for improving the security of our Nation.

The grades handed down would disturb any parent. On nearly half of the recommendations, our government received a D, an F, or an incomplete grade for failing to take the steps necessary to ensure that we never face another tragedy like September 11.

It is unacceptable that while people across the world can talk with each other effortlessly, now over 4 years after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, our Nation's first responders are still, still without the interoperable radios they need to communicate in crisis.

It is unacceptable that after we carefully screened passengers who fly on aircraft in this Nation, we seat them on planes loaded with cargo that is rarely ever screened.

Mr. Speaker, these and other loopholes must be closed immediately. The administration has failed the American people on these loopholes. We must work together to bring up these dangerous grades.

WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, we are saluting our veterans from World War II today. Last week, I had the opportunity to spend time with members of the 278th Regimental Combat Team of the Tennessee National Guard, and the 115th Field Artillery Regiment from the Tennessee Army National Guard.

Tennessee was welcoming them home after a year of service in Iraq and around the world. They have done great work. We are proud of them. And I believe their sacrifice is what does keep this Nation free.

Mr. Speaker, it was with sadness and a little bit of disbelief that I heard yesterday of Democratic Party leader Howard Dean's comments that we cannot win in Iraq, and that we are in the same situation as Vietnam.

The pessimism and historical ignorance contained in those statements is simply staggering, Mr. Speaker. I do not know if this is simply wishful thinking by a Democratic leader looking for an angle to slam the White House, or whether Mr. Dean actually believes it. Both options are frightening. I have been in Iraq. I have seen the progress. It is undeniable. It is good for America. It is good for the freedom-loving people in this world. Thank you to the men and women in uniform for their sacrifice.

CORRUPTION IN CONGRESS

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it is astonishing how badly this administration and the Republican Congress has veered off course. Bribery. Perjury. Allegations of insider trading and money laundering. The majority leaders in both Chambers of the Congress, one under indictment, the other being investigated by the SEC.

The American people understand full well the consequences of this culture of corruption. They saw it in New Orleans. The administration's incompetence was more devastating than the storm itself. They see a President all too willing to cover up waste and profiteering here and abroad where, again, incompetence has contributed to the loss of American lives, more than 2,000 and climbing.