

that you mentioned from the areas affected, but to all of us who want to ensure assistance gets to the people there. And while the tax provisions may well be important, they are longer-term impacts, and in some respects shorter-term impacts, that we would otherwise provide.

Lastly, Mr. Leader, if I can, can you perhaps give us a preview of the schedule for next year? It is our understanding on this side that the probability is we will not be returning until the 31st of January. Has that been decided? Can you confirm that and maybe give us a brief preview of what our schedule next month and the months thereafter in the year to come might be?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and before I go to that, I would like to say, and I would hope he would share my view of this, that while the Katrina supplemental is important and needs to be done before the end of the year, that also anything in the tax structure that encourages rebuilding, making a decision to get your business back in the affected area rather than stay somewhere else you may have moved to is also important.

I would not want our colleagues on the other side of the building to think that somehow the tax portion of this can wait until next year. They both need to be done this year, and we are going to work hard to see that both of those things get done this year.

We have worked this year well beyond our schedule to work in Washington. Members had every reason to believe before the August work period that they would be home now and would have been home for several weeks talking about what we have done and what we hope to do. But when we do go home at the end of the next working series of days we will be working, we would anticipate that the Members would not come back until the 31st of January, and the first votes for the second session would occur on and after that date.

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

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2005 AND HOUR OF MEETING ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2005

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at noon on Monday next, and further, when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, December 13, 2005, for morning hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). 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.

TRIBUTE TO CARROLL CAMPBELL, FORMER MEMBER OF CONGRESS

(Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in brief comment about a former Member of this House who passed away this week, Carroll Campbell. As one who came to this House with Carroll Campbell in January of 1979, I would say that if you were to draw a blueprint for an outstanding Member of Congress, you could do no better than to look to Carroll Campbell. Carroll Campbell served tremendously as the governor of his home State of South Carolina, but before that, served with great honor and distinction in this House.

Mr. Speaker, I can say that he was a man of great integrity. He was one that you admired in every aspect. I can recall him being the first Member from my side of the aisle south of the Mason-Dixon line who came out in support of the extension of the Voting Rights Act. He provided leadership in so many areas, whether tax policy, national defense or otherwise.

Carroll Campbell was a champion. Carroll Campbell left us far too soon, and we send our words, our good wishes, and our hopes with his wife and his children. This House is a greater place because of the service rendered to this House by Carroll Campbell.

IRAQ: COMMITMENT TO THE CAUSE

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

Ms. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to voice my support for our mission in Iraq and the global war on terror.

We stand at a critical juncture in the history of Iraq and in our own history. Do we ignore the steady progress toward democracy in Iraq? Do we hand victory to the terrorist insurgency on the eve of the historic December 15 elections? Or do we remain committed to the cause of freedom at home and abroad?

Our Nation already knows of the price of victory and how great it is, but the cost of failure would be far greater.

As Democratic National Committee Chair Howard Dean was engaging in

the politics of partisans and the demagoguery of doubters, I was visiting with our amputees in the Walter Reed Medical Hospital. These brave men and women know why we are fighting and why we must continue to fight. They know better than any of us why their brothers in arms have died fighting. Their sacrifices have been made in the name of freedom and in the pursuit of victory.

Not only is victory in Iraq possible, but it is within reach. Faced with long painful recoveries, these soldiers focus on the positive and what can be done and what will be done. We owe them the same.

It is not the time for retreat. It is the time for our Nation's civilian leadership to stand with them. Their sacrifice obligates us to demonstrate the same level of commitment and dedication to this cause of freedom. And each day as a Nation, we are more indebted to these extraordinary men and women with whom I visited.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT BILL MEEUWSEN

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the three words from the official seal of the United States Army states: "This we'll defend." Sergeant Bill Meeuwsen was a member of the Army and he died carrying out this motto, defending the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Sergeant Bill Meeuwsen. He was truly a remarkable person. Bill was born in Mount Vernon, Washington, on February 10, 1981, and when he was 10 years old, he and his family found their way to southeast Texas and moved to Kingwood, Texas. He attended Kingwood High School, one of the finest high schools in this country, and he graduated in 1999.

He went on to Texas A&M University, and he and some of his friends enlisted in the United States Army as a result of the attacks of September 11, 2001. His father Mike said "Bill strongly believed that we all share a responsibility to serve on behalf of God and country, to protect freedoms we all cherish so deeply." It was that sense of

patriotism that led him to enter the United States Army.

Bill was initially deployed with the renowned Band of Brothers to Camp Giant, near the Korean demilitarized zone in March of 2003. A year later, he was assigned to the 2nd Battalion 502nd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 101st Airborne Division of Fort Campbell, Kentucky. It was there he married his wife, Lauren Lynn, on August 18, this year, 2005. She was the daughter of a Colonel who was also serving in Iraq.

Bill was then deployed to Iraq just 3 months later, in October of 2005. Two months after that, on the day before Thanksgiving this year, Sergeant Bill Meeuwsen was one of two soldiers killed in action when his unit came under direct fire near Baghdad. He was the 186th Texan killed in Iraq since the war began. One out of every ten people serving in the United States military today is from the State of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, Bill is remembered as a person who loved his friends and family. He enjoyed playing basketball with his buddies, and he had compassion for animals. When he was growing up, he used to hide animals in his home. His friends and family will never forget his friendly and ever-present smile.

□ 1615

He had a great sense of humor and a way of making anyone around him feel comfortable. His father, Mike, spoke of his sense of adventure and interest in exploring other countries and cultures, which he was doing by fulfilling his Army experience.

While in Iraq, Bill spoke with his wife, Lauren, and parents, Mike and Thresa frequently. In one of his most recent conversations, he was upbeat and excited about his unit's recent success in the field in Iraq. He felt strongly they were accomplishing their mission and goal, making a difference in Iraq for those people. A week before he died, he sent home this photograph of him taking a break in Iraq enjoying tea in the Iraqi custom.

Mr. Speaker, here is a photograph of Bill shortly before he was killed in active duty in Iraq. It shows this big man, this big son of America, taking a break while on duty in Iraq for his country and for the people of Iraq.

During another conversation with his mother Thresa, she was crying when she spoke with her son because Bill's platoon had recently suffered four casualties, and she was worried how he was handling this. But Bill was very clear in his response to his mother. He told his mother, "Mom, you do not need to cry for the soldiers who were killed. They are all in heaven. They were good men. They died doing what they wanted to do. Cry for their families." Wise words from one of America's sons.

His clear and matter-of-fact responses have been a tremendous source of comfort to his wife and to his parents since his death.

While Bill was stationed in Korea before he went to Iraq, he met a man named Ahn. Ahn was a sergeant in the South Korean Army. He and Bill made quick friends. They made an odd pair since Ahn was relatively short and Bill was 6 foot 4 inches tall. On numerous weekends the two of them would catch the train to Seoul, South Korea, where they explored the city, and Ahn helped Bill learn the customs of the Korean people. Bill even got to go to Ahn's parents' home.

After he learned of Bill's passage, Ahn sent a heartfelt letter in broken English to the Meeuwsen family in Texas. It reads in part: "There is an old Korean saying that 'too nice and good person tends to be taken by God earlier than usual.' I strongly sure that Holy Father have special plan to brighten the heaven with Mr. Meeuwsen."

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that heaven is already brighter with Bill up there, and I would like to extend my prayers and our condolences to his parents, Mike and Thresa, to his relatives, his friends, the community of Kingwood, Texas, his wife, Laura Lynn. Sergeant Meeuwsen touched so many lives in his 24 years. He was a freedom fighter, he was an Aggie, a son of proud parents, a member of the band of brothers, an American warrior, and an inspiration to all patriots. His patriotism and heroism and his life will not be forgotten. He paid for freedom with his life. He paid for our safety with his blood, and he paid for our future years with his youth.

When I talked to Sergeant Meeuwsen's father, Mike, about what his son believed in and his reasons for his personal involvement in Iraq, he said this: "I am here for God, country, and freedom."

Mr. Speaker, that says it all.

God bless Bill and God bless our troops and God bless America. That is just the way it is.

TAX CUTS BENEFIT THE PROSPEROUS

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, in the face of our \$3.1 trillion debt, the House recently passed a budget reconciliation bill. This so-called Deficit Reduction Act cut spending by \$53 billion by cutting programs like health care for the sick, education benefits for students, child support help for parents, and food stamps for hungry families. Even as supporters of the budget reconciliation bill applauded their own new-found frugality, they knew the savings would never be realized because today the House passed a tax reconciliation bill, erasing the 3-week-old savings of \$53 billion with \$70 billion in new tax cuts. And most egregiously, the lion's share of these tax cuts benefit the most prosperous among us.

At a time when one in seven Americans have no health insurance, the budget bill cut \$11 billion for Medicaid, the most basic part of America's safety net. It further empowered health care providers to turn away patients who are unable to pay. This was not only uncaring but fiscally unwise. It will cost our Nation more certainly in the long run when significant health problems are left untreated.

Mr. Speaker, with a Federal debt now of \$8 trillion, every American owes \$27,000. Americans understand that the inability of the administration and Congress to balance the budget will have a disastrous effect on future generations. Imagine leaving our kids with an unpaid \$27,000 credit card bill and more interest on the way.

But holding back medical treatment for chronically ill children is not the way to restore fiscal discipline. Neither is making cuts to education that will close the doors of opportunity to a generation of students. The budget bill cut student loan programs by more than \$14 billion. With new fees and higher interest rates, educational opportunities will be lost, and all of the stimulus to the economy that would have been generated by all those new engineers and scientists will be lost with them.

Does our Nation truly benefit economically or otherwise by pushing so many deeper into poverty, or by closing the doors to higher education? In the wake of Hurricane Katrina and all that it revealed about the persistence of poverty in America, can we really have a more secure future with a less effective safety net?

I am proud to be a member of the Blue Dog Coalition, a group of moderate and conservative Democrats concerned about fiscal responsibilities. I join my Blue Dog colleagues in seeking ways to reduce the debt; but we were compelled to oppose this bill because it was a sham, a debt increase that made the poor poorer, the rich richer, and the country's future even more precarious. Any reasonable look at the numbers will easily reveal the truth: these bills result in an increase to the national debt.

As a Nation, we have gone from an \$86 billion surplus under President Clinton in 2000 to a record \$412 billion deficit last year. Our fiscal house is more than out of order; it is spiraling out of control.

What we need right now is a balanced budget strategy and one that honors the values of the American people, that rewards work not wealth, that requires the sacrifice of all Americans for the common good and not the sacrifice alone of the poor, the young, or the infirm.

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

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