

on the phone and ask permission and wait for him to deny it or grant it?

Madam Speaker, the first amendment of the Constitution is very simple. It says Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion. But there is a second phrase: or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. We have a Nation with a long religious history. Contrary to France whose Constitution states that it is a secular republic, in France religion and government never meet.

We are not that way. Congress starts with a prayer. We have In God We Trust above the flag. We have Moses in the back. The Supreme Court has the Ten Commandments above it in its Chambers.

The Supreme Court's ruling is confusing and defies predictability. The Supreme Court has created a hostility towards religion. The Supreme Court has become a court of confusion.

FUTURE CONGRESSES WILL ASK

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, the President will address the Nation tonight on Iraq.

At some point in the future, Members of a future Congress will look back at the war in Iraq and ask how we could have let it happen. They will ask why did our leaders try hard to convince the American people that Iraq had something to do with 9/11 when it did not. They will ask why did our government use awesome destructive power against the people of Iraq who posed no imminent threat to our Nation, and did not attack us.

They will ask how our leaders were able to convince us to stay in Iraq for so many years at the cost of so many lives. They will ask why there was no discussion about the countless deaths of innocent Iraqi civilians. They will ask why our leaders talked us into spending money for an unnecessary war when so many real needs for education and health care were unmet. They will ask how did we let fear so penetrate our hearts and our psyches that we forgot who we were, that we forgot our duty to justice, that we forgot our duty to liberty, that we forgot our duty to truth.

GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARDS

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate 10 Girl Scouts from the Sixth Congressional District of Georgia for earning the highly coveted Girl Scout Gold Award.

Through hard work, dedication and perseverance, Kathryn Cook, Kristen Crawford, Aimee Jarvis, Amy Kroeger,

Tera Lekan, Elizabeth Roddy, Brittany Scott, Michelle Teplis, Kelly Watson, and Jordan Wynn, with their community service projects, have positively affected, literally, the world.

Collecting school supplies to donate to young Iraqi students, sewing and stuffing 250 teddy bears for pediatric and emergency ward patients, collecting and donating essentials to foster care children, and writing books for children in both English and Spanish. These are just some of the many projects taken on by these girls.

The Girl Scout program is based on four fundamental goals that encourage girls to develop to their full potential, relate to others with increasing understanding, skill and respect, develop a meaningful set of values to guide their actions and contribute to the improvement of society.

Congratulations to each of these young American girls for their accomplishments and for embracing worthy principles. We look forward to their continued excellent example and for their future leadership.

NO SECURITY IN PRIVATIZATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY

(Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to give voice to the youth of my district. I recently had a Social Security e-town hall where young adults joined me online to discuss this important issue.

Billy, a constituent of mine from Long Beach, is currently a student at the University of Southern California. He questioned the wisdom and the solvency of the President's plan. He specifically asked me what would the worst case scenario consequences of the President's plan be.

My answer to him was simple. It is clear that Republicans have no desire to strengthen Social Security for future generations.

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Instead, their only intention is to privatize this guaranteed retirement program.

Privatization is a first step on the road to the worst case scenario. Privatization proposals hurt everyone, including today's beneficiaries. But it especially hurts young workers who end up paying for the administrative costs of privatization on the front end and then end up paying for it twice with large benefit cuts on the back end. Privatization does absolutely nothing to extend the solvency of Social Security.

If we really wanted to save Social Security, let us work to ensure its solvency. Let us not dismantle guaranteed benefits, especially for young workers like Billy.

EMINENT DOMAIN DECISION

(Mr. RYUN of Kansas asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RYUN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today against this recent Supreme Court decision in *Kelo v. New London*, which grossly misrepresents the intent and historical precedent regarding government taking of private property. Our Founding Fathers intended to protect private property by limiting government authority.

One would expect that private property taken by eminent domain would become land available for public use such as parks and roads. Unfortunately, this decision creates a loophole for government to manipulate the definition of public use simply to generate greater tax revenue.

Protection of private property is a fundamental right protected in a strong democracy. The Supreme Court's ruling is an insult to all Americans who have worked hard to have a home to call their own. It is a ruling that encourages the strong to take from the weak and flies in the face of what government is intended to do, that is, to protect the lives and property of all American citizens.

THE REPUBLICANS' SOCIAL SECURITY PLAN

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, every working day, every salary and wage-earning American will pay 6.2 percent, or 12.4 if they are self-employed, of their salary to Social Security, that is, up to the first \$90,000. That is creating a \$168 billion surplus, which is being borrowed and spent by this administration, some of it to give tax breaks to the wealthiest among us.

Now the Republicans have a new plan. Here is what Congressional Quarterly says: "The House version essentially counts the Social Security surplus twice. First, the government would borrow the surplus from Social Security's trust funds in exchange for special Treasury bonds, as it does now. It would then direct the surplus into individual accounts, but then borrow it back again in exchange for more bonds. But only the debt to the individual accounts would appear in the government's budget; the debt to Social Security's trust funds would remain 'off budget,' as is now. The surplus itself would be spent as part of the regular budget."

Huh? That is the solution to the problems of Social Security? That is making the future retirement of Americans more secure? That is dealing with the fact that you are stealing money from working people and giving it to people who invest for a living? Give me a break.

SUPREME COURT'S RULING ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise to voice my strong disapproval with the Supreme Court's ruling yesterday that barred individual States from displaying the Ten Commandments in courthouses. The five justices who voted for this ruling displayed extreme hypocrisy. As they outlawed this practice, they sat directly underneath our Ten Commandments.

In 1950, the Florida Supreme Court stated: "A people unschooled in the sovereignty of God, the Ten Commandments, and the ethics of Jesus could never have evolved the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution. There is not one solitary fundamental principle of our democratic policy that did not stem directly from the basic moral concepts of the Ten Commandments . . ."

The Ten Commandments are found more often in public buildings than in individual churches, demonstrating that Americans from all faiths and walks of life recognize their impact on our laws and culture.

Yesterday's ruling sets a dangerous precedent. What is next? Are we going to remove references to God from our pledge, remove the Bible from our court proceedings, and so forth?

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to look into ways to prevent this type of abusive judicial power. I also encourage the five justices to exercise better judgment in the future.

WE NEED A NEW TRADE POLICY

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, this Bush administration keeps setting records, only they are the wrong kinds of records.

We have a record debt of over \$7 trillion that breaks down to each citizen's share being over \$26,000. And now they have a new record, a new record debt on our trade deficit. It set a new record of \$195 billion in the first 3 months of this year. That is 6.4 percent of GDP on an annual basis, the largest such trade deficit ever in our history. This deficit has been created by the irresponsible trade policies of the Bush administration, and it is also being supported by the willingness at least so far of foreign investors and governments to keep extending us credit.

The administration cannot continue to ignore this problem. Even if we avoid a sudden flight from the dollar and an international financial collapse, the burden of paying off our mounting international debt will be a drag on our future standard of living. It will be a drag on the lives of our children and grandchildren. We need a new trade policy.

SOLDIERS AT GUANTANAMO SERVE WITH DISTINCTION

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, this weekend I joined a bipartisan delegation to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba led by the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), House Committee on Armed Services chairman. We were all impressed by the professionals serving at Guantanamo and their commitment to maintaining a humane detention facility for hard core killers.

The patriotic U.S. soldiers protecting America's families are successors to the 132nd Military Police Company of the South Carolina Army National Guard. Commanded by Major Brian Pitts, the 132nd served with distinction from September, 2002, through September, 2003.

Upon their return, the media reported that Major Pitts summarized his service when he stated: "Our goal was to treat the detainees well, and hope that if we were detained, that we would be treated as well."

Guantanamo should be kept open as a symbol of America's resolve to win the war on terrorism. Ten released detainees have already resumed their horrific efforts to kill Americans, and further releases must be subject to administrative review.

In conclusion, God bless our troops and we will never forget September 11.

MIKE GORDON: A CALIFORNIA LEADER LOST TOO SOON

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

Ms. HARMAN. Madam Speaker, the seaside community of El Segundo in my congressional district, rich in so many ways, is a great deal poorer following the death on Saturday of its longtime Mayor and State assembly representative Mike Gordon. Those of us who knew Mike well and the countless others whose lives he touched are devastated by his unexpected and untimely passing.

In the course of my public career, few people have had a more profound impact on me and the policies I pursue than Mike Gordon. He was a natural politician, drawn to people, and driven to solve their problems, no matter how big or small.

Mike Gordon was a big thinker, one who could see around corners, anticipating the needs of his community and forging, in a strong but sensitive way, its future. He was a mayor, an assembly member, a baseball coach, community activist, party leader, good husband, father, and friend. And when he succumbed to brain cancer in the early morning hours of June 25, he was just 47 years old.

When Mike received his dire diagnosis 3 months ago, the broader world

of California politics was just opening to him. Years of consensus building and goodwill and enormous potential were cut cruelly short.

I grieve for his family: his devoted wife, Denise; and four children; Ryan, Erika, Amanda, and Gordy; and for our larger loss.

Madam Speaker, Gordy Gordon designed a rubber bracelet which said "I am helping Mike fight." Though Mike lost that physical fight, we who survive him will carry on the fight for the beliefs we share.

CAFTA

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

Mr. SHAW. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the United States-Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement, which will benefit American farmers, manufacturers, and businesses both small and large. Last year alone, the Central American countries and the Dominican Republic imported nearly \$15 billion worth of United States agriculture and manufactured goods.

The DR-CAFTA countries combined represent our 13th largest export partner. That is larger than Brazil. As these numbers show, there already exists a strong relationship between the United States and Central America, and this relationship is destined to grow substantially.

With the agreement in place, more than 80 percent of the United States industrial and consumer products will become duty free immediately. The agreement also levels the playing field for United States manufacturers who are at a disadvantage to other countries that already have free trade agreements with the DR-CAFTA countries. This translates into increased exports and earnings for American farmers and manufacturers and more jobs.

I urge my colleagues to support this very important piece of legislation.

REPUBLICAN SOCIAL SECURITY SHAM; QUIT RAIDING SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND

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

Mr. STUPAK. Madam Speaker, congressional Republicans unveiled their own Social Security privatization plan last week, stating repeatedly that their proposal would protect the Social Security trust fund.

It is an interesting comment considering the fact that Republicans have raided \$670 billion from the Social Security trust fund over the last 4 years alone to help pay for their giant tax breaks for the wealthiest elite. The majority party seems to forget that during the Clinton years, we ensured Social Security trust funds were locked away so they could not be used by the