

Mr. Speaker, these issues represent a divide in government policy, a betrayal of values that I thought Americans hold dear, that most of us do. These issues represent a moral obligation in the fight for dignity of every American.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHWARZ of Michigan). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim my time for my Special Order at this time.

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

There was no objection.

SEVENTH ANNUAL HOOPS FOR HOPE BASKETBALL GAME RESULT

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

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, I rise and have the privilege perhaps on a lighter note to report the outcome of the seventh annual Hoops For Hope basketball game between Washington, D.C.'s elite lobbyists and Members of Congress. Perhaps the broad smile on my face or the gleaming hardware to my left might provide some clues as to the outcome of last night's contest.

Seven years ago, Paul Miller of the American League of Lobbyists hit upon the idea that perhaps lobbyists and Members of Congress could move away from the political arena and actually have a contest on the court. While I will report to my colleagues the games have been intensely competitive, the game has had a more noble purpose, and that is to raise money for kids in the inner city of Washington, D.C.

Last night, through the generosity of a lot of people, we raised \$50,000 from just last night's event, bringing the running total of these several contests to over \$200,000. Again, there were a lot of people that deserve a lot of credit for helping make that event a success.

Certainly our former colleague, Jack Quinn of New York, who, of course, now has gone over to the lobbyists side. When Jack Quinn was a colleague here and was our coach, he had an undefeated record. Unfortunately, his former colleagues last night marred that record and gave him a defeat; but, again, I appreciate all the work that Jack did, that Paul Miller did.

George Washington University was very gracious in hosting the event yet again.

I would also like to talk about someone who donated his time, that is, Mis-

souri men's basketball coach Quin Snyder, who is a personal friend who accepted my invitation to come, who came at his own expense, at his own effort, to prowl the sidelines to give some guidance for us. The game got a little close in the waning moments, and it was his presence on the sidelines, maybe working the officials just a little bit, but I really appreciate my friend Quin coming here to Washington, D.C. again for this purpose, his executive assistant Donna, as well as my own executive assistant Eileen, who helped work on the logistics.

Finally, this was a bipartisan, bicameral team. When you think that, on paper at least, the universe of lobbyists is about 10,000, and of course, House Members and Senators, there are only 535 of us from which to draw this team, we really on paper should not even be on the same court with these lobbyists; and, nonetheless, thanks to Senators ENSIGN and THUNE, thanks to my colleagues here in the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS), the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT), the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. OXLEY), the gentleman from Washington (Mr. LARSEN), the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE), and the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND), we happened to have a winning margin in the double digits. The final score was 44 to 33; and yet the real winners are the kids from the inner city D.C. area who are the beneficiaries of the proceeds that we raised.

We had a chance at half-time to personally interact with dozens of these kids. Again, this is a community effort to provide a solution for some kids growing up in some really tough circumstances. So they are the real winners of last night's contest; but even as they are the beneficiaries of those proceeds, we will proudly hang on to this gleaming hardware for yet another year.

I thank the Chair for allowing me this time.

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

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

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the gentleman from Illinois' (Mr. EMANUEL) time.

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

There was no objection.

HONORING THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to thank the Oregon National Guard. There is a lot of discussion here about the things that went wrong with the response to the Hurricane Katrina disaster; but yesterday, I had the experience of accompanying the adjutant general, Major General Fred Rees of the Oregon National Guard, to New Orleans to see the guard units there in action.

We have one of the largest, if not the largest, contingents in New Orleans. They have one of the most difficult sectors, a large portion of the city, particularly the portion of the city that is still submerged; and I had an opportunity there to meet with the troops. They are basically living in battlefield conditions, eating meals ready to eat, sleeping in an abandoned school and a university that is vacant at the moment, and they are doing extraordinary work.

One of the first people I met from the city when we made our first stop was a woman who was still in her house. I went to ask her why she was still in her house, because they have been trying to encourage people to evacuate. She said, well, I feel safe. I said, well, I can understand that. She said, no, thank God for the National Guard; I feel safe. She says, you do not understand. She was telling me that she felt safe in her neighborhood for the first time in years, an incredibly high crime neighborhood, because of the Oregon National Guard presence.

Then we went on from there to the flooded areas where, in the preliminary stages, they are still rescuing people. The day we were there they rescued people; 570 people rescued so far by the Oregon National Guard.

They have begun in their own small way to contribute to the restoration effort of the school, the high school that they are living in which was pretty trashed and this other university campus that they are on, beginning clean-up; but their efforts are just extraordinary.

The thing about the National Guard is they do not just bring the military precision to these sorts of efforts. I mean, they have got the discipline, the training, the logistic support, the unit cohesion, those sorts of things; but they have something else special. They are citizen soldiers, and they have other skills, and those other skills are needed more than ever in a disaster, more than regular Army troops.

They can certainly restore order. We have quite a number of police officers who have been heavily relied upon by other troops and other units of Guards not from Oregon in dealing with the residents and some of the problems still in the neighborhoods that they are assisting.

We have firefighters. We have people with expertise in heavy equipment. They found and repaired an abandoned bulldozer to begin clearing streets for

access around one of the headquarters. We have electricians who are trying to wire the school so that they can use the generators, at least have some basics for the troops.

This is the National Guard at their finest. Many of these troops have just recently returned from Iraq. They have not even been home 6 months, and many are signed up to go to Afghanistan next March; but I did not hear a single complaint. They said, this is a great mission. We are saving people's lives. We can see we are making a difference here. We are proud to serve.

I am proud as an Oregonian to represent many of these individuals. The Guard is a tremendous success story in a disaster which has too many other problems, things that must be investigated by Congress in terms of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, returning it to being an independent, professionally run, high-functioning agency. Many of us objected to putting it in Homeland Security. We were all too right, unfortunately.

We must oversee the relief and recovery effort. The government is borrowing and spending \$500 million a day. That must be strictly overseen to make sure there is not crisis profiteering that has happened after some other disasters and other hurricanes. Congress has a role in that, and Congress then is going to have to look at the rebuilding effort in terms of the infrastructure that serves that area, the intricate infrastructure, the Corps of Engineers and what steps we are taking for the future, where we will rebuild, and how we will protect those things.

It will be massively expensive; and in the face of that massive expense, in addition to a deficit, I hope that the President and the majority party drop their push for more tax cuts for the wealthiest among us. Those who earn more than \$300,000 a year and those who have estates worth more than \$6 million, should they not contribute to this effort? Are they not part of this country, or do they just live behind walled compounds with their private security and their private jets?

We are all in this together, as was demonstrated by my citizen soldiers who are not paid a whole heck of a lot of money to do this. So let us do this right. Let us recognize the National Guard and others who volunteered and have done so well. So far let us support their effort, and let us enter into this rebuilding effort in a wise and cost-efficient way, protecting both the taxpayers and the people who have been ravaged by this storm.

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

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

POVERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the Congressional Black Caucus has decided to discuss poverty.

I am a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 234 and would like to see the President present a plan to eradicate poverty by 2010.

Hurricane Katrina devastated the lives of people who were already living well under the poverty level. I have concerns with the slow response and weak leadership of the Federal and State agencies. I have concerns that many of the affected States have Medicaid-eligibility criteria that are too harsh. I have concerns about our overcrowded and underfunded safety net hospitals.

I have concerns that since our current President took office there are 5.4 million more people in poverty, 6 million more without health insurance, and the median income is down more than \$1,600 a year.

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As relates to these statistics, the most affected State is the home State of the President, Texas. What we saw on television during the hurricane was the face of poverty. People with resources left early. Only ones with the least resources had to depend on their government for a safety net. The safety net had holes that need repair. Denying minimum wage to help with the cleanup and the Halliburton Company in charge, opportunities are dismal. Only the President can correct this.

We still are being asked, was it racism? My response to the question: It is the face of poverty U.S.A. Was it racism? You answer the question. If it was, it did not start with Katrina. We need measures to eradicate poverty. Mr. President, let us not continue the trends of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer. As we move closer to a rich and poor society with the middle income disappearing, I plead with all of us, and the President, to address this problem.

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

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

POVERTY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking and ap-

plauding our colleague, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE, who will lead the next hour for the concurrent resolution she has introduced and which I cosponsor which everyone ought to support which affirms the obligation and leadership of the United States to improve the lives of the 37 million Americans living in poverty, 13 million of which are children.

The entire country and indeed the world got but a glimpse of the big picture as we watched in horror as the floods washed away the facade and exposed the poverty that exists in this the richest and most powerful Nation in the world. The added tragedy was the insensitivity and lack of urgency with which Katrina's victims were treated.

The moral question we are faced with today and which every person in this country must answer is, what are we going to do about it? As leaders of this Nation, we have the obligation to begin that answer now.

My colleagues and I tonight will be joining Congresswoman LEE to lead us in that response.

What everyone else saw perhaps for the first time was not a surprise to us. We have come to this body, to task forces and committee meetings, here to the well of the House and to countless press conferences to tell the world that this level of poverty exists, that it disproportionately includes African Americans and other people of color. And we have called on the Congress and the White House through our budget proposals and legislative agenda to repair the breach in our human condition, largely to no avail.

While the events of the last 2 weeks have spoken volumes in ways our words could not, we must not let what happened in Alabama, Mississippi, and even more so in Louisiana ever happen again. So as we appropriate dollars to fix the levees and other infrastructure that has been damaged or destroyed, we must also fix the social and economic infrastructure which failed so many and exacerbated the tragedy, and we must repair broken lives for the short and long term. That includes repairing a very deficient and dysfunctional health care delivery system in rural areas, the territories, and communities of color.

Almost as a last warning before the storm hit and the flood waters surged came the new numbers from the Census Bureau on income, poverty, and health insurance status in this country. Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama are three of our poorest states. In these states, about six in every ten African Americans are living at or below the Federal poverty line.

In the wake of the storm and even before the waters began to recede came a second report as a reminder of how deep we have to reach into America's psyche to repair the damage. That report, Closing the Gap: Solutions to Race Based Health Disparities, assessed and analyzed the impact that social determinants, such as economic,