

If I am offended by what you say or do or by what the government says or does, I can go to court and sue you because I am offended. This atheist was offended by a bunch of school kids, by their mere utterance of the Pledge of Allegiance. So he goes and sues and convinces a judge to protect his right not to be offended. So no more offended words, so no more pledge. This is an example of the new phantom constitutional right of freedom from being offended.

Mr. Speaker, I was a felony court trial judge in Houston for over 20 years. I heard thousands of cases. All of those were based on the United States Constitution. But the last time I checked in the Constitution, freedom from hurting someone's feelings was not included in the Constitution. So in truth this is the right that was allegedly violated by those kids in California. They offended someone, they hurt someone's feelings, and now they have to stop.

This is a dangerous movement, but this mysterious right is not in the Constitution. But the right of free speech, Mr. Speaker, is in the Constitution. And I say to those kids in California, your right of free speech was violated by the pledge policeman when he issued his pronouncement against you mentioning "under God."

So now you may proudly say the pledge each morning in a closet or in silence, and when you get to that phrase "with liberty and justice for all," just remember you lost some of your liberty by this ruling, and it certainly is not justice for all but only for those who are offended. Mr. Speaker, this ought not to be.

□ 1945

IRAQ HEARING

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, last Thursday, September 15, we held an informal congressional hearing to discuss and explore a military withdrawal from Iraq. It was called "The Bipartisan Congressional Forum on How to Bring the Troops Home." It was the first of its kind and it was about time.

I had hoped that the House Committee on Armed Services or the House Committee on International Relations would have taken up the matter, but repeated calls for such hearings have fallen on deaf ears. So, with the help of my colleagues and with many others and also my wonderful staff, we went about putting together this very needed hearing.

In so doing, we knew absolutely that opposition to the war is a stance that is firmly in the political mainstream. Less than 40 percent of Americans, according to the recent polls, approve of the President's handling of Iraq, and

roughly half want to see our troops come home as soon as possible. With this being an American sentiment comes responsibility to be more than a protest movement.

We also knew that we needed to offer sound, thorough policy proposals that could turn our deeply held convictions into operational reality, and that is what Thursday's hearing was all about. This was not an opportunity for placard waving, though there is certainly a time and a place for that. We were more interested in how to bring our troops home, rather than why.

We heard from a broad range of experts, from scholars and military strategists. We heard from Senator Max Cleland from Georgia.

We started with an overview of the situation on the ground, including a perspective on the lives of Iraqis under U.S. occupation. Later, we heard about specific ways that we can pivot away from the current policies, ending our military presence in Iraq and bringing our troops home. From there, we transitioned into a discussion of what next. I have always insisted that ending the war does not and cannot mean abandoning Iraq and its people.

Believing in the principle underlying Colin Powell's "Pottery Barn Rule," and that even if it was the Bush administration policy that broke it, at the very least we must play a constructive role in the rebuilding of Iraq.

Most of all, Thursday's hearing was designed to inspire a long overdue national conversation about alternatives to the current Iraq policy.

Our goal was to fill the policy vacuum and break the silence on Capitol Hill where, frankly, Members of Congress have been slow to embrace the fresh thinking and new approaches to Iraq that their constituents are eager to discuss and are eager to hear. For too long, for a number of reasons, this debate has been ceded to the Bush administration, even as they have produced a bloody and ruinous debacle.

Thursday's hearing demonstrated that we want to do more than just say no to the war in Iraq. We want to say yes to a new, intelligent, progressive, peaceful Iraq policy that will both protect the American people and fulfill our obligations to the Iraqi people. Chief among these obligations is to ensure that the United States does not maintain a long-term military presence in Iraq. That means no permanent bases and no control over Iraqi oil.

From our witnesses, it was clear: We need to engage in an open and robust dialogue, both at home and in Iraq. They agreed that multiparty peace talks are the best way to convince all factions of Iraqis that we are serious about allowing them to dictate their country and rebuild it, and, most important of all, the need for a commitment to bring the U.S. troops home. The truth is that our military presence in Iraq is contributing to the chaos there, not alleviating it. By bringing our troops home, we can save both

American and Iraqi lives and we can reunite thousands of American families in the process.

Mr. Speaker, my hope is that last week's hearing will serve as a catalyst for elected officials, for think-tanks and others around the country to join in a dialogue about military disengagement from Iraq, that the hearing will start a discussion that has been long, long overdue. The time for action in Iraq is now. So let us start taking action.

UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share one of the many stories of human compassion and generosity that have emerged in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Organizations across the 11th District of Georgia are working hard to assist Katrina's victims, and the State University of West Georgia in Carrollton is a shining example. As evacuees from the gulf coast began making their way north into our State, the University of West Georgia community realized these victims needed shelter, food, and support immediately.

So the university arranged to house 180 evacuees, including 80 children, in Roberts Hall, an empty dorm in the middle of campus. Dormitory living is now providing these families with the privacy and security they need to begin piecing their lives back together.

But the State University of West Georgia did not just house these evacuees. The community understood that shelter was only the first step to helping these victims get back on their feet. So the university and Carroll County community mobilized all their resources to assist their adopted residents.

The health services staff and nursing department faculty worked to provide the victims with health care services. The university opened its computer labs, and volunteers helped victims locate family members and find relief resources. The community came together to provide food, clothing, personal necessities, and home items for their guests, and local organizations are helping many of these victims find work in the area.

Mr. Speaker, it would have been more than enough for the University of West Georgia and Carroll County residents to house, feed and clothe these victims, but this generous community wanted to do more. They wanted to help these victims get their lives back together and start them on the path to recovery.

So the Carrollton public school system quickly registered children so they would not fall behind in their education. Because a college dormitory is only a temporary living situation, the Carroll County Housing Authority is

helping these evacuees locate more permanent housing in West Georgia. Counselors and social workers are on the university's campus every day helping victims access both emotional and financial resources.

Perhaps what is most inspiring, Mr. Speaker, is the way the West Georgia student body has gotten involved. Students are supervising play activities for the children. They are helping school-aged kids with their homework every night. Campus organizations are planning social and recreational activities for the evacuees, trying to bring some joy to their incredibly trying days.

Mr. Speaker, this level of personal and organizational generosity would be impressive anywhere in America, but in Carrollton, Georgia, this outpouring of support is especially heartening. Carroll County was hit by severe tornadoes and storms in the days following Hurricane Katrina. The community spent much of Labor Day weekend cleaning up the 30 homes that were destroyed and the many other community resources damaged by the storms and, yes, mourned a life tragically lost.

Yet even as this community was recovering from its own hardships, it was eager to help others in need. By opening their doors and hearts to Katrina's evacuees, Carroll County residents assured their guests that together they would rise to the challenges of this natural disaster. And, together, they have.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in praising the amazing work of the University of West Georgia and Carroll County community.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, we have seen the best side of humanity. We have shown that no American is a stranger, and the State University of West Georgia exemplifies this amazing American capacity to help others, no matter how great their need.

I thank the school and the community for their service.

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

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

PAYING TRIBUTE TO JOHN HAROLD JOHNSON IN RECOGNITION OF HIS MANY ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their re-

marks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of the America's most outstanding citizens, the late Mr. John H. Johnson, founder and chief executive officer of the Johnson Publishing Company, who died August 8 of heart failure at the age of 87.

Mr. Johnson was recognized and renowned as an emblem of the American dream, an embodiment of the civil rights movement, and a revolutionary businessman.

Given the breadth and impressiveness of his contributions to American society and to African American culture, the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation will honor him later this week with its Phoenix Award.

He was perhaps best known for launching the twin publications *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines. These sister magazines were started by Mr. Johnson specifically to engage the African American community. He also published numerous books, owned *Fashion Fair* Cosmetics and several radio stations, as well as held a majority ownership stake in *Supreme Liberty Life Insurance Company*. Mr. Johnson earned tremendous influence and success in his lifetime, but by no means were any of his accomplishments given to him.

He was born a child of meager means, but left this earth as one of America's wealthiest businessmen. Mr. Johnson personified the idea that hard work and determination can lead to success. He simply refused to accept anything less.

Born January 19, 1918, in Arkansas City, Arkansas, Mr. Johnson was raised by his widowed mother. She moved the two of them to Chicago in 1933 after saving her money over several years so that he could have the chance to go to high school, as his own hometown offered no education for blacks beyond primary grades.

After thriving in high school as the class president and student council president, an honor student, and the newspaper and yearbook editor, Mr. Johnson won a scholarship to the University of Chicago. He took classes at night while working as an office boy at the *Supreme Liberty Life Insurance Company* where he was in charge of compiling stories about the black community and sending them to the president of the company.

It was while working in this position that Mr. Johnson realized that there were no magazines or publications specifically designed for America's black population. This inspired him to create his own magazine, the *Negro Digest*. Started in 1942, with only \$500 from a loan secured with the assistance of his mother, the magazine began to draw followings when Mr. Johnson sent out letters asking for donations to fund its publication. Three thousand people donated \$2 each, and within a year the

magazine was selling 50,000 copies a month.

In November of 1945, *Negro Digest* evolved into *Ebony*, a magazine modeled after *Life* magazine. *Ebony* focused on successes and achievements within the black community. Today, this magazine reaches about 42 percent of all African American adults, with a paid circulation of about \$1.7 million. Mr. Johnson also founded *Jet*, another highly successful magazine aimed at the black community.

Mr. Johnson also sought to publish with a conscience. He published the highly controversial photographs of the open casket of Emmett Till, a 14-year-old Chicago boy who had been beaten to death by white men in Mississippi. While the images were thoroughly disturbing, Mr. Johnson felt that they simply needed to be published and seen by the public. "I decided finally that if it happened, it was our responsibility to print it and let the world experience man's inhumanity to man," he said.

A philanthropist, Mr. Johnson donated to many worthy causes, including a gift of \$4 million to historically black Howard University in Washington, D.C. The university would thank Mr. Johnson by later renaming its school of communications in his honor.

□ 2000

Although Mr. Johnson attended the University of Chicago and Northwestern University, he never completed a degree. However, during his lifetime he received honorary degrees from 31 schools, including Harvard, Howard, and Northwestern universities.

In 1982, Mr. Johnson had the honor of being the first African American to be included in *Forbes Magazine's* list of "The 400 Richest Americans." His 1989 autobiography "Succeeding Against the Odds," was a national best-seller.

Indeed, Mr. Johnson's initial loan of \$500 for his first magazine, he would later grow and develop that initial investment into an empire worth close to half a billion dollars.

We owe Mr. John H. Johnson a great debt of gratitude. His name may not have been known to every household in America, but his 60-year-old publications have had an important and unmistakable impact on American history and culture. His legacy has touched countless African Americans, including myself, and his inspiration and example will continue to be felt for generations of blacks to come.

Both his wife, Miss Eunice Johnson, and daughter were his business partners, and his daughter, Miss Linda Johnson Rice, has succeeded him as chairman and chief executive officer of *Johnson Publishing Company*. A great man, a great humanitarian.

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to acknowledge and celebrate the life and vast and phenomenal achievements of John H. Johnson, the CEO, chairman, founder and publisher of the *Johnson Publishing Company Inc.*, in Chicago, Illinois.