

we not allow that wall to be resurrected because the truth is, we owe it to the American people and we owe it to those whose lives will literally be lost unless we do our job and reauthorize the PATRIOT Act before provisions of that act expire on December 31, 2005.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DEMINT). Under the previous order, the Senate having received a conference report on H.R. 2528, that report is considered agreed to and the motion to reconsider that act is laid on the table.

Mr. ROBERTS. Mr. President, at this time, under the regular order and a unanimous consent request, the distinguished Senator from Ohio was to be recognized. He has acquiesced in my behalf that I may be recognized for 15 minutes. I ask unanimous consent that I may speak as in morning business for 15 minutes, to be followed by the Senator from Ohio, and that the Senator from Colorado will be recognized after the Senator from Ohio.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. ROBERTS pertaining to the introduction of S. Res. 329 are located in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio is recognized.

Mr. DEWINE. I thank the Chair.

(The remarks of Mr. DEWINE pertaining to the submission of S. Res. 321 are located in today's RECORD under "Submission of Concurrent and Senate Resolutions.")

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

ARMY PRIVATE FIRST CLASS HARRISON J. MEYER

Mr. DeWINE. Mr. President, I rise this evening on the floor of the U.S. Senate to pay tribute to a brave, young Ohioan, who lost his life while serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Army Private First Class Harrison J. Meyer, a combat medic from Worthington, OH, was killed on November 26, 2004, while attempting to rescue a wounded comrade during a firefight. Born on Veterans Day—November 11, 1984—he was barely 20 years old at the time of his death.

When I think about the sacrifices of our men and women in uniform, I am reminded of something President Ronald Reagan said about the strength of the American people. He said this:

Putting people first has always been America's secret weapon. It's the way we've kept the spirit of our revolutions alive—a spirit that drives us to dream and dare, and take risks for the greater good.

Harrison Meyer was always taking risks for the greater good—always put-

ting others first and selflessly giving of himself for his fellow man. According to Medical Platoon Sergeant Randolph L. Nutt:

[Private First Class Meyer] fully knew what the dangers were and willingly accepted them as a risk to save others' lives. He made the ultimate sacrifice so that others may live. Six other soldiers are still alive directly due to his actions.

Indeed, Mr. President, Harrison Meyer—Harry to his friends and family—embodied the true American spirit that President Reagan described.

Harry grew up in Worthington and attended Thomas Worthington High School. He graduated in 2003. While in high school, Harry belonged to the track team for 3 years. He competed as a pole-vaulter. Andy Cox, a U.S. history teacher and track coach at Thomas Worthington, remembers Harry as a "teddy bear who made everybody laugh. He was a real team player—always wanting to help people." Coach Cox went on to say that "Harry was the kid who was trying to make all the other kids relax, feel good about competing."

Harry often brought homemade treats to the track meets for the entire team. Coach Cox emphasized the popularity of his cheesecake. As he affectionately recalls, "[Harry] was a great cook!"

Harry did not join the track team during his senior year because he wanted to focus his attention on his upcoming military career. Still, however, he attended all of the school's track meets, and, according to Coach Cox "he'd always bring something homemade for the team."

Harry was also a member of the school's choir, and for four summers, Harry worked at the Worthington municipal pool doing various jobs, including serving as a lifeguard.

According to his mother, Harry was deeply affected by the September 11th terrorist attacks. He enlisted in the Army's pre-graduation program, and shortly after his high school graduation, he was inducted. He was stationed in Korea and assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Howze, before leaving in August 2004, for Iraq. His mom said that Harry's selflessness was one of the reasons he decided to become a medic after joining the Army.

In fact, according to Chris Begin, a good friend of Harry's, Harry wanted to go on to medical school after returning from Iraq.

While in Iraq, Harry and his comrades faced danger daily. Harry's mom recalls that before he was killed, Harry had treated a dozen seriously wounded soldiers. She said that "he knew (insurgents) were targeting medics. He indicated it was a very dangerous place. "But, he always told me—'Don't worry, Mom.'"

The dangers became too grave on November 26, 2004 near Ar Ramadi. Harry was killed the day after Thanksgiving, while trying to pull a wounded comrade to safety during an insurgent attack on his unit.

At the services held in Harry's honor after his death, friends and family recalled Harry's heroism and generosity, saying that the cause of his death reflected how he had lived. According to his mom, "Harry had always wanted to help people. He didn't think about his own welfare. He'd give you anything he had."

I recently came across a touching reminder of Harry's lasting impact on others. It is a posting on an Internet tribute for service members who have been killed in either Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom. A friend of Harry's—Pamela Moorehead from Worthington—posted the following email message:

Harry, I was thinking about you today. I'm not sure what made me think of you. I think I was just reminded by something someone said. It's September 26, 2005, so in one month you will have been gone for a year. Everyone still misses you. The memories from pole vaulting with you and hanging out with you and Brandon make me both happy and sad. To your family—Harry is one of my heroes, and we all still think about him. We miss him and continue to keep him and all of you in our thoughts and prayers.

Harrison Meyer was a kind soul, with a warmth that touched many people. My wife Fran and I keep Harry's family—his parents Deborah and William; and his three sisters—Lynn, Bronwyn, and Kelley, in our prayers.

I would like to conclude my remarks with an excerpt from a poem titled "American Hero, written by Harry's cousin Jordan Michael Meyer. The poem is in remembrance of Harry:

He is out there on the front lines.

He knows the risk.

He knows the sacrifice.

He is going to put it all on the line and role the dice.

The man is fighting for a better life.

The American soldier found his home after this brutal fight.

Now looking down upon us he sets flight.

Always keeping us in sight.

He won't stop protecting us, day and night.

He is an American soldier, brought up on love, alone, feeling so far from home.

He hides his fear, doing anything to protect those who are dear, knowing death is near.

He is a young man taking upon the sacrifice of a nation he holds dear.

Harrison Meyer held his Nation dear, and we hold dear his memory. We will never forget him.

MARINE CORPORAL NATHAN R. ANDERSON

Mr. DeWINE. Mr. President, while deployed in Iraq, Marine Corporal Nathan "Nate" Anderson made sure to write his family back home in Howard, OH, as often as he could. After witnessing the death of a good friend, Nate wrote that "the service of freedom demands sacrifice." He tried to calm his family's fears as he continued, "No worries. I will be fine wherever I end up. I have the Lord on my side and guardian angels on both shoulders. I am good to go."

I rise today on the floor of the United States Senate to pay tribute to this brave Marine. With the Lord on his side, Nate left this Earth on November

12, 2004, as he was killed while fighting insurgents in Al Anbar province in Iraq. He was 22 years-old.

Nate gave his life the day after Veterans Day, just over a year ago now. It is fitting in a sense, given his deep devotion to protection our Nation. When I think about Nate and the dedication of all our men and women in uniform, I am reminded of something President Ronald Reagan once said about freedom. He said that "the task that has fallen to us as Americans is . . . to keep alive the hope and dream of freedom."

Nate Anderson accepted this task wholeheartedly. He believed in freedom. And he believed that he had a mission to protect it and promote it around the world.

Nathan Anderson was born in Zanesville, OH on May 22, 1982. Growing up in Apple Valley, Nate enjoyed hunting, fishing, snowboarding, and bull riding. Older sister, Meg, remembers her brother as a "happy and good spirited" kid who liked swimming, making mud pies, and riding roller coasters at Cedar Point amusement park. She said that Nate was "the life of the party." He had a real zest for life. He loved country music, rodeos, and the military. Even at the young age of 10, Nate dreamed of someday becoming a Marine.

Nate attended East Knox High School, where he was both a dedicated student and gifted athlete. Karen Smith, a guidance counselor and teacher, described him as "a very likable, well-rounded young man" who had a lot of friends. Nate's football coach, Chet Looney, said that Nate's "contribution to the team was outstanding. He was one of those guys you need because he was a great team player. He was kind of fiery at times and then other times he was a jokester." Kathy Frere, an English teacher at East Knox High, fondly remembers Nate. "He was just a special student," she said. "He was so enduring. To know him is to love him—it's an old saying, but it's true."

Following his high school graduation in June 2001, Nate's dream of joining the Marines became a reality. He was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force, based in Camp Lejeune, NC. In 3 short years, Nate's service took him to over ten countries, including his final deployment in 2004 to Iraq in 2004.

Nate's family recalled the pride that Nate displayed as a result of serving his country and his desire to be the best Marine and the best son, brother, and friend he could be.

April Buckingham, Nate's close friend and former high school classmate, described his outgoing and compassionate personality as always uplifting others. She recalls gathering around the campfires that Nate often built, with the help of friends, in his parent's backyard. She said that "Nate was an honest guy—the heart and soul

of all our friends. He was the one who tried to keep us all together after graduation. He was an amazing person. We all loved him, and will miss him very much."

Nate's sisters remember him with great love, affection, and respect. His sister Traci describes her brother as "soaring on wings like eagles. I salute you, my brother. I salute the way you lived. I salute your sacrifice. I will always be in your debt."

Nate's sister Meg said that he was her best friend. She last spoke to him on the phone 2 weeks before his death, when he told her that they would be on a special mission. Meg said that Nate told her "it'd be two weeks and not to worry. He said he loves me. He said he'll be home soon."

At Nate's funeral service, held at North Bend Church of the Brethren, 400 mourners gathered to say goodbye. As the Reverend Patrick Bailey said, "They had come to honor a great son, an awesome brother, a great friend, a fellow [marine] and hero."

Nate was all of those things and more. He loved his family. He loved his country. He fought for freedom. And, we will never forget him. His parents, Mary and Neil Shaw and Richard Anderson; sisters Meg, Traci, and Kelly; and his brother Adam all remain in our thoughts and in our prayers.

I would like to conclude my remarks by reciting an e-mail message that was posted on an Internet tribute to Nate. Someone who just signed her e-mail as "Amy of Ohio" wrote the following:

Thank you Nate for your sacrifice—for protecting me and my children and for being our hero. We hope and pray that your reward will be great in Heaven. To Nate's family—we pray for you and will never forget your son's courage or the price he paid for our great country. May you find peace in God's love and know your son will always be with you, and you will one day be reunited. I hope and pray that all Americans are grateful of our men and women, sons, daughters, moms, dads, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, and grandchildren who are fighting for our freedom while we enjoy our lives in the comfort of our own homes. Nate, you will never be forgotten and will be our hero forever and always. God bless you and your family and God bless America.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. VITTER). The Senator from Colorado is recognized.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, I rise to discuss the situation in Iraq.

Critics of the Bush administration have recently gone out of their way to try to convince the American people that the President misled our nation about Iraq. Some are arguing most vociferously that President Bush purposely withheld intelligence information from Congress. Others accuse the President of deliberately fashioning U.S. intelligence to fit his own agenda. A few even suggest that the President had some kind of personal vendetta

against Saddam Hussein and was willing to do whatever it took to remove him from power.

I can accept criticism leveled at our intelligence agencies for providing inaccurate intelligence. I can accept criticism lodged against the Department of Defense for not sufficiently preparing for an Iraqi insurgency.

I can even accept criticism that the Bush administration did not appropriately prepare the American people for the cost of the war in Iraq.

What I cannot accept, what I feel is so irresponsible, and what is so damaging to our nation are accusations that suggest that President Bush deliberately lied to the American people about either the intelligence or about his reasons for going to war.

I was a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee when the President requested Congressional authorization for the use of force against Iraq in 2002. I participated in numerous open and classified, bipartisan hearings and briefings on our intelligence regarding Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. The conclusions that I reached, that President Bush reached, and that many Democrats reached, were the same.

We all agreed that Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. We all agreed that he had used such weapons in the past against Iran and Iraq's Kurdish populations. And, we all agreed that he would not hesitate to use them against the United States in the future.

The U.S. Congress and President Bush were not alone in this assessment. The intelligence agencies of Britain, Germany, Russia, China, and even France all believed Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction. The entire international community watched as Saddam used these weapons to murder thousands of his own people. Even the Chief United Nations weapons inspector, Han Blix, thought the chemical weapons he discovered prior to the war in Iraq were the "tip of a submerged iceberg".

The fact is that the debate in Congress over whether to authorize the use of force was never about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. Everyone thought Saddam Hussein had them. In fact, even those who voted against the use of force in Congress never questioned the veracity of our intelligence information.

That is not because the Bush administration manipulated the intelligence that was presented to Congress, as some have alleged. Indeed, a number of independent commissions since the war began have investigated this issue and found the Bush administration did not distort intelligence information. The best known investigation was the bipartisan Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, which stated unequivocally in its report that, "the Committee did not find any evidence that Administration officials attempted to coerce, influence or pressure analysts

to change their judgments related to Iraqi weapons of mass destruction capabilities.”

Therefore, if we agree that the President did not lie about our intelligence on Iraq’s WMD programs, then the critics can only argue that the President Bush’s rationale for going to war at the time of the Congressional debate was somehow flawed and unjustifiable. Here I would again disagree.

During the debate, I joined with a large majority of the Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle who voted to authorize force. We did so because of two important facts—the same two facts offered by the President.

First, Saddam Hussein was in breach of more than a dozen United Nations Security Council resolutions. He continued to refuse to cooperate with U.N. weapons inspectors even after a decade of sanctions. He rejected proposal after proposal to conduct fair and transparent inspections.

When he finally allowed inspections, Saddam did everything he could to undermine, cajole, and otherwise manipulate the inspections process. He gave every appearance of hiding large stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction.

Second, a large bipartisan majority of Members of Congress, including nearly 30 Senate Democrats and 81 House Democrats, voted to authorize the use of force against Iraq because, after September 11, it was clear that America could no longer afford to allow imminent threats to our nation go unhindered and unopposed. In most minds, Iraq represented a highly dangerous nexus between terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. In the context of Saddam’s decade-long defiance, it was a nexus that Members of both sides of the aisle in both the Senate and the House was no longer willing to ignore.

When critics try to cover up their vote in support of the use of force against Iraq, they damage the credibility of our government overseas and send a disheartening message to our soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who are bravely defending freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan.

When they falsely accuse the President of misleading the American people, they encourage the enemy who believes America will throw in the towel and give up when the fighting gets tough.

It is time for the President’s critics in Congress to remember why they voted to authorize force against Iraq in 2002. It is time for them to acknowledge the progress our soldiers are making now in Iraq and Afghanistan. It is time for them to recognize the success we have had against global networks of terror.

And most of all, it is time for these critics to lay aside their own political ambitions and do what is right for America. It is time for them join our Commander-in-Chief in the fight against those who wish to destroy our Nation.

An agenda of disunity and surrender will never lead to victory. We need to unite behind our Commander-in-Chief if we are to defeat this enemy. It is my hope that the President’s critics will see this imperative and finally do what is best for our Nation.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

Mr. TALENT. I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

DEFENSE BUDGET

Mr. TALENT. Mr. President, I decided to come to the Senate for a few minutes this evening to speak to the Senate because of growing concern over the defense budget and, in particular, the growing likelihood that we are going to see cuts in the defense budget so that next year’s budget is lower than what the President had proposed for fiscal year 2007.

I am moved especially by a recent “Inside Defense” column which reports that because of pressure from the Office of Management and Budget, the Deputy Secretary of Defense may well require that the service chiefs take \$7.5 billion out of next year’s budget and \$32 billion in cuts over the next 5 years—this at the end of the budget cycle, not as a result of an assessment of military need or necessity. As I will show in a minute, one could hardly in any dispassionate view of our military needs believe we could absorb \$7.5 billion in cuts next year because of procedure that is budget driven. When I see that, it reminds me of other things I have been hearing lately. I felt it was *deja vu* all over again, as Yogi Berra might have said.

I remember the days in the 1990s when military needs were determined by the budget rather than the budget being determined by military needs. When the Berlin Wall fell and the Cold War ended, our country was justifiably pleased. We believed there was a peace dividend available. The Clinton Administration took a lot of money out of the defense budget. I will go into that in a minute. They took too much out of the defense budget, and left a force that by the end of the 1990s was hollowing out. Our military was not as prepared as it should have been. We have been doing the best we can in the last few years to reconstitute that force, but now we may be headed in the wrong direction.

I emphasize, this pressure is not from within the Department of Defense. It is not what the Department wants to do. It is what the Department may be forced into as a matter of false economy. There is no economy more false than depriving our military and our men and women of what they need to defend us.

Let me go over a little bit more of a history lesson in some depth. Defense spending actually decreased in real terms every year from 1990 through

1999. In fact, during 3 years in that period, it decreased in nominal terms by almost \$50 billion.

Actual dollars, or nominal dollars, went down in the defense budget over 3 years during that period by \$50 billion, and in every year during that period military spending decreased in real terms.

The reason was, some people thought with the fall of the Soviet Union we would need the military less. That was true for the nuclear arsenal, but not true for the people in the military. It turned out we needed conventional forces actually more than we needed them before the fall of the Soviet Union because deployments went up. We found, in the post-Cold War era, that regional conflicts around the world, the ethnic and religious and regional conflicts that had been suppressed by the bipolar nature of world competition, rose to the surface.

I remember reading what former CIA Director Gates said about it. He said: History had not ended with the fall of the Soviet Union. It had just been frozen before that. And he said: “Now it is thawing out with a vengeance.”

Well, when you spend less and less overall, at least as against inflation, and you have to spend more and more on operations and maintenance, on readiness, because you are actually using the troops more and more, something has to give. You cannot take more and more of a percentage for operations and maintenance out of a budget which is less and less, at least as adjusted against inflation, without something giving. And what gave was procurement.

We took basically a decade-long “procurement holiday.” By the last few years of the 1990s most people realized what was happening and we were able to push more money back into the defense budget, but it was not enough to make up for what had happened before.

From 1975 through 1990, we purchased, on average every year, 78 scout and attack helicopters. From 1991 through the year 2000, we purchased 7 per year on average. For battle force ships from 1975 through 1990, it was 19 a year; 7 a year from 1991 to the year 2000. For fighter aircraft for the Navy, we purchased 111 per year from 1975 through 1990. We purchased 42 per year on average in the decade of the 1990s. I could go on and on.

For tankers, we purchased 5 per year on average during the 15-year period from the mid-1970s to 1990. In the mid 1990s, we purchased one per year. For tanks, artillery, and other armored vehicles listen to this, the basic plat-forms the Army uses; tanks, artillery and other armored vehicles—we purchased 2,083 on average every year from 1975 to 1990. But we purchased 145 on average every year from 1991 through the year 2000.

What happened is what you would have expected. The average age of the force and the equipment in the force