

sending you these bricks in support of an increase in the border security of the United States. These bricks should give you a start in building a wall. The American public demands some solutions to our open borders. A comprehensive border plan must include a security wall in some places, better technology, more funding of personnel for Border Patrol, and overall increased security presence on the southern border. When our borders are secure, then we can discuss the aspects of illegal immigration issues. We are tired of open borders, uncontrolled immigration, terrorist infiltration, criminal alien gangs, and all of the other horrors that arise due to our defenseless borders and unenforced immigration laws."

Mr. Speaker, the voice of America continues to cry out for us to enforce the rule of law, protect the dignity and safety of the American people. Government's number one job is public safety, and public safety starts at the border.

We have an obligation to stop the illegal invasion and stop the colonization of our country and homeland by foreign nations. Failure to do so will result in America being lost to foreign nations without even firing a shot.

And that's just the way it is.

HONORING THOSE WHO MADE THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE

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

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, it is an important duty of all of us who serve here to pay respect, to express our gratitude, to join in the sorrow of those and their families who are serving this Nation in a time of war. I have tried very hard to do that whenever the occasion occurred. I have attended funerals of young men who were killed, and in one case a man not so young.

I was pleased on Saturday to attend a welcoming home ceremony for one young man who returned. I attended a ceremony to see off a group of Guardsmen.

The merits of the war are irrelevant when it comes to honoring and expressing our gratitude to those who have served.

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Having said that, I want to say that I deeply regretted that yesterday, Tuesday rather, I felt called upon to vote against a bill that was presented here under the suspension of the rules which allowed for no serious debate and zero chance of amendment, a bill which in part protected veterans' funerals from the disruption that they have encountered. And it is true that a particularly contemptible group of bigots are harassing people at some funerals. And we have every right and under the Constitution the power to stop it.

Sadly, a badly overrafted bill was brought forth with no chance for us to

amend it. And I do not think we honor our veterans by failing to honor our Constitution. So I had to vote against the bill. Part of the bill, if it had been in part, if we could have amended it down, I would have proudly supported, the part that would have said you cannot have a demonstration in which any individual is willfully making or assisting in the making of any noise that disturbs or tends to disturb the peace or good order of the funeral, memorial service or ceremony on a military cemetery. But the bill went before that.

The bill says that for 60 minutes before a funeral and 60 minutes after, within 500 feet of the cemetery, you can't hold up a sign that might be offensive to people. You can't picket. It doesn't just say noise. It says diversion, and it defines it, any picketing, the display of any placard, banner, flag or similar device.

When we had an outrageous effort to intimidate a Danish newspaper because they exercised the right of free press and published cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed, which many Muslims found offensive, some people, apologists for this outrageous behavior against the newspaper, said, well, you know it is free speech. But free speech has to be respectful. Free speech has to be within limits.

No, it does not. Free speech is not respectful speech. Indeed, the American Constitution, the principle of free speech precisely protects the right of despicable people to be obnoxious. If you don't believe in that, you don't believe in free speech.

In fact, the particular group of vicious people who have been disrupting the funerals have as their major goal getting rid of people like me, gay men and lesbians. They particularly hate us. But I will not allow their bigotry against me and the reaction against that to be used to reduce the protections of our Constitution.

The parts of this bill that say that if you try to disrupt a funeral you are going to be prevented, they are fine. But telling people that 60 minutes before or after a funeral, within 500 feet of a national cemetery, they can't picket or hold up a banner, that is not free speech. That is not what we fight for.

I have defended previously the right of the Nazis to march in Skokie, to the great horror of victims of the Holocaust, or survivors of the Holocaust.

I told the Muslims who tried to coerce the Danish press that no matter how offensive they found that cartoon, freedom of expression meant that no government should stop you from being offensive.

Disrupting a funeral, of course you should not do that. We should not allow ourselves, through restrictive legislative procedures, to act against an admitted evil, the disruption of those ceremonies, in ways that could undermine the Constitution.

So I hope this will come back from the Senate in a form I can vote for. I

would have voted for part of this bill; but I cannot, no matter how despicable the bigots who are defaming this Nation and disrupting cemeteries, I will not allow their behavior to be used as an excuse for undermining the right of other people in other places to hold signs. People holding signs within 200 feet of a cemetery, a half hour after a funeral that some people find offensive, that is free speech. And the way to counter that is to counter that. So I regret very much, in fact, Mr. Speaker, and I don't mean to look for sympathy here. I had an operation here last week. I had a stent, and I was supposed to return early Tuesday to have the stent removed. I delayed my return because I wanted to attend this funeral of the young man who was killed. Obviously, the discomfort of my stent was nothing to what people face who are in Iraq. But I simply want to testify that I will do everything I can to continue to honor these people, but that does not require us to demean the first amendment to the Constitution.

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.)

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to speak out of turn for 5 minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Georgia is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of America's nurses, and I want to bring my colleagues' attention to the fact that this is National Nurses Week.

As a physician for nearly 30 years, I certainly know the importance of nurses to our Nation's health care system, and I can say without hesitation that nurses are the glue that holds our hospitals and our health care system together. They are literally on the front lines of health care, and they are the faces our patients see day in and day out.

Our Nation is facing a critical shortage in the nursing profession, Mr. Speaker. As Americans grow older and live longer, our health care system will be stretched even further to accommodate new demands. And in order for us to continue to deliver high-quality health care in this country, we will need increasing numbers of health care providers and especially registered nurses.

According to the latest projections from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics published in February of 2004, more than one million new and replacement nurses will be needed by the year 2012.

The importance of quality and trusted nurses is best illustrated by my telling you about two of them who are particularly special in my life. When I was a practicing OB-GYN physician in Marietta, Georgia, Lynn Olmstead was a wonderfully gifted nurse who worked with me for 20 loyal and dedicated years.

Lynn is a graduate of Michigan State University, a Spartan, as is her husband, Ken. She had worked in labor and delivery at Wellstar Kennestone Hospital in Marietta, Georgia, in my district for 10 years; and I had an opportunity to see her and her compassion and working with patients in the wee hours of the morning and was very, very fortunate that she agreed to come and work in my office and where she spent the next 20 years, as I said, working so compassionately with patients and helping me, in fact, make right decisions a lot of the times. And I remain dedicated and grateful to Lynn for that service that she gave to me and our patients at Marietta OB-GYN Affiliates.

The other nurse, Mr. Speaker, is my daughter-in-law, Emily House Gingrey. Emily is a graduate of the University of Georgia. She recently, after making a decision a couple or 3 years ago to go back to school and get her registered nursing degree from Georgia Baptist School of Nursing, now works at the Northside Hospital in Atlanta in the neonatal intensive care unit, taking care of the most fragile, not just premature babies, but what we know as immature babies, those less than 2,500 grams.

And I see Emily as she is beginning her career in that most important area of neonatal intensive care, providing life, really, to these very fragile babies that might possibly not make it in this world without the dedication of young nurses like Emily House Gingrey, the wife of my son, Billy.

So it is with a great deal of pleasure, Mr. Speaker, to take just these few minutes this evening to pay tribute to all nurses, and I rise today to applaud the profession of nursing and encourage young Americans to consider this noble work as a future career.

IRAQ AND THE FY07 DEFENSE BILL

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, this Congress had a great opportunity today to pass a defense authorization bill that is good for the American people, a bill that reflects the very best of American values. Foremost among those values is our desire for peace, our capacity for global leadership, and our compassion for the people of the world. We could have reflected those values by utilizing the defense bill as a means of voicing our opposition to prolong the war in Iraq. The Rules Committee, however, prevented me from offering

just such an amendment to the defense authorization bill.

My amendment expressed the sense of the Congress regarding the war in Iraq in two parts. First, it instructs the President, the Commander in Chief of the United States Armed Forces, to develop a plan to bring the members of the U.S. Armed Forces home from Iraq and to bring the plan to the congressional defense committees.

It is clear that we need to begin the process of bringing our troops home because, among many other reasons, the presence of nearly 150,000 American troops in Iraq is an obvious rallying point for dissatisfied people in the Arab world, making the situation in Iraq worse and not making the U.S. any more secure.

The second part of my amendment describes how the United States should support Iraq once our troops have come home. The amendment directs the United States to engage the international community, including the U.N. and NATO, to establish a multinational interim security force for Iraq. The U.N.'s Department of Peacekeeping Operations actually is particularly well suited to this task.

Next we would have shifted our role from that of Iraq's military occupier to its reconstruction partner. By working with the Iraqi people to rebuild their economic and physical infrastructure, we can give Iraq back to the Iraqis and help to create Iraqi jobs and Iraqi security.

Finally, my amendment urged the President to involve the United Nations in establishing an international peace commission comprised of members of the global community who have experience in international conflict resolution so that they would oversee Iraq's post-war reconciliation process, beginning Iraq's long road to recovery after years of sanctions and war.

The House should have been able to debate the importance of ending the war while we helped to stabilize this war-torn nation. Unfortunately, this Congress had other priorities, priorities like authorizing another \$50 billion to continue a devastating war in Iraq that has already taken the lives of more than 2,400 American soldiers, countless tens of thousands of innocent Iraqi civilians, and forever shattered the lives of another 16,000 injured and wounded American troops.

Priorities like authorizing another \$10 billion, that is billion with a "B," on a still unproven missile defense system that can't stop the greatest threat we face, nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists, and has never even been able to stop the missiles it is designed to destroy.

It is beyond dispute that this administration, in tandem with the Republican Congress, has been, to put it mildly, less than fiscally responsible.

Earlier this month I introduced new legislation called the Commonsense Budget Act of 2006 that finally put some sanity back into the Nation's fis-

cal policy. This bill already has the support of almost 40 cosponsors.

The Commonsense Budget Act would trim \$60 billion in waste from the Pentagon budget and put it to work on behalf of the people and programs that truly strengthen America.

These programs include \$10 billion for the modernization of every public school, \$12 billion for health insurance for every child in America, \$10 billion to invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency programs, \$13 billion to feed the hungry, \$5 billion to improve homeland security, and \$5 billion to start the reduction of our deficit.

We need to change the way we think about national security, Mr. Speaker. The return on the investments I have proposed as part of the Commonsense Budget Act will benefit the entire society, and they won't cost us a dime more than we currently spend on our bloated national defense.

Any change in budget priorities, though, has to go hand in hand with change in policy on the ground. The very first of those needs to be an end to the war in Iraq. For the sake of our soldiers, their families and our national security, it is time to bring our troops home.

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

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

BUSH ADMINISTRATION TAX CUTS

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, well, with little notice or fanfare, a modest tax benefit for families who are struggling to help their kids get a higher education expired this year. It was what is called an above-the-line deduction, up to \$4,000 towards tuition could become an above-the-line deduction.

Now for a family with \$40,000, \$50,000 income, that would be worth about 1,000 bucks off their taxes, not insignificant when they are straining on that income to try and help their child get an education, get ahead, realize the American dream.

But the Republican majority, being the fiscal conservatives they are, said it was too expensive. We could not afford to renew this modest tax benefit for middle income families to give them a little help with tuition for their kids. Now, well and good.

When you see their budget that they have pulled from the floor for the third time in 3 weeks, they are going to pass a budget, probably next week, that will have America borrowing \$1.4 billion a day, a lot of it from foreign sources.

It will have a lot of us borrowing from this year's Social Security surplus, \$193 billion, and spending it on