

Greg served as a senator in the 23rd Legislature of the Virgin Islands. He was well on his way to being elected once again, because our community values and needed his consistency, his diligence, his commitment to truth, to values, and to all of the people of the Virgin Islands.

Greg was a devoted son, father, and solid, caring, selfless friend. It was out of this that his humanity became manifest and extended to everything else he did. We are all saddened by his loss, which touches my family and I personally.

Although we grieve, we should take heart that knowing Greg won an even more important election. He now looks over and advocates for us in a far better and all-powerful place. May he rest in peace.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, my Virgin Islands community is saying a fond but sad farewell to a favorite and favored son of St. Croix, Lieutenant Gregory Bennerson of the Virgin Islands Police Department.

As excellently as he has served the Department—just to speak of—his years of service as a policeman and his rise through the ranks to the position of Commander of Criminal Investigations does not do full justice to his life and contributions.

A young man himself, he dedicated much of his free time to youth and worked with boys and girls clubs, was a PTA president and led the pre-cadet and Police Athletic League, but also involved himself in many other activities that uplifted our youth and guided them to be the best they could be.

He also gave his time and support to domestic violence prevention and the Women's Coalition, as well as to improving health services at the Governor Juan F. Luis Hospital. Greg loved St. Croix and was its dedicated advocate and devoted servant.

First a Republican following in the footsteps of his much revered dad, he became a Democrat and served his adopted party with commitment and passion. Greg served as a Senator in the 23rd Legislature of the Virgin Islands and at the time of his passing he was well on his way to being elected once again. Our community valued and needed his consistency, his diligence, his commitment to truth, to values, to right, and to all of the people of the Virgin Islands.

Though a big tease, with a subtle sense of humor, more than anything else he was a devoted son, father, and solid, caring, and selfless friend. It was out of this that his humanity became manifest and extended to everything else he did.

We are all saddened by his loss, which touches my family and me personally.

As I said in tribute at a gathering at home, although we grieve, we should take heart knowing that Greg won an even more important election. He now looks over and advocates for us in a far better and all powerful place.

May he rest in peace.

□ 1515

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACK). Under the Speaker's announced

policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

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

SUPPORTING THE WAR ON TERROR

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to proceed out of order.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. CARTER. Mr. Speaker, there was an historic debate on the House floor last week between both sides of the aisle concerning the war in Iraq. Unfortunately, I got a call late on Wednesday evening that my wife Erica had been rushed to the hospital with a serious medical emergency, and I was absent from that debate because I had to go to my wife's bedside at the hospital. I am happy to report she is at least out of the hospital, although the infection in her hand is still giving her a lot of trouble.

I wanted to at least state my opinion on the war in Iraq and the consequences of American action, and I think heroic action, that is taking place in Iraq and also in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, we are involved in a war on terror. The battle for Iraq and the battle for Afghanistan are clearly part of that war on terror. And if you want to talk about terror, how terrible could it be that what we have discovered happened to two of our fine soldiers, Kristian Menchaca and Thomas Lowell Tucker, who were slaughtered and butchered by our enemy, and we are just learning of the horror of what they did to those poor young men, those heroes, those American heroes who were willing to stand in the gap and be counted so that the people of Iraq can do what they have done, form up a government, make that government functional, get that government to where it is operational so that we can meet our goal.

Our goal is a free Iraq, a democratic Iraq, because, as the President says, when we have free democratic countries, we don't have disputes with those countries that go to war. We are trying to advance the cause of freedom around the world and protect ourselves from people who would slaughter our citizens of this country.

This is not warfare that we are talking about of these people. We are abiding by the rules of war; they are abiding by the rules of terrorism, which is no rule. And that is why we have to continue to take this fight to the

enemy where they are until we have established a victory for the United States. And I honestly believe that victory is on the horizon.

I have made three trips to Iraq. I have visited with individual soldiers in Iraq. They are proud of their mission, they are proud of their accomplishments, they are proud of the things that they do for the Iraqi public. They have stories to share, as one soldier shared with me who was in the hospital and had a rose there with him, about a little girl who gave him that rose and said thank you. He didn't understand the language she was speaking, but he knew it meant thank you.

These troops are doing humanitarian as well as soldierly efforts to make life for the Iraqi people better. But, more importantly, we as American citizens should never tolerate an enemy that would butcher our troops. If there is any amount of decency in these people, they would at least abide by simple, simple rules of war. But they don't. We have had beheadings. We have had slaughter and mutilation of our American corpses.

Mr. Speaker, we are on the right side of Iraq. I am proud that the 4th Infantry Division, which is in my district, and the 1st Calvary Division have been active participants in making life better for the Iraqi public. And, Mr. Speaker, I honor them by standing here today and say I fully support America's war on terror and the war in Iraq. And I apologize that I was not here for the debate, but I am grateful for all those who stood up for the United States of America's effort in the battle of Iraq.

VOTING RIGHTS ACT

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

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, thank you so much for granting me this time.

As chair of the House Democratic Caucus, Mr. Speaker, I would like to offer my congratulations to Chairman SENSENBRENNER, Ranking Member CONYERS, the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Mr. WATT, and the chair of the Hispanic Caucus Mrs. NAPOLITANO, for the great work and the significant sacrifices they gave in helping us to fashion a Voting Rights Act renewal that we thought was acceptable for the vast majority of the Members of this body.

We are extremely disappointed, however, that the leadership of the House has decided to pull the Voting Rights Act which we had hoped to be considering this afternoon.

It is my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that the Judiciary Committee had 12 or 13 hearings, and everybody in this body had an opportunity to come before that committee to let their views be known. Everybody in the voting public had ample opportunity to present their views and their emotions to the committee.

After all of this, we thought we had an agreement that this legislation would come before this body on suspension. We can understand why it was necessary for the Rules Committee to allow two amendments to be offered. We understand politics, and we do not have a problem with that. We do, however, have a problem with raising expectations among the people of this great State and having those expectations dashed as they were today.

We are hopeful that the leadership will bring this legislation before this body before we go out for the July 4 break. I do not believe there is any better way to celebrate this Nation's birthday, which we do on July 4, than by saying to the American people that the Voting Rights Act, which was created to get rid of creative devices that work to nullify and dilute the impact of minority voting in our great State.

I am proud to represent the State of South Carolina in this body. I used to teach history to students in that State. I used to tell my students all the time that one of the reasons that we study history is so that we can understand the past so that we will know pretty much how to prepare for the future. And one of the things I used to tell them, Mr. Speaker, is that if a thing has happened before, it can happen again. And I am afraid that the creative devices that were developed in the 1890s and early 1900s in this country under what we call the Black Codes, things like numbered posts, things like at-large voting, things like what we call full-slate voting, would be allowed back into our electoral process if we politicize section 5 that grants review. And if we were to turn that section over to a political appointee to make determinations as to whether or not they allow to be required other forms of exceptions, that is exactly what we will do with that law.

So, Mr. Speaker, I come today to thank the bipartisan group of legislators on the Judiciary Committee for fashioning an acceptable compromise to bring to this body. And I also ask the leadership of the Republican Party to please bring this legislation to this body next week and give us an opportunity to say to the American people that we will celebrate our birthday on July 4 with an understanding that everybody, irrespective of status, will have their votes counted and counted effectively.

DEMOCRATIC AGENDA

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. Mr. Speaker, the Democrats gave the Republicans a gift last Friday. Let me give you a drum roll here. It is a wonderful gift given by the left to the conservatives here in Washington, D.C. Let me tell you what that gift was. It was the Democrat agenda. They call it the new direction.

Someone said after they released this agenda that it was a new direction. When you are going in circles, you are constantly going in a different direction every time you go around that circle. And that is what the opposition party here in this Chamber is doing, they keep going in circles. It is the same old ideas.

They call it an agenda, but it is more like the Cliff Notes for Liberal Lunacy, Mr. Speaker. The theme of their agenda is best described as, well, promise, tax, spend. Promise, tax, spend. It is what they do best. And it is encouraging to see, and it shows a stark difference between the two parties and where we want to take our country, Mr. Speaker.

They say fiscal responsibility. That is one of their agenda items. Well, that is a wonderful thing to advocate, but it is laughable coming from Democrats. Here on this House floor, just this year, the opposition party has asked for \$45 billion in new spending; \$45 billion. And they call that fiscal responsibility. That is just amazing. And do you know what? They want to have all these new spending programs and call it fiscally responsible. Well, how are they going to do that? How are they going to pay for it? By raising every American's taxes. That is how they will do it.

They say roll back the Bush tax cuts. What that means is every American will pay more next year if the Democrats are in control than if Republicans are in control. That is what it means.

Energy policy. Energy policy. They want to lower gas prices and achieve energy independence. It sounds good. It is very good. Their voting record is far different from that. As we proposed ways of exploring for new energy sources, oil and gas, renewable energy, putting forward bold ideas here on the House floor, they just vote "no." We want to put out tax incentives for new innovation and new ideas for energy production. They say "no." We want to drill and explore for energy in Alaska. They say "no." One hundred eighty-four Democrats voted against exploration of ANWR; 196 Democrats voted against the passage of the Gas Act to relieve high fuel prices for every American; 124 Democrats voted against the Energy Policy Act of 2005, which provided tax incentives and energy production improvements.

Look, the Democrats' rhetoric is far removed from the reality of their voting here on the House floor. But let us talk about what they have done to energy. When you constrict the supply of energy and the demand goes up, costs go up for the consumers. As demand rises and supply is constricted, prices go up. It is very simple, basic economics. Well, the Democrats are in favor of constricting that supply and making the costs go up. That is the policies they have advocated.

But let us move on to taxes. As I said, they have all these new spending proposals, but what are they going to do? Let us talk about the tax cuts the

President has implemented in the last 5 years. One hundred eleven million American taxpayers have seen their taxes decline by an average of \$1,800. That is a wonderful thing for the American people. Over 5 million individuals and families will see their income tax liabilities completely eliminated because the President cut taxes across the board. So if you pay taxes, you have received a tax cut, Mr. Speaker, but those that don't pay any taxes didn't receive a tax cut. That is who the Democrats are saying are left behind by tax cuts. Well, it is a basic notion of fairness, Mr. Speaker. If you pay taxes, we have cut your taxes. But if you don't pay taxes, how can we cut your taxes? So I think the American people should remember that when the Democrats talk about Republicans not cutting everyone's taxes.

□ 1530

Let us talk about the economic growth that we have implemented as a conservative party here in the House and the Senate with a good President working hard. We have had real per capita disposal income growth of 8.5 percent increase since 1999.

HONORING AMERICA'S FALLEN IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, we recently marked a sad milestone in the war in Iraq, as the number of Americans fallen surpassed 2,500. We owe it to each of these families to do everything we can to honor the debt of gratitude we owe them, a debt that can never be fully repaid.

Over the past year, I have led 20 other Members of Congress from both parties in reading the names of the fallen in Iraq and Afghanistan into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

In the words of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, each of these heroes stands in the unbroken line of patriots who have dared to die that freedom might live and grow and increase in its blessing.

God bless and keep each of the brave Americans whose memory we honor today: 1. 1st Lieutenant Benjamin T. Britt. 2. Specialist Cheyenne C. Willey. 3. Sergeant Regina C. Reali. 4. Master Sergeant Joseph J. Andres, Jr. 5. Sergeant Myla L. Maravillosa. 6. Specialist Anthony O. Cardinal. 7. Specialist Sergio Gudino. 8. Specialist Dane O. Carver. 9. Chief Warrant Officer Isaias E. Santos. 10. Chief Warrant Officer Richard Matthew Salter. 11. Sergeant Dominic R. Coles. 12. Private Joshua M. Morberg. 13. Specialist Lance S. Sage. 14. Specialist Aaron M. Forbes. 15. Private 1st Class George Anthony Lutz II. 16. Specialist Prince K. Teewia. 17. Staff Sergeant Ayman A. Taha. 18. Private Jonathan R. Pfender. 19. Sergeant 1st Class Shawn Christopher Dostie. 20. Sergeant Marce-