

Madam Speaker, at this point, I ask unanimous consent to enter into the record the remarks Chairman Bernanke gave before my Fifth Regional Leaders Issues Conference.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Richard W. Fisher, CEO and President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, for hosting me recently at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas. Richard W. Fisher assumed the office of president and CEO of the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas on April 4, 2005. President Fisher serves as a member of the Federal Open Market Committee, the Federal Reserve's principal monetary policymaking group. He is former vice chairman of Kissinger McLarty Associates, a strategic advisory firm chaired by former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. From 1997 to 2001, Fisher was deputy U.S. trade representative with the rank of ambassador. He oversaw the implementation of NAFTA, negotiations for the Free Trade Area of the Americas, and various agreements with Vietnam, Korea, Japan, Chile and Singapore. He was a senior member of the team that negotiated the bilateral accords for China's and Taiwan's accession to the World Trade Organization. Throughout his career, Fisher has served on numerous for-profit and not-for-profit boards. A first-generation American, Fisher is equally fluent in Spanish and English, having spent his formative years in Mexico. He attended the U.S. Naval Academy, graduated with honors from Harvard University in economics, read Latin American politics at Oxford and received an M.B.A. from Stanford University.

During my visit, President Fisher provided me with valuable economic information on the 15th district of Congress as well as insight into the Dallas Bank's efforts to improve financial literacy. I want to commend President Fisher and the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas for publishing an excellent brochure entitled Building Wealth: A Beginner's Guide to Securing Your Financial Future, which is an introduction for individuals and families seeking to develop a plan for building personal wealth. It contains four sections: learn the language, budget to save, save and invest and take control of debt. The publication is available in both English and Spanish and is available in print and as an interactive version on the Dallas Fed's Web site. The Dallas Fed is an active partner in several asset-building initiatives throughout its district, including the Texas Asset Building Coalition, which promotes personal financial education, affordable homeownership opportunities, Individual Development Accounts/matched-savings programs, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and anti-predatory lending measures.

Again, I want to thank Chairman Bernanke for speaking at my Regional Leaders Issues Conference and President Fisher for hosting me at the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

□ 1000

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan) at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: "When I call; answer me, O God of justice, from anguish you release me; have mercy and hear me!"

Lord, at times our prayers, especially those said publicly, are bold sounding, almost like a military order summoning the ranks to take shape, a call to precision and movement.

At other times, our prayer is more like a whimper, muffled in the heart, struggling to find the right words, the cry of the most dependent in our midst.

Whenever or however we call out to you, O Lord, as individuals or as a Nation, hear us.

For we are in need of Your justice and Your mercy, both now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KUCINICH led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

IRAN'S GASOLINE IMPORTS

(Mr. KIRK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, 3 years ago, a Congressman, ROB ANDREWS, and I founded the Iran Working Group to explore all peaceful options with regard to the nuclear crisis.

Last June, we proposed a unique option, an international quarantine on the sale of gasoline to Iran. Despite its status as an OPEC oil producer, Iran depends on over 40 percent of its gasoline supply from abroad, and because the mullahs failed to modernize Iran's refineries, she has run short.

Iran's government knows of this critical weakness. They have reviewed the congressional resolution and calls for restricting gas sales to Iran.

To prepare their people, the Iranian government decided this week to cut in

half their gasoline subsidy for foreign supplies, effectively eliminating almost 200,000 barrels a day from their national supply. This will trigger gasoline rationing in Tehran and will begin to tighten the squeeze on the government.

It shows that this is a very powerful lever to use in the peaceful resolution of this crisis and one that Iran's leaders already know would be effective.

TIME TO REAWAKEN IN OUR PEOPLE THE COURAGE OF THE FOUNDERS

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, a reading from the book of James, Madison that is.

The fourth amendment to the Constitution of the United States: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated.

That amendment was passed in 1791. In 2006, the administration is getting the banking records of millions of Americans without a warrant. The government wants to know who you write checks to, who writes checks to you. They want to flag those transactions and investigate without a warrant legal, private conduct. Under the PATRIOT Act, they can monitor wire transfers, ATM and credit card transactions.

This year, as we celebrate the 230th anniversary of our Declaration of Independence, we find 150,000 troops in Iraq so the people there can have the very rights we are losing at home.

It is time to reawaken in our people the courage of the Founders, the spirit that founded a free Nation so that we can remain a free Nation. That struggle is not in Iraq. It is here in America.

REID-KENNEDY BILL IS NOT THE ANSWER

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, House Republicans are committed to passing strong immigration reform legislation. Last December, we passed a bill that would, among other things, strengthen border security, crack down on those who knowingly hire illegal workers, empower local law enforcement to enforce our immigration laws, and allow for the swift deportation of illegal aliens. This is something that has to be done for our national security, and we cannot compromise on this.

I cannot for the life of me understand why Democrats are pushing to pass the Reid-Kennedy bill, which is a huge pat on the back for those who are breaking our laws. This bill would reward bad behavior by guaranteeing Social Security benefits for illegal aliens and enabling them to collect welfare benefits

paid for by American tax-paying citizens. In addition, the Reid-Kennedy bill would permit illegal aliens to pay in-State tuition at public universities, also funded by American taxpayers, and would require our country to consult with Mexico before constructing a wall to protect our own country.

Madam Speaker, the Reid-Kennedy bill is not the answer to our immigration problems, and I encourage my colleagues to oppose it.

MINIMUM WAGE/LIVABLE WAGE

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, the economic climate created by years of failed Republican policies is tough for many Americans to swallow. Millions of full-time workers in the Nation who are making the Federal minimum wage, \$5.15, find that every other cost-of-living expense has gone up, from prescription drugs to housing to just about everything, food on our table.

The minimum wage has not increased for 10 years. The millions of Americans who would benefit from that increase know that it is impossible to make ends meet at the current salary that has not been raised since 1997. For example, we are struggling with the rising costs of oil and other expenses.

Madam Speaker, everyone in the country who works full time to support their family deserves to earn a livable wage.

Today, Democrats will demand a vote in this House to increase the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$7.25. It is only fair. We hope that House Republicans, who have been more than willing to shower giant tax breaks to their wealthy friends, will finally realize that no American working full time deserves to live in poverty.

We hope that you will join with us today to increase the minimum wage.

PALESTINIAN UPHEAVAL

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, the pictures running with recent news reports tell the story: The Palestinians are in upheaval. Earlier this month, hundreds of supporters of Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas and his Fatah faction stormed parliament buildings in Ramallah, setting parts of them ablaze. This was in response to earlier Hamas-led attacks on Fatah security forces in Gaza.

Madam Speaker, this escalating violence among rival Palestinian factions should teach the world a lesson. Elections alone do not make people democratic. The elections are important, but without the foundation of a civil society and certain values, they will not guarantee democratic freedom.

The Palestinian people must also embrace basic democratic values and prin-

ciples: the rule of law; freedom of speech; due process protections; respect for honest, civil debate; religious liberties. The list goes on.

Continuing to choose extremism rather than fundamental civil reforms like these will only lead to further upheaval and hardship.

PROVIDING A CARING FAMILY FOR FOSTER CHILDREN

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I just returned from a briefing held by the Congressional Coalition on Adoption and their Caring Connections Program for children. I have never been more inspired, I have never been more motivated, and I have never been more stimulated than when I heard all of these young people who grew up in foster homes talking about their experiences and where they have come.

So I simply want to commend Senator LANDRIEU and Representative GINNY BROWN-WAITE for their leadership of this activity and others. We need to make sure that all of our children have warm, caring families in which to live.

STAFF SGT. ALBERTO SANCHEZ JR.—IMMIGRANT SOLDIER

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, more than 30 years ago, Alberto and Olga Sanchez decided to leave the dusty border town of Renosa, Mexico, and immigrate to Texas with their small child, Alberto, Jr.

Alberto grew up in Houston and went to Milby High School. After high school, he wanted to go to college but decided to join the United States Army first. So he spent 9 years as a member of the United States Army.

He married his sweetheart, Yesenia; and their fifth wedding anniversary was to be next month.

But, Saturday, Staff Sergeant Alberto Sanchez, Jr., died while on combat patrol in Balad, Iraq. Caught in the path of an IED explosion, his wounds overcame him. He was 33 years of age.

He was assigned to the Army's 1st Battalion, 68th Armored Regiment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team of the 4th Infantry Division.

IEDs, improvised explosive devices, are nothing more than booby traps buried by cowardly, masked terrorists who lack the courage to face our troops.

Staff Sergeant Sanchez died while in service to his country. America joins his wife, his parents, his two siblings, along with a host of friends and family that mourn the loss of this American soldier. He is another example that freedom always costs and always will.

And that's just the way it is.

PLAN FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, on Sunday, Iraq's prime minister unveiled a 24-point plan that included a timetable for U.S. withdrawal.

Last week, the U.S. military's top commander in Iraq briefed the President and top Republicans about a plan to significantly reduce the number of U.S. soldiers in Iraq.

For months, Democrats have been calling for a new direction, including a timetable to redeploy U.S. soldiers out of harm's way; and the American people have been saying it is time for a new direction that protects U.S. interests by protecting U.S. soldiers.

The Iraqi people, the American people and the U.S. commanders all say the same thing: It is time for a timetable. And the President still says the same thing: Stay the course.

Madam Speaker, the Democrats were wrong. The President's favorite phrase, stay the course, is not a slogan. It is a direct order for Republican Members of the Congress to deny their better judgment and disregard the concern of their American constituents and the top five military commanders.

The President must have some kind of October surprise in mind. The President is off course, and until there is a mid-term course correction, America will remain misled and misguided in Iraq, and U.S. soldiers will bear the brunt of the President's stubbornness.

OPPOSING BILINGUAL BALLOTS

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of reauthorizing the Voting Rights Act of 1965. However, I am greatly concerned about a provision that is in the bill for bilingual ballots. That language still remains in the bill.

Let me be clear. I support legal immigration and certainly celebrating one's heritage. However, the bilingual ballot provision has long kept new citizens from increasing their knowledge of our language and from fully integrating into our society.

Not only is it expensive to print ballots in a variety of different dialects and tongues, but it reinforces a fractious society.

I had planned to offer an amendment with my good friend and colleague, Congressman Steve King of Iowa, to strip this arcane and divisive language.

I ask my colleagues for support of this measure. You heard it here.