

PRAYER

Imam Yusuf Saleem, Masjid Muhammad, Washington, DC, offered the following prayer:

With God's name, the merciful benefactor, the merciful redeemer. We seek Your guidance, Your mercy, and Your forgiveness that this body of servants to God and this country will be blessed with hindsight, insight, and foresight as only You can provide. Supply this elected assembly, entrusted by our Nation's citizens, to ultimately trust the creator of us all. As defined by humans, these are delicate times, but still we know it is Your times. So let truth, excellence, justice, and service lead the intellects and souls of our House of Representatives.

Yes, God bless America. Yes, God has blessed America. Yes, God is still blessing America, a land of diversity in every imaginable way. For in the Holy Quran, a book of guidance to humanity, it states, "God has honored all of the children of Adam." And in America's Declaration of Independence, "all men are created equal."

So, with resources, material, spiritual, and mental, we thank God. We thank You, God, for engineering the tradition of this land to witness that life and liberty must be secured by submitting our wills to Your plan. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Virginia (Mrs. DRAKE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. DRAKE 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.

WELCOMING IMAM YUSUF SALEEM

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to introduce to the Members of this body Imam Yusuf Saleem, a devoted servant of the Muslim faith and a recognized leader of the Muslim community. Imam Saleem is a graduate of Howard University, where he earned both his bachelor's of arts degree as well as his master's degree in education. He is a devoted educator who has held the rank of professor, principal, and teacher.

In the wake of the brutal terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Imam Saleem, along with other prominent

leaders of the Muslim community, met with President George Bush to condemn the attacks and to establish a unified front against terrorism. As spokesman for this historic meeting, Imam Saleem's remarks, along with those of President Bush, helped to clarify for the American people the peaceful nature of the religion of Islam.

Imam Saleem's tireless work has not gone unnoticed. In August 2002, the District of Columbia awarded Imam Saleem the first mayoral clergy award. In 2002, he was named Muslim man of the year by members of the Muslim community.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in welcoming to the floor a true citizen-servant who is committed to his faith, his family, and the United States of America.

SCHIP

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, last week President Bush threatened to veto a bipartisan agreement that will provide health insurance to 10 million of America's children.

Before acting on this threat, the President should talk to our Nation's Governors, 43 of whom support a robust reauthorization of children's health insurance, known as SCHIP, set to expire this Sunday night. Governors such as Republican John Huntsman of Utah, Republican Tim Pawlenty of Wisconsin, Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger of California, and Republican Jodi Rell of my State of Connecticut have all endorsed protecting this program, which the bipartisan agreement will accomplish.

Make no mistake about it; the President's plan will disqualify millions of American children from SCHIP coverage in the future. We already know, in Connecticut, 5,000 children will be kicked off the existing SCHIP program if his plan goes through.

Mr. Speaker, Republican and Democratic Governors together recognize the importance of a strong SCHIP program. It is time for him to listen to these Governors and back off his veto threat.

APPRECIATION FOR TROOPS IN IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this last weekend I was grateful to visit our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I saw firsthand the growing success in Baghdad during a visit with Major General Joseph Fil, commander of forces in Baghdad, to a neighborhood joint security site. We saw shops open, normal traffic, and civilians unafraid. This evidence of success was repeated

in a visit to Ramadi, where enthusiastic American and Iraqi troops have deposed the al Qaeda terrorists.

In Kabul, I was briefed on training of Afghan police by the 218th Brigade of the South Carolina Army National Guard led by General Bob Livingston. As a 28-year veteran of the 218th, I know the competence and resolve of our troops. Additionally, in Jalalabad, American and Afghani provincial reconstruction teams are promoting security, governance, and economic development.

With eight visits to Iraq and four to Afghanistan, I am more convinced than ever that to protect the American families we must stop the terrorists overseas. Our dedicated troops deserve our support of this vital mission.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

SCHIP

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

Mr. SESTAK. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago, entering my 31st year in the military, my single daughter, 4-year-old Alex, was struck with a malignant brain tumor. After two brain operations and given 3 to 9 months to live, we moved into a cancer ward and began a journey that has her here today and has me in the House.

The incident that brought me here was, her roommate that day as she began her chemotherapy was a young 2½-year-old boy from Washington, DC. He was diagnosed that morning with acute leukemia, and for 6 hours we could not help but overhear as social workers came and went to see if that 2½-year-old boy could stay because his parents did not have health insurance.

I have been in combat. I have seen the worst of human nature. I have also seen the best of human nature. This SCHIP bill would cover 10 million uninsured Americans, that 2½-year-old boy, so that social worker does not determine whether some child is taken care of, is the best of our nature. I ask everyone to support the SCHIP bill.

THE BATTLE AGAINST THE BRIDGE TO NOWHERE

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, we have won the battle against the Bridge to Nowhere.

This \$320 million federally subsidized structure would have been as long as the Golden Gate Bridge, standing 80 feet higher than the Brooklyn Bridge. It would have connected the mainland to an island, population 50, with no roads or stores.

Last year, the House adopted the Kirk amendment, blocking all funding for the Bridge to Nowhere. It was a

wise move to protect taxpayers. But the Senate said, no, and temporarily saved the bridge. House leaders of this Congress surprisingly backed the Bridge to Nowhere, but our arguments have finally won. Alaska has decided to block all funding for the Bridge to Nowhere. Following the collapse of the Minneapolis bridge, we now have additional funds to fix bridges in need of repair, and maybe return some of this money that was to be wasted to the American taxpayers that earned it.

SCHIP

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

Mr. WELCH of Vermont. Mr. Speaker, we have 47 million Americans without health insurance. Today, we are going to have an opportunity to vote on providing 10 million children with continued health care coverage that they are going to need. This is, as in the spirit of many of the good things we have done, bipartisan. The Governor of Vermont, Republican, supports it. Republican Senators HATCH and GRASSLEY support it, done a tremendous job. The response from the President, unfortunately, is to veto this legislation.

It is hard to understand how it is that, when the cost of this program is the equivalent of 2 weeks' spending on the war in Iraq, we can't find it in our capacity to spend that money to make certain that parents, when they go to bed at night, know their kids, when they need a doctor, will have access to the health care that they need. Our opportunity here in this House is to send the President a message, in the hopes that he will do the right thing and sign this bill, with an overwhelming bipartisan bill that reflects the bipartisan work and bicameral work that was done to bring it to the floor.

SCHIP

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today the new majority sadly declares politics more important than health care for our Nation's poorest children. Democrats are moving forward with a massive expansion of Washington-run health care under the auspices of helping kids. Yet, any honest discussion about this bill reveals that it is clearly less about helping children and more about Washington control. You see, they think they can make better decisions than you.

Remarkably, this expansion of bureaucratic health care offers taxpayer-funded coverage to people who are neither poor nor children. Democrats have made it clear that this bill is just the next step in their desired march toward Washington control of health care. And as a physician, I have seen how dangerous government control of health care can be.

Rather than forcing bureaucratic-controlled health care upon the American people, I urge my colleagues to reject this proposal and reauthorize SCHIP in a way that is consistent with its original bipartisan intent: helping America's poorest children.

SCHIP

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, how many more thousands of lives and hundreds of billions of dollars need to be spent to enable this President to avoid accountability, to save face for the worst foreign policy fiasco in America's history?

And when all is said and done, when all the blood and the treasure has been spent and we look back at what we will have accomplished, we will have a Shia theocracy far more loyal to Iran than it is to the United States, and probably equally repressive of women's rights and human rights. How is that possibly worthy of the sacrifice of our soldiers? Mr. Speaker, it is not.

The fact is that, if the President's supplemental for Iraq that he is requesting now is granted, we will be spending almost as much in 1 week, \$3.5 billion, as it would take to provide needed health insurance for 4 million poor children for an entire year. Isn't it time to put America's priorities in order?

U.S. HISTORY RESOLUTION

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, 220 years ago, 55 delegates assembled in Philadelphia, "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity."

The principles set forth by our Founding Fathers are still important today, and the Constitution and founding documents are essential to understand our history as a nation. They remain the bedrock of American society, and it is essential that we honor our Constitution as the embodiment of the freedoms we hold dear. That is why I introduced the U.S. History Resolution.

This resolution acknowledges the importance of promoting U.S. history in our schools and communities, with a particular focus on America's founding documents.

As the saying goes, those who forget history are doomed to repeat it. And to avoid this fate, we should repeat it often, but to repeat it in schools, to repeat it to our children so they understand where we came from so we can know where we are going. And that will promote a better America.

WAR IN IRAQ

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, the President recently boasted that we were "kicking ass in Iraq."

With brave Americans dying in record numbers, I have two questions for the President.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I have a point of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will suspend.

Mr. MCHENRY. The gentleman's words are out of order. The gentleman is using language that is unbecoming of the debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all Members to refrain from vulgarity.

The gentleman will proceed.

Mr. YARMUTH. With brave American soldiers dying in record numbers, I have just two questions for the President: Just whose posteriors are we kicking? And how do you know?

With Sunnis and Shiites killing themselves and each other, plus an incompetent Maliki government, we don't know who we are fighting much less where we are kicking them. And while we are tied up in Iraq, al Qaeda thrives in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

So the President's turn of phrase will go into the Blooper Hall of Fame with other Bush golden oldies, like "last throes," "links to al Qaeda," and "mission accomplished."

There was a time when American success meant defeating Nazis, tearing down communism's iron curtain, and walking on the Moon. Supporting our troops meant honest safeguards, not trash talk. How low have our standards fallen when the President points to the debacle he created and says, "This is what I am proud of"?

Most Americans believe in a country that is capable of much higher standards. And if America were really kicking butt, the President wouldn't need to say anything. Everyone would know it.

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ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind all Members to refrain from vulgarity.

CONDEMNING THE ATTACK ON GENERAL PETRAEUS

(Mrs. DRAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, General Petraeus presented Congress with the progress report that we requested. Rather than encountering a fair dialogue on the situation in Iraq,