



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2007

No. 174

House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SALAZAR).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC.
November 9, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN T. SALAZAR to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, as veteran to all our stories of heroes and as eternal witness to the human depths of their truths, You have asked the ultimate sacrifice of only some. They, more than any others, have followed in the way of Your self-giving and unconditional love.

Others have been called to serve their brothers and sisters of this Nation, living through the years and beyond in the military. The wearing of the uniform alone bears the respect and honor of our people because of their loyalty to their pledge and faithfulness in caring for each other.

In so doing, sometimes their lives have been abruptly altered, always significantly changed because they have lived and served so closely with each other, to accomplish the task at hand, while always upholding the best values held by these United States.

So this weekend, Lord, we stand with, we march alongside, and we pray for, all the veterans who have served this country. As we thank them and their families for their sacrifices, we solemnly ask that You give us a share in the spirit that has guided and upheld

them. May we be so committed, unified, and self-giving in our service, 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 his approval thereof.

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain five 1-minute speeches per side.

SAVE AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I want to speak directly to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. The defense authorization conference report today has a section which I think Members need to look at. All of us who are familiar with the 1878, I think it is, Posse Comitatus Act know there was a reason to exclude the military from being involved in civil law enforcement.

I want you to listen to a section that is in this bill today, section 1615. I am going to read part of it. Section 1615 "Requires the Secretary to: (1) determine the military-unique capabilities needed to be provided by DOD to support civil authorities in an incident of national significance."

I want people to think about this. We have an administration that has repeatedly violated the Constitution, that has taken this country into war based on lies, that is putting us in hock to China to pay for the wars, and that suborns torture and rendition. And now this. We have to be careful, America. We're losing our democracy. It's time for us to save it.

HONORING JUDGE H. SAMUEL STILWELL

(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, long-time friend, Judge Sam Stilwell, a true Southern gentleman, recently retired from the South Carolina Court of Appeals after 11 years on the bench. Judge Stilwell's personal integrity and professionalism have earned him a well-deserved reputation as a fine judge and attorney.

Judge Stilwell graduated from the University of South Carolina Law

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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School, served as counsel to the late Senator Strom Thurmond, and was a colleague of mine in the South Carolina State Senate, ably representing Greenville County.

I want to thank his wife Robin and their children and spouses: Rivers and Charlotte, Jason and Amanda, Allison and Bo, and Rob and Charlotte for their years of support. We are all proud that Rob is currently serving with the 218th Brigade Combat Team of the South Carolina Army National Guard in Afghanistan.

South Carolina is grateful for Judge Stilwell's years of dedicated public service to his State and country, and we wish him all the best in his future endeavors.

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

STOP OUTSOURCING SECURITY

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, in case there was any doubt that we need to get rid of private security contractors in Iraq, just look at yesterday's headline story in the Washington Post: "How Blackwater Sniper Fire Felled 3 Iraqi Guards. Witnesses call shooting unprovoked, but State Department cleared its security team after a brief probe."

That shooting took place February 7, and just yesterday we found out about it. Isn't it obvious that the State Department is unable or unwilling to control these armed mercenaries whose reckless behavior fans the flames of hatred against all Americans, including our young troops in harm's way? Isn't it obvious that for-profit companies like Blackwater who are being paid billions of taxpayer dollars have forfeited their right to work in Iraq? Defense Secretary Robert Gates said they are working "at cross purposes to our larger mission in Iraq."

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor the Stop Outsourcing Security Act, H.R. 4102, and begin now to phase out these unaccountable private security contractors before they do any more damage.

CHILD SOLDIERS IN BURMA

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to a new report by Human Rights Watch detailing the use of child soldiers in Burma, particularly by the brutal dictatorship there.

Past reports have suggested that there are approximately 70,000 child soldiers in Burma, the largest child soldier army in the world. It is difficult to know the exact number. But we do know that not only does the SPDC regime refuse to allow democracy and en-

gages in ethnic cleansing, it also deliberately, as policy, targets children for military recruitment, training, and battle.

Children are targeted simply walking down the street or waiting for a train. If they don't have their ID cards, so-called "recruiters" tell the children they will be sent to prison or they can join the army. If the children try to run away, they are severely punished.

Children are also forced by the SPDC to participate in human rights violations such as burning down villages or shooting villagers on sight, women and children included.

Mr. Speaker, the SPDC dictatorship must go. It is time for democracy in Burma.

IRAN WAR GAME

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, my concern that the President might launch a military strike against Iran is well known; but my mission here today is not rhetorical. I am here to propose that Members of Congress participate in an Iran war game.

Television could carry the event so the American people can watch it all. We know that the Pentagon has conducted war games to examine the casualties and consequences of a U.S. military strike against Iran. We should, too.

Here are some of the questions that could be answered: Could we use bunker buster bombs? Could a U.S. military strike against Iran result in a wider Middle East war? What provocation would cause the President to provoke such a strike?

A group of retired, high-level CIA agents brought this idea to me. These are patriots whom we trusted with keeping and protecting America's secrets. They and others, including a retired Air Force colonel who conducted war games in the Pentagon, would accurately produce a U.S.-Iran war game just as it is done in the Pentagon. I know because they gave me the plan.

A military strike against Iran would involve life-and-death issues. We need to understand what they would look like. I urge my colleagues and the media to join me in demanding that we publicly conduct a U.S.-Iran war game as soon as possible.

Think what we would have learned if we had done it before Iraq.

FUND OUR VETERANS

(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, this is day 40. That is 40 days so far that our veterans have not had the use of the increased funding for their benefits and health care. That is \$18.5 million a day not able to be used.

One thing that our veterans asked for is that we pass our bill by October 1. This work has been done for months.

With Veterans Day quickly approaching, the Democratic leadership put our veterans aside to consider billions in bloated domestic spending instead of sending a clean veterans bill to the floor.

I'm standing with our veterans, and I call on all Americans to contact their Representatives to tell the Democrat leadership to send a clean veterans appropriation bill to the President now.

MAIN STREET OR WALL STREET?

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Get ready. You're going to hear a lot of fuzzy math, obfuscation and general BS here on the floor today; but there has never been a more clear choice between Main Street and Wall Street America.

On one side, tax relief for 22 million American families, 247,000 families in Oregon, 39,000 in my district, relief from the onerous alternative minimum tax.

On the other side, 50,000 millionaires and billionaires who manage private investment funds and exploit a tax loophole to pay a rate of taxes less than that paid by a teacher or a cop walking the beat. The bill would ask those 50,000 millionaire and billionaire investors to pay their fair share so that 22 million middle-income families can get relief from the alternative minimum tax, a tax originally designed to get at the millionaires and billionaires.

There will be gnashing of teeth because the millionaires and billionaires are very generous come campaign time. But you can't dodge this vote; Main Street or Wall Street?

□ 0915

HONORING TOMMY WIRES

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, America will pay tribute to tens of thousands of military veteran men and women who have bravely served their country and who have fought to protect our freedom.

I mention one resident from Pickens, South Carolina, Mr. Tommy Wires, who served this country for 9 years in the United States Marine Corps. Tommy joined the Marine Corps in 1959. He served two tours in Vietnam and, while serving with the 26th Marines on his second tour in Vietnam, was wounded.

During his service, he remained devoted to his wife and his two sons.

Tommy is a part of those brave soldiers on this coming Veterans Day who deserve recognition for his sacrifice and love for this country.