

We can wait no longer and that is why I am here before you. We must work together to restore Palestine, a nation in despair and without hope. We must work together to restore peace, hope and opportunity to the Palestinian people. And in so doing, we will begin a process of building peace, not only throughout the region, but throughout the world. How much more bloodshed and how many more lives will it cost for this grave situation to be resolved?

I say: No more bloodshed and no more lives pointlessly taken.

The young boy, traveling to school with his brother in Palestine, let him have a life of peace.

The mother, watching with fear as her children board a bus in Israel, let her have a life of peace.

The father in Lebanon, working hard to provide an education for his children, let him have a life of peace.

The little girl, born in Iraq, with her wide eyes full of wonder, let her have a life of peace.

The family, together eating their evening meal, in Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Europe, Australia, and the Middle East, let them all have a life of peace.

Today my friends, we must speak. We cannot be silent.

The next time a Jordanian, a Palestinian, or an Israeli comes before you, let it be to say: Thank you for helping peace become a reality.

Peace be upon you.

Thank you very much.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

At 11 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m., His Majesty King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Deputy Sergeant at Arms escorted the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps from the Chamber.

JOINT MEETING DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The purpose of the joint meeting having been completed, the Chair declares the joint meeting of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 11 o'clock and 38 minutes a.m., the joint meeting of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The House will continue in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1218

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SCHIFF) at 12 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS HAD DURING RECESS

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings during the recess be printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain one-minutes, 15 minutes per side.

THE IMPERATIVE OF PEACE

(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, a few minutes ago we heard King Abdullah of Jordan declare the imperative of peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians as central to assuring peace not only in the Middle East but throughout the world.

Speaking not only of Israelis and Palestinians but of Lebanese and Iraqis and of people all over the world, King Abdullah said, "Let them have a life of peace."

Indeed, it is our responsibility as leaders of the United States to respond to such an eloquent call by creating a restart of the peace process, which brings security, justice and peace to both Palestinians and Israelis.

When our brothers and sisters are killing each other, it is for us to use the power of compassion and love so that all may survive and prosper in security and peace.

This is a good moment for us to make a restart. This is a good moment for us to create a new context. This is a good moment for us to join with King Abdullah in speaking of people in the Middle East and throughout the world and saying, "Let them have a life of peace."

BRAC FUNDING

(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, earlier this week I visited Walter Reed Army Medical Center, including outpatient residence Building 18.

Despite Walter Reed's status on the BRAC list, there is no excuse for offering anything but world-class patient care to our returning wounded warriors.

According to the BRAC Commission, Bethesda Naval Medical will take on the important mission currently handled by Walter Reed in 2011. Yet, only 5 weeks ago, the majority decided to take away \$3 billion from the BRAC ac-

count that is needed to allow them to build the facilities to take on this overwhelming responsibility.

I have asked the question then, and 5 weeks later have yet to have an answer, where is the money for BRAC and when will the money be restored for patient care for our men and women returning from battle?

SONIC FOUNDRY

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

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize one of Wisconsin's own, the Sonic Foundry Company, for its well-deserved attention as leaders of the company rang the opening bell to start the NASDAQ trading day this morning.

Sonic Foundry is an example of a company excelling in innovation. Its Web technology is transforming business, government and educational institutions by allowing people to receive critical information and share knowledge. Their Mediasite technology is trusted by Fortune 500 companies, educational institutions and government agencies. In Wisconsin, use of this technology saved the State's budget \$800,000 in its first year of use.

Sonic Foundry's Mediasite technology also allows the exchange of video greetings and interactive content to be passed between separated family members. Military families have been provided this service for free during holiday occasions.

Wisconsin is proud of Sonic Foundry's accomplishments.

DIRECTO A MEXICO

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the Federal Government is helping and encouraging illegals in this country to send money south of the border. Here is how it works.

The Federal Reserve, in a program called Directo a Mexico, allows illegals that have no Social Security numbers and no American IDs to send billions of dollars through U.S. banks to Mexico.

The Federal Reserve, also at taxpayer expense, provides banks with promotional marketing propaganda in Spanish so as to appeal to the ever-growing illegal population. This untaxed money to Mexico is about \$23 billion a year and a drain on the United States economy.

The banks make a profit off the illegals and their transfers. It is all about banking greed. These transactions should be taxed, and the banks should be required to collect the taxes.

Keep some of that money in the United States to pay for all the social services that illegals obtain and don't pay for. Banks should not be in the business of helping illegals in the United States send money anywhere,

and neither should our Federal Government, for that matter. But banking greed seems to rule the day.

And that's just the way it is.

WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I stand today for our veterans. The American public has heard the revelations of poor conditions at Walter Reed and other military medical centers around the country.

The fact that we are not providing adequate support and resources for the brave men and women who fought for our country is a national disgrace. We must ensure soldiers have the training, resources and care while in combat and when they return home.

Next week, I will be visiting Walter Reed to talk to administrators and patients about the care our veterans are receiving. I will also visit Jefferson Barracks and the John Cochran Hospital in Missouri. By evaluating our current facilities, we can determine the strengths to build upon and weaknesses to address.

I remain determined to ensure our veterans are receiving the care and support they have earned and been promised, and I call upon every Member of this House to join in fighting for those who have fought for us.

FISCAL YEAR 2008 BUDGET

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

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, next week we will mark up the budget for fiscal year 2008. That budget will set the tone for the year and will affect the fiscal direction of our country.

Simply chasing higher spending with higher taxes, as the Democrats want, fails to address the unsustainable growth of government spending. Also, entitlement spending currently consumes more than half the budget and is projected to grow by nearly 6 percent per year, faster than the entire government costs now. We must take immediate and substantive steps to ensure we can meet commitments in the future.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans will put forth a budget that balances the budget by 2012, without raising taxes, by keeping our economy strong, creating jobs and by reforming and strengthening entitlement programs.

Let's work together to balance the budget, but let's make sure we do it the right way. The question will be answered this month, which is, will Democrats work with us toward these goals or go back to the days of tax and spend?

DEMOCRATIC CONGRESS PROVIDING PROPER OVERSIGHT OF POOR TREATMENT OF WOUNDED SOLDIERS

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

Mr. HARE. Mr. Speaker, the American people are rightfully outraged by the stories coming out of Walter Reed.

On Monday, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee held its first hearing at Walter Reed to determine how long these problems have been going on and how best we can fix the problems as soon as possible. Three other hearings are scheduled throughout the week.

But this administration has some tough questions to answer. First, when did they know that wounded military personnel were not receiving the treatment they deserve? The President said he wasn't aware of these problems until the Washington Post investigation, but several GAO reports have been released outlining some of these problems. Was the administration ignoring these reports or just ignoring the problem?

And, second, why did the administration choose to privatize services at Walter Reed? And how did they go about choosing a company with ties to Halliburton?

Our soldiers deserve better, and I am confident that this Congress will provide the necessary oversight so that we can fix these problems immediately.

FIRST AMENDMENT AND FREEDOM OF THE PRESS ARE STILL BEHIND BARS

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, if there is anything we learned from the conviction of Vice Presidential aide Scooter Libby yesterday, it is that the first amendment and the freedom of the press are still behind bars. The need for a Federal media shield bill has never been more apparent.

Yesterday, Mr. Libby was convicted of lying to a grand jury. That is reprehensible, and he will be held to the strictest account.

But as the Washington Post editorial page pointed out this morning, his chief accuser, Joe Wilson, also lied about who sent him to Africa, what he found there, and about whether his wife was a covert CIA agent. The Washington Post even called Joe Wilson today a "blowhard."

Ironically, while Mr. Wilson was lying to the press and creating a partisan furor, Mr. Libby was telling the truth to reporters, and that is what got him in trouble.

The case presented us with a long spectacle of reporters being jailed and threatened with jail time for not re-

vealing confidential sources. Because there is no Federal media shield law, the real losers in all of this difficult and tragic case are not actually reporters or the press, but the American public.

My own colleague, Congressman RICK BOUCHER, and I will be reintroducing the Free Flow of Information Act. I urge my colleagues in Congress to take it up expeditiously. It is time to restore the fabric of the first amendment freedom of the press.

GI BILL

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

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of our Nation's veterans. The GI bill has provided education to many of our Nation's fine, honorable men and women. Unfortunately, there is a provision which excludes our National Guard and Reserve from receiving their GI bill benefits after they have left the military.

I have introduced bipartisan legislation, H.R. 1330, which will give the National Guard and Reserve members up to 10 years to take advantage of their GI bill education benefits. This proposal is similar to the benefits extended to active duty members of the military right now.

This bill extends a much-deserved and needed benefit to our troops. Because the National Guard and Reserve are playing an ever-increasing role in combat operations, they are finding it harder to achieve their educational goals while they are enlisted. This bill will better allow troops to serve their country honorably and then reward them with higher education when they return.

The National Guard and Reserve are becoming indistinguishable from the active duty now. They are in need of this benefit. We owe this to our troops and to our military families back home.

I urge all Members of Congress who care about our troops and military families to sign on to this legislation.

□ 1230

WE MUST LIVE UP TO OUR OBLIGATIONS TO THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED OUR NATION

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

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week I participated in a Government Reform hearing at Walter Reed Hospital.

During that hearing, we heard from soldiers wounded in the defense of our Nation and their families. Like most Americans, I was disappointed and saddened by what we learned. What we heard represents an absolute failure of military leadership and accountability.