

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages in writing from the President of the United States were communicated to the House by Ms. Wanda Evans, one of his secretaries.

□ 1215

BALANCING BUDGET WITHOUT RAISING TAXES

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, this is the first year that the Democrats have controlled Congress in a long time, and we are dedicated to bringing a budget to the floor next week that balances the budget within the next 5 years without any new taxes.

Earlier this year, the President made the same pledge. Unfortunately, earlier this month the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office released its analysis of the President's budget and says that it falls short by 2012. Since taking office, this has been a difficult proposed budget.

Not only does the President's budget remain in the red for the next 5 years, but he also proposes raising taxes on some of the middle-class families. The President's health care proposal would result in a tax increase of \$500 billion over 10 years by increasing taxes on middle-class families who are fortunate to have employer-provided health insurance.

Madam Speaker, Democrats propose a budget that is balanced by 2012, and a budget that is balanced without raising taxes.

AMERICANS WANT A BALANCED BUDGET

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

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, this week the Budget Committee will mark up the budget for fiscal year 2008. The American people want a balanced budget that lowers spending, reforms unsustainable entitlement programs, and encourages economic growth without raising taxes.

My constituents are tired of the out-of-control spending that they see at the Federal level. That is why I stood with my colleagues in the fiscally responsible Republican Study Committee last week and announced the Taxpayer Bill of Rights. We believe that the taxpayers have a right to a Federal Government that does not grow beyond their ability to pay for it. They have the right to receive back each dollar that they entrust to the government for their retirement; a right to a simple, fair Tax Code they can understand; and they have a right to expect that the government balance its budget without having to raise taxes.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to working in a bipartisan way with my colleagues on the Budget Committee to ensure that the rights of the taxpayer are not ignored.

SUPPLEMENTAL PROVIDES CRITICAL FUNDING

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Madam Speaker, we were all outraged by stories of how wounded soldiers are being treated at hospitals all over our Nation and how many are forced to weave through bureaucratic hurdles to receive the benefits they were promised.

We cannot continue to neglect the needs of our veterans and our soldiers wounded in combat. That is why the Democratic emergency supplemental bill provides substantial funding increases for equipment that will better protect our troops in the field and the necessary assistance to meet our obligation to help those who were wounded.

The Democratic supplemental bill provides \$313 million more for new vehicles called mine resistant ambush protection vehicles, which will resist improvised explosive devices. Our bill also provides critical funding for soldiers suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries.

Madam Speaker, the Democratic emergency spending bill shows a real commitment to both our soldiers still in the field and our troops wounded in combat. It deserves our support.

NO TO DEMOCRAT TAX INCREASE

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, soon our colleagues on the other side of the aisle will be introducing their 2008 budget. What they will really be introducing is an unprecedented tax hike on the American people.

Under the economic policies of the last 6 years, the American people have had this economy to over 40 straight months of economic growth, over 7 million new jobs and an unemployment rate at a near-40-year low. This is proof that Americans respond best to having more of their money in their pockets.

Nevertheless, the majority party, true to form, is preparing to usher in the largest tax increase in history. That's right, the largest tax increase in history that would bring back the marriage penalty and discourage further investment and growth. This would be a huge step backwards for our economy and for our government. The American people deserve leadership that respects their hard work. Washington must stop trying to find ways to afford a larger government.

As we begin the debate on the budget for the upcoming year, we shouldn't begin with a plan to grow an even more massive bureaucracy on the backs of the American taxpayer.

MORE ACCOUNTABILITY IN ADMINISTRATION

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, last week this House, with strong bipartisan support, passed important bills that will demand more transparency and accountability here in Washington. And in the first few months of this Congress, the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, on which I have the opportunity to serve, has held several hearings on political influence in public policy.

Sadly, instead of following our lead, the Bush administration is being anything but open about its involvement in the political purging of eight U.S. Attorneys.

For weeks now, Attorney General Gonzales has asserted that the firings were not instigated by the White House, but e-mails between the White House and Gonzales's chief of staff show heavy involvement in the purging by political advisers.

The President admits mistakes were made, but he has no plans to hold his Attorney General accountable. The implications of this scandal on our legal system are grave. This administration has created a climate in which prosecutors are looking over their shoulders trying to do right by the political bosses instead of through the system of justice.

Madam Speaker, this White House should learn something from what we did in the House last week. It is past time that the President insist on more accountability in his administration.

FUND TROOPS IN HARM'S WAY

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, you know, in Texas we have a phrase for folks who talk big game and fail to deliver. We call it "all sizzle and no steak."

That's sort of how I view the Members of Congress who claim they support our men and women in uniform, but fail to back permanent legislation that says Congress will fully fund our troops serving in harm's way.

Their actions don't match their words. If Members really support the brave men and women in our armed services, Members would make sure our men and women in combat have the bullets and tanks and helmets, whatever they need.

That is why today I am launching a discharge petition on my bill to fully

fund all our troops in harm's way. The Democrats can't hide behind their slow-bleed strategy forever. We need a floor vote to make the entire Congress go on record for or against our troops.

IRAQIS MUST MEET BENCHMARKS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, American involvement in Iraq should not be an open-ended proposition, and we should not be sending more troops there to serve as referees in that nation's devastating civil war.

The status quo simply cannot continue. It is time this Congress seriously level with the Iraqi Government that it must meet the benchmarks the President himself outlined earlier this year. And if they cannot meet those benchmarks, it is time to start bringing our troops home.

It is time the Iraqi Government is held accountable for its actions. The Maliki government must realize that it has to meet political, economic and diplomatic benchmarks in the region, and that if serious improvements are not seen in the coming months, then we will begin the process of redeploying our troops out of Iraq.

This week, we will have an opportunity to exert pressure on the Iraqi Government to meet the President's own benchmarks. If the Iraqi Government continues to believe that our involvement there is indefinite, what kind of pressure are they going to have to make the necessary reforms? They are not, and that's why this change in direction is much needed at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. HARMAN). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later today.

HONORING HEROIC SERVICE OF GLIDER PILOTS OF UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCES DURING WORLD WAR II

Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 42) honoring the heroic service and sacrifice of the 6,500 glider pilots of the United States Army Air Forces during World War II, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 42

Whereas the use of gliders during World War II provided an innovative method of transporting troops and equipment behind enemy lines;

Whereas the United States Army Air Forces began training glider pilots in 1942, eventually training thousands of men;

Whereas glider pilots exhibited exceptional valor by landing behind enemy lines in unarmed gliders;

Whereas glider pilots participated in 8 successful missions;

Whereas in Operation Husky, which took place in Sicily on July 9, 1943, glider pilots carried British airborne troops, completing their mission despite heavy casualties resulting from landings at sea;

Whereas in Operation Broadway, which took place in Burma on March 5, 1944, glider pilots took the Japanese completely by surprise; carried troops, airborne engineers, and equipment by night; seized and prepared landing strips for forthcoming transport planes; and evacuated the wounded, accomplishing in 2 hours what would have taken 2 months by ambulance;

Whereas in Operation Overlord, on June 6, 1944, glider pilots took part in the Battle of Normandy, the largest combined airborne and seaborne invasion in history, carrying troopers of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions and their equipment to landing areas behind enemy lines;

Whereas in Operation Dragoon, which took place in the coastal area of southern France on August 15, 1944, glider pilots delivered troops and cargo despite wooden poles erected in open fields to impede their landing;

Whereas in Operation Market-Garden, the largest glider operation of World War II, which took place in Holland on September 17, 1944, glider pilots carried their usual cargo of troops and heavy equipment, thereby providing cover for an attempt to clear a road to Berlin;

Whereas in Operation Repulse, which took place in Bastogne on December 27, 1944, as part of the Battle of the Bulge, glider pilots, although flying directly through enemy fire, were able to land every glider, delivering the badly needed ammunition, gasoline, and medical supplies that enabled defenders against the German offensive to persevere and secure the ultimate victory;

Whereas in Operation Varsity, which took place at the Rhine crossing in Wesel, Germany, on March 24, 1945, more than 1,300 glider pilots took part in their final European mission, delivering a fatal blow to Axis forces;

Whereas in Operation Gypsy Task Force-Appari Mission, which took place in the Philippine island of Luzon on June 23, 1945, glider pilots took part in their final, and only Pacific, mission, carrying members of the 11th Airborne Division; and

Whereas many glider pilots sacrificed their lives during the course of these missions: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) honors the heroic service and sacrifice of the glider pilots of the United States Army Air Forces during World War II; and

(2) urges the people of the United States to remember and teach future generations about the contributions and sacrifices that glider pilots, and all veterans, have made to and for the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Kansas (Mrs. BOYDA) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Kansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Kansas?

There was no objection.

Mrs. BOYDA of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 42, which honors the heroic service of glider pilots of the United States Army Air Forces during World War II. I would like to commend the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. McCARTHY) for bringing this measure forward.

The resolution recognizes the more than 20,000 individuals who volunteered and were trained to serve as glider pilots during World War II. These brave men served alongside airborne forces and participated in many of the major invasions: Sicily, Burma, the Battle of Normandy, France, Holland, Germany, the Philippines, and the Battle of the Bulge. These unarmed gliders landed behind enemy lines transporting vital troops and equipment to support the Allied Forces.

Major General Henry "Hap" Arnold, commanding general of the Army Air Corps, directed the development of a transport glider program, and the United States military glider program officially began on February 25, 1941. These gliders provided the Army Air Corps with a unique ability to transport soldiers and equipment that could not be reached by conventional ground units.

By the end of 1942, the Army Air Force had graduated a total of 9,802 glider pilots. Within just 3 years, the United States had 21,240 military glider pilots available, according to the Army Air Forces Statistical Digest of World War II. Less than 3 years after the first graduating class of glider pilots had finished their training, these fearless pilots flew numerous combat teams into France on D-Day. Gliders transported 12 to 15 fully equipped soldiers and four portable machine guns with 500 rounds of ammunition for each gun.

Unfortunately, the American military glider pilots are a vanishing breed. The Department of Defense ended the military glider program in 1952. Today, we are here to honor these daring and fearless World War II glider pilots for their services and sacrifices and to urge all Americans to remember the significant contribution that they made on behalf of our Nation.

Madam Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to support this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 42, a bill to honor a