

Ryan called home weekly, but the thunder of battle sometimes forced him to quickly end those phone calls. As the 2006 Christmas season approached, Ryan was given last-minute leave to spend the holidays at home in Texas with his family and his neighbors in Sabine Pass.

During Christmas, Scottie, Ryan's mother, held her son tightly and told him that she was not going to let him go back to Iraq. Ryan replied, Mr. Speaker, "I've got to go back over there. I've got to make it safe for my wife, my mom, my dad, and all those I love."

Mr. Speaker, amazing people, these Americans who go to war. On January 4, 2007 with nearly a year to go in Iraq, the teenager returned to the battlefield to fight against these insurgents and their terror against the people of Iraq. Ryan was only in Iraq for 5 days when he was shot by a hidden enemy sniper. The wound was fatal.

Last week, 19-year-old U.S. Army Specialist Ryan Berg became the first son of Sabine Pass, Texas, to be killed defending freedom in that land far, far away, of Iraq. For his courage during combat, Ryan was awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star.

The news of his death at the hands of the anarchists stunned the Berg family and the people of Sabine Pass. Through their tears, Ryan's mother and father, Scottie and Travis; his brother Brad, his sister Marissa, and his new wife, Katie, and countless other relatives and friends have, in their anguish, honored the American warrior.

Ryan's loved ones expressed their pride of his service to America and the bravery their soldier exhibited throughout his career. They also asked for the community to pray not only for Ryan but for those soldiers still amid the dusty trenches fighting for freedom and securing liberty.

Those who knew Ryan, and I have a photograph of him, Mr. Speaker, those who knew him, remember his loyalty to his family and to his friends, but not only as a man who never knew a stranger, but Ryan devoted his life to guarding them from danger, those especially who could not stand up for themselves.

This Nation owes its gratitude, its liberties, its freedom, to people like Specialist Ryan Berg and to brave soldiers who have walked the path of sacrifice for the rest of us.

So God bless Sabine Pass, Texas and God bless the Berg family and God Bless Ryan Berg.

It has been said that when the Roving Legions went into battle one of their generals once told his men, "How you yet live will echo throughout eternity."

Ryan, your deeds will always speak the example of the spirit of the American soldier.

And that's just the way it is.

vious order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

do to show the gratitude of a grateful Nation.

I urge my colleagues to stand up for our troops, stand up for Iraqi sovereignty. Cosponsor the Bring the Troops Home and Iraqi Sovereignty Restoration Act.

BRING THE TROOPS HOME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, along with Congresswoman BARBARA LEE and Congresswoman MAXINE WATERS, I will be introducing the Bring the Troops Home and Iraqi Sovereignty Restoration Act.

This bill fulfills the voters' November 7 mandate to the Congress. It ends the occupation of Iraq and, at the same time, it strengthens the Iraqi government, and it also meets the needs of our returning troops.

It will, one, bring our troops home; two, it will expedite the training of Iraqi security forces; and three, if invited by the Iraqis, work with the international community to rebuild Iraq's infrastructure, while four, fully funding the commitment we have made to our returning soldiers for full health care benefits, physical and mental.

The situation in Iraq, Mr. Speaker, gets worse every day, and it is clear that we cannot provide security to Iraqis in the middle of a civil war. We need to bring our brave and capable men and women home to safety and to their families, and we need to help the Iraqi people regain their sovereignty.

President Bush does not have a plan to bring our troops home. In fact, if anything, he is escalating this occupation with absolutely no end in sight. Our standing in the region and our standing around the world is at an all time low, and this administration has all but given up on diplomacy.

We can no longer wait for the Commander-in-Chief to come up with a plan. We are in the fourth year of this occupation. We have waited long enough. That is why I will introduce the Bring the Troops Home and Iraqi Sovereignty Restoration Act tomorrow.

Whether my colleagues voted to support the invasion of Iraq or not, they can now unite behind a comprehensive plan, a plan to bring peace and stability to the region.

One of the most important elements of this bill is to live up to the promises made to those who have put their lives on the line for this President's fiasco in Iraq.

Our most solemn obligation is to the men and women who have been placed in harm's way. To fulfill our obligation, we must bring them home to their families, while, at the same time, guaranteeing physical and mental health care for all U.S. veterans of military operations in Iraq and other conflicts around the world. It is the least we can do. It is the least we can

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

12-POINT PLAN FOR IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House of Representatives, last week the President of the United States gave a speech to this Nation that he intends to escalate the war against Iraq. Compounding his speech was the point-by-point recitation of his intention to continue to escalate tensions between the United States and the sovereign nation of Iran.

At this moment, when this Congress has honored the memory of Dr. King, it bears reflection as to whether or not we in this Nation have the capacity to begin to pursue a path of nonviolence in our relations with other countries.

Our President is intent on escalating a war against Iraq. He is intent on precipitating a war against Iran. Whatever happened to the science of human relations? Whatever happened to using our head in dealing with people so that war is not an acceptable option, but that peace becomes inevitable because we pursue talking to one another?

If we had taken the case for Iraq to the U.N., we would not have gotten approval for an attack against Iraq. How much better it would have been if this Nation had not decided to attack Iraq, because Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, did not have the intention or capability of attacking the United States, was not trying to get uranium from Niger, did not, in effect, constitute a threat to the United States of America.

And yet, we attacked a nation which did not attack us, at tremendous consequence, the death of over 3,000 American men and women who served this country valiantly, the deaths of over 650,000 innocent Iraqis, according to the Lancet Report, during the conduct of the war; complete annihilation of so much of the cities of Iraq.

What are we doing? What do we stand for as a nation? Does this really represent what America is all about? Or does America have a higher destiny? Is it our destiny to rule the world with our military might? Or is it our destiny to hold up our values of peace and justice, and to live them in our own

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Nation, and to nourish them abroad through following international law?

It is a critical moment for America, Mr. Speaker. This Congress must stand up. We must not just set aside the escalation, we must set aside the occupation. We must not simply challenge this President and his buildup to war in Iran. We must let this President know that any action he takes against Iran will have constitutional consequences.

We are at a moment when we need to defend our Constitution. We need to stand up for the American way, which is not the way of war. It is not the way of aggressive war. It is not the way of preemption, unilateralism and first strike.

Mr. Speaker, it is really time for America to take a new direction in the world, and that direction is to work with the nations of the world.

I put forth a 12-point plan for Iraq. It called for America to announce the end of the occupation, the closing of the bases, withdrawal of our troops. But we cannot do that unless, simultaneously, we let the nations of the world know that we are going to take a new direction in world affairs. We need to ask the world community to help us, to mobilize a peacekeeping and security force that will move in as our troops move out so that the people of Iraq can be secure. When we do that we can build a basis for a reconciliation in Iraq between the Kurds, the Shiites, the Sunnis. When we do that we can have a legitimate program for reconstruction and reparations for the Iraqi people. We can help safeguard their oil wealth for the people of Iraq, not for private American oil companies.

Iraq should be a turning point for this Nation. It should be a turning point away from war as an instrument of policy. It should be a turning point where we address the needs of the people of the United States, the real human needs, for health care, education and jobs. And that is what my 12-point program leads to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

CELEBRATING THE BIRTHDAY AND PUBLIC HOLIDAY FOR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased that I got an opportunity to listen to the statement from the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), who just made what I would consider to be one of the most common

sense, passionate and eloquent statements about where America ought to be and what its position should be vis-a-vis the rest of the world. And so I want to thank you so much, Mr. KUCINICH, for having had the opportunity to just hear the statement that you have just made.

Mr. Speaker, like many others, I spent much of the weekend talking about the contributions of Dr. Martin Luther King and what he meant to America. And earlier today, we had a resolution, bill on the floor, celebrating the birthday and public holiday for Martin Luther King, Jr.

One of the young staffers in Government Reform and Oversight had written a statement that I was supposed to have read at that time because I was supposed to have managed that bill, but I was not here. But I was so impressed by the statement that this young person had written that I decided that I would come and share it with the rest of America anyway.

And so he wrote, Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Nation celebrated the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the impact he made on our society. His nonviolent struggle for freedom, dignity and equality of all races broke down longstanding barriers which denied equal opportunity to all Americans. Although we still have a long march ahead toward Dr. King's dream of peace and impartiality, his work inspired many to work for a world that respects and celebrates diversity.

Born January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia, Dr. King stood out as a student and entered into the Christian ministry. There he responded to racial prejudices and injustices that surrounded him when Rosa Parks refused to relinquish her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama bus. Dr. King was elected to the Montgomery Improvement Association and led the bus boycott that ensued. Later, King would organize the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, which provided him a platform to become a more influential leader in the civil rights movement.

He continued to advocate civil disobedience, despite the fact that fire hoses and attack dogs were turned on him and fellow protesters in Birmingham. He spearheaded the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963. The March on Washington brought more than 200,000 people to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and demanded the elimination of racial segregation in public schools, protection for demonstrators against police brutality and self-government for the District of Columbia. This march also included Dr. King's now famous, "I Have a Dream" speech, which became a profound turning point in the American conscience.

In 1964, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, and continued to lead the civil rights movement. His interests broadened from civil rights to include criticism of the Vietnam war and the plight of the impoverished.

His plan for another march to Washington meant for underprivileged Americans was cut short when he was shot and killed on April 4, 1968. As we commemorate his life and work, we should apply the lessons he demonstrated in the context of current world events. His nonviolent approach to constructive change and his firm stance of fairness are leadership qualities that Washington and the world must remember and emulate.

As we face issues of national importance day in and out in this Chamber, we must bear in mind the example that Dr. King set in the hope that one day, as he said, the leaders of the world will sit down at the conference table and realize that unless mankind puts an end to war, war would put an end to all of us.

I think that is exactly what Mr. KUCINICH was saying a moment ago.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you again for the opportunity to have addressed the House this evening, and I thank my young colleague for having written such an eloquent statement.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IN REMEMBRANCE OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL MILTON H. MEDENBACH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SESTAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. SESTAK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I wish to honor a proud American and because it is my sad duty to announce the loss of Lieutenant General Milton H. Medenbach, superintendent emeritus of Valley Forge Academy in Wayne, Pennsylvania, who died this morning, January 16, 2007.

Lieutenant General Medenbach turned 99 on December 31, 2006, and had been a member of the Valley Forge Military Academy & College faculty and staff since the fall of 1932. General Medenbach is a 1929 graduate of the Johns Hopkins University, where he was commissioned a secretary lieutenant, infantry (TANKS).

He also attended the University of Marburg in Germany and was a student of military government at the University of Virginia and Yale University during his active military service. He held a doctorate from Gettysburg College.

Upon the completion of his fellowship at the School of Diplomatic Service of the Austrian Foreign Office in Vienna, Austria, in 1932, he came home and joined the Valley Forge faculty as an instructor in the Foreign Language Department and as a tactical officer in