

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.

□ 1945

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

the Commandant of Cadets Department.

On leave from Valley Forge during World War II, General Medenbach served as Secretary of the General staff of the Army Air Corps Tactical Training Command and the Air Corps Training Command and later, in North Africa, Italy, France, Germany and Austria as a military government planner and officer under Field Marshal Alexander and General Eisenhower.

Following active duty, General Medenbach returned to Valley Forge and served in the Pennsylvania National Guard. His many decorations included the Legion of Merit, the European Service Ribbon with two battle stars, the American Defense Ribbon, the Meritorious Service Unit Award, and the Pennsylvania State Guard Reserve Distinguished Service Ribbon. He was also listed in Who's Who in America.

During his Valley Forge service, General Medenbach served in or assisted in the establishment of practically every department of the institution as an associate of the founder, Lieutenant General Milton G. Baker. He held the post of adjutant and chief of staff, as well as deputy superintendent, and served for more than 30 years as the commandant of cadets.

He became the president on the retirement of General Baker and retired as superintendent emeritus in 1971. More recently, he served the school as volunteer historian and archivist and as the vice president and secretary of the Chapel Foundation Board of Directors.

During the many years of his long service, General Medenbach was the driving force in establishing the high standards of character, personal discipline, drill, ceremonies, and individual fitness that have been the hallmarks of military excellence at Valley Forge.

It is with great sadness that we mourn his passing, and our thoughts and prayers go out to his family at this time, as we thank him for his service.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

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

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE BLUE DOG COALITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, this evening, on behalf of the 44 member strong fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog coalition, I rise to spend an hour this evening talking with you and Members of this body about the Blue Dog Coalition's desire to restore fiscal discipline and common sense to our national government.

Over the next hour, we plan as members of the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog coalition to talk on this floor about the Blue Dog Coalition's 12-point plan for budget reform. We plan to discuss our accountability measures, because we believe it is time to restore accountability, fiscal discipline, and common sense to our national government.

Before I begin the formal presentation this evening, and will be joined by other members of the Blue Dog Coalition, I would like to take a moment to recognize Sergeant Marcus Wilson. Sergeant Wilson grew up in Dermott, Arkansas, in southeast Arkansas, in our congressional district back home.

This afternoon I had the honor to go to Walter Reed Army Hospital where I was able to sit down and visit with Sergeant Wilson and his wife and his son and thank him for his service to our country. He is there because of injuries suffered in Iraq.

Before that he served in Afghanistan. All of us have different ideas about what we should be doing with this post-war Iraq policy. But one of the things that I believe is absolutely critical and important is that as Members of this Congress, and as American citizens, that we remain united in support of our men and women in uniform. This evening I pay tribute to Sergeant Marcus Wilson of Dermott, Arkansas, and thank him for his service to our country and pray for him as he recovers from injuries he suffered in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I wish you could have been with me there this afternoon in conversations with Sergeant Wilson because he makes all Americans proud with his attitude, his attitude of perseverance, his attitude of service to our country as a soldier in the United States Marines. Again, I pay tribute and salute Sergeant Wilson.

Mr. Speaker, on this day my brother-in-law leaves to go to Kyrgyzstan,

which is the entry point for Afghanistan, much like Kuwait is the entry point for Iraq, for his second mission there. I hope that all of us will keep him and all our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere across this globe in our hearts and in our prayers.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying purpose of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition is to demand a balanced budget in this country. Mr. Speaker, it was not too long ago from 1998 through 2001 that we had a President named Bill Clinton, from my native State, from my home State, who gave us a balanced budget.

One of the ways he did that was with PAYGO rules in place on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, rules that the Republican leadership threw out after they took control of the House and Senate and the White House in 2001, the beginning of the 107th Congress.

What we have witnessed over the past 6 years has been absolutely staggering, if not startling. We have seen the largest deficit year after year after year until we have accumulated the largest debt ever in our Nation's history.

As members of the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, we are committed through our 12-point plan for budget reform and through our accountability package to restore fiscal discipline to our Nation's government.

As we begin this evening, today the U.S. national debt is \$8,701,316,295,722.43. We ran out of room. For every man, woman and child in America, their share, your share of the national debt, \$29,035.60, what we refer to as the debt tax, d-e-b-t, which is one tax that cannot be repealed, cannot be cut until we go away and get our Nation's fiscal house in order.

If this is not startling enough, what's even more alarming is the fact that our Nation is borrowing about \$1 billion a day. On top of that, we are spending about half a billion every day paying interest on the debt we have already got before it increases by another \$1 billion a day. It is important that we get our fiscal house in order, that we return to the days of a balanced budget, that we restore fiscal discipline to our national government, because it is about priorities.

Many of America's priorities, honoring our soldiers, giving them the resources they need to get the job done, honoring our veterans and providing them the services that they were promised and so desperately need, especially with this new generation of veterans coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan and other parts of the world, the priorities in education, and so many other areas that are going unmet, half a billion dollars a day is not going to those priorities, they are going to simply pay interest on the debt we already got before it increases another \$1 billion just about every single day.

We want to do something about this. We want to effect change. We are sick