

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. SHAYS. Madam Speaker, on April 14, 2008, I missed 3 recorded votes. I take my voting responsibility very seriously. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on recorded vote number 183, "yea" on recorded vote 184, and "yea" on recorded vote 185.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill and a joint resolution of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 1119. An act to amend title 36, United States Code, to revise the congressional charter of the Military Order of the Purple Heart of the United States of America, Incorporated, to authorize associate membership in the corporation for the spouse and siblings of a recipient of the Purple Heart medal.

H.J. Res. 70. Joint resolution congratulating the Army Reserve on its centennial, which will be formally celebrated on April 23, 2008, and commemorating the historic contributions of its veterans and continuing contributions of its soldiers to the vital national security interests and homeland defense missions of the United States.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 76. Concurrent resolution to make technical corrections in the enrollment of the bill S. 1858.

RECOGNIZING DAVIDSON COLLEGE WILDCATS MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM ON THEIR TREMENDOUS SEASON

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

Mr. WATT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to Davidson College, President Tom Ross, Coach Bob McKillop, and the Davidson College Wildcats men's basketball team, which had one remarkable basketball season. Davidson College is one of a number of outstanding colleges and universities in my congressional district. The Wildcats basketball team finished its regular season undefeated in the Southern Conference, won the Southern Conference tournament, and went on to their third consecutive NCAA tournament appearance.

In the NCAA tournament, Davidson College delivered three stunning upsets, eliminating the Gonzaga Bulldogs, the Georgetown Hoyas, and the Wisconsin Badgers on their way to the Elite Eight. In the Midwest regional finals, the Wildcats gave a tremendous effort before ultimately falling to Kansas by 2 points. Kansas, of course, went on to win the National Championship. By any measure Davidson College was the Cinderella team of this year's NCAA tournament.

In a fitting tribute to his coaching and leadership, Coach Bob McKillop re-

ceived the Coach Clair Bee Award on April 7, honoring the NCAA Division I men's basketball coach who has made the most significant positive contribution to the sport during the year.

I wish Coach McKillop and his Cinderella Davidson Wildcats continued success. I am fortunate to represent Davidson College and their outstanding scholars and athletes in Congress. We'll be back next year.

WELCOME POPE BENEDICT XVI

(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. Madam Speaker, tomorrow Pope Benedict XVI will make his first papal visit to the United States of America. This is an exciting time for America and the over 64 million American Catholics to celebrate the relationship between our Nation and The Vatican and our continued work towards peace and humanitarian needs around the world.

During his trip, the Pope will visit New York City and Washington, D.C., where he will attend Mass at Nationals Park and Yankee Stadium, visit the World Trade Center site, and attend ceremonies and meetings at the White House with President George W. Bush. As an extraordinary sign of respect, the President will welcome the Pope at Andrew's Air Force Base in Maryland and escort him to the White House. Pope Benedict is just the third Pope to visit the United States, and this visit marks the 25th meeting between a sitting President and a Pope.

On behalf of the citizens of the Second Congressional District of South Carolina, I welcome Pope Benedict to the United States. I hope his visit will be a positive reminder of the importance of our relationships.

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

Welcome Michael McCrory Wilson, who was born on April 11, 2008, at Lexington Medical Center, West Columbia, South Carolina.

SALUTING "HOMES FOR HOMETOWN HEROES"

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I'm delighted to rise today to salute "Homes for Hometown Heroes."

Many of us, my colleagues and myself, Members from as far away as California and Arizona, had the privilege of being in Houston, Texas, last evening at the Hyatt Regency to celebrate a very unique and special program where our hometown heroes, injured soldiers, were able to receive their own home by the largess and generosity of many heroes in our community.

Madam Speaker, it's a moving experience to see our soldiers coming in in-

jured but yet strong and resilient. What a privilege to be able to present to them a key to their own home.

I look forward to working with this caucus, the Democratic Caucus, the Republican Conference, and all of our Members to spread this message across America. One has said that all of what they've done, they deserve to be respected and responded to, a home for the injured soldiers, brain damaged, those who cannot walk in wheelchairs, to simply say "thank you." I look forward to announcing a posttraumatic stress disorder center in my own 18th Congressional District.

Last evening reinforced the fact that nothing is too great for those who have put their lives on the front line. I look forward to celebrating the hometown heroes.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. LEE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

RECOGNIZING AND HONORING VICTIMS OF CRIME

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, this week is National Crime Victims' Rights Week, and in the criminal justice system, Madam Speaker, we've come a long way to the time that we recognize the importance of victims and honor them for a whole week.

Before I came to Congress, I was working in the District Attorney's office in Houston, Texas. That was even before I was a judge for 22 years. And I often reflect on one crime victim that taught me more about the way the world really is than maybe any other person.

Many years ago I had the opportunity to prosecute a case, and I'm going to change the names because the victim's family still lives in the Houston area and are concerned about their privacy.

This young lady was married and had two twin boys. And she had a good career. She was in her early 20s, and she was going to the University of Houston at night to get a second degree.

And one evening she was driving home, and she had car trouble. The lights came on in the dash of her vehicle. So she pulled over to a service station that she thought was open. But the service station was not open, it was closed.

She got out of the car, and she started talking to who she thought was a service station attendant. But the individual, Luke Johnson, was not a service station attendant. He was just hanging around. He pulled out a pistol. He kidnapped this young lady, Lisa,

and took her to a remote area in the piney woods of East Texas. He pistol whipped her. He sexually assaulted her, and he left her for dead. In fact, when he was later arrested, he was mad that he hadn't killed her.

But she was a remarkable young lady. She survived that brutal attack. Three or four days later, she was found in the woods by a hunter that was out there. Medical needs were met for her. She recovered that brutal attack. Luke Johnson was later captured and charged with aggravated sexual assault.

I was fortunate to prosecute that case. Lisa came and testified before a jury of 12 citizens of Houston, Texas. Luke Johnson was convicted. He received the maximum sentence of 99 years in the Texas State Penitentiary.

And, Madam Speaker, we would hope that all would be well with victims after that, that the world would go on and things would work out well. But that's not the world that we have ever lived in.

Lisa couldn't quite cope with being the victim of a crime. She never went back to that campus at the University of Houston. You can understand why. She couldn't hold a job. In fact, she was fired from her job because she couldn't focus. She started abusing drugs, first alcohol and then probably everything else that she could get her hands on.

Her husband, the kind of guy that he was, no longer wanted her, sued her for divorce, and was able to convince a judge in Houston that he should obtain both of the twin boys, and he left the State of Texas for good, claiming that she was not mentally capable to raise those two children.

And soon after that occurrence, I received a phone call from Lisa's mother telling me that she had received a note from her daughter saying that she was going to take her life. And she did. And I have that note with me today. I've always had that ever since this crime occurred, all the years I was a judge, and I have it in my office here in Congress, saying that she was tired of running from Luke Johnson in her nightmares.

She paid the ultimate price for being a crime victim, Madam Speaker. And because of the fact in those days there was no victim advocate, there was no one that she could turn to, she felt alone. She was alone, Madam Speaker.

But the criminal justice system in this country has come a long way. We have victims' advocates, who take care of the needs of victims, all the way from the time the crime is committed, through the trial, and after the trial. And we have people in the medical profession that donate their time to help in the recovery of crime victims. And now we have in the United States Congress a Victims' Rights Caucus. I'm proud to be the founder of that, but it's a bipartisan caucus. Jim Costa from California, a Democrat, is the co-chairman of this caucus. We have over 44 members, of Members of both parties,

who seek and advocate rights of crime victims here in the United States House of Representatives.

Madam Speaker, we have come a long way. But we have a long way to go because crime victims are real people. Crime doesn't discriminate based on race, age, sex, or economic status. Crime affects so many people through this country. And we, as good neighbors, need to make sure that we keep up with people who have had that unfortunate experience of being a crime victim, especially of a violent crime. Because the same Constitution that protects the rights of criminal defendants protects the rights of crime victims. And we should always seek justice because justice is what we do in this country. And that means that we must always have justice for victims as well.

And that's just the way it is.

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IRAQ'S HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, as we enter the sixth year of the seemingly endless occupation of Iraq, the International Committee of the Red Cross published a worrying report about the State of the humanitarian crisis in Iraq.

In its entitled "Iraq: No Let-Up in the Humanitarian Crisis," the publication shows just how far we need to go to meet the most basic needs of the Iraqi people. Despite the rosy picture being painted by some in the administration, too many Iraqis are still without health care, clean water, and/or education.

And many families have been torn apart by the civil war wracking the country. Family members have gone missing or have been killed. Some have been shipped off to detention centers.

Estimates range on how many people, mostly men, have been locked up. According to the Red Cross, "Tens of thousands of Iraqis, almost all of them men, are currently in detention often far from their homes."

One camp is situated in the southern part of the country near Basra and is managed by the United States-led multinational forces in Iraq. At the same time, this is the largest detention facility in the country. And there are more than 20,000 inmates in that detention camp.

The situation means that many families have lost their breadwinner. The new heads of household, many women and many children, have to cope in a world that seems to be without home or promise for the future. And their day-to-day life is just as bleak.

Instead of improving, the supply of electricity has become even more unreliable. Because of this, water sanitation plants are breaking down and hos-

pitals find they cannot provide adequate care, even if they had the medical supplies to meet the demand, which they very seldom do.

Parents the world over, Madam Speaker, American, Iraqi, or anywhere else, only want the best for their children. They want their kids to be happy. They want them to be healthy. They want their kids to go to school, to grow up and to have a chance to achieve their dreams. That is why ongoing occupation is about more than statistics or numbers.

The Red Cross reports helps to put a human face on the administration's so-called foreign policy. One such story actually highlights the struggle faced by too many. Here is Ruba's story. She says, "My children and I left my home in Anbar province almost 2 years ago. My husband had been killed right in front of us." She continues, "I had to protect my children, so we fled the same night with nothing but some money. For me, today, there is no past, there is no future, only a horrible present. I only wish I had some photos of my husband, photos of my family. I can see it all in my mind, but I don't know for how long I will remember. There was a time when we always sat down together for lunch and laughed. Today, we are living with my cousin's family."

She goes on to say, "There are 12 of us in one room. I don't want my old life again, because I know it is impossible without my husband. All I want is for my children to go to school and lead a normal life."

The story of this mother, Madam Speaker, a woman just 38 years old, is heartbreaking. We have a solemn obligation to help the Iraqi people achieve a future that is both secure and stable.

In the 5 minutes we stand here to deliver our special order speeches, the administration spends over \$1 million to prolong the endless occupation. I think the people of America could find a better way to show our commitment to the Iraqi people.

The American people's generosity and commitment to humanitarian assistance is boundless. But our patience with this administration's foreign policy follies is actually not boundless. This Congress must stand up to the administration. We must say "no" to a blank check. Let us redirect our resources to where they are really needed, towards aid, not ammunition.

UNJUST PROSECUTION AND IMPRISONMENT OF U.S. BORDER PATROL AGENTS COMPEAN AND RAMOS

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. Madam Speaker, today is day 453 of a terrible injustice in America. Two U.S. border agents, Agents Compean and Ramos, have been languishing in Federal prison since January 17 of 2007.