

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to welcome Pope Benedict XVI to our Nation's Capital as part of his official papal visit to the United States. During this 6-day trip to Washington, D.C. and New York City, the Holy Father, who serves as a wondrous example of faith and leadership, will help Catholics and all Christians renew their faith by delivering mass to tens of thousands of people.

I was honored to have the opportunity to attend mass with the Holy Father at the new Nationals Stadium here in D.C. this morning. And, Madam Speaker, it was truly a blessed event.

Despite his relatively short tenure, Pope Benedict XVI has emerged as a vocal and effective leader for Catholics throughout the world. Over the past 3 years, His Holiness has stressed the need for a return to fundamental Christian values in response to what many see as the world's sloping trend toward secularism.

As Pope, he has focused on the importance and sanctity of human life, especially the life of the unborn, an issue that's very important to me, both as a member of the Catholic Church and as a Member of Congress. But every American, regardless of party affiliation or religious belief can find hope in his message of freedom and justice for all people.

Madam Speaker, as a member of St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Marietta, Georgia, I humbly welcome Pope Benedict XVI to the United States as he continues to spread his message of faith, love and service in Christ.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION'S MIDDLE EAST POLICIES

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to bring to the House's attention a potentially, very dangerous new turn in the administration's policies in the Middle East. In recent weeks the administration has been stirring up the pot on Iran again, and that has caused many Americans to worry that the administration is getting ready to launch another attack in the region, this time in Tehran.

In fact, there's more than enough evidence to show that the administration may be laying the groundwork for military action. In an interview last month, the President said that the Iranians, and I quote him, he said, "the Iranians have declared they want to

have a nuclear weapon to destroy people."

That would be troubling, Madam Speaker, if it were true. But the Iranians haven't said anything of the kind. It is shocking to me that our Commander-in-Chief would make unsubstantiated and misleading statements about a subject as important and as serious as nuclear weapons.

Another troubling sign came last month when Admiral William Fallon retired. Admiral Fallon was a bulwark against the Iran hawks in the administration, and his departure raised fears that he was, first, forced to retire, and that next, the rush to war was on.

And several weeks ago, Vice President CHENEY said that he has "high confidence" that the Iranians have an ongoing nuclear enrichment program. Of course, the most recent national intelligence estimate reported that the Iranians stopped working on a suspected nuclear weapons program 4 years ago.

And finally, General Petraeus told Congress last week that Iranian-backed special groups now pose the greatest long-term threat in Iraq.

For years, the administration told us that the main enemy was al Qaeda or Sunni insurgents, or Shiite militia. Now they tell us, forget them; it's Iran. In my mind, this raises legitimate concerns that the administration may be inventing new excuses to stay in Iraq by trying to convince the American people to support war against Iran.

Madam Speaker, I too am concerned about Iran. The Iranians should stay out of Iraq. They should not develop nuclear weapons. No country should develop nuclear weapons. But if we want Iran to behave well, we must stop threatening to attack them. Instead, our first line of defense must be engagement and aggressive diplomacy.

The absolutely essential first step in that process must be the redeployment of our troops out of Iraq. How can we expect Iraq's neighbors to cooperate in stabilizing the region while we insist on an open-ended foreign occupation with 140,000 troops and tens of thousands of military contractors?

Ending the occupation will allow us to launch a broad initiative to bring the nations in the region to the table, to address the relevant, the political, the economic and the security issues.

And Madam Speaker, when it comes to Iran's nuclear challenge, we must retake the high moral ground in the United States of America. When we turn our backs on nuclear nonproliferation, abandon the comprehensive test ban treaty and develop new nuclear weapons of our own, under what circumstances can we tell another nation to abandon their nuclear dreams?

The American people do not want a wider conflict in the Middle East. They want our leaders to spend every waking moment working to bring peace to the region. This is not the time for heated rhetoric, for bullying and new threats. It is time to try the one thing we haven't tried, diplomacy.

SERGEANT SHAUN PAUL TOUSHA:
HULL, TEXAS HERO

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, today the small town of Hull Texas, population 1,800, is mourning the loss of a native son who grew up to be a mighty warrior for the United States Army. He gave up everything he had to protect everyone else's freedom.

Army Sergeant Shaun Paul Tousha was killed in Baghdad, Iraq on April 9, 2008 when an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle.

Madam Speaker, the IED is the way our cowardly enemy fights this war. And in my Congressional district area, Shaun Paul is the 26th area resident that has been killed in Iraq or Afghanistan during these wars.

He was a man from small town Texas who had a playful heart, and he made a big impression on everybody that knew him growing up. He died as a war hero at the age of 30, and he will forever be recognized as how he lived, that being a loving husband, a caring father and a great friend to all those people in rural America.

Shaun Paul Tousha was born February 11, 1978 in Silsbee, Texas. He grew up in the town of Hull, Texas, and he was the son of the late Tommy Gene and Roberta Tousha. He was a husband to Christy Tousha, and loving father of the two children, Colton and Maycee.

As a teenager, Shaun played football, like most Texas rural boys do. He played at Hull-Daisetta High School. And he also liked to ride horses. And being a cowboy, he enjoyed bull riding.

His stepmother, Doris Tousha, was very proud of Shaun. She described him as outgoing and an individual who had a lot of friends. He was always cutting up, acting silly, and made friends easily. He liked to joke around, and his personality drew people toward him. She said that he may have been a handful growing up, but she was proud of the way he turned out.

And after graduating from Hull-Daisetta High School in May of 1996, Shaun got a job at a wire company in Dayton, Texas. He worked there for several years before he heard his Nation's call and joined the United States Army at the age of 22 in February of 2000.

His father, Tommy Gene Tousha, was extremely proud of his son's decision to serve in the Army, and even went with him to the local recruiting station when he joined up.

Madam Speaker, General Patton once said "we should live for something, rather than to die for nothing." Shaun sought to live his life in duty to this country.

Shaun attended basic training in Ft. Benning, Georgia and later was stationed at Ft. Hood, Texas. He was assigned as a Generator Equipment Repairman in the 1st Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, in Ft. Hood, Texas.

General Patton reminded us that “wars may be fought with weapons but they are won by men.” Shaun was a skillful soldier, and he and his comrades in arms are the ones with the boots on the ground that are winning this war. Shaun realized this, and during his first tour of duty in Iraq he decided to re-enlist in the United States Army and make the military his career. He served three tours of duty in Iraq.

When Shaun’s father died in 2002, he helped his stepmother, Doris, through many difficult times. He took care of his family back home in America.

Doris said that she was impressed at Shaun’s emotional strength during that painful ordeal of the family father’s death. Doris said that she was proud that the Army really helped him become a mature individual.

George Washington once said that “discipline is the soul of the Army.” And with Shaun’s character, background and career in the Army, Shaun was able to overcome even the most trying circumstances because of that discipline.

One of Shaun’s best friends, Johnny Fregia, described him as a “good ol’ boy that died for his country.” They became friends when they worked together in Dayton, Texas. Shaun was Johnny’s helper, and he kept work interesting for Johnny with his humor, ever-present smile and his constant good mood. They enjoyed even shooting pool after work, and Johnny said that Shaun was pretty good at it.

Johnny described the high caliber of character and love for their country that his friend Shaun had and the rest of our military men and women possess.

Johnny went ahead and said, “freedom ain’t free. And sometimes we take it for granted. There’s a price to pay, and those guys like Shaun are willing to pay for it. They are willing to lose everything they’ve got to keep this country free.”

Madam Speaker, this is a recent photograph of Shaun Paul Tousha right before he died. Shaun Tousha paid the ultimate price with his life, the price for freedom in our country.

Aristotle once wrote that “we make war so that we may live in peace.” Shaun served in order that we may have freedom and have real peace in this country.

Americans, even in this chamber, cry peace, peace. But Madam Speaker, there can be no peace as long as there are people who are trying to kill Americans somewhere in the world. And Shaun Paul tried to protect us from that threat.

He had a heart as big as Texas, and we are proud of Sergeant Shaun Tousha. The light of his life has been extinguished, but Shaun’s joyful spirit will burn bright forever in the hearts and minds of his friends, his fellow soldiers, and the Texans that loved him.

And that’s just the way it is.

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.)

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HONORING THE LIFE OF LOU COSTANTINO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank you for your leadership.

As I begin my special order this afternoon, I want to pay tribute to two great Americans. One is a friend to us all. We know him well as Lou Costantino. We thank him so very much, and we really know him as Lou. We thank him for his friendship. We thank him for his warmth. We thank him for taking care of this place, this House.

Lou, you see, was one of the distinguished men and women who stand outside of the house chamber, works with the Sergeant of Arms, is in conjunction with the Clerk’s Office. But really, Lou is part of our family.

He attended and was concerned about all of our guests that would come. He was concerned about the Members. He was equally concerned and passionate about America.

I consider him a great patriot, a great American. He loved this work because he was serving America.

Lou lost his battle just this past weekend, but we are reminded that Lou was with us last week. How truly valiant Lou is in life and in death, and I stand here today to offer my deepest sympathy to his wife, Doris; his daughter, Edie; his son, Lewis, Jr.; and to all of his family members. May he rest in peace and may God bless him.

I also take note to acknowledge the happy celebration of the birthday of Maya Angelou, poet laureate, teacher, mentor, resident of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the author of the 1993 inaugural poem that suggested that those of us who live in the great land must come from underneath the rocks and shout out and be seen for justice. She also wrote the language or the words to a book, “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings,” to talk about what it’s like to be isolated, to be contained, to be inhibited as a child growing up in the deep south.

Maya Angelou can be considered a great American, certainly a great poet, certainly a great mentor of men and women, college students, as she taught me at Yale University. I am honored today to be able to say “thank you” to Maya Angelou.

I now move, Madam Speaker, to something that has been continuing in this Nation, and very quickly I call

upon the Secretary of State and the United States of America to reengage more actively in the negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians. I now believe fully that the only way that we will have success in recognizing and achieving peace in the Middle East is not through preemptive attacks, but through concern, negotiation, and firmness.

We must tell the negotiators what America wants to see and provide them the support. We must insist that we will continue to be a friend of Israel, we will never step away from her, and we stand by Israel’s right to exist as a freedom-loving democratic people.

Let’s say to the Palestinians if they are to move their people beyond the refugee camps, then they, too, must fight for democracy and two distinct separate states. The two-state theory must be put in action, but we can no longer stand by as an objective bystander. We must be engaged, we must roll up our sleeves, we must recognize that we are very much a part of the peace process in the Middle East.

I remember very well when the President came in and he said, That’s their business. My good friends on the other side of the aisle got up and joined him, That’s their business. It’s our business.

And before the lights go out on this administration, it would do well for us in the name of Prime Minister Sharon, who began this process, to get engaged and to make sure that we can have peace in the Middle East, to have an ally in Israel, safe and secure, and to say to the Palestinian people that you can have good health, you can have housing, you can have education.

I think, Madam Speaker, that this is a challenge that the Secretary of State should accept; this is a challenge for the President to accept. America can do no less.

I did not say “battle.” I said “engage,” and be able to be part of the negotiation for peace. There is nothing wrong for being considered a peace-loving Nation that promotes peace.

May God bless this Nation and bless our soldiers, wherever they may be, as they stand on the front lines around the world asking us to promote our ideals and our values, and that is peacemakers.

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.)

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

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