

life in North Carolina, and to ask the United States military what happens when a woman alleges sexual harassment, or, in this instance, rape. I think it is imperative that we have a system and a response that was not given to this young woman.

Some years ago, the Women's Caucus, Republicans and Democrats, raised the question of sexual harassment that was permeating our United States military. They are too good for this and this must stop. I am saddened by her loss. I believe it could have been avoided. We need a response, and we need it now.

PRESIDENT MUST WORK WITH CONGRESS TO HELP WORKING AMERICANS

(Ms. SHEA-PORTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, for months now, economic experts have been warning that our economy was in trouble. After some disturbing signs about job losses in this country, the President finally came out and made some comments saying that there were "mixed signals" about the state of the economy.

These are not mixed signals about the state of the economy, and Americans understand. Americans know they are having more trouble paying for their mortgages, having trouble paying for their heating bills, having trouble paying for their gas, having trouble paying for all the costs of living in America right now.

The President should not continue to call these signs "mixed signals," should acknowledge that we have some problems, and work in a bipartisan manner to straighten this out.

He might also wonder what impact the war in Iraq is having as we pour billions of dollars into Iraq and take the money from our own people and then borrow the money to continue the fight in Iraq. He might ask himself if this, too, is hurting our economy.

I ask the President to work with us to find answers for America's working people.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. JONES of Ohio). Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions 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.

Recorded votes on postponed questions will be taken later today.

CONDEMNING ASSASSINATION OF FORMER PAKISTANI PRIME MINISTER BENAZIR BHUTTO AND REAFFIRMING COMMITMENT OF UNITED STATES TO ASSIST PEOPLE OF PAKISTAN

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 912) condemning the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and reaffirming the commitment of the United States to assist the people of Pakistan in combating terrorist activity and promoting a free and democratic Pakistan.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 912

Whereas on December 27, 2007, former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was assassinated while departing a peaceful election rally;

Whereas the attack on Ms. Bhutto also killed some 20 other innocent bystanders and fellow Muslims;

Whereas Ms. Bhutto had returned to Pakistan in October 2007 after 8 years of self-imposed exile for the stated purpose of bringing democracy and the voice of moderation back to Pakistan;

Whereas Pakistan has struggled historically in its path toward a secure and stable democracy, having been ruled by unelected leaders for 34 out of 60 years of Pakistan's history;

Whereas Pakistan has been plagued by over 40 suicide attacks, claiming over 700 lives in 2007;

Whereas the Federally Administered Tribal Areas in Pakistan are being used by al Qaeda, the Taliban, and other terrorist and extremist elements to regroup, retrain, and recruit for future attacks in Afghanistan and Pakistan;

Whereas Pakistan is a nuclear-armed nation, adding another level of complexity to Pakistan's deteriorating security situation and raising the specter of nuclear arms falling into the hands of extremists in the future;

Whereas the international community has a vital interest in supporting a free, stable, and secure Pakistan so as to stem the rise of extremism in the region, prevent global acts of terrorism originating in Pakistan, and support the movement toward stable political institutions and democratic values and the rule of law;

Whereas in the past 5 years, the United States has provided over \$5,000,000,000 in assistance to Pakistan and an additional \$5,000,000,000 to reimburse Pakistan for its expenses incurred in combating terrorism;

Whereas a significant portion of United States assistance and reimbursements have gone to support Pakistani military operations in the Pakistan-Afghanistan border region, counterterrorism operations in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas in Pakistan and to increase Pakistan's counterterrorism and military capability;

Whereas there is an acute need for additional assistance from the United States and other countries to support and promote Pakistan's economic, social, and political development; and

Whereas the tragic death of Ms. Bhutto creates even greater uncertainty in an unstable region: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns in the strongest terms the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and expresses its condolences to her family and the families of all those who were killed or injured in the attack of December 27, 2007;

(2) supports efforts by Pakistan to expeditiously bring to justice those who have perpetrated this cruel and cowardly attack;

(3) welcomes the provision of assistance by the Government of the United Kingdom of expertise to the Government of Pakistan in the conduct of the investigation of the attack;

(4) commends the Government of Pakistan for accepting such assistance and urges that government to allow experts from the United Kingdom to participate in such investigation in the fullest possible manner;

(5) urges the people and Government of Pakistan to be relentless in its pursuit of a democratically-elected government, including the holding of free and fair elections at the earliest possible opportunity;

(6) expresses its support for the freedom of the media, the ability of political parties to express their views without restriction, and the independence of the judiciary in Pakistan; and

(7) reaffirms the commitment of the United States to assist the people of Pakistan in combating terrorist activity and promoting a free and democratic Pakistan.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 912.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, on December 27, former Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto was assassinated in Rawalpindi as she left a peaceful political rally. In addition, 20 of her supporters were killed in a suicide bomb blast and Pakistan was wracked by violence and instability in the immediate aftermath.

Former Prime Minister Bhutto had returned to Pakistan in October after several years in exile in an attempt to bring Pakistan back to the democratic fold and inject the voice of moderation into the Pakistani parliamentary elections. Her killers cut short that effort in an attack that was one of 40 suicide bombings that killed 700 people in Pakistan during 2007.

Ms. Bhutto's life was marked by tragedy that played out on Pakistan's public stage. Her father was hung after a questionable trial. Her brother was murdered. As Prime Minister, she was twice removed from office by the army amid allegations of corruption and wound up in self-imposed exile. Yet she

remained very popular with the people of Pakistan, especially those in her home province of Sindh, and as the awful events of December 27 demonstrate, she was perceived as a threat by someone.

The United States and the rest of the international community have a vital interest in supporting a free, stable, and secure Pakistan so as to stem the rise of extremism in South Asia, prevent global acts of terrorism from originating in Pakistan, and support the movement toward stable political institutions, democratic values, and the rule of law.

The fact that al Qaeda, the Taliban and other extremist elements are using the federally administered tribal areas to regroup, retain and recruit for future attacks in Pakistan and Afghanistan is a dangerous component of instability that, when added to Pakistan's possession of nuclear weapons, conjures up the frightening possibility of terrorists with access to weapons of mass destruction.

All of this means that the United States and the rest of the international community need to do all that we can to promote and support Pakistan's economic, social and political development to prevent Pakistan from becoming a failed state.

□ 1030

The resolution before us today condemns Ms. Bhutto's assassination, expresses condolences to her family and the families of the other victims of the attacks, and reaffirms the commitment of the United States to the people of Pakistan as they combat terrorism and work to establish a free and democratic country. I urge all of our colleagues, Madam Speaker, to support the resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, this resolution condemns the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and reaffirms the commitment of the United States to assist the people of Pakistan in combating terrorist activity and promoting a free and democratic Pakistan.

I would like to commend the author Mr. ACKERMAN and the distinguished chairman of our committee Mr. LANTOS for their leadership in introducing this timely resolution.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the people of the United States and the Congress, this resolution expresses our sympathy for the people of Pakistan on the tragic assassination of former Prime Minister Bhutto last December 27. It should be noted that, in the immediate aftermath of the attack, both the President and Secretary of State Rice immediately extended condolences to the Bhutto family and the family of others who were killed and wounded on that horrible day. And, as so many observers have noted, Ms. Bhutto's death is a great loss to Paki-

stan. As Secretary Rice stated, she was a woman of great courage with an impressive commitment to democracy and to the future of Pakistan itself.

Madam Speaker, as President Bush has emphasized, the perpetrators of this terrible crime must be brought to justice. In this regard, the Congress joins with the administration in welcoming the government of Pakistan's decision to accept British assistance to the investigation into Ms. Bhutto's death. We all hope that their actions to ensure a credible and transparent investigation of the circumstances surrounding Ms. Bhutto's death will help to restore calm, contribute to the conditions needed for a free and fair election to take place, and bring the perpetrators of her death to justice.

The assassination of the former Prime Minister and the apparent attempt to destabilize Pakistan remind us again how consequential this relationship is to American national interests and our own homeland security. It is vital that we continue to seek to forge an enduring relationship and partnership with a democratic, stable, and prosperous Pakistan that remains a strong partner in the campaign against Islamic militants and which maintains responsible control over its nuclear weapons technology.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) be permitted to manage the remainder of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. With that, I urge support for the resolution and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY).

Mr. KENNEDY. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, remembering a true pioneer in the Muslim world. As the first woman to lead an Islamic nation, Prime Minister Bhutto represented a great hope for Pakistan and world peace.

I had a chance to meet with Benazir Bhutto when she came to the United States to visit the John F. Kennedy Library back in the 1990s; and I was hopeful that I would have the chance to meet her again on the evening of her assassination when I was visiting Islamabad. Tragically, I heard the news as I was on my way to go visit her that evening while I was visiting Islamabad, and it was an evening obviously that I will never forget. It was one of those moments that many people tell me about when they recall my uncle's assassination. They say to me, "I'll never forget where I was when I heard the news."

Madam Speaker, I often heard from people when I was over there when they tell me about my uncle and how

they had heard the news all the way over in Pakistan over 40 years ago where they were when they heard the news; and I can tell you, when I went and visited the headquarters of her party after her assassination and visited the supporters of hers, their heartbroken feelings were such that she was considered by them to be part of their family. And it was something that I will never forget, because she was much more than just a political leader in their view; she was someone who was somewhat of an icon, a person who inspired a nation much more than just as any ordinary political leader would. As such, this assassination represents much more than just the killing of a political leader; it represents the dashing of hopes and aspirations of millions of Pakistanis.

So, I join my colleagues in this resolution to say that we in the United States stand with our friends in Pakistan in joining in solidarity with them, and ensuring that her death is not a death that is going to be in vain, but, rather, that we are going to ensure that this election is going to be an election that she would have hoped would have been one that is transparent, fair, and would have lived up to the hopes that she had for a free and fair Pakistan. That is what we will all work for here in the United States and that I hope this resolution will help to bring about.

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support as an original cosponsor of House Resolution 912, condemning the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, and reaffirming the commitment of the United States to assist the people of Pakistan in combating terrorist activity and promoting a free and democratic Pakistan.

Let me begin by commending the chairman of the subcommittee, on which I serve as ranking member, for taking his usual efforts with speed and sensitivity and professionalism to bring this resolution to the floor forthwith. I also want to commend Chairman LANTOS. And I would take note of the presence of the Speaker of the House on the floor. This is an important resolution for this Congress to embrace, and it is important in the wake of this tragedy that it be the first thing this Congress do in this year.

All of us, as we were enjoying time with our families in the immediate aftermath for many of us of a memorable Christmas, we were struck by the extraordinary and tragic events of 27 December 2007. As my colleague, Mr. KENNEDY, just said, some of us were closer to those events at the time than others, but they were events that shattered the hopes of the entire world for a move in the midst of our critical ally, Pakistan, from a military dictatorship to democracy.

And while there is always second-guessing about decisions that were made and policies that were made, let

me say squarely, as does this resolution, the blame for this outrage, the blame for this tragedy lies squarely with the assassins. They alone are responsible for the horrific death of Benazir Bhutto. In fact, an al Qaeda commander and spokesman, Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, gloated to the Italian news agency that they had "terminated the most precious American asset which vowed to defeat the mujahadeen."

And, of course what makes this tragedy so moving and this congressional action so timely is that the former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto knew the stakes. She knew precisely the dangers into which she was entering. In a late November interview even with *Parade* magazine here in the States, she said, "It is only now that America has awakened to what we are already fighting, namely, Islamic jihadists."

As the ranking member of the full committee said moments ago, eloquently, Secretary of State Rice called Benazir Bhutto "a woman of great courage." And courage is a word we throw around a lot in political life, it seems, but it was in this moment that I was struck with the reality of courage. Courage is not the absence of fear; courage is action on one's principles in the midst of fear. One has to know that this 54-year-old Harvard and Oxford graduate, giving up a life of luxury in exile, knew the dangers that faced her and the mortal peril in which she was walking on behalf of a free and democratic Pakistan. One cannot fail but be moved by that. If there was any doubt, then the immediate attack upon her on 18 October 2007, which left some 145 of her supporters dead, relieved all doubt of the danger in which she was entering. And yet Benazir Bhutto, the first woman elected to lead a Muslim country, went forward, continued to take the risk, continued to advocate freedom, and paid the ultimate sacrifice.

I will say that while I want to acknowledge her unapologetically secular approach to leadership in government, I can't help, when I look at Benazir Bhutto, to think that she will long be remembered with a verse that comes out of a Christian tradition, which is, that greater love has no man or, if I may, woman, than this than to lay down their life for their friends.

Benazir Bhutto showed a love for the people of Pakistan. She showed a love for freedom. And in this resolution, the United States of America by its Congress will reaffirm to the people of Pakistan our commitment to justice in this instance, and our commitment to see stability and democracy reign in that critical ally.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 1 minute to the distinguished Speaker of the House, Ms. PELOSI.

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding and for giving us this opportunity to express our sympathy and sadness and

recognize the tremendous contribution of Benazir Bhutto to the cause of democracy.

Thank you, Mr. ACKERMAN and Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, ranking member of the full committee; Mr. LANTOS and Mr. PENCE for their giving this opportunity to us as well and for their strong words and support of democracy in Pakistan.

Benazir Bhutto about 15 years ago came to this Chamber of Congress, one of the first women ever to address a joint session of Congress. Only in her thirties, I believe, at the time, she inspired us, she filled us with hope, and the confidence which she projected gave us the confidence that democracy could come to Pakistan. That was a while ago, and much has transpired since then. She has been in and out and in again as Prime Minister. And, as you know, when she returned to Pakistan, it was to participate in an election to take Pakistan back down the path to democracy.

Her return was courageous. Mr. PENCE mentioned the word courageous. It was courageous for many reasons. It is important to note that her father and two of her brothers had been assassinated. They were victims of political violence. And, of course, their family was dealt another blow as were the people of Pakistan with the brutal assassination of Benazir Bhutto.

She possessed a remarkable optimism about the future, a belief in the power of dialogue, and a strong, strong commitment to democracy. She was an advocate for reconciliation between Islamic and non-Islamic societies, and outlined how that goal could be achieved. She not only had a vision, she had a plan on how it would be done. The strength of her message of hope has underscored how much we lost in her tragic death.

In the days and the weeks that have followed Benazir Bhutto's death, there has been little good news from Pakistan. The Musharraf government continues to deny the Pakistani people a full accounting of the assassination and the events that followed. There must be a strong international investigation of this despicable crime. I acknowledge and recognize that the government has accepted assistance from Scotland Yard and the government of Great Britain. But the government has delayed scheduled parliamentary elections while continuing to jail democratic activists, suppress journalists, and shut out international monitors. The Bush administration must continue to press the Pakistani government to ensure that the coming election is free and fair.

□ 1045

I think it is important to note, my colleagues and Madam Speaker, that the 9/11 Commission recommendations, which were passed by this body and were signed into law last year, condition U.S. assistance to Pakistan on the cooperation of the Pakistani Govern-

ment with global efforts against terrorism.

Since 2001, Pakistan has received nearly \$10 billion in U.S. assistance. The Bush administration has repeatedly certified that our assistance would facilitate Pakistan's transition to democracy. We clearly have not seen enough progress in this area.

Troubling questions have been raised about our assistance to Pakistan, that it has not been properly monitored and that the Pakistani Government may be using it for purposes other than those intended.

Last year, under the leadership of Chairwoman NITA LOWEY and Ranking Member FRANK WOLF of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, under their leadership, our legislation shifted economic assistance for Pakistan from going directly to the Musharraf government to going directly to the Pakistani people on the ground. Indeed, this was a step forward and a recognition of the concerns that we had about how that aid was being used in Pakistan.

I believe the best way for the United States to honor the legacy of Benazir Bhutto is to renew our engagement directly with the people of Pakistan. We urge the Musharraf government to implement democratic reforms by restoring the Pakistani constitution, ensuring freedom of expression and assembly, guaranteeing free and fair democratic elections, and restoring an independent judiciary.

The opportunity that Mr. ACKERMAN and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, Mr. LANTOS and Mr. PENCE have given us today to give an overwhelming vote in support of this resolution can tell the world that again we have gone on record in support of the democratic hopes of the Pakistani people and to pay tribute to the legacy of Benazir Bhutto.

I know I speak for all Members when I express my condolences to the family of Benazir Bhutto, and also to all of the others who lost loved ones in this tragic incidence of violence and assassination in Pakistan.

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the ranking member of the legislative branch of the Appropriations Subcommittee, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP).

Mr. WAMP. Madam Speaker, I consider it a privilege to follow the distinguished Speaker of the House in recognizing our support for the people of Pakistan and our remorse that the world community of peacemakers has lost the great Benazir Bhutto. I, too, considered her a personal friend. I spent many hours with her, mostly associated with the National Prayer Breakfast here.

During the years she was in exile, she came many times to our National Prayer Breakfast, which is always the first Thursday in February. She was a proud participant in the Islamic tradition. However, she was always interested in the teachings of Jesus, and she was very much fascinated by the concepts of forgiveness and reconciliation,

and the principles that the last would be first and basically the way that the teachings of Jesus turned the world upside down. And we had coffee with her. We had lunches with her. My wife and I had dinner with her and her controversial husband and got to know him when he was here the last time she was here and visited with us.

She was truly a courageous human being, someone who understood the West, yet maintained her solid heart-felt conviction to her favorite country, Pakistan. She spent a lot of time with us, and she truly was a peacemaker.

I believe the greatest way to honor her courageous death would be for us to work tirelessly to empower the moderates within Islam to stand with us against radicalization, in any faith, frankly. But today, particularly in the Islamic faith, the radicals threaten the world. Yet 92 percent of people within Islam believe that terrorism is not an acceptable means to an end. And she was a leader among that 92 percent.

The problem is 8 percent of Islam is 130 million people who think that terrorism is acceptable, and those are the people that killed her. And they will kill anyone who threatens their ideology. And they killed her.

We need to empower all of the moderates within this very large religion to stand with us against the radicals, and then we can honor her courageous death. She will live on though, really through eternity, as one who, as MIKE PENCE said, was willing to lay down her life for a friend.

I will quote another Christian idea. It is in the Beatitudes. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven." Benazir Bhutto was a peacemaker. She gave her life for a cause, and the entire world should be grateful.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, let me offer my gratitude to Chairman ACKERMAN and to his cosponsor, Mr. PENCE, and our chairman of the full committee, Mr. LANTOS, for all of his leadership and certainly his recognition as a peacemaker as well, and to the ranking member, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN.

I rise today with a great degree of somberness and, to a certain extent, hopelessness. But I also rise to express my appreciation for the life and the legacy of Benazir Bhutto. I also want to offer a personal sympathy and acknowledgment to her husband, Mr. Zardari; her son, Bilawal; and her daughters, Bakhtwar and Aseefa, for our families mourn with you.

And I think it is important in the backdrop of one of the greatest peacemakers' birthday, Dr. Martin Luther King, to place former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto in her rightful place. I am glad my colleagues called her a peacemaker. I call her a humanitarian and someone who was willing to sacrifice her own life to push the envelope of democracy.

I hold in my hand the Washington Post today that has as a headline, "Bhutto's last day in keeping with her driven life." It indicates a quote that I think speaks to her life. It says, "Wake up, my brothers." That is why she was campaigning in such a frenzied manner. That is why she was waving to her constituents and fellow brothers and sisters as she left the place of her speech.

So I think it is important for us to make the very important note that we should not victimize the victim. Her assassination was not her fault. Everyone in a pressing democracy wants the ability to communicate with those who you are trying to encourage to wake up. Today we honor that bravery, that courage.

We say to the Pakistani Government, for this Nation to move forward, there must be an enlisted and entrenched commitment to democracy. There must be a full investigation of this assassination. It must be determined whether al Qaeda had others beyond its reach to be involved in what may have been a conspiracy. And yes, the leadership of the Pakistan Government must ensure the security of all candidates going forward for these elections. The elections must be ensured.

But we must thank former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto for her legacy; that she was not concerned about her own safety, that she wanted greatness and excellence for her country.

I joined with President Clinton in a visit some years ago when we met President Musharraf, and there were great hopes that he would move his country towards democracy. There were times that occurred. Now he must show that he is sincere about this democracy and let the elections go forward and let a democratic leader emerge from this election. At the same time, he must of course make sure that the instruments of democracy, the court system, the media, and all of those different voices be heard, but it must be ensured that the government is in the business of security and making that happen.

In speaking to Prime Minister Bhutto in the days and weeks before her death, as I did, it was obvious that she was concerned about her security, but she was concerned about the future of the people of Pakistan. Again, a peacemaker, someone who put her life behind her love and affection for this country.

And so we rise today to acknowledge the horrific tragedy, the fact that her family has suffered such, and the fact that she was truly a fighter globally. But there is a challenge that she knew that we had to confront together, and that is the tribal areas in Pakistan. It is a place where we must accept the collapse, if you will, of the foreign policy efforts of this nation, for it is there where the Taliban is resurging and there where al Qaeda may be strong, and it is there where it is alleged that Osama bin Laden rests.

So this policy must begin to address what former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto wanted us to address: the social and economic needs, along with the security needs, of the Pakistani people. And it is my call that we not give up on the Pakistani people or Pakistan. It is a country that was founded on democratic principles. We must not give up on the Pakistani people around the world and Pakistani Americans. They want democracy. Those in my community want democracy for their nation, and my constituents in Houston, Texas, are calling me every day so we can come together to find a way to put Pakistan on the path to democracy.

Sleep well, my good friend, former Prime Minister Bhutto. We owe you an enormous debt of gratitude, and deepest sympathy to your family. But our commitment is that your lust and love for peace will never be forgotten. We owe you that in our tribute and our words and actions and deeds. May all rest in peace, in you, a great and wonderful leader.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 912, introduced by my distinguished colleague Mr. ACKERMAN. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this bipartisan resolution, which condemns the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and reaffirms the commitment of the United States to assist the people of Pakistan in combating terrorist activity and promoting a free and democratic Pakistan. I express my sincere condolences to Ms. Bhutto's husband, Asif Ali Zardari, and her children, Bilawal, Bakhtwar, and Aseefa. I would like to thank my colleague Mr. ACKERMAN for introducing this resolution, and I would like to commend Mr. LANTOS for his leadership on Pakistan as chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

As my colleagues are aware, former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto was assassinated on December 27, 2007, as she left a peaceful political rally, in an attack which also killed over 20 innocent bystanders. Ms. Bhutto's death came 2 months after she returned to Pakistan from exile and was immediately attacked in a suicide bombing that killed over 130 people, and just over 2 weeks before Pakistan's democratic elections were scheduled to occur.

It is with deep sadness that I mourn the passing of former Pakistani Prime Minister Bhutto. Ms. Bhutto was a woman and a leader who pursued excellence and greatness for her country, putting the needs of her nation above concerns for her own safety. As co-chair of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, I had the opportunity to speak with Ms. Bhutto several times in recent months, and I was always struck by her commitment to remaining in Pakistan, despite attacks and threats on her life. Benazir Bhutto's return to Pakistan in October 2007 came in the midst of an explosion that would have driven away anyone of lesser heart. She left the relative security of family life in Dubai to return to her homeland, determined to see democratic processes and institutions grow in Pakistan.

Benazir Bhutto was one of the world's most high-profile female leaders, and she rose to prominence amidst a male-dominated political hierarchy. After gaining her education at Harvard and Oxford, Ms. Bhutto followed her father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, into politics. Like her

father, she served as Prime Minister of Pakistan, holding the office from 1988 to 1990 and again from 1993 to 1996. Also like her father, she was violently killed for her convictions, her dedication to her country, and her unwillingness to hide in the shadows upon her return to Pakistan.

The assassination of Ms. Bhutto is a horrific tragedy for Pakistan and for the world. It is essential that her killers be brought to justice immediately. This is an extremely critical time for the nation of Pakistan, with elections that had been expected in early January now scheduled for February 18, 2008. Pakistan has seen serious political instability throughout the past year, weathering approximately 60 suicide bomb attacks, which killed nearly 800 people over the course of the year.

Pakistan continues to be an important ally in the global fight against terrorism. I am particularly worried about the security of Pakistan's leaders and people, and I believe that we must examine the measures that are being undertaken to ensure their safety. As co-chair of the Congressional Pakistan Caucus, I have long advocated the need to ensure that Pakistan is stabilized, and that its leaders and people are protected.

According to the United States Department of State, Pakistan currently has 85,000 troops stationed along the border with Afghanistan. Richard A. Boucher, Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, recently noted that Pakistan has "captured more al-Qaeda than any country in the world, and lost more people doing that." Pakistani authorities have also killed or captured several top Taliban commanders in this area in recent months.

Prime Minister Bhutto's assassination is a great blow to the democratic process in Pakistan. The international community must work together with the Pakistani government to ensure that those responsible for this brutal crime are brought to justice. In addition, we must stand with the people of Pakistan during this turbulent time, and, together, work together against our common enemy: terrorism.

Benazir Bhutto was a truly courageous woman, and a true leader for her nation and the world. Her violent and untimely death is a true tragedy, and I join with the people of Pakistan, as well as my colleagues here in Congress, in mourning the passing of an extraordinary leader, as well as those who died in the December 17th attack with her.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution, paying tribute to former Prime Minister Bhutto, condemning her assassination, supporting Pakistani and international efforts to bring her murderers to justice, and reaffirming our commitment to a free and democratic Pakistan, standing strong against our mutual enemy of terrorism.

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to a member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and original cosponsor of this resolution, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE).

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman for yielding, and I also thank Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. LANTOS and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for sponsoring this resolution.

On December 27, 2007, the world reeled as it received news that a suicide terrorist and others had assassinated Pakistan's freedom fighter and

beacon of democracy, Ms. Benazir Bhutto, during a peaceful political rally.

She was educated in the tradition of western democratic philosophy, and received her higher education training at Oxford and Harvard University. She has been the voice in support of a democratic Pakistan for more than 20 years.

In 1988, at the age of 35, she became the youngest person and the first female elected to lead a Muslim state. Since that time, Ms. Bhutto has remained committed to the restoration of a true democracy in Pakistan. When Ms. Bhutto returned to Pakistan last year, she knew she was putting her life at risk because, Madam Speaker, the violent enemies of democracy throughout the world are numerous. But her commitment to democracy in Pakistan was stronger than her fear of death.

As the daughter of a former Prime Minister of Pakistan, Bhutto used to say she did not choose her life but that it chose her instead. The truth is she chose freedom and democracy, and her love for those principles compelled her continuous bold, even boisterous voice of democracy for the Pakistani people.

Ms. Bhutto has been described as a defiant and strong-willed leader. In life and in death, her charisma and determination have been admired by people throughout the world.

She was a beacon of democracy in Pakistan, and I join my colleagues in condemning her assassination with the expectation that the current government will seek out and find all of the assassins.

Pakistan has been a loyal ally and friends of the United States since 1947.

□ 1100

The United States stands with the people of Pakistan. We affirm our commitment to the Pakistani people in combating terrorism and promoting a free and democratic Pakistan. The long lamentable history of human conduct is filled with the names of martyrs who have been murdered for the cause of freedom. Today, we add the name of one more.

And that's just the way it is.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Is the gentleman from Indiana seeking to recognize further speakers?

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman for his courtesy. I have no additional speakers, but would reserve the right to close for a minute or two.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Proceed.

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I want to rise again to express my strong support of this resolution and urge as near a unanimous adoption of this resolution as this Congress can muster.

I want to commend the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) for his swift and sympathetic and thoughtful legislative workmanship on this measure. As I said before, I think, given the tragic events of 27 December 2007, it is

important that this Congress be heard on a resolution condemning this assassination, and it is important that it be the first substantive measure that this Congress takes up. And I commend Mr. ACKERMAN, the chairman of the committee Mr. LANTOS, and Speaker PELOSI for facilitating that, as I do my colleagues on the committee in the minority.

This resolution condemns in the strongest possible terms the assassination of former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. It supports efforts by Pakistan to bring to justice those who have perpetrated this cruel and cowardly act. It welcomes the provision of assistance by the government of the United Kingdom, and it commends the government of Pakistan for accepting such assistance.

In addition, it urges the people and the government of Pakistan to be relentless in their pursuit of a democratically elected government, including the holding of free and fair elections at the earliest possible opportunity. It urges support for a free media.

And perhaps in the seventh paragraph, as I close, Madam Speaker, it, this resolution, which I hope and trust will be unanimously adopted today, reaffirms the commitment of the United States to assist the people of Pakistan in combating terrorist activity and promoting a free and democratic Pakistan.

I quote again the words of the late and, no one would argue, great Benazir Bhutto who said just this fall in an American magazine, "It's only now that America has awakened to what we were already fighting, Islamic jihadists."

I believe the greatest legacy that Benazir Bhutto could leave is not only a legacy of a democratically elected government in her country, but it would be a legacy of a further awakening in the world to the threat that free societies and those that seek to be free face from radical Islamic jihadists. If her legacy can be not only progress for her people toward democracy, but progress in the free world to renewing our determination to confront those who oppose our way of life with violence, both in support of the Pakistani Government and in places like Afghanistan and Iraq, if I might add, then that would be a powerful and meritorious legacy indeed.

I urge support of all of my colleagues for this important resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I would like to thank Mr. PENCE, Mr. LANTOS, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, all those who participated in this discussion. I don't think we can call it a debate. I think all of the indications that we have heard today indicate that we are on the same side on this.

I would urge unanimous support for the resolution.

Mr. MANZULLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my anger and sadness regarding the assassination of former Prime

Minister Benazir Bhutto. The horrific murder of Prime Minister Bhutto is a chilling reminder that extremist forces are continually trying to undermine democracy and freedom. Today, we stand with the democrats in Pakistan and throughout the world to oppose tyranny and terrorism.

Benazir Bhutto was the first woman elected to lead a Muslim state and served twice as Prime Minister of Pakistan. I had the distinct honor and privilege to meet her when she spoke to members of the House International Relations Committee during the mid-1990's in an ornate ceremonial room just one floor below this rostrum. Her accomplishment paved the way for other women leaders to seek and win top offices throughout the developing world. Bhutto's dedication to democracy in Pakistan is closely tied to the time she spent as a student in the United States. In fact, she credits her exposure to America as a driving force behind her push for a free Pakistan.

Former Prime Minister Bhutto was also no stranger to the good people of Illinois' 16th Congressional District. In 2002, she spoke to an overflow audience at Rockford College about the link between promoting democracy and defeating extremist terrorists. I know I speak for the people of northern Illinois in expressing our heartfelt gratitude that she visited Rockford. Bhutto's speech was inspirational and enlightening. I enclose for the RECORD the article titled, "Ex-Premier Pushes U.S. to Aid Democracy Fight" from the Rockford Register Star, published on September 20, 2002, discussing Bhutto's historic remarks at Rockford College.

Pakistan must continue its journey to political reform and democracy. The United States must stand with those who advocate for the fundamental freedoms that were bestowed onto all of us by our creator. Let's not forget Bhutto's legacy and stand with the people of Pakistan in this dark hour.

[From the Rockford Register Star, Sept. 20, 2002]

EX-PREMIER PUSHES U.S. TO AID DEMOCRACY FIGHT

ROCKFORD.—Former Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said Thursday that people of her country support her battle to bring democracy to Pakistan. She wants President Bush to help.

The deposed leader—who at age 35 became the first female prime minister in the Muslim world—continues her efforts, made more important in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

Bhutto remains critical of the regime of Gen. Pervez Musharraf, who has controlled the country since 1999. She is an author and active in the Pakistan People's Party, the country's largest, pro-democracy party.

"I support democracy in Pakistan and, with the war on terrorism, there is a new commitment to bringing democracy to the Muslim world and the empowering of the Muslim people based on fundamental human rights," she said.

Bhutto planned to share this message later Thursday night with a sold-out crowd at Maddox Theatre at Rockford College. Additional crowds were seated in the Cheek Theatre and dance studio to watch a live television feed of Bhutto's presentation.

Bhutto's visit kicked off the 2002-03 Rockford College Forum Series, a program of speakers and workshops focused on the politics and culture of Islam.

Bhutto acknowledged that she hasn't met with Bush about bringing democracy to her

home country but "other U.S. officials" assured her that the United States remains committed to fostering democracy in Pakistan.

"I want President Bush to say 'Look, you've been our ally, and we want to help bring democracy because democracy doesn't promote terrorism,'" she said.

Her determination to see Pakistan become a democracy began after she completed her education at Radcliffe College and Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, in the late 1970s.

Bhutto was born June 21, 1953, in Karachi, Pakistan. In 1977, at age 24, she returned home and took up the struggle to restore democracy and human rights in the country as a leader of the Pakistan People's Party.

Bhutto faced imprisonment and exile while guiding the resistance to Pakistan's military regime.

Her government was replaced by opposing political forces in 1990, but Bhutto was again elected prime minister in 1993 and served until 1996, when the government was overthrown by a military coup.

"My leadership was of different vision than the conservatives. It was dictatorship vs. democracy."

Jeff Hendry, chairman of the forum series committee, said Bhutto's visit was "huge, especially now with all the news in that part of the world."

In her speech: "she will deal with the international political climate and deal more with what the U.S. can do and should be doing to bring democracy to Pakistan as well as the strategic importance of the region," he said.

WHAT SHE SAID

The Register Star asked Benazir Bhutto:

Is Osama bin Laden dead? "It's 50-50, and it's anybody's guess. I thought for a while if he was dead, there had to be certain funeral ceremonies done for the soul, but maybe he was killed and nobody knew. He could be playing dead and he could pop in the next five years. But if he's hiding, it would probably be in the mountains of Afghanistan."

How the people of Pakistan view the United States: "Pakistan has mixed feelings toward the U.S. It's like a love-hate relationship. They see it as a land of opportunity and power and to them, they feel they are powerless. They like the power the U.S. has, but they hate their own powerlessness."

Have the Pakistani people been treated differently in the United States since the terrorist attacks? "I have respect largely in the area of academia. I have talked to students who have said Americans came to them and asked 'Are you OK?' Other stories I hear from big cities are of hate crimes and of some men who have shaved their beards off in fear of being targeted. But President Bush is right when he says Pakistan is safe here. I hear others say, 'We are Americans, and please accept us as the way we are.'"

Mr. ACKERMAN. Having no additional speakers, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 912.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the

Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

PROVIDING FOR CONCURRENCE BY HOUSE WITH AMENDMENT IN SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 4253, MILITARY RESERVIST AND VETERAN SMALL BUSINESS REAUTHORIZATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 2008

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 921) providing for the concurrence by the House in the Senate amendment to H.R. 4253, with an amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 921

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution the bill (H.R. 4253) entitled "An Act to improve and expand small business assistance programs for veterans of the armed forces and military reservists, and for other purposes", with the Senate amendment thereto, shall be considered to have been taken from the Speaker's table to the end that the Senate amendment thereto be, and the same is hereby, agreed to with the following amendment:

In lieu of the matter proposed to be inserted by the amendment of the Senate, insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Military Reservist and Veteran Small Business Reauthorization and Opportunity Act of 2008".

SEC. 2. TABLE OF CONTENTS.

The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title.
- Sec. 2. Table of contents.
- Sec. 3. Definitions.

TITLE I—VETERANS BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

- Sec. 101. Increased funding for the Office of Veterans Business Development.
- Sec. 102. Interagency task force.
- Sec. 103. Permanent extension of SBA Advisory Committee on Veterans Business Affairs.
- Sec. 104. Office of Veterans Business Development.
- Sec. 105. Increasing the number of outreach centers.
- Sec. 106. Independent study on gaps in availability of outreach centers.
- Sec. 107. Veterans assistance and services program.

TITLE II—RESERVIST PROGRAMS

- Sec. 201. Reservist programs.
- Sec. 202. Reservist loans.
- Sec. 203. Noncollateralized loans.
- Sec. 204. Loan priority.
- Sec. 205. Relief from time limitations for veteran-owned small businesses.
- Sec. 206. Service-disabled veterans.
- Sec. 207. Study on options for promoting positive working relations between employers and their Reserve Component employees.
- Sec. 208. Increased Veteran Participation Program.

SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act—

- (1) the term "activated" means receiving an order placing a Reservist on active duty;