

This husband, father and grandfather chose a life of service, protecting and defending his friends, neighbors, and the public. His life and work demonstrate a public service of the highest caliber. With this loss, I offer my prayers and deepest sympathies to the family and friends of Officer Crittenden, and I urge all Americans to take the time to thank those who put their lives in danger every day in order to protect us.

□ 1930

ADDRESSING HEALTH CARE AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the 85 Members of the House who signed onto H.R. 676, the bill which JOHN CONYERS and I authored, which establishes Medicare for all. It's very clear that there is only one way that you can control costs and can make it possible for people to have the doctor of choice. That legislation, H.R. 676, accomplishes that.

I would like to suggest that the underlying angst that we have seen reflected across this country in the last couple of months at townhall meetings and in individual confrontations is not simply about health care, and we ignore at our peril the underlying economic issues that are confronting this country. The fact that there are 15 million Americans out of work, the fact that so many people have lost their investments, that so many people have lost their pensions is what is moving the American people to revolt against their own government.

So we need to look at this in a broader way, not only to address the health care issue but also to address the underlying economic questions.

QUIT TALKING—START LISTENING

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, the President of the United States was addressing a group yesterday, and he came after, once again, the critics of his health care proposal. We got the health care bill that was filed in the House, and that's what we've been working from. He has said that, if you like your policy, you can keep it. Obviously, he hasn't read the policy. I would recommend he read page 16, and he'll find out that what he's saying is not true.

He went on and is quoted in talking about his critics as saying, "You've heard all the lies. I've got a question for all those folks: What are you going to do? What's your answer? What's your solution? And you know what? They don't have one."

Madam Speaker, I would like to encourage the President to quit talking

so much and listen. There are lots of proposals out there. Read Human Events today. You'll see there are plenty of proposals. Quit talking. Start listening.

HEALTH CARE REFORM WITH A PUBLIC OPTION

(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, it is a delight to be back with my colleagues, but more importantly, it was enriching to be with my constituents at some 10 townhall meetings and at any number of personal appearances before organizations to talk about changing America's health care system for the better of all Americans. After 60 years, we now have an opportunity to address the question of the uninsured and to make sure that those who have insurance can keep it.

I have read page 16. What it says is that your private insurance is grandfathered in and that, if your insurance in 5 years does not meet basic standards, we'll require your insurers to do so. There is nothing on page 16 that says anything about eliminating your insurance, but it does reform the insurance industry of America—no pre-existing disease; preventative care. We can pay for it. The Congressional Budget Office said so.

So today, Madam Speaker, I am here gladly to stand with the President and to join him in the question: What will you do? It's time to move on health care reform with a vigorous public option.

RESPECTING THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

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

Mr. CAO. Madam Speaker, the Office of the President of the United States is higher than the individual who occupies the seat. It is a symbol of freedom, respect and of the enduring values of our Republic.

Like every American, the President has the right to speak freely. In fact, it is his duty to address the American people. So, as I watched the events this past weekend, which suggested that his words would be subversive, controversial or otherwise inappropriate, I was very disappointed. Every American President has had the opportunity to speak to schoolchildren. President Obama is no exception.

The President's address to students this morning promoted students setting high standards, supporting our teachers and principals and reforming our schools. He encouraged students to take advantage of educational opportunities for successful careers and the opportunities to achieve the American Dream.

I ask that we, as Americans, learn to make the distinction between our disagreements with the man in the Oval Office and our history of respecting the office, itself.

THE PRESIDENT FOR ALL AMERICANS AND HEALTH COVERAGE FOR ALL

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

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I would like to commend my colleague who just spoke before me because I think he hit the nail right on the head.

President Obama spoke to schoolchildren today. I listened to it. It was very moving. It was very good to see the President of the United States talk directly to America's youth, and it was disgraceful to see, during the past week, parents, some teachers and some schools saying that they weren't going to allow their children to listen to the President of the United States. What a sad day it is when people can talk that way.

The President of the United States is to be respected by all. He is all of our President, not just the President for the people who voted for him. I voted for him, and I'm proud that I did, but he is everybody's President; he is every Americans' President.

I believe that tomorrow, as he did today with schoolchildren, the President will make a very, very good speech on health care—highlighting health care, why we need health care reform, why it's important to have it. There are 40 million Americans who have no health insurance coverage whatsoever—47 million—and it will soon be 60 and 70 million. That's why we need health coverage, and I welcome the President's speech tomorrow.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

REMEMBERING AND HONORING THE LIFE OF SVEND AUKEN

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

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I rise to mark the death of a good friend and of a good friend of America—Svend Auken—who died last month after a long struggle with cancer.

Svend was the first Vice President of the Danish Parliament, the Folketing, and he was a political legend in his country. I had the opportunity to meet and work closely with Svend on many occasions, most recently when he was one of my gracious hosts on a trip to Denmark this May.

Each time, I was impressed by the vitality, the sense of humor and the idealism of this man who devoted his life to public service from the day he entered politics at the age of 28, right up to his death a few weeks ago. Svend was a kind, wise and insightful friend, and I will miss him.

Today, I rise to offer my condolences to his wife, Anne, to his children and to other friends and family whom he left behind. I also, of course, rise to pay him tribute.

Svend's country is home to a proud political tradition. It stretches from the solidarity Danes showed when they protected their Jewish fellow citizens from the onslaught of the Holocaust to the foresight Denmark proved by becoming entirely energy independent.

Svend Auken was a real humanitarian and a visionary political thinker who was worthy of his proud heritage. As leader of the Social Democrats and as a long-serving minister for the environment and energy, Svend left a powerful mark on his country and on Europe, and he became an inspiration to leaders around the world who are struggling to confront common threats such as global warming.

As a leading Danish paper wrote, "The country's landscape, specked with the thousands of windmills that have become a symbol of Denmark, can be traced back to Auken's efforts." Svend deserves credit for his country's secure retirement system as well.

Svend's friendship wasn't just meaningful to me on a personal level; the relationships and respect he cultivated on both sides of our political aisle helped to cement the powerful friendship between America and its key NATO ally, Denmark.

As a Danish-American myself and as a Member of Congress, I have been proud to support and nurture this key alliance. I chair the Congressional Friends of Denmark Caucus, along with my friend HOWARD COBLE, and I meet frequently with visiting Danish leaders, whose inquisitive and analytical approach in meetings is always very notable.

Though Svend is gone, I know that the progress he made for his country and the friendship he helped sustain with ours will be among his lasting legacies. I also know that he lived a full, committed and creative life.

As Svend said when he announced his decision to continue serving despite his cancer, "The amount of time you have left to live, be it short or long, is life, itself, and you shouldn't squander it." Svend did not squander his life. I believe that Svend died secure in the knowledge that he made everything he could of the time he was given, and there is no better end than that.

I pay respect to a friend, a colleague, a great Danish leader, a great European leader, a great international citizen—Svend Auken.

U.S. PRESENCE IN AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, on June 25, 2009, I joined Congressman JIM MCGOVERN in offering an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act. The amendment would have required the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to Congress which outlines an exit strategy for our Armed Forces in Afghanistan.

During the floor debate that day, I, along with other Members, talked about the history of Afghanistan and about the difficulties that other nations have had there—from Alexander the Great to England and Russia. As just one measure of the hazardous conditions facing our troops in Afghanistan, 99 American servicemembers have been killed in Afghanistan since June 25, 2009—the day we debated the amendment.

While I regret that the amendment was not approved, I still believe it is critical for the current administration to clearly articulate benchmarks for success and an end point to its war strategy in Afghanistan.

Last week, on September 1, 2009, conservative columnist George Will wrote an op-ed, titled "Time to Get Out of Afghanistan." In it, he shares his insights on our Nation's current strategy in Afghanistan.

I submit the full text of this op-ed for the RECORD.

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 1, 2009]

TIME TO GET OUT OF AFGHANISTAN

(By George F. Will)

"Yesterday," reads the e-mail from Allen, a Marine in Afghanistan. "I gave blood because a Marine, while out on patrol, stepped on a [mine's] pressure plate and lost both legs." Then "another Marine with a bullet wound to the head was brought in. Both Marines died this morning."

"I'm sorry about the drama," writes Allen, an enthusiastic infantryman willing to die "so that each of you may grow old." He says: "I put everything in God's hands." And: "Semper Paratus!"

Allen and others of America's finest are also in Washington's hands. This city should keep faith with them by rapidly reversing the trajectory of America's involvement in Afghanistan, where, says the Dutch commander of coalition forces in a southern province, walking through the region is "like walking through the Old Testament."

U.S. strategy—protecting the population—is increasingly troop-intensive while Americans are increasingly impatient about "deteriorating" (says Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) conditions. The war already is nearly 50 percent longer than the combined U.S. involvements in two world wars, and NATO assistance is reluctant and often risible.

The U.S. strategy is "clear, hold and build." Clear? Taliban forces can evaporate and then return, confident that U.S. forces will forever be too few to hold gains. Hence nation-building would be impossible even if we knew how, and even if Afghanistan were not the second-worst place to try: The Brookings Institution ranks Somalia as the only nation with a weaker state.

Military historian Max Hastings says Kabul controls only about a third of the country—"control" is an elastic concept—and "our" Afghans may prove no more via-

ble than were 'our' Vietnamese, the Saigon regime." Just 4,000 Marines are contesting control of Helmand province, which is the size of West Virginia. The New York Times reports a Helmand official saying he has only "police officers who steal and a small group of Afghan soldiers who say they are here for 'vacation.'" Afghanistan's \$23 billion gross domestic product is the size of Boise's. Counterinsurgency doctrine teaches, not very helpfully, that development depends on security, and that security depends on development. Three-quarters of Afghanistan's poppy production for opium comes from Helmand. In what should be called Operation Sisyphus, U.S. officials are urging farmers to grow other crops. Endive, perhaps?

Even though violence exploded across Iraq after, and partly because of, three elections, Afghanistan's recent elections were called "crucial." To what? They came, they went, they altered no fundamentals, all of which militate against American "success," whatever that might mean. Creation of an effective central government? Afghanistan has never had one. U.S. Ambassador Karl Eikenberry hopes for a "renewal of trust" of the Afghan people in the government, but the Economist describes President Hamid Karzai's government—his vice presidential running mate is a drug trafficker—as so "inept, corrupt and predatory" that people sometimes yearn for restoration of the warlords, "who were less venal and less brutal than Mr. Karzai's lot."

Mullen speaks of combating Afghanistan's "culture of poverty." But that took decades in just a few square miles of the South Bronx. Gen. Stanley McChrystal, the U.S. commander in Afghanistan, thinks jobs programs and local government services might entice many "accidental guerrillas" to leave the Taliban. But before launching New Deal 2.0 in Afghanistan, the Obama administration should ask itself: If U.S. forces are there to prevent reestablishment of al-Qaeda bases—evidently there are none now—must there be nation-building invasions of Somalia, Yemen and other sovereignty vacuums?

U.S. forces are being increased by 21,000, to 68,000, bringing the coalition total to 110,000. About 9,000 are from Britain, where support for the war is waning. Counterinsurgency theory concerning the time and the ratio of forces required to protect the population indicates that, nationwide, Afghanistan would need hundreds of thousands of coalition troops, perhaps for a decade or more. That is inconceivable.

So, instead, forces should be substantially reduced to serve a comprehensively revised policy: America should do only what can be done from offshore, using intelligence, drones, cruise missiles, airstrikes and small, potent Special Forces units, concentrating on the porous 1,500-mile border with Pakistan, a nation that actually matters.

Genius, said de Gaulle, recalling Bismarck's decision to halt German forces short of Paris in 1870, sometimes consists of knowing when to stop. Genius is not required to recognize that in Afghanistan, when means now, before more American valor, such as Allen's, is squandered.

□ 1945

I would like to highlight just a couple of Will's key points. He wrote, "The war already is nearly 50 percent longer than the combined U.S. involvement in two world wars, and NATO assistance is reluctant.

"The U.S. strategy is 'clear, hold and build.' Clear? Taliban forces can evaporate and then return, confident that U.S. forces will forever be too few to