

In tribute to Joshua—we memorialize him this coming Saturday—but more importantly, in tribute to him we will say “Never on our watch again.” I join with his family and the memorial funding that they will have to say to young people across America, enough is enough, and to be able to enforce the laws that are necessary, along with the freedom that we have, that gets rid of those who think it is okay to take a senseless life, to beat up a fellow student, or to cause the death of someone they do not know.

May this fine young man rest in peace. Joshua McMackle, we honor you for your contributions to America.

□ 1630

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.

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

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

GOING GREEN AND SAVING ENERGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Congresswoman DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ and my fellow Members of Congress—MARIO DIAZ-BALART and TED DEUTCH—and I held a great press conference with DAN BEARD, the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives, on how to make our offices more energy efficient.

Representing such natural wonders like the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, I am extremely sensitive to the impact of our daily routine on the environment. I am a supporter of the green proposals, such as increasing the fuel efficiency of our cars and promoting the use of clean alternative energy.

However, as we all know, green living begins at home and in the workplace. Whether it’s by turning off the lights when exiting a room, carpooling to the office, or recycling on a regular basis, we can all work to improve our environments. The buildings of the Capitol complex, including my congressional office, are now utilizing the latest in energy- and water-saving technologies. For example, the simple action of installing energy-saving lighting throughout the U.S. House of Representatives has saved U.S. taxpayers more than \$175,000 annually. House offices have also increased their partici-

pation in the recycling of paper and of other raw materials. Last year, the House of Representatives recycled more than 1,800 tons of paper, 46 tons of bottles and cans, and 1 ton of leather.

In the days ahead, my district office in Miami will be implementing additional electricity- and resource-saving measures. At a time when our Nation is struggling with high unemployment and with an unsustainable deficit, we should be doing all that we can to eliminate government inefficiencies, waste, fraud, and abuse.

This week, in celebration of Earth Day, south Florida families can attend Miami’s Goin’ Green Celebration to learn more about how you can protect our environment, how you can support green technologies, and how you can save money on your energy and water bills. I encourage south Floridians to attend this important event, which is scheduled to take place on Saturday from 10 to 6 p.m. in Miami’s Bayfront Park. Individuals and families attending this event can participate in seminars on energy-efficient home improvements, on how to save on your water bills, and on several other informative exhibitions. In particular, I encourage you to register for many of the eco-friendly services provided by Miami-Dade County, such as recycling pickups and the Adopt-a-Tree program. By implementing individual changes, we can all make positive differences on our environment.

I will continue to work in Congress to support policies that encourage families and businesses to be more energy efficient and less reliant on expensive foreign fuel. At the same time, I will continue to be a staunch advocate for green initiatives that will not put a financial burden on working families and small businesses.

Once again, I urge all of my south Florida constituents to attend Miami’s Goin’ Green Celebration this Saturday in Bayfront Park, which is in my congressional district, to learn more about living more environmentally friendly lives. We all have roles to play as we endeavor to preserve south Florida’s natural beauty and to improve our communities’ environments for ourselves, our children, and our grandchildren.

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

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

COMMENDING AND THANKING OUR BRAVE MEN AND WOMEN IN UNIFORM

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

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend and to thank our

brave men and women in uniform who risk their lives every single day to protect America and to keep our families safe.

We have the very best warfighters in the world who are led by the very best commanders, and under President Obama, our military servicemembers are experiencing even greater success in keeping our Nation safe from those who seek to do us harm.

Earlier this week, a joint raid by U.S. and Iraqi forces delivered what General Odierno, the top military commander in Iraq, identified as “potentially the most significant blow to al Qaeda in Iraq since the beginning of the insurgency.” During this raid, two of al Qaeda’s top leaders were killed, including al Qaeda in Iraq’s top leader. This news was not only a sign of our continued progress against al Qaeda in Iraq and its affiliates but of our progress overall in our fight to quell terrorism and to keep America and our allies safe.

Our increased success in killing and capturing terrorists isn’t limited just to Iraq. Under President Obama, we have stepped up the fight against terrorists, and we have strengthened strategic partnerships in places like Pakistan and Yemen. With the help of these partners, we are finally making significant progress in the war against al Qaeda terrorists and their allies.

We are capturing terrorist leaders every week, and we are seeing much greater success in getting our allies and other countries in the region to root out terrorists and to send a loud message that those who seek to do us harm will not be able to operate freely. This increased progress is markedly noticeable in Afghanistan, which for many years under the Bush administration was, frankly, the forgotten war.

Mr. Speaker, Afghanistan is an epicenter of terrorism. We cannot afford to forget that it was the genesis of multiple attacks that have killed thousands of Americans: our children, our parents, our spouses, our friends, and our neighbors. After nearly a decade with no real plan in Afghanistan, we now have a strategy for success under this President.

While we build an Afghan Government capable of keeping al Qaeda from using Afghanistan as a safe haven, we are striking ever harder at al Qaeda and at their allies as they hide in the mountains of Pakistan. Using special operations forces and Predator planes and in cooperating with the governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan, we have captured or killed hundreds of al Qaeda’s fighters and affiliates since 2009, far more than in 2008. In fact, during this administration, more than 600 terrorists have been killed by drone strikes. That is more than triple the amount from 2004–2008 combined.

The President’s new strategy in Afghanistan and in Pakistan, in cooperation with Pakistani forces, also helped lead to the capture of the Taliban’s

second-in-command, a former Taliban finance minister and two Taliban shadow governors. These were the most significant captures of Afghan Taliban leaders since the start of the war in Afghanistan. Building the capacity and reinforcing the will of other countries to strike at al Qaeda will, I believe, be critical toward eliminating this threat forever. President Obama's administration deserves to be congratulated for its progress on both fronts.

Importantly, this administration understands that we need a comprehensive strategy to prevent terrorism. Just as you cannot effectively rid your backyard of poison ivy by just cutting off all the leaves, we cannot effectively destroy terrorist cells unless we take them out by the roots, cutting off the supply of recruits that feeds them. So, in addition to ramping up our missions to capture and kill terrorists, we are also now placing a greater emphasis on taking the necessary measures to prevent the recruitment of violent extremists.

Mr. Speaker, with the responsible new steps being taken by our Commander in Chief, with the outstanding leadership by our commanders on the ground, and with the unrivaled dedication and courage of all of our men and women in uniform, I have no doubt that our Nation is safer today than it was 3 years ago. We have come a long way in keeping America safe from future terrorist attacks.

UNDERSTANDING THE BUDGET SURPLUS

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

Mr. BARTLETT. Mr. Speaker, during the Clinton years, Washington was telling the American people that we had a budget surplus and that we were paying down the debt. After a number of months of bragging about this budget surplus we had and about how much we were paying down the debt, we had to raise the debt limit ceiling.

Now, I asked our leadership, Isn't it going to be a little difficult to explain to the American people why we have to raise the debt limit ceiling if for these many months we have been paying down the debt? Why would you have to raise the debt limit ceiling if you've lowered the debt?

Well, you may not be surprised that what comes out of Washington is not always altogether truthful.

I have a little chart here that helps to explain what happened and why we had to raise the debt limit ceiling when we had a so-called "budget surplus" and were telling the American people that we were paying down the debt.

Now, we had surpluses in Social Security and we had surpluses in Medicare, and we had a lockbox. You may remember the lockbox. We had a lockbox on Social Security and Medicare surpluses. The lockbox said that

you couldn't transfer those moneys to the general Treasury, that you had to pay down the public debt with those moneys. So what we did was take the surpluses from the Social Security trust fund and the Medicare trust fund—and there were surpluses there—and we paid down the public debt; but for every dollar we paid down on the public debt, we incurred another dollar debt in the trust funds.

You see, the national debt, the debt that really counts, is the sum of the public debt and the trust fund debt. So, if you simply decrease the public debt by increasing the trust fund debt, you've done nothing to the national debt. It's a little bit like taking money from your right-hand pocket and putting it into your left-hand pocket. Obviously, if you do that, you are neither richer nor poorer after you've taken money from your right-hand pocket and put it in your left-hand pocket. That is what we were doing.

Now, very few people know that there is a difference between the public—oh, the public debt is the Wall Street debt. That's all those instruments that we give to people when they loan us money. The trust fund debts, of course, are debts that we owe to our trust funds because, for many years, we've been taking moneys from the American people for Social Security, for Medicare, and for about 50 other trust funds—the Highway Trust Fund and so forth—and we presumably are taking that money and putting it into trust for them.

Is that what happens? No, that is not what happens.

What happens is we take that money, and if we have any surplus money after meeting our Social Security and Medicare obligations, we then take that money and immediately convert it into a nonnegotiable U.S. security. We move it over to the general trust fund and we spend it. So there is, in fact, no money in the Social Security trust fund or in the Medicare trust fund. That is really a misnomer. It is not a trust fund. I guess you might call it a "trust debt" because there is nothing there but IOUs.

Now, this year, for the first time, we've spent more money on Social Security than we took in in Social Security. We didn't expect that to happen for several years, but we still have about, I think, \$2.5 trillion of surpluses in the Social Security trust fund, so we'll be paying Social Security for a while if we can collect or can borrow enough money from other places to make up for the money that we took from the Social Security trust fund and spent.

So, for those months and a couple of years, we were telling people we were paying down the debt. I talked to the CBO, and I think there was never a moment in time, if we kept our books on the accrual method—which, by the way, we require every small business to do—when the national debt went down.

Now, another thing: The debt will always go up more than the advertised

deficit. How can the debt go up more than the advertised deficit? The debt goes up more than the deficit because we make the silly statement that the Social Security surplus and the Medicare surplus offset the debt. Of course, if you take that surplus and spend it, it simply incurs another kind of debt.

Well, I hope this helps you to understand. I just thought you'd like to know.

PRAISING THE OUTSTANDING WORK OF OUR FIGHTING MEN AND WOMEN

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

Mr. BRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise the outstanding work of our fighting men and women stationed overseas. Too often, their work goes unnoticed, but our safety and security is contingent upon their success. On Monday, however, the entire world took notice of their excellent work.

Two of al Qaeda's top leaders were killed in a joint effort between Iraqi and U.S. forces. General Odierno said it was "potentially the most significant blow to al Qaeda since the beginning of the insurgency."

Their success has not been by accident nor has it been limited to Iraq. Our allies across the region are beginning to actively engage in the fight against terrorism, and it is yielding successful results. We must send a loud message that those who seek to do us harm will pay the ultimate price. I anticipate our progress will continue in the months ahead because we have a strategy and clear-cut goals in Afghanistan.

The administration and the commanders on the ground know we must root out the terrorists who still reside in the same country from which the 9/11 terror attacks originated. As a result, terrorist leaders are being captured and killed on a regular basis. Special forces and Predator drones, in coordination with the governments in Pakistan and Afghanistan, have captured or killed more than 600 of al Qaeda's fighters and associates in 2009 alone, far more than in 2008. This is more than triple the amount from the period of 2004–2008 combined.

The new counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan helped lead to the capture of, among others, the Taliban's second in command, a former Taliban finance minister, and two shadow governors of Afghan provinces. These are the most significant captures of the Afghan Taliban leaders since the start of the war in Afghanistan.

□ 1645

However, as we continue to move forward in Iraq and Afghanistan, we must never forget about our number one target. That's Osama bin Laden. The man who was behind the 9/11 attacks must be brought to justice in order to send a