

communities and the success of America. They entreated me to help their replacements learn the ropes and excel in the House of Representatives.

Such a perspective is not what makes headlines in the media, but it is one that will help us emerge from this difficult economic time stronger and more united. This perspective, the demonstration of deep character in the midst of defeat, serves our Nation well.

While the national media pursued tired story lines about partisan battles and legislative gridlock, I challenge this dull, status quo reporting. The American people deserve to hear that, despite Congress' many flaws and shortcomings, there are people here from all across the political spectrum who love our country and want nothing more than to see us living in prosperity and security.

Mr. Speaker, I want to praise my outgoing colleagues for their public service and their continuing desire for America to be great. We may vehemently disagree on public policy, but that does not keep us from remembering we are privileged to serve the people of the greatest Nation the world has ever known. And I hope no one who serves in the Congress ever forgets that.

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

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A REASONED CONVERSATION

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, let me thank you for your leadership. I think it is important to always engage our colleagues in reasoned conversation.

Before I begin a reasoned conversation and asking of the hard questions, let me, first of all, add my appreciation to this bipartisan House that saw fit to create opportunities for young, working Americans, and that is by passage of the DREAM Act.

And the only sentence I want to leave with you, beyond the idea of equality and justice, which many times we take lightly, we use it often, but it is very real. It is why so many Americans pledge allegiance to the flag and have an abiding faith and love in this country.

But also, this is an economic engine of investment for those young people who have come to this country, and perpetrated no criminal act of their own, and now will be able to work and contribute to society, serve us in the United States military, perpetuate community service and generally, as we always ask of our young people, to

be the kind of citizens that make this country great. Thank you for passing the DREAM Act.

Now we'll have many months to come to renew the effort that I had in Save America Comprehensive Immigration Act, that includes border security and reinforcement of the men and women in Border Patrol and as well, Customs and Border Protection, combined agencies now, but as well, new technology and working to secure America as we should. And so I look forward to that journey again.

However, there are other issues that I believe are enormously important, and many of us have engaged in what has been known to be the providing for middle class, middle-income tax cuts or relief, is what I like to call it. And I believe that there is some value to one's values.

So let me just say to my colleagues and through them, those who they represent, the American people, who are, in fact, our bosses, this is not a class warfare. This is not "dissing" one particular group, but it is holding true to what you have asked us to do, bar any political party, and that is to reduce the deficit.

So, my friends, a middle-income tax relief that would include, if you will, a child tax credit, that would include an idea of ensuring that the working Americans who are now, unfortunately, unemployed will have unemployment insurance, that would further include those who have run up against a brick wall, the "99ers" as they call them, don't have any more resources but still have mortgages and food to pay for and bills to pay, and they want to pay for it.

A reasoned tax relief legislation will be the real answer, not the answer, if you will, of a huge, ridiculous amount of dollars going to individuals who, of their own voice, have said, we are well. We are well. The economy is turning, the Dow is working.

If you ask our major banks, they have more than \$4 billion-plus in some of our major banks in the third quarter in profits. And as well, we see that the economy is moving. In fact, we know that some of the unemployment numbers even went down.

But we need to focus on reducing that deficit, not adding to it by a ludicrous, reordering of even the Bush response to estate tax. And that is, to create a \$68 billion, if you will, burden on the American people to give an unusual tax relief to an estate of a magnitude that only fits a small number of people, some 39,000 out of a 300 million-person country.

We're not trying to deny those working family farms, those small businesses that will have an opportunity to benefit again.

But let me remind you there were tax cuts in the stimulus. There were tax cuts in the recent Small Business Jobs Act, some 16 or more tax cuts for small businesses. In addition, there is \$30 billion sitting for small businesses in our community banks.

I believe some of the elements of any kind of tax relief should ensure that those who get tax relief, such as major corporations, should have accountability. Yes, they should have profit; but at the same time there should be a linkage to their commitment to retaining jobs and not laying people off.

We want the right kind of relief for the American people, and that's the kind of tax bill that I'll be supporting. And I look forward to my colleagues working with them.

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana 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 Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

FRANK BUCKLES—LONE SURVIVOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, they went off to war singing George M. Cohan's song, "Over there," something to the effect that "Over there, over there, send the word to beware that the Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming and we won't be back till it's over over there. Those were the World War I doughboys, as they were called in the great World War I.

One of those individuals is Frank Buckles. Frank Buckles is an interesting individual. He was born in 1901, February 1, and he was born in Kansas. And when he was 16, the great World War I had already started. And he was at the Kansas State Fair, and he saw a recruiting poster, "Uncle Sam Wants You." So he went to a local marine recruiter, wanted to join the United States Army to go fight the war to end all wars over there in Europe. The marines wouldn't take him. You're too small and you are not 18 years of age. And he continued to try to get in to the Marine Corps.

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Finally, he decided he would try the United States Army. He went all the way to Oklahoma City. Being only 16 as he said later, I decided to really tell them a whopper and tell them I was 21. The Army recruiter said, Okay, we will sign you up. And he joined the United States Army after vigilantly telling people he was 18 when he was only 16, a volunteer to go fight in that war.

He signed up for the ambulance service, and the reason he signed up for the

ambulance service was because he heard that was the quickest way to get to the battlefield to help other young Americans that were already fighting that war to end all wars. And so he went overseas. He served in France. He drove an ambulance. He rescued not only Americans but the other allies that had been wounded and took them back behind enemy lines.

After the war was over with in 1918, having joined in 1917, Frank Buckles continued in Europe until he was discharged, protecting and guarding German prisoners of war. He came back to the United States, and before he was discharged, he was given \$143.60 plus a bonus for serving in combat of \$60. He came back to America, and of course there were not benefits in those days. There was no VA. You just went back home and started your own life.

In the great World War I, over 4 million Americans served; 117,000 of them died in Europe. Half of those doughboys died from what they obtained, the Spanish flu. Many of them didn't even know it. They got back to America and died from the Spanish flu that they had contacted while serving overseas.

Frank Buckles, being the kind of guy he is, he came back home. He started a new life. He decided to go to sea. He worked on different ships. In 1940, he found himself in the Philippine Islands. And as we all remember from American history, the Philippines were invaded by the Japanese, and there Frank Buckles was captured by the Japanese. And during World War II, he spent 3½ years in a Japanese prisoner of war camp. Having already served in World War I, he lied about his age so he could get in as a volunteer. Now in World War II, 3½ years of his life stolen from him by our enemies. He served in that prisoner of war camp.

He was finally released when Americans liberated the Philippines, came back to the United States and lived in West Virginia until the age of 102, Mr. Speaker, 102. He worked the farm. You know, he chose probably the occupation of America's past, the hard-working individual that works American soil. And that was Frank Buckles. He worked the soil.

Today, Frank Buckles—and here is his photograph, Mr. Speaker—is 109 years old. It is an honor for me to call Frank Buckles my friend. This photograph was taken in front of the D.C. memorial to World War I veterans which I will get to in a minute. So he is 109 years old today. Besides his remarkable life that continues, Frank Buckles is the lone survivor, the last doughboy alive that served in the United States Army and military during World War I.

There are two other survivors. They are both British individuals. They are 109. But he is older than they are. He will soon be 110 in February. So he is the last survivor, the last living doughboy that served our country.

He will soon be 110, Mr. Speaker. You know, 110 is old. To put it in perspec-

tive, it is about half of America's history this one person has lived through. He is still the great patriot that he was when he raised his right hand as a 16 year old in 1917 and swore to defend the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, the oath he took to uphold the Constitution.

Now, I mention Frank Buckles in his own right because he is the last of this generation, those that lived and fought in World War I. You have to remember who these were; these were the fathers of the Greatest Generation, those individuals that we hold up, people like my dad who is 85 years of age, those who served in the great World War II. Those were the fathers of the Greatest Generation, people like Frank Buckles.

But you see, he still continues to fight for America and really fight for people that served in World War I because when I met Frank Buckles he was here at the Capitol. His mission now is to make sure that we honor as a Nation those who served and came back home in World War I and those that served and are still buried in graves only known by God in Europe, those other doughboys. His goal, and the goal I hope of most Americans now, is to make sure that they are properly honored.

You know, America has moved on since World War I. Not much was said after World War I. The American doughboys came home. They didn't have a whole lot of fanfare. They just merged back into society. Then all of a sudden came the Roaring 20s, the exciting 20s. Then there was the Depression for 10 years. Then all of a sudden we were in World War II. America just sort of moved on and left that generation the way they were when they returned. And I say that to say this: Because you see in this great Capitol, the greatest capitol in the world, the center of democracy, the center of liberty, the center of people who have values like Frank Buckles, we have in my opinion yet to honor these individuals. Let me explain.

Here not far from the Capitol on what we call the Mall, where we have the important memorials to America's past, we have built as a Nation memorials to three of the great wars of the last century. If you wander up and down the Mall, you will see the first memorial that was built. They were built in reverse order of when the wars occurred. The first one that was built is that black marble granite memorial to those young men in Vietnam, the 58,000 that went to Vietnam and came home, or rather did not come home. You remember Vietnam, Mr. Speaker, that was the war when America, we treated our troopers real bad. As a Nation, we treated them real bad when they came home. But we did build them a memorial, and it is not far from here. Today and every day when you go to the Vietnam Memorial, you will see people who put up flags and write notes to those great Americans from Vietnam.

And after that was built, then there is the memorial that was built on the Mall to the Korean war. Some of the politically correct folks still call that a conflict. Well, Americans died in the Korean war. We went over and fought somebody else's war again. That memorial shows that Americans going through a minefield in the snow, a great memorial to those Korean veterans, those that lived and those that died.

And then the most recent one, the one that many Americans are aware of because there was so much political fighting whether or not this memorial should be built, that is the World War II memorial that is built not far from here, that great memorial that honors the Greatest Generation, that shows how important it is for us to remember those individuals. As I mentioned, people like my dad who served as an 18 year old in the United States Army in Europe. Many people didn't want that memorial built on the Mall. You know, it is built on the Mall. They didn't want it built there. Anyway, politics got out of the way and Congress approved that memorial.

But there is no memorial for those who served in the first great war of the last century, and that is the World War I memorial. It is true there is a memorial near the Mall for those that served from Washington, D.C. Here is a photograph of that memorial, and a picture of Frank Buckles in front of it.

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This photograph was taken a couple of years ago or, really, a year ago when he was there. This memorial is not even on the D.C. maps. Of all the things to do and see in Washington, D.C., this memorial is not even on there. The only reason I ever saw it is I was running by it one day, and I saw this memorial—or this monument, this structure—over in the weeds. I went over there and started reading it and realized what it was. It is not a fitting memorial but a memorial for the D.C. veterans who lived and died during World War I. You can see that it's cracked and that the stone is bad. It needs a lot of repairs. Finally, the repairs are starting to be made for that.

Make no mistake about it: this is a memorial for those from Washington, D.C. We don't have a memorial on The Mall for those who served from all over the United States, an appropriate memorial that, I think, should be built. The plan is and Frank Buckles' goal and mine and many others is to expand this memorial and to honor all those who served in that Great War, now almost 100 years ago.

There are really no advocates for this. I mean there are no lobbyists. There are no veterans left from World War I. No other veterans' groups have taken this on to encourage our building this memorial for him. An individual by the name of David DeJonge, who is an historian and a photographer, started doing research on the

last survivors of World War I. He has got photographs of all of them, of recent date, of those who have died—some of them have died—and he has done research on all of them. As I mentioned, there are only three from all over the world who fought from all nations, Frank Buckles being one of those. Some other individuals are encouraging Congress to give the authority to build this memorial.

In Kingwood, Texas, which is one of the places I represent down in Texas, there is an educator there by the name of Jan York. Jan York loves America like educators do. She got her Creekwood Middle School kids to do research a couple of years ago on World War I and on its last survivors, and that's when they came up with Frank Buckles. They, too, are passionate about making sure that a memorial is built on The Mall for all who served in World War I. Let me mention this:

There are memorials for the World War I veterans in different places in the United States. There is one in Kansas City. But can we have too many? Should we not have one on The Mall? I mean this is Washington, D.C. When you go through Washington, D.C., you see memorials and monuments for all kinds of people—wonderful people. Some of them aren't even Americans. The memorials and monuments are appropriate. They're needed. But should we not build a memorial on The Mall for all of those who served in World War I—the war that was supposed to end all wars? I think that we should.

Anyway, Jan York has helped her school get involved in this, and the Creekwood Middle School folks and other schools in the country are encouraging Congress to help build a memorial. This memorial is not going to be funded by taxpayer money. Don't get me wrong. This is not something the taxpayers are going to be required to contribute to. All Congress has to do is authorize its being built and there being a commission, and then private funds will be collected from groups like the Creekwood Middle School.

I want to thank Senator ROCKEFELLER, who is down the hall in the Senate. He is helping to promote legislation that will allow us to move forward and have congressional approval to build this memorial on The Mall—this appropriate memorial for people like Frank Buckles, who is the lone survivor.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is imperative that we as a Nation understand our history. Many of us don't think about the past. We only think about the future. We think, unfortunately, many times: What can America give us? What can America do for us? as opposed to: What can we do for America? What can we do for people who have served our great country in the military, and what should we do as a Nation to honor those individuals?

America has always had to defend who we are as a Nation. I carry in my pocket, like maybe most Members of

Congress, this little book, the Constitution of the United States, which has not only the Constitution but the Declaration of Independence in it as well.

If we just remember a little bit of history, just a little bit, back in the colonial days, in 1776, there were these Americans who did not like being treated a certain way by the most powerful empire that had ever existed in the history of the world—the British Empire. It was the most powerful empire at the time, and it was led by the most powerful king, King George. They got together, and they said, You know, we are going to liberate ourselves from this type of tyranny, which is how they looked at it. So they came up with this Declaration of Independence.

Now, in legal terms, what that meant was they indicted the King of England for crimes against the United States. Their remedy, the punishment for the King and for England, was to separate. They concluded their Declaration of Independence, that important document that later led to the Constitution, with this phrase:

“And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.”

Then they had to fight for what they believed in—7, 8 years of long war to get this country free. Then it was the War of 1812, the Spanish-American War, the war with Mexico, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and we are still engaged in two great wars today.

In all of those wars, Mr. Speaker, it has been America's youth who has gone to war to protect the rest of us. Unlike other countries, it has been said that America goes to war not to conquer but to liberate. That is true. We've got troops fighting right now, not to conquer but to liberate. America goes to battle so that others will live in freedom. Our enemies go to battle so that others will die in tyranny. That is what is happening in Afghanistan and Iraq. It has always been the American warrior who has had to protect this document—people like Frank Buckles.

Today, occasionally, we get to see those great warriors from the current wars. They come back to this Capitol, and we see them. Many Members go visit the wounded warriors. I have had the honor to be in Iraq and Afghanistan and see our military in action. The finest military that has ever existed in the history of the world represents us today.

Yet, to some extent, at home, America is disengaged. We are more interested, unfortunately it seems, in what is in it for us as opposed to what is in it for America. Frank Buckles and the generations before him and after him have always asked: What is in it for America? What can we do for America?—not what America can do for us.

So it seems to me we owe it to Frank Buckles and we owe it to those dough-

boys who have all died, who have all passed away except him, to build and honor them for what they did for the rest of us—for without them, we certainly would not be here. Without each generation that has been called upon to bear arms to protect our Nation, we would not be here. Many of them died at young ages, including those 600,000 Americans who died in the Civil War, which is when our country went to war within itself.

It would be appropriate that we honor these individuals by approving this memorial on The Mall. It would be equally as important that we remember Frank Buckles, his being the lone survivor. I hope he lives a long time. He told David DeJonge not too long ago, I'm headed to 115.

Well, the way he is, he may get it. He's just that way.

Yet, when he passes away, we should honor him as the last doughboy. He should lie in state here in the Capitol rotunda. He should be buried with full military honors. Our Nation should remember him, as it is important we should remember all those who served throughout the United States, by building and approving the memorial here on The Mall.

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You know, when they went overseas, they said they weren't coming back until it was over over there. They did not come back until it was over over there, and they came back victorious. We over here have the obligation and the opportunity to get it right over here. And the way we get it right is to honor Frank Buckles and honor all of those who served in the great World War I, those that served and did not come home and those that served and did come home, to continue the American way of life and preserving this little document called the Constitution of the United States of America.

And that's just the way it is.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the ordering of a 5-minute Special Order speech in favor of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is vacated.

CONGRESSMAN ETHERIDGE BIDS FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the House. I will be leaving Congress at the conclusion of this term, and I want to take a few minutes to speak to my colleagues and the people of North Carolina's Second