

on the floor of the House, I will tell you that is indicative of her work; that she was here for us in the morning, here for us late at night. And so I have no doubt that she will be carrying forth the torch in California, as all the others will be doing. Having just hosted the Attorney General from California, Ms. Harris, I know that you will be a great comfort and nurturer to her.

PARTISAN POLITICS TRUMPING PATRIOTISM

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, there are some days when I find myself completely baffled by the cynicism of many people who have the privilege to serve here in Washington. Last week, for example, the United States Senate did it again, staying true to its reputation as a graveyard for good legislation. Using the filibuster once again, a minority of Senators blocked the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act. This bill, which the House passed in September, would be the greatest expression of our gratitude for the 9/11 first responders. It would provide health care for those workers who incurred health hazards in their efforts to save lives in the aftermath of that horrific tragedy. But apparently, Madam Speaker, some in Congress are unmoved by the plight of firefighters and emergency medical personnel who breathed in toxic fumes on 9/11.

The only way it appears the right wing in America knows to commemorate 9/11 is through exclusion and religious chauvinism—by insisting that a Muslim community center must not be built even a few blocks away from Ground Zero. They've got no interest whatsoever in lending a compassionate hand to those who answered the call on 9/11; no apparent interest in responding to 9/11 with healing rather than dividing.

□ 1800

No wonder Mayor Bloomberg of New York calls the rejection of the bill "a devastating indictment of Washington politics, a tragic example of partisan politics trumping patriotism."

If I had a dollar for every time a colleague on the other side of the aisle invoked the bravery of the 9/11 first responders, I'd probably have enough money to offset the cost of the bill. But talk is cheap, Madam Speaker; they want to play lip service to heroism. They just don't want to invest any actual money to help the heroes. Hundreds of billions in tax breaks for the very richest Americans, that's not only okay by them; it is the one thing that animates the Republican Party more than anything else, but funds for American heroes who got sick answering the call of duty—sorry, that's just too expensive.

Actually, there is one other thing that animates them, and that is the

support for endless military occupations halfway around the world. I have yet to hear any of the so-called "deficit hawks" ask questions about how we're going to pay for that.

I will not, Madam Speaker, take any claims of fiscal responsibility seriously from anyone who is not willing to put Afghanistan war spending on the table. Between Iraq and Afghanistan, we have now spent more than \$1.1 trillion in taxpayer money on wars that have undermined our national security goals, increasing rather than diminishing the terrorist threat.

But what about the folks who were there on that one day that the terrorists attacked? Who jumped right into the debris and now suffer from lung damage and devastating respiratory illnesses? They can't get a modest fund from the country whose values they so valiantly embodied that fall morning 9 years ago.

It is an appalling set of priorities. We ought to bring our troops home at once and reinvest the money in our people, including those who showed such courage and who sacrificed so much on 9/11.

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

(Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut 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 Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FATTAH 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 gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

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

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

COURAGE OF CONVICTION

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

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

As always, it is an honor and a privilege to address this House, especially when you know the history of this place.

I would like to comment about my friend across the aisle who was talking about the 9/11 first responders. Those were heroes. They are heroes. They are really true testaments to the good in America. So many first responders were going up the stairs to rescue people as most everyone else was fleeing. They are true heroes.

What is not as heroic—in fact, it isn't heroic at all—is to bring a bill before the floor and say, Here is a bunch of heroes we need to help. We're not going to cut spending in any other areas. We know there is massive waste, fraud and abuse all over the place. We know there are entities that really have not been able to show any real benefit to the American economy, to American freedom, to American security; but we are not going to cut those, because those are favored in our eyes, too. We want you to borrow more money from the Chinese and from whoever is willing to keep buying bonds; and apparently, some people aren't willing to buy bonds at all or aren't willing to finance our continued astronomic debt.

So, even though Chairman Bernanke had assured us in a private meeting that he wasn't doing it, whatever he wants to call it, it sure sounds like monetizing the debt when you print money and buy our own debt, whether you do it directly or buy it from a third party who has just bought our debt.

Those are the kinds of things we are doing. We are saying, We see these heroes who deserve to be cared for and who deserve to have their health needs met. We agree on that. There was total agreement on that as far as I know.

What we didn't agree on was saying, So, as to these little children being born now, these little babies who are in their cribs all over the country, we're going to load them down with tens of thousands of dollars of debt before they ever even get their first jobs. We are going to load them up with debt because we don't have the financial responsibility to carve out money that is being wasted and to say this is where we need to send it.

Had that been done, I know the people on my side of the aisle, who I know and talked to about that bill that was so noble in its intent, would have voted for it as well. It doesn't even have to be that heroic. Just carve out some of the waste, fraud and abuse that this government is involved in, and pay for these things.

That was another problem with the so-called "tax extender bill" that came before the House this week. There were 36 Republicans who voted against it—not terribly heroic even though most of us knew that there could be consequences. I hear there are those who want to further take away committees. Some of us have been told we won't be subcommittee chairmen in the new Congress. It is ironic to see that those who have the most affiliation with tea party groups and the most conservatism, except for a precious few, are

pretty much being shut out. So we understand there are the consequences of being shut out of any type of leadership power on this side of the aisle when we stand firm on our convictions.

We needed to extend the tax rates. It wasn't going to stimulate the economy, but it was going to help prevent a disaster, a recession—a double dip recession, a triple dip, whatever you want to call it. Extending the current tax rates was the thing to do. It should have been done months or years ago. The problem was we didn't have enough courage on our side of the aisle to stand firm and say, We ran on being financially responsible.

We ran and won the majority, making it clear we were going to stop the deficit spending. We made it clear that, if you give us just one more chance in the majority, then we are going to be responsible financially. We are not going to rush bills to the floor no matter the heroic or noble purpose. We need to protect those children being born and those to be born in this country from having to shoulder the debt that we irresponsibly would not address.

That was the concern of the 36 I know who voted against it. We weren't keeping our promise.

Now, I know the tax extension's current rates were absolutely critical. I also know that the Members on our side of the aisle who I know voted for that bill are just a bunch of wonderful folks who have the best interests of this country at heart. They love America. I know people on both sides of the aisle love America and want to do what is best for America, but we have dramatically different visions of how you do that. Frankly, the Democrats won the majority in November of 2006 because we had been doing some deficit spending.

□ 1810

And even though there were wars going on, it needed to stop, and America said that: Okay, Democrats, you've made clear you're going to stop the deficit spending so we'll give you a chance to do that. Four years later, the deficit spending had gone on steroids like nothing anybody has ever seen anywhere in the world. \$3 trillion in deficits in 2 years? It's just unfathomable.

So to come in when we've already saddled that much debt, where we're borrowing over 50 cents of every dollar this majority across the aisle was spending, that's just irresponsible. It's just wrong.

So I deeply regret that my friends across the aisle that brought forth the 9/11 first responders bill did not also carve out the money from things that were not worthy and say this money can be better spent for heroes in this country, and we're going to responsibly do it without adding debt to those who come after us, because in our position, our generation, those of us who are serving in Congress now, we're only

here not because we deserve to be born in this country, or those that emigrated to this country deserved to emigrate into here. We are here because of the grace of God, the blessings of God and because this Nation was blessed for over 200 years as a Nation and 200 or 300 years before that going back to Columbus, 1492, and his sacrifice and his courage and even putting his life on the line when the crew was ready to turn back and putting his life on the line in an effort to keep the crew on track, to give it a few more days, which they did, and as a result, we have so much for which to be grateful and thankful.

But we've been irresponsible, and there are those of us that knew by taking a stand against unpaid-for spending that we ran the risk of being further ostracized by our own party, not getting committees, being removed from committees, not getting chairmanships. We understand that. But this was an important principle. It was important that we try to keep our word when we can.

And I appreciated what my friend from Michigan THADDEUS MCCOTTER had said in talking and justifying his vote against this massive deficit growth because, as we all know, we won the majority. The Republicans won the majority. Come January 5, we will have the majority in this House. It will be a Republican Speaker, JOHN BOEHNER, who will be in the Speaker's chair up there. We will control the House of Representatives for the first time in 4 years. Still won't control the Senate. We'll have additional Senators we didn't have 2 years ago and 4 years ago, and President Obama will still be President, but we will hold the majority in the House of Representatives.

So what THADDEUS had to say was that forcing us to vote for a bill, even though it had this extension of the current tax rate that would help avoid a massive recession, is a bit like Custer saying, Come on, boys, let's attack before there are more of us. Didn't make a lot of sense to some of us. We were going to have more leverage to do what was right and best for this country before we had a majority because it seems to me that once we had the majority, if we will stand on principle then, that we can tell the Senate we're not going to deficit spend. You can't dangle things that we know in our hearts at this end are good for the country and expect us to buy into your deficit spending—we're not going to do it. That that would have been an awful lot of leverage.

And we also know that taxpayers at the lowest tax-paying levels were going to see their income tax go up 50 percent. People that pay 10 percent in income tax were going to have their taxes go up to 15 percent. That's massive when you're not making very much. And the highest wage earners were going to see their taxes go from 35 to about 39½ percent. It was an increase but percentage-wise not anything like at the lowest wage earner

level. So there was going to be leverage.

And I appreciate Mr. MCCOTTER's comment. It's like Custer saying, Come on, boys, let's attack now before there are more of us. Well, the tax extension bill was passed, and there are those who said, LOUIS, you were the one who came up with the payroll tax holiday, and this bill had your bill, your idea in there. It did not. It had a 2 percent reduction from 6.2 percent down to 4.2 percent as the Social Security tax rate. So it was clever, but that also gives Members of Congress over a \$2,100 raise because our Social Security tax—and I guess by saying that, some people in America are shocked. They don't know that we've been paying Social Security tax the whole time I've been in Congress for the last 6 years, but like everyone across America, our Social Security tax will be dropped by 2 percent down from 6.2 to 4.2.

But here again, it was not paid for. We're going to do that on the backs of our children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren. It's wrong, and it needed to be paid for. We ran on the fact that we would do that, and I know the people I talked to that supported that felt like it was what had to be done, but some of us saw it differently, and it may cost us politically but it was the right thing to do.

The Social Security so-called tax or payroll holiday was not paid for, and that was never my idea to have an unpaid-for tax holiday. Because the fact is, that we had enough money from the porkulus, stimulus, whatever you want to call the nine-hundred-and-something billion dollar bill that the President passed immediately, got through Congress, his demand and Speaker PELOSI's pushing, Majority Leader REID's pushing. They got through that monstrosity of a debt increaser. We could have taken that money and had a tax holiday. In my bill, I proposed taking the money from TARP, and I know, I've read the data. Yes, Wall Street contributes to my Democratic colleagues 4-1 over Republicans. I get it. I understand. So obviously they would be for helping Wall Street, so many of them. I've got dear friends who were as offended as I was at what was happening, and I'm grateful for their friendship and for their stance and it did cost some of them.

But we didn't need to be running up the debt, and that's why my tax holiday bill would have allowed people to keep their own money in their own paycheck and, instead of allowing the Secretary of the Treasury—and I agree with Newt Gingrich that probably Hank Paulson was the worst Treasury Secretary we've had certainly in my lifetime, and now Timothy Geithner, he's enjoying having a slush fund where he can throw out, dole out as he sees fit. To Secretary Paulson's credit, he was able to bail out his buddies at his firm Goldman Sachs and see that they not only avoided bankruptcy but got mega wealthy on the backs of the

American taxpayers, and also that AIG was kept from having to reorganize in bankruptcy so they could stay wealthy as well, and also pay like \$9 billion, whatever it was they owed, Mr. Paulson's buddies at Goldman Sachs.

□ 1820

But anyway, four-to-one contributions to Democrats over Republicans from Wall Street, and it has really reaped them benefits. The only thing they've had to endure on Wall Street is having the President, having some of the Democrats, by words, accused them of being greedy and money-grubbing and all those words. But they've been able to endure all the slings and arrows that words have brought from the Democratic leadership, including the President, because they knew they were getting megawealthy from their friends they helped elect in the Democratic Party.

A tax holiday needed to be paid for. It would have stimulated the economy. And I realize there are political calculations, and I will readily admit—I may be wrong, but I believe that those who think that having the tax rates extended for 2 years so they have to be debated as the Presidential election is coming up in November 2012 will help Republicans. I didn't see it that way. I still don't see it that way.

I think Republicans are going to pay a price because that 2 percent reduction on Social Security is going to push Social Security more quickly toward bankruptcy or default, and it will enable our friends across the aisle to say, Uh-huh, it's about to go broke. Now you have to raise taxes. Let's do it on those who create jobs. Let's do it on the wealthy. Let's do it on those in small business. Let's pop them hard, raise their taxes. And because people will not want to see their tax rates go up, including their Social Security rate go up, then there will probably be more political interest in raising taxes than our friends across the aisle were not able to do in the last few months.

They may be able to do it through the Senate and through the things that are sent down here in late 2012 because, as one of our friends here on this side of the aisle had said, we've got to be careful, because as this tax extender/stimulus bill showed, when we send the clear message to the administration in the White House and to our friends in the Senate that we stand firmly on our principles, we will not yield, we will not give in to deficit spending unless you give us something in the bill that we know will be good for America, then we'll keep deficit spending, so we get a net wash and maybe net damage. That's not a message we needed to be sending, that if you'll give us something that we know helps America, like extending the current tax rates, we'll forgo our principles on standing firm on stopping deficit spending. It's very unfortunate.

But I would also submit that with regard to the unemployment benefits, 13

more months that were added, I understand, the thought was that this was out of compassion, to help those who are not working, when real compassion would be creating jobs. The best Christmas present you could give so many Americans this year would be a job—that would have been the thing to do—instead of paying people to continue staying at home.

Now, I know people who have been looking constantly for employment, but because of their age, the things that they have been doing for a living, they can't find a job. I understand that. But true compassion would have been to say, You know what? We went from a matter of months of unemployment insurance we would pay to 2 years, 99 weeks of unemployment that our Democratic friends had pushed through. And now we've added unpaid-for deficit spending, 13 more months of unemployment on top of what we've already done. Compassion would have said, We're more interested in you getting a good job than paying you to continually lose more and more of your self-esteem because you can't find a job, continually go into more depression, as so many I know are because they can't find a job. We would have been better off saying, You know what? In 26 weeks, a year, 99 weeks, another 13 months on top of that, you know, you haven't been able to find a job 6 months or a year? If you haven't, then this is what we need to do. Instead of paying you to sit at home and not work because there are no jobs in your area of expertise, we're going to pay you to retrain in areas where there are jobs. That would be more compassionate. Re-create some self-esteem in people who have lost theirs. That would be more compassion.

Now, we're coming back next week into session, and of course it costs money every time we bring this body back into session. People fly back in from all over the country, drive back in from some places. Some people stay here and don't go home much and lose touch with their constituents. But those of us who go home when we're not in session, it costs money to come back and forth.

It shocks people sometimes to see us flying commercially because they think just because Speaker PELOSI had her own 757 that we all have private planes and fly on those. We don't. And to soon-to-be Speaker BOEHNER's credit, he's giving back that 757 to the Air Force. That's going to be a big deal. That's going to be so helpful to those who are serving in our military service that have been without that plane for the last some years now.

We're coming back next week. It really wasn't necessary, except that there are Members in the majority of the Senate who are not satisfied to have a continuing resolution that would extend the current rate of spending into next year. What was discussed in here, some of our friends across the aisle, they were willing to have a 2-, 3-

month—some less, some more—but are probably going to have a 2-month continuing resolution to continue the current level of spending into, say, next February, and that would give Republicans a chance to get in here. We wouldn't get much time. It's going to mean a lot of work to figure out the proper appropriations to fill in, carry forward after that resolution runs out. But that was going to be agreeable, it sounded like, to this House.

However, the Senate says, You know what? We're not satisfied. We want to pull out more Christmas presents from the American public, from the taxpayers, even though we realize they don't have the money now. We don't have it in the Treasury. We'll have to borrow it. We'll have to print it. We've got too many more Christmas presents we want to come up with to help our buddies with. And so we're not ready to just continue this current level of spending. We've got too many Christmas ornaments we want to put on that spending resolution. That's why we're coming back next week.

We've got a 5-day resolution to keep spending at the current level, and we'll have to come back next week because the Democrats in the Senate—and I can really understand. You know, Majority Leader REID, he had a tough-fought race and had tough opposition, lots of people helping, narrowest race that he might have expected, but he won. And so, by golly, as the old saying has gone for centuries, to the victor goes the spoils. So he is wanting some of these spoils to be put on these bills and not have a clean spending resolution. I get it. I understand that. But it sure would be better for America to stop the runaway spending, stop all the pork being added to these bills, stop all the special earmarks, whether they are going to Republicans or Democratic Senators. It needs to stop. Let's get our spending under control.

□ 1830

So there will be a Christmas present there. My friend, Dr. GINGREY, was speaking in the well about Guantanamo Bay. I can't think about Christmas without thinking about the Christmas present to the five people that have self-admitted that they planned 9/11 and that they were, as of December 8 of 2008, had indicated to the judge at Guantanamo that they were ready to plead guilty. They would enter no more motions. They were ready to get this over with.

And then Senator Obama was elected President, and they immediately sent out the word that they were going to probably be bringing these people to New York City, costing no telling how many billions of dollars to try to protect the city, no telling how much money would have to be spent to prepare facilities. They couldn't be as safe as they are in Guantanamo. I have been there. I have been through them. As a former judge, those were well-thought-out judicial facilities there,

well-thought-out facilities for consultation between the defendants and their attorneys, well-thought out facilities both from a protection aspect and from a judicial aspect.

But Senator Obama made clear that they were going to give them a Christmas gift. They didn't call it that, but obviously that is what it was. Certainly those five don't celebrate Christmas, but they sure did get a Christmas present because after they announced they were going to plead guilty, the administration made clear they were going to give them a good show trial in New York City. So they withdrew their indication that they were going to plead guilty and move forward.

So they have had a wonderful Christmas present. It is good to see the charity for others, and that is interesting charity that was provided by this administration to those who planned and plotted and were able to see 3,000 Americans killed on 9/11. It was wonderful to see the charity, but the problem is we take an oath to defend this country, basically the Constitution, against all enemies foreign and domestic; and it is a problem when you don't do that.

So they got a Christmas present 2 years ago, and they have continued to have a Christmas present. The administration, Attorney General Holder and the President, have given them another one because they have announced we don't know when we are going to get around to trying you so you can't get the death penalty for the foreseeable future because, heck, here is a gift—life. You didn't give the gift of life to those 3,000 Americans on 9/11; you took theirs, but we are going to give it to you and perhaps there is some feeling by us showing them such wonder and gratitude and love and affection that perhaps they will end up embracing us.

But the pleadings that Khalid Sheikh Mohammed has filed on behalf of himself and the other four planners of 9/11 make pretty clear, as they say in their pleading that was filed in March of last year, they praise Allah. If we caused you terror, they say praise Allah. And that it is not over. They say they will defeat us, and we will be destroyed just as surely as those Twin Towers were on 9/11. But the administration has given a gift to them that seems to keep on giving.

We took up the DREAM Act this week. There are people who came over, were brought over as children and who had no control of being brought into this country. So it is easy to understand the warmth and the compassion for people like that. I have met some. They have done well in school, some that I have met. The problem is that they were brought here illegally. And a bigger problem is that still we have not secured our border.

And as we found in 1986, with all of those promises, okay, we will do this, one time in American history, we will give this amnesty to everyone who is here illegally and then we will never do

it again because nobody else is getting amnesty. One small problem: they did not secure the borders so now there are millions and millions and millions of people here illegally. Now we are talking about amnesty again.

Some of us had a problem with the bill because it created the ability for people to say, you know what, I meet the criteria here. I am under 16. I have been here more than 5 years and so make me a citizen and then I can turn around and declare that I need my parents here so I can use chain migration to add those who came illegally.

So that is a problem. You say, no, under that DREAM Act, the Secretary of Homeland Security was going to make the determination of whether they fit the criteria. But when I read the bill, I was shocked to see that Homeland Security, the Secretary of Homeland Security, had complete authority. Nobody else had it, undivided authority to grant or not grant the existence to stay here under the DREAM Act and amnesty and the ability to ultimately become citizens. It didn't give it to the Department of Justice because under the Department of Justice is where you find immigration judges. The bill doesn't allow for them. It gives complete authority to Homeland Security.

Now having been a judge, I know if someone were to come before me with an affidavit that says I am under 16 and I have been here for more than 5 years, and if I were looking at the person who provided the affidavit or the sworn testimony, that I might say: But sir, your hair is white or gray or you are balding than I am and your skin is more wrinkled than mine from many, many years out in the sun. I don't believe you are under 16. Perhaps he would be met with words, sometimes through an interpreter: Oh, yeah, I have lived a hard life. That is why my hair is so white and my skin is so wrinkled. Well, an immigration judge would know that unless there is some extraordinary disease, this person is not under 16 years old.

However, when the Secretary of Homeland Security has complete unadulterated authority to decide anything she sees fit, and not only that, a provision that even if they don't meet any of the requirements, she can waive them, that is not a good bill. And especially when they add a provision that whether or not you meet a single one of the requirements to allow you to have the amnesty in the DREAM Act, the mere act of filing the petition will stay enjoined basically any effort to remove you from the country.

Well, we can have some pretty heinous folks around here who should be removed; but under the bill, once they file a petition, even though they are clearly not under 16, that effort is stayed. They have to allow them here pending a decision by the Secretary of Homeland Security. It is not a good idea.

Now, with regard to the Don't Ask, Don't Tell damage we have done this

week in the House, I understand there are many who mean well. There are some who think it would be a great thing to give all of these civil rights to people in the military. But anything that is an impediment to the good order and discipline of the military is not good for the military. The military does not have the civil rights everybody else has. That is why under the Constitution Congress is allowed to do as it did and create the Uniform Code of Military Justice so when I was in the military if I had been arrested for something, I didn't have a right to a random selection of jury panel. The same person who signs the order ordering you to court martial is the same one who gets to pick the jurors who will sit on your case.

Now people in civic life in America would not stand for that. Civilians would not. It would be unconstitutional. But not in the military because they don't have the rights that we do.

I know when I was in the Army at Fort Benning, a young man there in the barracks could not control his overt feelings of homosexuality and so he misread indications from another person in the barracks and found out that he had misread when he crawled into his bunk with him late one night and his advances were not met with the kind of affection that he had hoped.

□ 1840

That's not good for the good order and discipline. When we have people who cannot control their hormones, no matter whether it's heterosexual, homosexual, whatever, they are an impediment to the military. And we out-processed people at Fort Benning when I was there who couldn't control their overt sexuality, whatever it was.

There are some people across America that mean well with this but don't realize this is being shoved down the military's throat. It would have been far more appropriate to have done a survey where the respondents—all of those in the military—are asked and submit a ballot to give their feelings about what effect it would have and whether or not they would reenlist, they would re-up, they would do another term, find out so that it could not be adversely affected in their OER or their enlistment ratings. And then take that result—because we have a voluntary military some have lost sight of, they don't have to stay in. So when we talk about losing hundreds or thousands of people who want to practice homosexuality openly in the military, there has been no regard for how many thousands or tens of thousands—or who knows how many because a survey wasn't properly done—we don't know how many we will lose, but it will be a lot of people as they have certainly conveyed that to some of us privately.

And there were no solutions in this bill for how you deal with living conditions. Do you put gay men and heterosexual men together? Do you put gay

men together? There are all kinds of questions that needed to be properly studied and have not been. But I understand before this group lost the majority across the aisle they had to pander to people who were demanding this kind of thing, but it sure wasn't the military making that demand.

And just as I know there are proponents of this bill who thought they knew what the majority in their district felt, and then it turned out they didn't know what the majority of the people in their district felt because they got beat, and just as there were people in leadership across the aisle who thought they knew what the majority of America was thinking and that tea parties were "astroturf," and then it turned out they completely misread America, there is a decent chance they were misreading the military on this as well. But we rushed headlong, not giving proper concern to the vast majority of those in the military and whether or not they would enlist, whether or not we would do damage to the good order and discipline.

But you can expect, if Don't Ask, Don't Tell is repealed—it's working fine; if you can control your sexuality, whatever it is, then you stay, you serve. You love your country, it's not overt, then you stay and you serve. Certainly there were homosexuals that were good soldiers in the military when I was there, but it was a private matter and remained that way, and so it did not affect, unless it became overt, the good order and discipline of the military. You can expect though, if that becomes law, there will be demands by those in the military saying, hey, now that we can be overt in the military, we demand to have barracks, we demand to have quarters where we can live together as husband and husband and wife and wife, and now you've got to redo that.

And then of course once that is rammed through the military as well—because they don't have a choice, they can't object to anything the Commander in Chief throws their way because that is a court martial-able offense—they give up their right to free speech, in fact, in the military. It's going to have a tremendous effect across America, which is what was desired.

I also know that there are people across America, including at the White House, who say this is not a Christian Nation. And I will continue not to debate that point because maybe they're right, I don't know. But I know the foundation of the country, I know how we got started. And so we are coming back, we're told, next Tuesday into session perhaps for part of one day. I could not be sure that we would actually have Special Orders during that one day we come back to deal with the Christmas presents that the Senate Democrats want to convey to people, so I wanted to make sure that this was in the RECORD this year.

And so, Mr. Speaker, if I might inquire at this time how much time is remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 17 minutes remaining.

Mr. GOHMERT. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, December 21, 1941, said these words—I won't read the whole thing, but he said, "Sincere and faithful men and women are asking themselves this Christmas how can we light our trees, how can we give our gifts, how can we meet and worship with love and with uplifted spirit and heart in a world at war, a world of fighting and suffering and death? How can we pause even for a day, even for Christmas day, in our urgent labor of arming a decent humanity against the enemies which beset it?" He goes on and he says, "I do hereby appoint the first day of the year, 1942, as a day of prayer, of asking forgiveness of our shortcomings of the past, of consecration to the tasks of the present, and asking God's help in spirit, but strong in the conviction of the right, steadfast to endure sacrifice, and brave to achieve a victory of liberty and peace."

He said, "Our strongest weapon in this war is that conviction of the dignity and brotherhood of man which Christmas day signifies. Against enemies who preach the principles of hate and practice them, we set our faith in human love and in God's care for us and all men everywhere. And so I am asking, my associate, my old and good friend, to say a word to the people of America, old and young, tonight, Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of Great Britain," at which time Prime Minister Winston Churchill gave a Christmas message for America because they thought Christmas was a national treasure. And so it was.

In 1942, Roosevelt said these words, "It is significant that tomorrow, Christmas day, our plants and factories will be stilled. That is not true of the other holidays we have long been accustomed to celebrate. On all other holidays work goes on gladly for the winning of the war, so Christmas becomes the only holiday in all the year. I like to think that this is so because Christmas is a holy day. May all it stands for live and grow throughout the years."

In 1944, Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "It's not easy to say 'Merry Christmas' to you, my fellow Americans, in this time of destructive war, nor can I say 'Merry Christmas' lightly tonight to our Armed Forces at their battle stations all over the world or to our allies who fight by their side. Here at home, we celebrate this Christmas day in our traditional American way because of its deep, spiritual meaning to us, because the teachings of Christ are fundamental in our lives, and because we want our youngest generation to grow up knowing the significance of this tradition and the story of the coming of the immortal prince of peace and good-

will." Those are Franklin D. Roosevelt's words, 1944.

He went on and said, "They know the determination of all right-thinking people and nations, that Christmases such as those we have known in these years of world tragedy shall not come again to beset the souls of the children of God. This generation has passed through many recent years of deep darkness, watching the spread of the poison of Hitlerism and fascism in Europe, the growth of imperialism and militarism in Japan, and the final clash of war all the over the world.

□ 1850

"Then came the dark days of the fall of France and the ruthless bombing of England and the desperate battle of the Atlantic and Pearl Harbor and Corregidor and Singapore. Since then, the prayers of good men and women and children the world over have been answered."

He goes on and says, "We pray that until that day when peace comes, God will protect our gallant men and women in the uniforms of the united nations, that he will receive into his infinite grace those who make their supreme sacrifice in the cause of righteousness, in the cause of love of him and his teachings."

Roosevelt went on and said, "We pray that with victory will come a new day of peace on Earth in which all the nations of the Earth will join together for all time. That is the spirit of Christmas, the holy day. May that spirit live and grow throughout the world in all the years to come."

Harry Truman, in his message on December 24th of 1946, included these words. He said, "Again our thoughts and aspirations and the hopes of future years turn to a little town in the hills of Judea where on a winter's night 2,000 years ago the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled. Shepherds keeping watch by night over their flock heard the glad tidings of great joy from the angles of the Lord singing 'Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good will toward men.'"

Truman went on and said, "The message of Bethlehem best sums up our hopes tonight. If we as a nation and the other nations of the world will accept it, the star of faith will guide us into the place of peace as it did the shepherds on that day of Christ's birth long ago.

"I am sorry to say all is not in harmony in the world today. We have found that it is easier for men to die together on the field of battle than it is for them to live together at home in peace. But those who died have died in vain if in some measure at least we shall not preserve for the peace that spiritual unity in which we won the war.

"The problems facing the United Nations, the world's hope for peace, would overwhelm faint hearts. But as we continue to labor for an enduring peace through that great organization, we

must remember that the world was not created in a day. We shall find strength and courage at this Christmastime because so brave a beginning has been made. So, with faith and courage, we shall work to hasten the day when the sword is replaced by the plowshare and nations do not learn war anymore."

He went on and said, "He whose birth we celebrate tonight was the world's greatest teacher." He said, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets. Through all the centuries since he spoke, history has vindicated his teaching. In this great country of ours has been demonstrated the fundamental unity of Christianity and democracy. Under our heritage of freedom for everyone on equal terms, we also share the responsibilities of government."

He went on and said, "We have this glorious land not because of a particular religious faith, not because our ancestors sailed from a particular foreign port. We have our unique national heritage because of a common aspiration to be free and because of our purpose to achieve for ourselves and for our children the good things of life which the Christ declared he came to give all mankind. We have made a good start toward peace in the world. Ahead of us lies the larger task of making the peace secure."

"The progress," Truman said, "we have made, gives hope that in the coming year we shall reach our goal. May 1947 entitled us to the benediction of the master, 'blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God.' Because of what we have achieved for peace, because of all the promise our future holds, I say to my fellow countrymen, Merry Christmas." He didn't say "happy holidays," but Truman said "Merry Christmas." "Merry Christmas, and may God bless you all."

There are so many wonderful Christmas messages over the generations from different presidents. I love Truman's comment in '48 when he said, "The God that made the world and all things herein hath made of one blood all nations of man for to dwell on the face of the Earth." Truman said, "In the spirit of that message from the Acts of the Apostles, I wish you all a Merry Christmas."

In 1953, Dwight Eisenhower had these words for us. On December 24th, 1953, he said, "This evening's ceremony here at the White House is one of many thousands in American traditional celebration of the birth almost 2,000 years ago of the Prince of Peace. For us this Christmas is truly a season of good will and our first peaceful one since 1949. Our national and individual blessings are manifold. Our hopes are bright, even though the world still stands divided in two antagonistic parts."

"More precisely than in any other way, prayer places freedom and com-

munion in opposition, one to the other." Eisenhower said, "The communist can find no reserve of strength in prayer because his doctrine of materialism and stateism denies the dignity of man and consequently the existence of the God. But in America," Eisenhower says, "George Washington long ago rejected exclusive dependence upon mere materialistic values. In the bitter and critical winter at Valley Forge, when the cause of liberty was so near defeat, his recourse was sincere and earnest prayer. From it he received new hope and new strength of purpose, out of which grew the freedom in which we celebrate this Christmas season."

"As religious faith is the foundation of free government, so is prayer an indispensable part of that faith." Eisenhower said, "Would it not be fitting for each of us to speak in prayer to the father of all men and women on this Earth of whatever nation, of whatever race and creed, to ask that he help us and teach us and strengthen us and receive our thanks? Should we not pray that he help us; help us to remember that the founders of this, our country, came first to these shores in search of freedom, freedom of man to walk in dignity, to live without fear beyond the yoke of tyranny, ever to progress; help us to cherish freedom for each of us and for all nations. Might we not pray that he teach us, teach us the security of faith. And may we pray that he strengthen us. Should we not pray that he receive our thanks, for certainly we are grateful for the opportunity given us to use our strength and our faith to meet the problems of this hour. And on this Christmas Eve, all hearts in America are filled with special thanks to God that the blood of those we love no longer spills on battlefields abroad. May he receive the thanks of each of us for this, his greatest bounty, and our supplication that peace on Earth may live with us always."

Now, at that time we were at peace, when Eisenhower spoke those words. But, of course, we have men and women losing their lives in uniform for our benefit and our freedom and we should, as Eisenhower said, remember them in prayer both for their safety and thanks giving.

President Kennedy had wonderful, wonderful Christmas messages, as did other Presidents.

□ 1900

But let me make sure people understand who don't understand Christianity and don't understand that it is possible to love someone and not agree with their lifestyle; that it's possible to even lay down one's life for people they love even though they disagree completely with their lifestyle.

I serve with colleagues here, as the gentleman from Massachusetts pointed out, who serve here and are openly avowed homosexuals. And I understand that. I have friends who practice homosexuality—people I love, care about. There are people who practice adultery

as heterosexuals. And in all those cases, as a member of the military, I would gladly lay down my life for them and their freedom because, as Jesus taught, you don't have to embrace or love somebody's lifestyle to love them with all your heart.

But as we approach this Christmas season, I hope that we will re-engage a love for those yet to take a breath in this world, who are in utero; that we will have a love and affection for those who are being overwhelmed with taxes before they even get their first job; and we will act responsibly to show that love and to cease the damage we're doing to this country. Those are adequate matters of prayer.

And in this, the last hour of this week before we approach the week of Christmas, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for December 16 and the balance of the week.

Mrs. NAPOLITANO (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of official business in district.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. CARNAHAN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. CARNAHAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CONYERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LEE of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RANGEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LANGEVIN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. YARMUTH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CLARKE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FATTAH, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BURTON of Indiana) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, December 20 and 21.

SENATE BILL REFERRED

A bill of the Senate of the following title was taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows: