

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

OPERATION AMERICAN HEROES

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege to speak today about Operation American Heroes, an organization founded in 2009 by Vietnam War Veteran and Houston businessman, John Carlross. Mr. Carlross recognized gaps in government support programs and has been working endless hours to create Operation American Heroes.

Mr. Carlross knows American heroes consist of more than just our warriors fighting overseas. Police officers, firefighters, border patrol agents, and first responders are just a few of the occupations fighting the front lines at home. They all sacrifice to make sure Americans are safe. As Mr. Carlross likes to say, we can give a little for those who have given much and have suffered difficulties and deserve our support overcoming obstacles they may be facing due to their service.

Operation American Heroes provides immediate and long term funding for non-profit organizations dedicated to improving the lives of those who have sacrificed so much to ensure we are safe. Their unpaid Board of Directors works with local businesses to raise these funds. They are proud to cover expenses so one hundred percent of all funds raised go towards immediately helping heroes, or to the foundations endowment which will support many future generations of heroes.

Every year American Heroes are honored during the week of September 11th by Operation American Heroes. Individuals can show their support in a unique way by becoming a "21 Gun Saluter" and business owners are encouraged to donate a small percentage of their sales for the week. Mr. Carlross said, "These brave men and women are the reason that we have the freedom to start, grow and prosper our businesses. It is only right that every business gives a small portion of their success in thanks."

This organization proves, yet again that, in Texas, patriotism is alive and well. Texans honor not only our fallen heroes, but those who have survived.

And that's just the way it is.

LORRAINE AND ELLIOTT PALAIS

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, December 28, 2012 will mark 60 years of marriage for Lorraine (Lipsky) and Elliott Palais. They met at New York University Heights in 1950 and lived in the Bronx after their wedding. Elliott served in the United States Army from 1954–1956. Lorraine was able to accompany him at his

assignments, including Salzburg, Austria, and Fort Monmouth, N.J. where she worked in the Adjutant General's Office. They moved to Yonkers in November 1961.

The Palais' are very involved in civic, educational, religious, professional, political, veterans and community activities. Both served as President of Lincoln Park Taxpayers Association where they are now Regents, and as Chairman of the Yonkers Branch of the American Red Cross. Lorraine is President of the Yonkers Police Second Precinct Community Council, serves as Treasurer of an Oil Cooperative and is on the Westchester County Parks, Recreation and Conservation Board.

Elliott is an administrator at Fordham University where they directs the Title VI Programs. He is a former Yonkers City Councilmember and is a member of three veterans Posts (two of which he served as Commander) and Secretary of the Yonkers Central Committee of Veterans Organizations.

Both were awarded the Americanism Award by the Central Committee of Veterans Organizations. They are both members of the Kiwanis Club of East Yonkers. Elliott is an Honorary Kentucky Colonel for his service as a consultant to Western Kentucky University.

They have four children, eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren. They attribute their marriage longevity to love, patience, understanding, caring and adversity in sickness and in health.

I am proud to be able to congratulate them for all of their good works for their community and their neighbors. And, like all who believe in love, I especially want to congratulate them on the 60th anniversary of their marriage. They are a shining example to all of us.

RELATING TO THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE DANIEL K. INOUE, A SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF HAWAII

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 19, 2012

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in reflection and remembrance of the life of Senator Daniel Inouye.

I was deeply saddened to hear of the loss of Senator Daniel Inouye on Monday; his passing marks the end of an era for the people of Hawaii, for the United States Senate and Congress, and for the country. A public servant from start to finish, Daniel Inouye has left a shining, indelible mark on history that will inspire Americans for generations to come.

His story is simply incredible. Daniel was a medical volunteer during the Pearl Harbor attacks in 1941. Even though the U.S. Army banned people of Japanese descent from enlisting, and even though Executive Order 9066 authorized the internment of roughly 110,000 Japanese Americans, Daniel Inouye found it within himself to be an American patriot.

Soon after the ban on enlistment was lifted, he abandoned his Pre-Med studies at the University of Hawaii and enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1943. He was a war hero in the truest sense of the term, earning a Medal of Honor for his actions on the battlefields of World War II before his State was even admitted to the Union.

Daniel Inouye was a Lieutenant and Platoon Leader on the battlefield in Tuscany, Italy in April 1945. Even after being shot in the stomach by German machine gun fire, he refused medical treatment and still managed to find the courage to destroy 2 machine gun nests. Nearly losing consciousness from blood loss, he heroically charged a 3rd machine gun nest before having his right arm severed by a German grenade. Somehow, even after these grave injuries, Daniel Inouye still found a way to toss a grenade that destroyed the 3rd bunker.

He remained a proud member of the military until his honorable discharge as a Captain in 1947. He was Hawaii's first Representative in the House, a source of great pride to all Members, past and present.

As Hawaii's first Congressman and, subsequently, as a nine-term Senator, Daniel Inouye embodied the spirit of "aloha" in his work. Serving as Chairman of the Appropriations Committee, he worked to strengthen our national security and help veterans access the benefits they've earned.

He was a consistent champion for the interests of Hawaii's people. I am grateful for the opportunity to have worked with Senator Inouye, and my thoughts are with his family and with the people of his beloved Hawaii, who will always remember him for his leadership and his courage. As a Senator, he never forgot his military roots, and has always been a voice for veterans.

Senator Inouye was a patriarch of Hawaii, and all Hawaiians will long remember his unyielding devotion to the economic vitality, progress, and success of his beloved home State. His fellow Americans will long remember his leadership in protecting our men and women in uniform, strengthening our national security, reaching across the aisle, and investing in a future of prosperity for all.

By his actions, he stood firm for the independence of the Congress, the strength of our democracy, and the values of the American people.

I want to extend my condolences to his wife, Irene, his son Daniel Jr., and the rest of his family as they mourn the loss of a great man.

When asked recently how he wanted to be remembered, Daniel said, quite humbly, "I represented the people of Hawaii and this Nation honestly and to the best of my ability. I think I did OK." I think that I speak for us all when I say that this was quite an understatement for a man who accomplished so much and sacrificed so for this country. And so with heavy hearts, we bid "aloha" to Senator Daniel Inouye—a man whose chapter in American history will live on.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN
CONGRESSMAN WOLF AND THE
ADMINISTRATION REGARDING
THE AFGHANISTAN/PAKISTAN
STUDY GROUP (APSG)

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 20, 2012

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, news reports from Afghanistan continue to show that U.S. policy is not working. For fiscal year 2012, the House provided the secretary of defense \$1 million to establish the Afghanistan/Pakistan Study Group (APSG). Modeled after the successful Iraq Study Group (ISG), the APSG would be a bipartisan panel bringing together the best and brightest minds to provide solutions on how to assure a successful outcome in this troubled region. I have written President Obama and Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta over a dozen times asking that the APSG be established, so the American people will know that every effort is being made to address a faltering U.S. policy at a critical juncture. I submit for the RECORD the first part of a series of letters from August 4, 2010 through September 15, 2011 on this important topic. How can President Obama and Secretary Panetta, who served on the ISG, continue to claim that putting “fresh eyes” on U.S. strategy in Afghanistan and Pakistan is a bad idea? Additional correspondence with the administration between October 3, 2011 and December 13, 2012 will follow tomorrow.

Hon. BARACK H. OBAMA,
The President, The White House, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: On September 14, 2001, following the catastrophic and deliberate terrorist attack on our country, I voted to go to war in Afghanistan. I stand by that decision and have the utmost confidence in General Petraeus's proven leadership. I also remain unequivocally committed to the success of our mission there and to the more than 100,000 American troops sacrificing toward that end. In fact, it is this commitment which has led me to write to you. While I have been a consistent supporter of the war effort in both Afghanistan and Iraq, I believe that with this support comes a responsibility. This was true during a Republican administration in the midst of the wars, and it remains true today.

In 2005, I returned from my third trip to Iraq where I saw firsthand the deteriorating security situation. I was deeply concerned that Congress was failing to exercise the necessary oversight of the war effort. Against this backdrop I authored the legislation that created the Iraq Study Group (ISG). The ISG was a 10-member bipartisan group of well-respected, nationally known figures who were brought together with the help of four reputable organizations—the U.S. Institute for Peace, the Center for the Study of the Presidency, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and the Baker Institute for Public Policy at Rice University—and charged with undertaking a comprehensive review of U.S. efforts there. This panel was intended to serve as “fresh eyes on the target”—the target being success in Iraq.

While reticent at first to their credit President Bush, State Secretary Rice and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld came to support the ISG, ably led by bipartisan co-chairs, former Secretary of State James Baker and former Congressman Lee Hamilton. Two members of your national security team, Secretary of

Defense Robert Gates and CIA Director Leon Panetta, saw the merit of the ISG and, in fact, served on the panel. Vice President Biden, too, then serving in the Senate, was supportive and saw it as a means to unite the Congress at a critical time. A number of the ISG's recommendations and ideas were adopted. Retired General Jack Keane, senior military adviser to the ISG, was a lead proponent of “the surge,” and the ISG referenced the possibility on page 73. Aside from the specific policy recommendations of the panel, the ISG helped force a moment of truth in our national conversation about the war effort.

I believe our nation is again facing such a moment in the Afghanistan war effort, and that a similar model is needed. In recent days I have spoken with a number of knowledgeable individuals including former senior diplomats, public policy experts and retired and active military. Many believe our Afghanistan policy is adrift, and all agreed that there is an urgent need for what I call an Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group (APSG). We must examine our efforts in the region holistically, given Pakistan's strategic significance to our efforts in Afghanistan and the Taliban's presence in that country as well, especially in the border areas.

This likely will not come as a surprise to you as commander in chief. You are well acquainted with the sobering statistics of the past several weeks—notably that July surpassed June as the deadliest month for U.S. troops. There is a palpable shift in the nation's mood and in the halls of Congress. A July 2010 CBS news poll found that 62 percent of Americans say the war is going badly in Afghanistan, up from 49 percent in May. Further, last week, 102 Democrats voted against the war spending bill, which is 70 more than last year, and they were joined by 12 Members of my own party. Senator Lindsay Graham, speaking last Sunday on CNN's “State of the Union,” candidly expressed concern about an “unholy alliance” emerging of anti-war Democrats and Republicans.

I have heard it said that Vietnam was not lost in Saigon; rather, it was lost in Washington. While the Vietnam and Afghanistan parallels are imperfect at best, the shadow of history looms large. Eroding political will has consequences—and in the case of Afghanistan, the stakes could not be higher. A year ago, speaking before the Veterans of Foreign War National Convention, you rightly said, “Those who attacked America on 9/11 are plotting to do so again. If left unchecked, the Taliban insurgency will mean an even larger safe haven from which al Qaeda would plot to kill more Americans. So this is not only a war worth fighting . . . this is fundamental to the defense of our people.” Indeed it is fundamental. We must soberly consider the implications of failure in Afghanistan. Those that we know for certain are chilling—namely an emboldened al-Qaeda, a reconstituted Taliban with an open staging ground for future worldwide attacks, and a destabilized, nuclear-armed Pakistan.

Given these realities and wavering public and political support, I urge you to act immediately, through executive order, to convene an Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group modeled after the Iraq Study Group. The participation of nationally known and respected individual's is of paramount importance. Among the names that surfaced in my discussions with others, all of whom more than meet the criteria described above, are ISG co-chairs Baker and Hamilton; former Senators Chuck Robb, Bob Kerrey and Sam Nunn; former Congressman Duncan Hunter, former U.S. ambassador Ryan Crocker; former Secretary Of Defense James Schlesinger, and General Keane. These harms are simply suggestions among a cadre of capable

men and women, as evidenced by the makeup of the ISG, who would be more than up to the task.

I firmly believe that an Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group could reinvigorate national confidence in how America can be successful and move toward a shared mission in Afghanistan. This is a crucial task. On the Sunday morning news shows this past weekend, it was unsettling to hear conflicting statements from within the leadership of the administration that revealed a lack of clarity about the end game in Afghanistan. How much more so is this true for the rest of the country? An APSG is necessary for precisely that reason. We are nine years into our nation's longest running war and the American people and their elected representatives do not have a clear sense of what we are aiming to achieve, why it is necessary and how far we are from attaining that goal. Further, an APSG could strengthen many of our NATO allies in Afghanistan who are also facing dwindling public support, as evidenced by the recent Dutch troop withdrawal, and would give them a tangible vision to which to commit.

Just as was true at the time of the Iraq Study Group, I believe that Americans of all political viewpoints, liberals and conservatives alike, and varied opinions on the war will embrace this “fresh eyes” approach. Like the previous administration's support of the Iraq Study Group, which involved taking the group's members to Iraq and providing high-level access to policy and decision makers, I urge you to embrace an Afghanistan-Pakistan Study Group. It is always in our national interest to openly assess the challenges before us and to chart a clear course to success.

As you know, the full Congress comes back in session in mid-September—days after Americans around the country will once again pause and remember that horrific morning nine years ago when passenger airlines became weapons, when the skyline of one of America's greatest cities was forever changed, when a symbol of America's military might was left with a gaping hole. The experts with whom I have spoken in recent days believe that time is of the essence. In moving forward with a study panel, and waiting for Congress to reconvene is too long to wait. As such, I am hopeful you will use an executive order and the power of the bully pulpit to convene this group in short order, and explain to the American people why it is both necessary and timely. Should you choose not to take this path, respectfully, I intend to offer an amendment by whatever vehicle necessary to mandate the group's creation at the earliest possible opportunity.

The ISG's report opened with a letter from the co-chairs that read, “There is no magic formula to solve the problems of Iraq. However, there are actions that can be taken to improve the situation and protect American interests.” The same can be said of Afghanistan.

I understand that you are a great admirer of Abraham Lincoln. He, too, governed during a time of war, albeit a war that pitted brother against brother, and father against son. In the midst of that epic struggle, he relied on a cabinet with strong, often times opposing viewpoints. Historians assert this served to develop his thinking on complex matters. Similarly, while total agreement may not emerge from a study group for Afghanistan and Pakistan, I believe that vigorous, thoughtful and principled debate and discussion among some of our nation's greatest minds on these matters will only serve the national interest. The biblical admonition that iron sharpens iron rings true.