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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PAULSEN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 24, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ERIK PAULSEN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

AFGHANISTAN SITUATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, on January 12, CBS Evening News did a segment on just how impossible is the situation in Afghanistan. This is something I have been speaking out on for months and months and months, and I think CBS illustrated beautifully just how dire of a situation it is in Afghanistan. I will read excerpts from the report containing examples of just how inept the Afghan Army is.

"CBS News correspondent Clarissa Ward found one reason in the Pech Valley. Americans lost their lives there building a base called Nangalam. When they tried to hand over their gains to the Afghan Army, the base went to ruin.

"Army Major Guillermo Guillen, from southern California, is frustrated. 'You're relying on us to do all of your security for you. You need to be participating,' Guillen told an Afghan counterpart.

"On a recent patrol, some Afghan soldiers were not wearing helmets. One chatted on his cell phone.

"The United States military left Nangalam base last February, handing over to Afghan forces. But within weeks, things went badly wrong."

Remember, Mr. Speaker, this is a CBS national report.

"Enemy forces returned to roam freely through the valley. The Afghan commander deserted. Hundreds of his soldiers followed.

"The Afghan forces that remained ransacked their own base. All the electric wires have been pulled out. Anything of any value was taken. You can see the wire hanging out of the light."

Mr. Speaker, "A new Afghan Army unit has been brought in with a new commander, Colonel Turab. U.S. officers have nicknamed him 'Honest Abe.' And he was honest to a fault about the prospects of the Afghan Army."

Mr. Speaker, listen very carefully: "It will take about 30 years' for the Afghan Army to be ready, Turab said through a translator. 'And if they are reformed and the corruption is removed,' it will take about 10 years.

How many \$10 billion a month do we have to spend? How many young men and women have to die for a failed policy? History has proven you will never, never change Afghanistan no matter what you do.

This poster beside me is a wife in tears whose husband was killed in Af-

ghanistan, and the little girl, as you can see, Mr. Speaker, is looking at the flag. She has no idea that her daddy is dead. She will know one day that her father died to prop up a corrupt leader named Karzai and a corrupt government, and then she will learn from the history books as she gets into high school that no nation has ever conquered Afghanistan and no nation will ever conquer Afghanistan.

As we listen to the President tonight and he talks about the state of affairs, I hope he will mention that he intends to bring our troops home now, not in 2014. In 2014, I do not know how many young men and women have to lose their legs, their arms, and die. So I hope both parties will come together this spring and talk about bringing our troops home now, not 2014.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform and their families, to bless the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq, and ask God to please continue to bless America.

[From cbsnews.com, Jan. 12, 2012]

NANGALAM: A SYMBOL OF THE AFGHAN WAR'S TROUBLES

(By Clarissa Ward)

Most Americans in Afghanistan are doing their best in a war that's now in its 11th year. Why has it taken this long?

CBS News correspondent Clarissa Ward found one reason in the Pech Valley. Americans lost their lives there building a base called Nangalam. When they tried to hand over their gains to the Afghan army, the base went to ruin.

This is one part of Afghanistan that America thought it could finally leave. But U.S. troops are back, trying once again to train their Afghan allies.

Army Major Guillermo Guillen, from Southern California, is frustrated.

"You're relying on us to do all your security for you. You need to be participating," Guillen told an Afghan counterpart.

On a recent patrol, some Afghan soldiers were not wearing helmets. One chatted on his cell phone.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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



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"We're not going to be here forever, you need to take care of yourself," Guillen said.

The U.S. military left Nangalam base last February, handing over to Afghan forces. But within weeks, things went badly wrong.

Enemy forces returned to roam freely through the valley. The Afghan commander deserted. Hundreds of his soldiers followed.

"I believe there was some of (feeling of abandonment) amongst the (Afghan) soldiers. It's probably what led to some of their leadership leaving," Guillen said.

The Afghan forces that remained ransacked their own base.

All the electric wires have been pulled out. Anything of any value was taken. You can see the wiring hanging out of the light.

Just about everything else that could be moved was sold for cash.

Without American support, the Afghan army refused to resupply the base. The soldiers were living in filth.

For the U.S. military, it was an embarrassing example of what might happen when security is handed over to Afghan forces across the country, and so four months after leaving, a small group of U.S. troops was sent back in.

Today, American contractors are back on the base repairing the damage, with U.S. taxpayers footing the bill, again.

A new Afghan army unit has been brought in, with a new commander, Colonel Turab. U.S. officers have nicknamed him "Honest Abe."

And he was honest to a fault about the prospects for the Afghan army.

"It will take about 30 years" for the Afghan army to be ready, Turab said through a translator. "And if they are reformed and the corruption is removed, ten years."

"They understand what they're doing. They understand what's required. It's just getting them to do it without coalition support," Guillen said.

The U.S. exit strategy depends on them doing it without support. Not in 30 years, and not in ten. They have just two years before the vast majority of American forces are scheduled to leave the Pech Valley—and all of Afghanistan—for good.

IN MEMORY OF FORMER CONGRESSMAN ED JENKINS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life, leadership, and legacy of our former colleague and a friend of many in this house, Congressman Ed Jenkins.

My colleague, JOHN LEWIS, has brought many of us together on this floor or in other public statements to say what an honor it was to serve with Eddie Jenkins, how much we all learned from him. The humor as well as the intellect he brought to his work was definitely, definitely an asset to the work of the Congress.

Eddie Jenkins was a proud son of Georgia. If you heard him say it, you would agree, a self-described country lawyer from Jasper, a public servant dedicated to his constituents, to advancing the interests, hopes, and aspirations of his neighbors down there in Georgia, and in securing future prosperity for all and opportunity for all Americans.

It must be a true honor for Congressman Jenkins and his family that this

tribute has been organized and led by the conscience of the Congress, a man of extraordinary leadership and character and a fellow representative from the State of Georgia, Congressman JOHN LEWIS.

Congressman Jenkins will long be remembered as a leader willing to work across the aisle, negotiate and build coalitions on behalf of the greater good. He will be remembered in textile mills across the South as a champion of the industry, a defender of good-paying jobs for local workers in small towns and communities across the region for small businesses. He will be remembered as a champion of the Ways and Means Committee for his expertise on the Tax Code, for his wisdom and leadership, with the respect he earned even when his colleagues disagreed with him. And he will be remembered for his legendary tough questioning during the Iran-Contra hearings, a scene that reflected and embodies his strong will, deep character, and core principles—his pursuit of the truth, his commitment to transparency and accountability, and his firm belief in the sanctity of the rule of law.

Congressman Jenkins served his community and our country as a lawyer and a congressional staffer, in the Coast Guard, and as a Member of the House of Representatives. He'll be missed by his friends in Congress, by his friends he served in Georgia, by his neighbors, and loved ones.

We only hope that it is some comfort to his wife of 51 years, Jo; his daughters, Janice and Amy; his brothers, sisters, grandsons, and his entire family that so many share grief at this sad time.

Thank you, Mr. Jenkins, for a life of service to the Congress and the country. Thank you, Mr. LEWIS, for providing this opportunity for us to honor a person we were proud to call a colleague and friend.

□ 1010

THANK YOU TO MY FRIEND, GABBY GIFFORDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. SCHMIDT) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, today I really just want to say thank you to a young woman who for the last time in her legislative career as a Member of Congress will grace our presence this evening at the State of the Union, and I'm talking about my good friend, GABBY GIFFORDS. I think the world will all know GABBY as the courageous heroine who, on January 8, 2011, was met by an unbelievable mad person who changed her life and the life of so many, but I really want to tell all of us in this body what a great individual and humanitarian she was for all of us.

She was sworn into office on January 4, 2007. She came out of the State legislature in Arizona, so her background was in the State legislature, as mine is.

She currently represents southern Arizona, the Tucson area, which has the Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and Fort Huachuca in Sierra Vista. She is the leading champion on border security, energy independence, and the needs of military families and veterans, which she knows so well because she is married to an active military veteran, Mark Kelly, who not only flew umpteen missions as a naval pilot but also flew into space as a NASA astronaut.

On January 8, when she was having Congress On Your Corner at a supermarket in northwest Tucson, an ordinary morning, and many people were there, she was met by a madman who not only changed her life, but ended the life of 9-year-old Christina Taylor Green; Dorothy Morris; John Roll, chief Federal judge for Arizona; Phyllis Schneek; Dorwan Stoddard; and Gabriel Zimmerman. Twelve others, including Giffords' staff members Ron Barber and Pat Simon, were wounded. She was treated initially nearby and then flown to the TIRR Memorial Hermann Rehabilitation Hospital in Houston. She continues to be rehabilitated, and it is remarkable how far this young woman has come.

She was a Fulbright Scholar, but more importantly, she is my friend. You see, in the House we have a little bipartisan softball team. We play folks like the NRCC young folks and the DCCC young folks, and now recently we're all playing the press corps. She was a member of our team, and she was a really good member.

I wish GABBY well as she moves to a new direction in her life, and I pray each and every morning and each and every evening that God will continue to allow her to become a complete human being again. She is a great lady, a great friend of this House, a great friend of the folks in Tucson and surrounding Arizona.

Mr. ENGEL. Will the gentlewoman yield?

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Yes, I will yield to my friend, Mr. ENGEL from New York.

Mr. ENGEL. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me, and I think that her taking the floor this morning is the best example of bipartisanship that people say Congress doesn't have enough of, and I think that those of us that believe in bipartisanship need to do more and more of this.

The attack on GABBY was really an attack on all of us, an attack on Congress, and something that's really unthinkable. I'm very happy that she will be here this evening for the State of the Union Address by the President.

I got to know GABBY very well because my son attended the University of Arizona in Tucson and graduated from there, and he was campaigning for her, and I actually got to know her before she even was a Member of the House. I think that all of us can say that she has been one of the most collegial, friendly, hardworking and dedicated Members of Congress.