

Rican nationalists, apparently on a tour of this very congressional gallery, pulled out pistols and fired 41 rounds of ammunition at Members of Congress. When the shooting ceased, five Representatives were wounded in the attack. By an act of God, none were killed.

After a short period of time in the private sector, Bill returned to Congress in 1967. He went on to serve in seven succeeding Congresses until 1983. The ranking Republican member of the House Agriculture Committee, a member of the Committee on Aging and the Committee on Committees, Bill always considered it a great privilege to serve the people of the "Fighting Ninth." Fondly known as "The Bald Eagle of the Cumberlands," I assure you and the people of the Ninth District that his legend will never die.

Even though he was in failing health, I was greatly honored, when I was elected in 2010, to have Bill Wampler show up at our victory party in Bristol and hand me his No. 9 license plate as a part of his legacy. I hope that I can achieve the greatness that he achieved and have the abilities that he had. He was truly a great man.

His legacy and influence will long be remembered across the Ninth and throughout southwest Virginia. I am honored to pay tribute to Bill's many contributions to our community, our region, and our Nation. He was a friend and a courageous public servant. My thoughts and prayers go out to his wife, Lee; his children; friends; and loved ones. May God give them comfort during this difficult time.

HEARING FROM A BRAVE AFGHANISTAN TRUTH-TELLER

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, later today I will join a bipartisan group of Members at a panel discussion about the ongoing war in Afghanistan. Joining us as a special guest will be Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Davis, one Afghanistan veteran who has spoken the devastating truth about conditions on the ground.

During his second tour of duty in 2010 and 2011, he interviewed or interacted with 250 soldiers at all levels in several Afghan provinces. He also spoke with Afghan security officials and with civilians. He prepared both a classified and an unclassified report about what he saw and what he heard. Here is some of what he concluded in his own words, Mr. Speaker. He said:

What I saw bore no resemblance to rosy official statements by U.S. military leaders.

He said:

I witnessed the absence of success on virtually every level. I heard many stories of how insurgents controlled virtually every piece of land beyond eyeshot of a U.S. or international security assistance force base.

And he said:

From time to time, I observed the Afghan security forces collude with the insurgency.

Davis tells us that one Afghan police captain actually laughed at him when Davis asked about how they responded to a Taliban attack. No, we don't go after them, said the captain. That would be dangerous.

One senior officer told Lieutenant Colonel Davis: How do I look a soldier's wife in the eye and tell her that her husband died for something meaningful?

Mr. Speaker, is that what we have to show for nearly 11 years of war and hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayers' money? As we recognized Memorial Day on Monday and over the past weekend, don't we at least owe it to the war dead and their families to ensure that their sacrifice was for a worthy cause?

Lieutenant Colonel Davis did not have to come forward. Without a doubt, it would have been better for his military career to keep his head down and his mouth shut. But with the stakes so great and the costs so high, he felt that he had a greater obligation to the truth.

Lieutenant Colonel Davis' story must be heard. It needs to be heard because it balances the last 10 years at the Armed Services Committee and in various other briefings and forums where we've been exposed to nothing more than the official line on how this war is going. It's time we got firsthand experience and a firsthand version from someone who has seen the dysfunction of our Afghan policy at the ground level.

In February, a group of Members sent a letter to House leadership asking that Lieutenant Colonel Davis have the opportunity to testify at a formal hearing of a relevant committee of the House, but this invitation has not been extended to him. So, thanks to the leadership of my friends, Congresswoman BARBARA LEE and Congressman WALTER JONES, we will convene a panel later today to give Lieutenant Colonel Davis a chance to tell what he saw in Afghanistan.

I invite all Members of Congress to attend. It's at 2 p.m. at B-318, Rayburn. If you do, you will hear convincing and overwhelming evidence that this war is a colossal failure, and it's time, finally—after more than a decade—to bring our troops home.

CANCER SURVIVOR BEAUTY AND SUPPORT DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Cancer Survivor Beauty and Support Day.

To my left here is a poster for Cancer Survivor Beauty and Support Day, which appears right now in hundreds of businesses all across our Nation and will be read by over a million survivors. This important day is observed

on the first Tuesday in June, which falls this year on June 5. I am very pleased to help draw attention and raise awareness for this important day.

Mr. Speaker, there are nearly 12 million cancer survivors living in the United States, and each year that number continues to grow. In 2012, about 1.6 million new cases are expected to be diagnosed, and each individual will face challenges both during and after treatment. Each individual will need a tremendous amount of care and support.

Since its inception in 2003, Cancer Survivor Beauty and Support Day has helped bring warm support, comfort, and pride to survivors. This day is one of a kind, bringing together all cancer survivors in this country—men, women and children, regardless of their type of cancer or when they were diagnosed—with thousands of volunteer stylists, beauticians, barbers, and industry professionals who are looking to offer a little personal kindness to our Nation's cherished cancer survivors. These individuals have overcome so much and have shown us all the courage to fight on in the face of so many uncertain challenges. This day simply is an opportunity to provide relaxation and to connect survivors with one another and with caring volunteers.

Cancer Survivor Beauty and Support Day is the only event of its kind in our Nation, with complimentary services being offered to all survivors by salons, barbershops, day spas, and other beauty and massage therapy facilities. The event is nationwide, with support in literally all 50 States. It is also important to note that participation in this day is purely voluntary by these businesses, with no monetary solicitation or donations before, during, or after the event.

Support for this important day continues to grow, thanks to the hard work of so many good people and dedicated supporters. I'd like to especially recognize Barbara Paget, the founder and dynamic leader of this cause, for her hard work. It certainly would not be the event that it is today without her leadership.

In addition to the signs and flyers like this one we have right here, Mr. Speaker, all around the country, Stand Up To Cancer will reach over 1 million survivors on their Facebook page on June 5, 2012.

This day is very established and deserves recognition by this body. To this end, I have introduced House Resolution 494, a bipartisan resolution which expresses the support for designating the first Tuesday in each June as National Cancer Survivor and Beauty Support Day. I certainly urge all of my colleagues to recognize and jump on board this important resolution. But more importantly, I ask everyone to take a moment to recognize this day. Put something on your Web site. Urge survivors and volunteers in your districts to participate on this day, June 5, and honor the cancer survivors all across our Nation.

□ 1110

ONGOING TROUBLES AT
VETERANS AFFAIRS

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

Mrs. ADAMS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to the ongoing troubles at the VA and its apparent inability to effectively manage major construction projects, specifically, the new veterans hospital at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Orlando, Florida, in my congressional district.

Our Nation's veterans have served our country honorably, putting everything on the line to protect our freedoms. After all they have done for us, it is Congress' duty to ensure that our veterans' service-connected medical needs are taken care of.

The American people were told that for \$665 million they would receive a state-of-the-art medical facility to care for the hundreds of thousands of veterans in central Florida, which is one of the most underserved veteran populations in this country. This project is desperately needed in our community. Our veterans cannot wait any longer, nor can hardworking taxpayers afford more expensive delays.

Recently, Chairman MILLER held a hearing with the Veterans' Affairs committee to examine these delays. During the hearing, it became clear that incompetence and a lack of leadership from the VA is to blame for the egregious amount of errors with this project. Those errors include forgetting to order medical equipment, designing incompatible power sources in patient rooms, and designing doorways too small for the equipment that needs to get through them. These basic design errors are absolutely unacceptable, and we must hold the VA accountable for them.

While I am not a member of the committee, I felt it was my duty, as the Representative for central Florida veterans, to participate in the hearings and conduct the oversight necessary to get answers and move the project forward.

Having toured the hospital construction site recently, I knew that the project was behind schedule and over budget. Listening to the hearing testimony, coupled with seeing the site firsthand, reinforced the fact that the VA has fallen down on the job and is failing our veterans.

Veterans in my district have to drive hundreds of miles in some cases to get the cure and the care they need and have been promised—they've been promised—in return for their service to our Nation. These are often elderly men and women who cannot afford the trips. And we have young veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan who have sustained injuries that make those long trips incredibly painful.

This is not the best we can offer; and we should be ashamed, in the VA, that those brave warriors have to travel

long distances with the vague hope of getting the care they need. The VA can do better. We can do better.

Today's consideration of the Military Construction and Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill helps put the VA's feet to the fire and will spur them to return the focus to our veteran population and not on bureaucratic mismanagement and political infighting.

The language of the bill makes it clear that, while the hospital construction remains fully funded, it is no longer an open-ended construction project with bills to be paid years into the future. The legislation states quite clearly that funds obligated to complete construction have to be spent within 5 years. The message should be heard loud and clear by the VA: get your management in gear and finish this hospital.

Mr. Speaker, the delays at this hospital are despicable, and the inability of the VA to provide what our veterans have been promised is unacceptable. Our veterans and their families have put everything on the line to defend our country. Making sure their service-connected needs are taken care of is the very least we can do to repay our Nation's heroes.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 14 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Rabbi Aaron Melman, Congregation Beth Shalom, Northbrook, Illinois, offered the following prayer:

We invoke the blessing of Almighty God upon the Members of this House.

Bless our leaders and all who work tirelessly for the good of our people with an understanding and discerning mind, a listening ear, a compassionate heart, and insightful thoughts.

Bless the people of the United States of America.

Help us to gain the insight to know what is good and true, for it is through Your spirit and love that we learn to become more human.

We thank You for enabling us to live in a free country, and we remember those who do not yet live with the same freedoms.

We pray that the leaders of our Nation help all those who are in need.

Shield our leaders and bless them. Protect our Armed Forces and speed our victory over tyranny. Let us make

each day more meaningful, helping others move towards a life of peace.

May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable to You, O Lord, our rock and our redeemer.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DOLD led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING RABBI AARON
MELMAN

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to welcome my friend, Rabbi Aaron Melman. Rabbi Melman has served the families at Congregation Beth Shalom in Northbrook, Illinois, for the past 9 years, where he works with children and adults to help them better develop their faith.

Previously, he studied and taught in New York City, where he served as a student chaplain to the New York City Fire Department. On September 12, 2001, he found a way to get to Ground Zero, and thereafter provided comfort and support to those first responders in need.

Rabbi Melman is devoted to helping others. He serves as the president of the Chicago Region of the Rabbinical Assembly; he provides valued education to families through his work as a board member for the Chicago Center for Jewish Genetic Disorders; and he continues to support firefighters by serving as the chaplain to the Northbrook Fire Department.

Mr. Speaker, I'm honored to call Rabbi Melman my friend.

I do want to also congratulate Rabbi Melman and his bride, Elisa, on their 13th wedding anniversary, which they celebrated last night. We certainly appreciate you joining us and celebrating that with us today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GINGREY of Georgia). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-