

in '53 and Best Situation Comedy in '54. He also produced comedy programs: "The Dick Van Dyke Show," "The Andy Griffith Show," "The Real McCoys," and "The Mod Squad."

Yet he never forgot his promise to build a shrine to St. Jude. He had conversations with his close friend and mentor, a native of Tennessee and archbishop of Chicago, Cardinal Samuel Stritch. Cardinal Stritch was the cardinal in Toledo when Danny Thomas was in church, and they became close. Cardinal Stritch, who served time in Memphis at St. Patrick's church after he was in Nashville, which was his home, told Danny that the shrine to St. Jude should be a hospital where children should be cared for regardless of race, religion, or ability to pay. He told him that the hospital should be in Memphis, Tennessee.

Cardinal Stritch was a great man for many, many reasons, but this was one of them—the creation of the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital with Danny Thomas. The hospital, located in Memphis, is one of the world's premier centers for research and treatment of pediatric cancer and for other catastrophic children's diseases. It is the first and only pediatric cancer center to be designated as a comprehensive cancer center by the National Cancer Institute.

Children throughout the United States and from around the world come to Memphis and in through the doors of St. Jude for treatment. Thousands more have benefited from its research, which is shared freely with the world global community. No child is denied treatment because of an inability to pay. The hospital has developed procedures that have pushed the survival rate for childhood cancers from less than 20 percent when the hospital opened to 80 percent today. By U.S. News and World Report, it ranks as the number one children's cancer hospital in the United States. It was the first completely integrated hospital in the South, a condition demanded by both Danny Thomas and Cardinal Stritch. Black doctors treated white patients, and white and black patients were together in the same rooms.

As one of Memphis' largest employers, St. Jude has more than 3,600 employees, supported by a full-time fundraising staff of almost 900 at ALSAC, which is the American Lebanese Syrian Associated Charities. The Shadiac family has a great history in running that charity. ALSAC/St. Jude, the fundraising organization of St. Jude, is the third largest health care charity in America, and it raises money solely to support St. Jude.

□ 1120

Danny Thomas was presented with a Congressional Gold Medal in 1983 by President Reagan in recognition for his work with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. He died in 1991 at the age of 79. His great accomplishments and altruism make him an American hero

worthy of the honor a commemorative stamp imparts. His life perfectly illustrates how the American Dream can be within the reach of anyone, even an immigrant son of Lebanese parents with a humble upbringing.

Mr. Thomas was an extremely compassionate man who certainly deserves nationwide recognition for his dedication to St. Jude and all the children that the hospital has helped over these 50 years. To this day, Danny Thomas is still a part of every child's experience at St. Jude. Children rub the nose of Danny's statue for good luck prior to every treatment, sure proof that he will always be a source of hope and inspiration.

I was pleased to support this effort by leading a letter to Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe, and I commend the United States Postal Service for selecting Danny Thomas.

I urge everyone to contribute and to visit the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. I congratulate St. Jude and the family of Danny Thomas for this honor and for all that they do for children of the world.

AFGHANISTAN AND IRAN

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, President Obama's decision to end combat operations in Afghanistan next year is welcome news. I commend President Obama for making this decision. But we should bring our troops home even sooner than that.

The American people are tired of this war in Afghanistan. Large majorities of them want a safe and orderly withdrawal from Afghanistan as soon as possible. A decade of war has ravaged military families, our Nation's treasury, and our standing in the world.

I commend President Obama for ending the war in Iraq as well. I commend him for trying to end the war in Afghanistan. The courageous truth telling of Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Davis should give us pause. His report and the failure to establish peace in Afghanistan after 10 years of war should remind us that we need a political solution, not a military one.

We have ended the war in Iraq. This is a good thing. We are slowly ending the war in Afghanistan. This is also welcome news. But I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that it would be unwise for the United States to enter into a new war just as we're ending two others.

But if you listen to the rhetoric around Washington and the Nation, Mr. Speaker, it is literally impossible to not hear the drumbeat of war with Iran. The rhetoric in Washington about the military strike against Iran leads me to think that we may be sliding into a new war yet.

I would like to be perfectly clear, because whenever you speak against a war, your patriotism is challenged and

your courage is challenged until they find out that you were right. So let me be clear:

I strongly oppose nuclear proliferation, and that includes Iran. I have supported sanctions against Iran to help prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Iran's repression of human rights and support for terrorist groups is appalling.

But the heated rhetoric we hear around our city and the events on the world stage are deeply troubling, Mr. Speaker. News headlines read, "The Coming Attack on Iran." Pundits discuss the possibility with shocking casualness, and I am alarmed by this.

America, we have seen this movie before, and, Mr. Speaker, it doesn't end well. Two months after leaving Iraq, we have already forgotten the consequences of war it appears. If you need a reminder, talk to a veteran or a veteran's widow.

Our military leaders are cautioning against a strike on Iran. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta said the United States "could possibly be the target of retaliation from Iran, sinking our ships, striking our military bases." He said, "That would not only involve many lives, but I think could consume the Middle East in a confrontation and a conflict that we would regret." Let me repeat, "a conflict that we would regret."

Mr. Speaker, I wish the United States had never entered Iraq. And before we entered it, the world—not just Americans, but the world—said, "Don't do it." Some people led us to war anyway; and haven't we all regretted—after no weapons of mass destruction, no linkage between Saddam Hussein and Osama bin Laden—that none of these things that were recommended have come to pass, yet we've lost, literally, thousands of American lives and perhaps \$1 trillion.

Israeli intelligence officials have equally dire predictions about a military strike against Iran. Former Israeli Mossad Chief Meir Dagan said that attacking Iran "would mean regional war, and in that case, you would have given Iran the best possible reason to continue the nuclear program."

There is serious concern that a military strike on Iran would hasten Iran's development of a nuclear weapon, not slow it down. A strike would only delay—not end—development. Speaking about what would happen after a military strike, retired General Anthony Zinni said, "If you follow this all the way down, eventually I'm putting boots on the ground somewhere."

America cannot afford another war. We've just gotten out of Iraq. We're getting out of Afghanistan. And diplomacy, diplomacy, diplomacy is what is called for to avoid a new war with Iran.

CONSTITUENT IDEAS

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago, I proposed a simple challenge to my constituents back home in St. Louis. I said: Tell me your ideas for creating more jobs and economic opportunity in 2012, and I'll compile them and not only take them back to Washington but work to turn your ideas into action.

I want to thank the over 600 Missourians I heard from, each offering many of their own commonsense solutions to help our economy continue to grow.

I want to share their message on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives today. Their message was a clear consensus that we need to invest in our infrastructure, make things here in the U.S., bring manufacturing jobs back from overseas, educate and train our workforce for 21st century opportunities, and work together for the good of the country instead of pulling our country apart at the seams.

My constituents in St. Louis are deeply concerned that our communities will be left behind in this new global economy if we don't act now, right now, without delay.

As Joseph C. expressed best:

Missouri is a great State, but I'm afraid it will be left behind, and manufacturing jobs will go elsewhere.

Chris K., from St. Louis, sent me an email saying:

What would help my personal economic situation and those of many others would be a greater investment in our Nation's infrastructure.

Joseph P., from St. Louis, commented:

Investing in our infrastructure and educational systems will not only create jobs but will also result in long-term economic benefits for the entire Nation.

Karen M. said:

We need to realize how important good carpenters, plumbers, electricians, bricklayers, secretaries, and caregivers are in the long scheme of things. We need to encourage and applaud these jobs.

As Kevin N. put it:

We need to invest in infrastructure for communications and transportation because public infrastructure is the greatest catalyst for economic development.

To create jobs, Diane M. said:

I have long thought that the unions and small businesses that require special skills should provide apprentice programs to students, which would give hope and possibility through real skills to thousands of students who would not be exposed to these trades otherwise.

And Christine A. echoed this sentiment by saying:

I believe it could be helpful to increase job training opportunities in our high schools.

We need to pull together to create economic opportunities across this country and for the good of the country. Marilyn B. wrote to me:

Personally, I'm really frustrated with both sides of the aisle not being willing to work together for the good of all.

As a Member of Congress, I pledge to work with my colleagues to see that these great ideas from America's heart-

land are developed further. By working together and reaching across the aisle, I'm confident we can grow jobs and economic opportunity across this country.

□ 1130

I look forward to using these commonsense ideas to build a blueprint for putting our economy back on track, to turn these great ideas into action.

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 30 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

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, through whom we see what we could be and what we can become, thank You for giving us another day.

In these days, our Nation is faced with pressing issues of conscience, constitutional religious and personal rights, and matters of great political importance.

We thank You that so many Americans have been challenged and have risen to the exercise of their responsibilities as citizens to participate in the great debates of these days.

Grant wisdom, knowledge, and understanding to us all, as well as an extra measure of charity.

Send Your spirit upon the Members of this people's House who walk through this valley under public scrutiny. Give them peace and Solomonian prudence in their deliberations.

And may all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

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.

Mr. QUAYLE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. QUAYLE. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a

quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. POE of Texas 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY: THE CONSTITUTION DEMANDS IT

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, religious liberty is under attack by the administration.

The right of religious liberty is guaranteed in the First Amendment of the Constitution because it is a foundation for other rights. Yet the administration is forcing religious organizations to violate their conscience by indirectly providing their employees with services that trample on those religious beliefs.

The administration's so-called "promise of accommodation" changes nothing. It is just political word games.

The issue is not about contraception. This is an issue about religious liberty. It affects not just Catholics, but many religions and individuals of faith.

Regardless of where Americans stand on the issue of contraception, sterilization or the morning-after pill, it should be alarming to all who believe the government should not persecute religion or substitute a government secular doctrine and impose it on citizens.

The Constitution does not accommodate for religious liberty, it demands it, whether this administration likes it or not.

And that's just the way it is.

STUDENT-LOAN BORROWER BILL OF RIGHTS

(Mr. CLARKE of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CLARKE of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I'm speaking directly to the American people today, to all families