

Last Saturday, Mr. Speaker, an AP article said seven Americans were killed in Afghanistan. Seven Americans were killed. God help the families. Yet we in Congress just sit here and continue to think that Afghanistan is not our problem, it's just somewhere out there, and we'll find the millions and billions of dollars to send over there with no accountability.

Mr. Speaker, I'm on the Armed Services Committee, and I have written a letter to the chairman of the Oversight Subcommittee and asked her to hold hearings and bring in the inspectors general who've been looking into how the waste, fraud, and abuse abounds in Afghanistan. They can't even account for half the money we've spent over in Afghanistan. We've already spent over \$700 billion in Afghanistan, and half of it we can't even account for.

I don't blame the American people for being frustrated. I really do not. I'm frustrated, too. And I would hope we can find more members of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party to join together in these budget bills coming up this summer and start bringing our troops out of Afghanistan.

I bring this photograph, Mr. Speaker, that has our marines carrying a flag-draped coffin. I try to do this down in the district, and I do it here on the floor because I'm afraid too many times the American people, unless they've got a family member in Afghanistan, probably, with all of the problems that the American people are faced with, and certainly we are here in Congress, don't think a whole lot about the war. But when you hear about the CIA sending cash money for 10 years, millions and millions and millions of dollars to Karzai so that he can take care of the warlords over in Afghanistan and give a little bit of money to the Taliban so they can buy weapons to kill Americans, then I don't know and I sometimes just am frustrated. Where is the outrage in Congress?

Just a couple more points, Mr. Speaker, before I relinquish my time. I hope that the leadership of the House, led by Speaker BOEHNER and Minority Leader PELOSI, I hope they will join us, Democrat and Republican, in trying to bring an end to this failed policy in Afghanistan. It is a failed policy. We're not going to change one thing. They've already acknowledged, Mr. Speaker, that we are fighting the Taliban, and most of the Taliban are Pashtuns, the largest tribe in Afghanistan. They will eventually be the leaders, and Mr. Karzai will not even be in Afghanistan. He'll probably be in Switzerland counting his money that Uncle Sam has sent to him. Taxpayer, taxpayer, it is wrong that you're having to pay that bill in Afghanistan.

Families who've lost loved ones and families who have kids losing their legs and their lives, it's not fair to you, either.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask God to continue to bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to continue to bless

the families who've given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. I'll ask God to please bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of God for his people. I'll ask God to bless President Obama, that he will do what is right in the eyes of God for his people. And as I yield back, God, please, God, please, God, please, continue to bless America.

□ 1020

THE TIME HAS COME TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT SEXUAL ASSAULT IN OUR MILITARY

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

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, next to me is a mug shot. It's a mug shot of someone who's been charged with sexual assault. This is a mug shot of Jeffrey Krusinski.

Jeffrey Krusinski is a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force. His job is to work at the Pentagon as the chief officer of the Sexual Assault and Prevention Office within the Air Force. This man is charged with the responsibility of preventing and reporting sexual assault in the military, in the Air Force. And just this last weekend, he was charged with sexually assaulting a woman in a parking lot.

The best and the brightest the Air Force has to offer to run this office, and he's a sexual predator? Is that what we're talking about?

This is an indictment of the SAPRO office that is supposed to be the solution for military rape and assault. It's an indictment of our procedures. It's an indictment of everything we have done on this issue.

And Congress is as culpable as the military in not addressing it, because we've known about this issue for 25 years. And we are big on holding hearings and beating our chests and saying, This has got to stop. And the big brass comes up to the Hill, and they say all the right words. They say, We have a zero tolerance. And then our chief prevention officer is charged with a sexual assault.

But it doesn't end there. The bad news doesn't end there.

The military just released today its Sexual Assault and Prevention Office report on how many sexual assaults took place in the military last year. And guess what? The numbers have gone up by 30 percent, from 19,000 sexual assaults and rapes in the military, based on the last year's figures, to the most recent year's figures of 26,000 rapes and sexual assaults in the military.

For all the money we've been throwing at this issue, for all the prevention and all the rehabilitation and all of the training, the numbers keep going up. And now, this most recent report also suggests that one-third of the women serving in the military reported that they were sexually harassed last year.

This is an institution of military good discipline, good order?

It is time for us to roll up our sleeves and do something real about this. We have got to stop just kind of nibbling around the edges in an effort to try and fix a broken system.

121 Members have joined me as co-authors of legislation that would take the reporting of sexual assault out of the chain of command, keep it in the military, but place it in a separate office staffed by persons who are experts in investigations, experts in prosecuting these crimes.

And until we do something like this, the numbers of sexual assaults will continue to rise in the military. The number of unrestricted reports will not rise as fast as the number of restricted reports.

And why do we have restricted reports? Why would we say to any member of the military, Yes, report this, but we will keep it quiet, we will sweep it under the rug?

This, my friends, is time for us to do something. It is time for us to say that we are not going to tolerate another scandal. We're not going to tolerate a scandal on Lackland Air Force Base, where there were 59 victims and 32 military training instructors who were implicated. We're not going to tolerate that in Aviano, Italy. We had a major general who overturned the decision by five military members of a jury who court-martialed a lieutenant colonel and found him guilty, and yet the major general overturned the decision and decided to reinstate this individual.

The time, my friends, has come to do something.

ADDRESSING THE DEBT LIMIT

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, amidst all the controversies gripping the Congress, certainly we should at least all be able to agree that the full faith and credit of the United States, the very trust that the public has when it loans money to the government, should not hang in the balance every time there's a fiscal debate in Washington.

This week, the House is expected to consider H.R. 807, to allow a temporary exception to the debt limit solely to assure that the full and prompt payment of principal and interest is made on the debt in the event of an impasse in Washington.

Now, that should make perfect sense. As a practical matter, a family that's depending on its credit cards to pay its bills had better make sure to pay the credit card bills first.

The executive branch already has considerable powers to protect the Nation's credit, but the administration hasn't always acknowledged it. The 14th Amendment to the Constitution

places the validity of the public debt beyond question.

The Government Accountability Office has consistently held that the Treasury Secretary already has “the authority to choose the order in which to pay obligations of the United States” in order to protect the Nation’s credit. This authority is inherent in the 1789 act that established the Treasury Department and entrusted it with the management of the revenue and the support of the public credit.

Even with record deficits, our revenues are roughly 10 times greater than our public debt service, so there’s no excuse for a debt default. And yet, when an impasse over the debt limit loomed 2 years ago, then-Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner insisted that his only option was to default on the Nation’s credit.

Now, whether this was a crude attempt to hold the Nation’s credit hostage to political demands for higher spending or whether it was the sincere misunderstanding of his powers and responsibilities is really immaterial.

In the future, this measure would order the Treasury Secretary to promptly and fully pay all principal and interest due on the national debt, even providing a temporary exemption from the debt limit in order to do so.

Now, most States have provisions in their laws or constitutions guaranteeing their debt. Last year in testimony to the Senate, Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke praised these State provisions for maintaining confidence in State and municipal markets, and he told the House Budget Committee that a similar measure at the Federal level would help protect the Nation’s credit.

Is this a tacit suggestion that we shouldn’t meet our other obligations? Well, does anyone suggest that all the States that have had similar provisions in their constitutions and statutes for hundreds of years have ever used them as an excuse not to pay their other bills? Of course not. On the contrary, providing clear and unambiguous mandates to protect their credit first, they actually support and maintain their ability to pay all of their other obligations.

For a Congress that’s borrowing nearly 40 cents on every dollar that it spends, the importance of this provision should be obvious. With the Nation carrying a total debt that exceeds its entire economy, it is imperative that credit markets be absolutely certain that the risk of an American default is nonexistent. Without this confidence, rising interest rates could rapidly consume vital government programs and make a mockery of the even modest budget savings wrought by the sequester.

Opponents charge that protecting the public credit above all other expenditures would subordinate many other essential obligations, like payments to troops or children’s nutrition, but they forget the public credit is what makes it possible to meet every other obligation of the government.

A prolonged impasse over the debt limit is something that is much to be avoided.

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Postponing payment of any of the government’s bills would be dangerous and unprecedented. Although existing revenues could support critical government responsibilities for a while, distress to other Federal employees and contractors would be severe, would rapidly compound, and would eventually threaten core governmental functions.

Yet there is a worse fiscal outcome, and that is a failure to honor the Nation’s debt obligations. We should remember that if the full faith and credit of the United States is ever compromised, all programs are jeopardized.

We must recognize that today our country is divided over fiscal policy and that bitter fiscal disputes in Congress are likely to continue for some time. Financial markets ought to be confident that their Treasury bonds are safe regardless of what political storms are raging in Washington.

TRIBUTE TO MR. JOSEPH CARTER CORBIN, FOUNDER OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS AT PINE BLUFF

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

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Mr. Joseph Carter Corbin, founder of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff.

As a proud graduate of Arkansas Mechanical and Normal College, now the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, I am pleased to have the opportunity to participate in the dedication of a headstone on the grave site of our founder and first president, Professor Joseph Carter Corbin.

The Bible says, “Where there is no vision, the people perish;” and all of us who revere and appreciate the history of the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff owe a debt of gratitude to our fellow alumna, Ms. Gladys Turner Finney, who thought of the idea, did the research, and communicated with other alumni across the country and brought the idea to fruition. The final resting place of Joseph Carter was recently discovered in an unmarked grave in Forest Home Cemetery in Forest Park, Illinois, which I represent as a Member of Congress.

Professor Corbin died January 9, 1911, in Pine Bluff, Arkansas. He was interred at the Waldheim Cemetery in Forest Park near his wife, Mary Jane Corbin, and two sons, John W. Corbin and William H. Corbin. The cemetery, known at that time as Waldheim German Cemetery, is located at 863 South Des Plaines Avenue in Forest Park, Illinois.

Mr. Corbin was born in Chillicothe, Ohio, on March 26, 1833, to free parents, William and Susan Corbin. He entered

Ohio University at Athens, Ohio, in 1850, when he was 17, after having been home-schooled. He earned a bachelor’s degree in art. He also earned two master’s degrees from Ohio University in 1856 and 1889.

He later moved to Little Rock, Arkansas, joined the Republican Party, and became a leader. He quickly rose and became secretary of the State convention and was elected State Superintendent of Public Instruction, where he laid the groundwork for the establishment of the Branch Normal College. It finally started, and he became its founder and principal for 27 years, from 1875 to 1902.

A leader in the public education movement in Arkansas, Professor Corbin became the principal of Merrill High School in 1902. He and fellow educator, R.C. Childress, founded Teachers of Negro Youth in Arkansas, which became the first State colored teachers association. Professor Corbin was its first president.

Compared with educators Booker T. Washington and Horace Mann, Professor Corbin was thought to be one of the most highly educated individuals of his time as a scholarly graduate of Ohio University. During his tenure at Branch Normal, he worked tirelessly to maintain an adequate physical plant and academic program. The student population grew from 7 students to 241 students by 1894, when Arkansas graduated its first African American student.

As beneficiaries of his work, we hold Professor Corbin and his legacy in high esteem. An institution which started with 7 students is now the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff offering master’s degrees, bachelor’s degrees, and doctorate degrees. We owe Joseph Carter Corbin, our first president and the founder of a now great institution, a debt of gratitude and thank him for his work.

PASS A RESPONSIBLE FARM BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from South Dakota (Mrs. NOEM) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. NOEM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the importance of getting a farm bill done this year. Growing up on a farm in South Dakota, I know how volatile the agriculture industry certainly is. Our producers will invest in seed; they will fertilize the land; and they will put it in the ground in the spring, oftentimes in unfavorable weather, in the hope that that fall they will come back and be able to pick something up and have something to show for it in the fall. The crops that are grown provide food not just for South Dakota, but for our Nation and for our world.

South Dakotans understand that our weather can be extreme and it can be unpredictable. It can also vary a lot from year to year. We have certainly seen that situation this year. Look at