

lives damaged, having their safety put at risk, and having their businesses jeopardized because we have not invested enough in our infrastructure. Is there a State out there, by the way, that has an extra billion or two dollars lying around? Because some of my colleagues think that maybe the States should be investing. But I am curious. Is there a State out there that has an extra \$5 billion in their budget to step in where the Federal Government should be active? I don't think so. I don't hear that. And yet this House is about to reduce the spending on transportation.

Mr. Speaker, this cannot stand.

#### GE EXPANSION IN WEST JEFFERSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, last week, it was my great pleasure to participate in a groundbreaking at a plant expansion at the GE manufacturing facility in West Jefferson, North Carolina. The expansion will allow GE to produce more of the company's incredibly popular LEAP engine, which will power next-generation aircraft from around the globe. The 80,000-square-foot factory expansion will provide for additional machining capacity and represents a \$65 million investment by GE in West Jefferson.

The LEAP jet engine has proven to be incredibly popular, with commitments or orders for more than 6,000 LEAP engines to date. This is especially remarkable because the LEAP does not enter service until 2016. Once it does enter service, it will power planes such as the Boeing 737 MAX and the Airbus A320neo.

GE is familiar with the fact that high quality workers can be found in North Carolina, since the company already has more than 1,300 employees at locations in West Jefferson, Durham, Wilmington, and Asheville. The current expansion is expected to add 105 new jobs over the next 2½ years.

I am exceptionally pleased that GE is partnering with Wilkes Community College to give local workers the skills needed to compete for the new jobs this expansion will bring to West Jefferson. This innovative worker education program will allow current and prospective employees to learn in a hands-on environment with state-of-the-art machinery.

Mr. Speaker, this is just the type of program that we need to close the skills gap and give hardworking Americans the opportunity to compete for the 4 million jobs that are available now.

This expansion will demonstrate, yet again, that American manufacturing and American workers can compete in the global economy. There is no more fulfilling aspect of our jobs here than to be invited to be present for the an-

nouncement of more jobs in our districts. Everyone in the area is excited for the community of West Jefferson, and I look forward to a very successful future for the innovative education partnership between GE and Wilkes Community College. Thanks to GE for making this investment, and thanks to the employees at GE West Jefferson for your great effort and commitment to excellence.

#### DR. PEPPER BOTTLING COMPANY

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, last week, I was energized and inspired by the opportunity to tour the Dr. Pepper Bottling Company in West Jefferson, North Carolina. This plant has been recognized for the high quality of its products and was a recipient of the 2013 Caleb Bradham President's Award.

This award is named after North Carolina native and Pepsi founder, Caleb Bradham. This year, only 19 plants across the country received the award out of hundreds of bottlers across this country. According to The Jefferson Post:

The company received the award for the production of its 12-ounce glass bottle sodas, which are bottled in downtown West Jefferson. West Jefferson Dr. Pepper glass bottle products are wildly popular among soda enthusiasts.

The Dr. Pepper Bottling Company has been making drinks in West Jefferson since 1940, when it was founded by H.R. Vannoy. Among the employees are three generations of the Vannoy family, whose patriarch began the company. I wish the company and all of its employees many more years of success.

#### SERGEANT LUKE PORTER—OLD GUARD COMMISSIONING

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and congratulate Sergeant Luke Porter of State College, Pennsylvania, serving within the United States Army's 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry Regiment—better known as The Old Guard.

On June 9, Sergeant Porter was formally inducted into the ultra-selective unit which stands guard as a Sentinel for the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Since 1958, only 622 other individuals have been selected to share in Sergeant Porter's distinct honor and responsibility. He now will become number 623.

The Sentinels at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier stand guard over their fallen brothers-in-arms 365 days a year in squelching heat, rain, hurricanes, and blizzards.

Sergeant Porter could not have made it this far in his military services without the life lessons and guidance of his parents and family, who were present during the ceremony, and during his first changing of the guard.

Congratulations, Sergeant Porter, on this outstanding distinction. You have joined a highly motivated regiment

that proudly honors all American servicemembers who are "known but to God." May you remain resolute in your convictions and serve as an example for the countless others selflessly serving in our Armed Forces.

#### 70TH COMMEMORATION OF D-DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend, I had the privilege of joining the President of the United States in the official delegation to the 70th commemoration of D-Day.

It was not a normal experience of an international codel, the opportunity to interact with our colleagues and allies in Europe, but it was a testament and a testimony to the continuing strength, determination, and value of the United States of America. It was a moving experience. It was an experience based in reality.

We listened to the recounting of the deliberations of General Montgomery, General Eisenhower, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and many others. We listened to the stories of young men, many of whom signed up at the age of 15 or 16, 17, wanting to serve their country, not knowing where they would go, now in their late 80s and early 90s, and some would say the sweetest men that you had ever seen, showing pictures, telling stories, and shedding a tear about the comrades that were left on Omaha Beach or Sword Beach, soldiers that didn't speak the same language but understood the words of liberation and freedom.

I would only say that I hope this challenges this body called the House of Representatives, that they didn't wear the armor of Republicans or Green Party or Tea Party or Independent Party or Democratic Party; they wore the armor of an American.

What wonderful words of General Eisenhower, who said that he needed the unity, the strength of all, or the sadness of those who ploughed their way onto the beach, seasick and nauseous as they were, losing tons of equipment, and, unfortunately, at times coming and falling over bodies of bleeding soldiers, losing some 10,000 in the first day.

Where is the America of that time, prepared to take up comprehensive immigration reform or prepared to take up serious gun regulations to stop this unending violence in America, even the shooting of two law enforcement officers? What has America come to?

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Where is its greatness? Where is the reality that we are the generations that have inherited those young men's lives—and young women's, the Rosie Riveters—who left their homes, sacrificing? Where is the placement of the Voting Rights Act reauthorization, which is a bipartisan bill? Why haven't we passed that to show that liberty is real in the United States of America?

I had moments where tears fell—of joy—and the privilege of talking to and meeting these men, watching them receive the honor from the French people, and as we walked through the streets even today, the people of France were saying thank you with a degree of emotion that knew that they would not be free, they would not be liberated, they would not be France if it had not been for those boys who left the soil of this United States; or those who came from Guadeloupe and Martinique, men of color who came and were trained from Fort Dix and then fought on the shores; or my uncle, who fought in Tunis and Ethiopia; and others who left my widowed grandmother, her three sons, leaving one behind—all of us have been touched.

So it is important that, even as we look to the status of Sergeant Bergdahl, that we look at it in a spirit of fairness, not grandstanding, not partisan politics, but finding out the facts and realizing that America is greater than divisive politics when you look to the Greatest Generation of which we have now been given the gift of their life, their sacrifice.

No one will be the same after they have walked amongst the white crosses that represent the blood shed by America, not to conquer Europe, but to free Europe. That is our mantra, and that is what we should do for the American people, not to conquer them, but to free them from violence, from inconsistent policies, and certainly from the inability to vote.

I pay tribute to the 70th commemoration of the brilliance of America and the spirit of her youth, and I tell everyone that that brilliance and that spirit is not lost upon us today.

I am happy because I know that embedded in all of those who walk the streets of this Nation and call themselves an American have that same spirit, and we can make a difference in this country for all of those who need us.

#### AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, along with other Members of Congress, I attended a classified briefing on the swap of our soldier for the five Taliban leaders. I won't go into that, but I did have an opportunity to make a comment to the presenters.

I made a comment regarding my concern about the bilateral strategic agreement, known as BSA, and the fact that we continue to spend money in Afghanistan that we borrow from foreign nations.

Mr. Speaker, beside me today, I have a cartoon that was created by Mr. Milt Priggee, and it makes a point very well. It has Uncle Sam pointing out saying:

I want you.

Then the language beside it says:

To understand that if you can't afford to take care of your veterans, you can't afford to go to war.

Well, that makes my point very well because we seem to find all the money we need for Afghanistan to waste, and we know that waste, fraud, and abuse is worse today than it has ever been in the 12 years we have been in Afghanistan.

I would like to quote from the Daily Journal Online. The title is, "No end for Afghanistan's war on the U.S. taxpayer." I want to read two paragraphs from this online article:

John Sopko, the inspector general for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR), may have taken Uncle Sam and shaken him by the lapels last month, but the media missed it. In short, Afghanistan is on life support, and Joe Citizen is its permanent IV. From your pockets, Uncle Sam has taken \$103 billion to build Afghanistan so far.

By the way, that figure doesn't include the cost of war-making. That is more money than we have spent on reconstruction for any one country in the history of the United States.

Mr. Speaker, I just heard the Congressman from Connecticut talking about the infrastructure of his State, as well as America, and the poor shape it is in, but yet we find all the money we need for Afghanistan, so we can build their roads, so that the Taliban can blow up the roads. It makes no sense.

Mr. Speaker, SIGAR, on the job since 2008, has produced 118 audits and inspection reports and made 23 quarterly reports to Congress. I have read a few of these, certainly not all, but all you have to do is hear Mr. Sopko speak or read some of the reports from his organization, and you will be disgusted, as I am disgusted, with the stupidity of continuing to find money for Afghanistan while we cut programs right here in America.

Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, I went to Walter Reed Hospital. I knew there were two marines who had been injured in Afghanistan from my district, Camp Lejeune, which is in the Third District of North Carolina.

I happened, while being there, to meet four soldiers, one a colonel from Fort Bragg, which is not in my district, but in North Carolina. All four had lost at least one leg. Then when I met this young man from Louisiana, who is a marine from Camp Lejeune, his father was standing beside him.

He had lost both legs and an arm, and he is 23 years of age. I looked in the eyes of the father, who could not have been more than 50. I saw pain. I saw hurt. I saw worry about the future of his son's life, missing two legs and an arm.

Why are we still sending troops to Afghanistan? Yes, we are going to cut the troops, but we are going to keep 9,000 to 10,000 there. The Taliban will still go after them and try to blow off their legs and kill them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to quote Pat Buchanan, who I have great respect

for, particularly on foreign policy, because he and I agree:

Is it not a symptom of senility to be borrowing from the world so we can defend the world?

Let me repeat that:

Is it not a symptom of senility to be borrowing from the world so we can defend the world?

Mr. Speaker, I would put one word in there. I would change "senility" to "stupidity," and I will read it now: Is it not a symptom of stupidity to be borrowing from the world, so we defend the world?

Mr. Speaker, again, Uncle Sam is saying, Don't spend money overseas when you have got problems right here in America and our veterans are not being adequately cared for.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to end the spending in Afghanistan. It is time to stop sending our troops over there to be killed and have their legs and arms blown off.

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

#### INDIA'S SANITATION CRISIS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the recent news account of a horrific murder and rape of two young girls in India shocked our consciousness, but one of the items that was interesting is that few of the news accounts actually detailed what put those young women at risk.

Julie McCarthy of NPR had a story which highlighted one of the greatest human global health challenges that created this situation. They were indeed attacked, raped, and hung from a tree after they were caught in a field.

These two young women didn't have access to a toilet, and like so many women around the world, but particularly in India, they went out in the fields at night to relieve themselves, and they went in a pair to minimize the likelihood that they would be isolated.

This is offensive on so many levels. It is emblematic of violence against women, the vicious attitudes by people towards lower castes, and the complicated dynamic of castes in rural India.

It is also testimony to the need to be able to have these young women—and others around the globe—have access to adequate sanitation facilities, so they don't have to sneak out at night or early in the morning, cloaked in darkness to disguise their embarrassment, to use a nearby field as their restroom.

One-half of India's population uses open fields for defecation. Fewer than half of Indian households have a toilet. The women and girls perform a ritual to deal with this most basic bodily function, often in fear and trepidation.