

This is a budget that is based on elitism and class warfare, top-down class warfare: the richest people in this country against everybody else. That is what this budget represents. That is what it embodies.

So check out the Progressive Caucus' People's Budget. It is a real reinvestment in the infrastructure of the country: our bridges, our roads, our highways, our transit systems, our port systems, our airports, and cybersecurity—where America really needs investment, not stealing from poor people, not stealing from the working class, and not ripping off NIH and the Centers for Disease Control in order to put money in the Pentagon for a bunch of beltway bandits and defense contractors who have so much money they don't know what to do with it anymore. That is not what we need. We need a real investment in America.

This budget is an affront, and it is an insult to the American people. We should reject it immediately. I call on all of our colleagues, Mr. Speaker, to repudiate this document in a bipartisan fashion, and let's get down to work for the American people.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

MEMORIAL DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arizona?

There was no objection.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, on Monday we observe Memorial Day to honor members of America's Armed Forces who have died in service to our Nation. For those who have lost a loved one, a friend, a neighbor, or a comrade, this day has added significance, remembrance, and sadness.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON).

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, many of us in this House will attend Memorial Day ceremonies over the weekend as we honor those who have died in the service to this great Nation.

Certainly, in this office, one of the more difficult but one of the most honored opportunities is to be at the grave site of our fallen heroes as they are laid to rest and that American flag, which flies over our Capitol, is draped over their coffin.

On this Memorial Day, I really want to highlight my brother-in-law, Larry

Emerman, who in the fall of 1980, in the service of this country as a pilot in the United States Navy as a lieutenant commander, lost his life in the service of our Nation.

Memorial Day is observed on the last Monday of May. Memorial Day is one of America's most solemn occasions. The tradition of Memorial Day dates back to 1864 in Boalsburg, Pennsylvania, which is considered to be the birthplace of Memorial Day. Three ladies decorated the graves of fallen Civil War soldiers, and the custom has continued every year since then.

It was an early fall day, in 1864, when Emma Hunter and her friend, Sophie Keller, picked flowers and went to the old cemetery to lay them on the grave of Emma's father, Reuben Hunter. Dr. Hunter was a young Boalsburg doctor at the time of the Civil War. When he volunteered to serve with the Army of the North, he was assigned to the hospital in Baltimore. In addition to attending the wounded soldiers, he also cared for the men who had contracted yellow fever while fighting in the southern swamplands. Dr. Hunter became ill. He died of yellow fever, and his body was buried in the Boalsburg Cemetery.

On their way that day in that early fall, the two girls met Mrs. Elizabeth Myers, whose young son, Amos, had been killed the last day of the Battle of Gettysburg and was also buried in the old cemetery. Learning where the girls were going, Mrs. Myers asked to join them. They shared the flowers, and they placed them on both graves. It was decided then and there that they would meet the following year with flowers for all who had died in the Civil War. The three young women told their friends of the plans, and when the day came around, most of the villagers joined them.

From that simple beginning came the observance of Memorial Day in Boalsburg, Pennsylvania. Every year since then, the people have met on the Diamond in Boalsburg Square for the walk to the old cemetery to lay flowers on the graves of all the soldiers dead.

They are led by a hometown band. All ages join in the walk and participate in the simple service of remembering. I have been proud to participate in that tradition which has spanned more than 150 years.

Boalsburg still puts on a traditional Memorial Day celebration complete with a parade, a community walk to the cemetery, speeches, military reenactments, and much more.

On Memorial Day, communities across the country will pay tribute to our fallen veterans who never returned home. Many of us will gather with family members, friends, and neighbors as we keep those we lost in our hearts.

Unfortunately, for many of our Nation, Memorial Day has become a day of picnics and family gatherings, which is not a bad thing, but we must always remember truly where Memorial Day came from and its purpose, that we not forget those sacrifices.

So as we raise the Stars and Stripes and as we lay wreaths at the monuments, memorials, and cemeteries, let us remember that our freedom is thanks to those who have died in sacrifice. We celebrate Memorial Day in honor of so many who are no longer with us. May God bless them, and certainly God bless the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona for his leadership and putting this opportunity today for us to gather on the floor to speak on the topic of not just Memorial Day but the service and the sacrifice that warranted its origination.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Memorial Day on May 29, 2017. On this day, Americans across our Nation pay respects to and honor members of the U.S. Armed Forces who have sacrificed their lives defending the freedoms that we so gratefully enjoy.

The decision to leave families and friends, travel to a land that is utterly unfamiliar, and risk their lives protecting the lives of others is among the most selfless acts one can make.

Roughly 1.5 million Americans are currently serving in one of the five branches of the Armed Forces. Of these Americans, nearly 90,000 are assigned to one of Georgia's numerous military bases which are scattered throughout our great State.

Georgia's First Congressional District that I have the honor and privilege of representing is particularly important to our Nation's Armed Forces as it includes Fort Stewart Army Base, Hunter Army Airfield, Kings Bay Naval Base, and Moody Air Force Base.

The service provided by our Nation's armed services is invaluable. Throughout our history, millions have paid the ultimate price for freedom—they have given their lives in order to save ours. I ask that you please keep these brave men and women in your prayers, not only on Memorial Day but every day.

It is an honor to represent a State and a district with such a strong tie to our Nation's defense. I ask that you pray for our troops, and I ask that you pray for our Nation. God bless each and every one of you as we observe this great Memorial Day. God bless America.

□ 1830

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to my colleague from North Carolina (Mr. HUDSON).

Mr. HUDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because this week is All American Week, the annual celebration of the 82nd Airborne Division's mission and the paratroopers who serve to uphold it.

Based in my district at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the 82nd Airborne Division is the Nation's Global Response

Force and can mobilize, load, and strike in a moment's notice. These rapid reaction forces put the "air" in airborne and are absolutely vital to our national security.

This year marks the division's 100th anniversary, and it is a special time for us to celebrate its incredible history as America's Guard of Honor.

Since its inception, the 82nd Airborne Division has played a role in every major U.S. conflict around the world. It was nicknamed the "All American Division" because of the unique and diverse group of soldiers who came together to form the division from all across the United States.

As the Representative of Fort Bragg in Congress, I am so proud of the 82nd Airborne's legacy, of our paratroopers and their families. They put country before self, and we are so grateful.

I will continue to work to ensure this critical installation remains the epicenter of the universe and the tip of the spear guaranteeing our national security.

As we celebrate All American Week this week, I ask my fellow Americans to join me in praying for servicemembers stationed at Fort Bragg who are currently deployed and for their families here at home.

We also remember our veterans who served in the 82nd Airborne Division, particularly those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Today's paratroopers stand on the shoulders of these giants.

Airborne, all the way.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, each Memorial Day, a newspaper in my State, the Arizona Republic, publishes one particular letter to remind its readers of the sacrifice our soldiers made in defense of their country. The letter is written by Sullivan Ballou to his wife on July 14, 1861.

Sullivan was a major in the Union Army, 32 years old, and about to enter the first battle of Bull Run. A little more than a week later, almost 3,000 Union soldiers had perished, including Sullivan.

Major Sullivan's letter reads as follows: "My very dear Sarah: The indications are very strong that we shall move in a few days—perhaps tomorrow. Lest I should not be able to write again, I feel impelled to write a few lines that may fall under your eye when I shall be no more. . . .

"I have no misgivings about, or lack of confidence in the cause in which I am engaged, and my courage does not halt or falter. I know how strongly American civilization now leans on the triumph of the government and how great a debt we owe to those who went before us through the blood and sufferings of the Revolution. And I am willing—perfectly willing—to lay down all my joys in this life to help maintain this government and to pay that debt. . . .

"Sarah, my love for you is deathless. It seems to bind me with mighty cables that nothing but omnipotence could break; and yet my love of country

comes over me like a strong wind and bears me irresistibly on with all these chains to the battlefield. The memories of the blissful moments I have spent with you come creeping over me, and I feel most gratified to God and to you that I have enjoyed them for so long. And hard it is for me to give them up and burn to ashes the hopes of future years, when, God willing, we might still have lived and loved together, and seen our sons grow up to honorable manhood around us.

"I have, I know, but few and small claims upon Divine Providence, but something whispers to me—perhaps it is the wafted prayer of my little Edgar—that I shall return to my loved ones unharmed. If I do not, my dear Sarah, never forget how much I love you, and when my last breath escapes me on the battlefield, it will whisper your name.

"Forgive my many faults and the many pains I have caused you. How thoughtless and foolish I have often-times been. How gladly would I wash out with my tears every little spot upon your happiness. . . .

"But, O Sarah, if the dead can come back to this Earth and flit unseen around those they loved, I shall always be near you; in the gladdest days and in the darkest nights . . . always, always, and if there be a soft breeze upon your cheek, it shall be my breath, as the cool air fans your throbbing temple, it shall be my spirit passing by.

"Sarah, do not mourn me dead; think I am gone and wait for thee, for we shall meet again."

So closes Major Ballou's letter.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield to my colleague, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BRAT).

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank my very good friend from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS), first of all, for his moving testimony on behalf of the greatest folks who ever served our Nation and for arranging this Special Order to honor the valiant men and women that serve our country every day.

While most of America views Memorial Day, rightly, as the official start of summer vacations and cookouts, which we all enjoy, I hope we also do not forget to pause and remember the men and women who give the full, last measure of devotion serving our country. It is a day to remember those who died defending the freedoms we hold dear and acknowledge the debt of gratitude we owe to our servicemembers and their loved ones. This weekend, we stop to mourn so many of our heroes who served: brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, aunts and uncles who never came home.

National cemeteries often serve as the final resting place for those who served our country. Founded by President Lincoln and enacted by Congress in 1862, today you can find these cemeteries tucked away in communities across America. Too often the history and stories they hold remain untold or forgotten.

In 1867, Culpeper National Cemetery was established and is located in my congressional district. Earlier this month, a 23-year-old young man was laid to rest there.

U.S. Army Sergeant Cameron Thomas grew up in Ohio, but his family later made Culpeper, Virginia, home. I was proud to see so many members of the Culpeper community lining the streets holding American flags to honor Sergeant Thomas.

At the age of 19, Sergeant Thomas became one of the youngest soldiers to ever earn the Ranger designation. On his fifth deployment, he was killed in action on April 27 in Afghanistan during a night raid on a remote ISIS stronghold that resulted in killing the head of ISIS in Afghanistan.

Family members and friends described him as a man who lived with intention and determination. He believed anything worth doing was worth overdoing and that moderation is for cowards. He was a man who knew his mission and served our country with distinction.

Sergeant Cameron Thomas represented the best of our armed services. He loved his family, passionately served his country, and will be a soldier we honor and cherish for the rest of our Nation's history.

Mr. Speaker, I want to again thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS) for doing this service for our country.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I am going to take a moment to give recognition to a special veteran from my district who is 90 years old and is a World War II veteran, who worked in the U.S. Navy during World War II and saw many trips across the Pacific Ocean and endured the life of a sailor, sometimes monotonous and sometimes under very perilous circumstances, including at least one attack by kamikazes of his ship and convoy.

I pay special tribute at this time to Wayne Whitlock, who has persevered for many years after service to his country in that great war.

Mr. Speaker, I am also reminded tonight of President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. As President Lincoln looked out on a battlefield that had experienced almost 50,000 casualties, he said: "The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this Nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the Earth."

Mr. Speaker, very few of us in this Chamber will be remembered long after we leave Washington, D.C. Almost no one will remember my speech tonight, and it will soon become lost in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. Yet we are here in this body because of the heroic efforts of men and women who have given their lives for this country for over 200 years. We can never forget their sacrifices.

The only reason we can participate in the activities of this Chamber is because of the sacrifices of our Armed Forces, particularly those who have paid the ultimate price. They have nobly defended our freedoms and our way of life up to their last measure of devotion. They left behind fathers, mothers, wives, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, friends, and communities to ensure that future generations walk in the light of liberty.

President Lincoln was resolved that those soldiers shall not have died in vain. They and all the soldiers who have died defending American wars and conflicts still deserve that respect and dignity.

Mr. Speaker, we should govern every day with our heroes in mind. We should strive to make them proud of our speech, our actions, and our commitment to our promises. The American Dream, spirit, and Constitution that they fought for should be our charge.

I would be remiss tonight if I did not mention the loved ones these patriots left behind, who are also patriotic. Countless men, women, and children have watched their American soldiers walk away from home, hoping that they will return safely, unaffected physically, mentally, and emotionally. Sadly, many of those heroes never make it home. Knowing that no words can do justice to their sacrifices, I can only say: Thank you. A grateful nation mourns with your loss.

Mr. Speaker, Monday may be the official observance of Memorial Day, but we live with the memory of our fallen heroes every day across our country. I am eternally grateful for their sacrifices.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1845

THE SCOURGE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FITZPATRICK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this coming Monday, May 29, marks the 2-year anniversary of the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, called the JVTA.

Democrats and Republicans in the House of Representatives and the Senate worked together in a bipartisan manner to write this comprehensive, massive law to fight human trafficking. Basically, we said in this legislation that modern-day slavery will not be tolerated in the United States, and that message was made loud and clear when the law was signed 2 years ago.

Since that time, there have been wonderful successes by providing victims with help and services that they need to recover, and by capturing and charging both the traffickers and the buyers according to our law.

DEBBIE'S STORY

Mr. Speaker, Debbie grew up in an idyllic American neighborhood.

The middle child of a close-knit military family living in the suburbs, Debbie could have never imagined that she would be forced into sex slavery.

One cool Phoenix night, Debbie's mother thought nothing of letting her young daughter meet a friend in their front yard one night to play.

Busy with dishes and other children inside, her mother didn't realize that her young daughter, clad in her cartoon pajamas, was being abducted by two men in front of their house.

These deviants threw Debbie in the car, drugged and gang raped her.

They held a loaded gun to her forehead and threatened to pull the trigger if she ever tried to escape.

For 60 days she was forced to have sex with countless men.

Thankfully for Debbie, a lucky anonymous tip led police to a hotel room where they found Debbie tied up and stashed under a bed.

CHERYL BRIGGS' STORY

Cheryl Briggs grew up in an abusive home, sexually and physically abused by her father.

Her mother left when Cheryl was very young to escape the abuse.

At the age of 12, Cheryl didn't know what else to do to get away from the father she feared, so she ran away.

She began hitchhiking with truck drivers and anyone who would take her.

This led her to a ride with a motorcyclist and into human trafficking hell.

He took her to a biker club filled with men who took advantage of her.

He became her trafficker.

She was forced to dance at a strip club by day and sold on the streets at night.

She was trapped in the world of human trafficking.

Cheryl didn't know how to get help.

She had no one to call and no one to provide for her.

No one came to rescue her.

That is until a patron at a strip club found out that she was only 15 and helped her escape.

LENA'S STORY

In her formative years, Lena wore turtle-necks and baggy clothes to school every day.

Why did she do so?

To hide the bruises that covered her entire body.

When her abusive foster mother lost custody, Lena ran away.

She was just 13 years old.

After bolting from the front lawn at the Houston middle school, she ran into a friendly-looking stranger.

This man offered to look after her, protect and love her.

Human traffickers manipulate the vulnerabilities of their victims, he knew that Lena would do anything to feel loved.

For the next 3 months, Lena was trafficked to countless buyers.

He kept her on the move, switching from motel to motel to evade detection.

Finally, after tracking a BackPage advertisement her trafficker posted, police located Lena.

They arrested her trafficker in the hotel next door. With her help, the police ultimately charged her trafficker.

Debbie, Cheryl and Lena are all human trafficking survivors.

The things they had to endure are more horrific than most of us can even imagine.

But they survived, they overcame this tragedy.

It was for survivors like these women that CAROLYN MALONEY and I drafted the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act two years ago.

This far-reaching legislation, led by Senator JOHN CORNYN and Senator RON WYDEN in the Senate, made it clear that Congress would no longer turn a blind eye to this scourge in our society.

We wanted to ensure that victims were treated like victims, given the care and help they needed to overcome the evil inflicted upon them.

We also wanted to make sure that the traffickers and the buyers were both brought to justice.

HOUSTON SUPER BOWL STORY

This past February, my hometown of Houston, Texas, hosted the 51st Super bowl.

For most Americans the Super Bowl is a fun filled day spent with friends and family cheering on a favorite team.

But for trafficking slaves and potential trafficking slaves, if can be a very dangerous time.

Studies show that big events like Super Bowls create large upticks in the trafficking and purchasing of sex trafficking victims.

In order to counteract this, The Department of Homeland Security, as part of its Blue Campaign Initiative, began preparing months in advance.

DHS agents came to Washington, DC and briefed me and other members of the Texas Delegation on their anti-trafficking strategy for super bowl weekend.

Through the Blue Campaign, DHS raises public awareness, forges anti-trafficking partnerships and brings suspected human traffickers to justice.

I command the Blue Campaign for collaborating with local, state and federal law enforcement agencies in preparation for the Super Bowl.

As a direct result of this large multi-agency operation, over 750 people were arrested across 15 different states.

At least 86 victims were rescued, and many more were likely spared being forced into the trafficking industry.