DC, and around this Nation. The title of her article: ''Is the Marine Corps P.C.?'' PC meaning political correct.

''Second Lieutenant Ilario Pantano was making a six-figure income as an energy trader with Goldman Sachs in New York when the World Trade Center was attacked. Pantano had friends who worked in the Twin Towers and friends among the firefighters who perished trying to save them.

''This Marine veteran had already served his country in the first Gulf War, set aside his career, which also included work in film and television, kissed his wife and two children goodbye, and headed to Quantico, Virginia, for officer training school.''

I continue Ms. Charen's comments in her article: ''A Marine Corps colleague asked, 'How many guys do you know who would drop 100 grand a year to go sleep in fighting holes in the nasty mud and dust for, what, 25 grand a year?'

''There are a few, and the rest of us owe them more than we can possibly express, which is why it is shocking to learn that Pantano may now be facing murder charges.''

Mr. Speaker, that is why I am on the floor. I want to read from part of a resolution, H. Res. 167, which I introduced the day before we left for Easter:

''On April 15th, 2004, Second Lieutenant Pantano led a platoon in Mahmudiyah, Iraq, that apprehended two Iraqis who were suspected insurgents.

''Second Lieutenant Pantano ordered the suspected insurgents to be detained, then ordered them to search their own vehicle in the event that it contained explosives.

''The vehicle's seats were not bolted down, a tactic commonly used by insurgents to retrieve weapons, and nails and bolts were found in the trunk of the vehicle, items commonly found in improvised explosive devices.

''In response to threatening movements by the suspected insurgents, Second Lieutenant Pantano took action in self-defense that resulted in their deaths.

''Accusations that Second Lieutenant Pantano's actions were something other than self-defense did not surface until almost 2 months after the incident.

''In his Combat Fitness Report dated August 5, 2004, nearly 4 months after the incident, Second Lieutenant Pantano's superior officers gave the following evaluation of his performance from March through July, 2004.''

I am just going to read a couple of these, Mr. Speaker. One, ''He is a Marine who 'leads from the front, always, and balances his aggressive style with true concern for the welfare of his Marines.'

''He was 'ready for increased responsibility,' and was a soldier who the Marine Corps should 'retain, promote and assign to challenging assignments.' ''

Now, ''Therefore be it,'' Mr. Speaker, this is the close of my resolution, ''Second Lieutenant Ilario Pantano, United States Marine Corps, was defending the cause of freedom, democracy, and liberty in his actions of April 15, 2004, that resulted in the deaths of two suspected Iraqi insurgents and that subsequently have given rise to certain charges against him.

''The United States Government should dismiss all charges against Second Lieutenant Ilario Pantano arising from the actions referred to in paragraph (1).''

I hope my colleagues that may be listening tonight will join me or at least look on our Web site or call our office and ask about this resolution, H. Res. 167. I can also say, Mr. Speaker, that his mother, who I have spoken to three times, who is a wonderful lady, has set up a Web site called www.defendthedefenders.com.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, last Friday I went down to Wilmington, North Carolina, where the American Legion was holding a barbecue and a fish fry to help Lieutenant Pantano with his defense. I have never met such a fine young man in all my entire life. He's 29 years old, a beautiful wife and two children. I met them and I hope that my colleagues here tonight and those in the office will look at this resolution, H. Res. 167. We need to stand behind our men and women who are in harm's way in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I close by asking the good Lord in heaven to please bless our men and women in uniform and their families, and I ask the good Lord in heaven to please bless the United States of America and to help us find peace in this world, and May God please, please bless America.

TRIBUTE TO POPE JOHN PAUL II

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to a man who embodied the values of compassion and selflessness.

Serving for the past 26 years as the spiritual and emotional beacon of the Catholic Church, John Paul II exhibited charisma, character, and conviction when carrying his divine message to millions of people across the world.

He passed away this past Saturday at the age of 84 after a courageous struggle.

I join millions of mourning people across the world in honoring his remarkable life and recognizing his wondrous achievements.

Many great men and women have devoted themselves to a single cause or to a group of people. Pope John Paul devoted his efforts to all humanity around the world.

When he was elected Pope on October 16, 1978, he was well aware of the problems occurring not only in the Catholic Church but throughout the world. Communism had a grip on many areas, including his beloved homeland of Poland.

John Paul II had a social and political vision of what the world should be and dedicated himself to changing the reality that we knew.

He inspired incredible change, leading with unwavering faith and exceptional sincerity. His duty to the church was purposeful and his love for mankind was unconditional.

He undertook the goals of sewing the schisms of Christianity, healing the wounds of the Christian-Judeo relationship, and creating a legacy for the world to follow. He left his imprint on all faiths, as well as the scholar world.

As a devoted Catholic, I am honored and privileged to recognize such a special and loved person.

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He was my inspirational compass and guided my faith through his unyielding dedication to the tenet of integrity and morality.

Mr. Speaker, today I mourn the passing of Pope John Paul II, but salute and express sincere admiration in his unparalleled life and lasting legacy, and I wrote a poem that I would like to dedicate to John Paul II that's called ''The Spirit of Life Is.''

To live is to believe. To see is to believe. To express is to believe. To feel is to believe. To respect is to believe. To forgive is to believe. To have hope is to believe. To love is to believe. For if you possess these values, you truly can enter the Kingdom of Heaven, and the spirit of life will be within you. For you truly have touched the life of the world around us in making it a better place for humanity, changing the course of history. Your legacy will live in the lives of those who truly believe.''

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PENCE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MURPHY. Tonight Republican Members of Congress will be talking about Medicare. Now, as we are getting into this, what I want to make sure that we first look at here is that many talk about is the Federal Government