

freedom and democracy around the world, and I am proud to be part of that.

It is interesting that in the center, in the rotunda, that area was originally wood, as I understood it; and the wood part had burned. Apparently, fortunately for me and fortunately for my colleagues if they like the new dome, the wooden part burned and they had to reconstruct that. And when they did that after that fire in 1814, there were those who wanted to do like some of the European buildings and have a great icon of grace and dignity for that country buried in the middle, have their remains in the middle. They wanted to do that with George Washington's remains. He had been buried at Mt. Vernon. That was in his will. They wanted to finish with a hole in the floor out there in the middle of the Capitol so people could file by and look down below and see where the remains of George Washington were. But as it turned out, they eventually supposedly convinced Martha Washington to let them move his remains but she passed away before his remains were moved, and so a great nephew that took over as administrator said, George Washington said in his will he wanted to be buried in Mt. Vernon; you are not moving him. They eventually filled in the floor, and so George Washington's remains are not buried there. We have a solid floor across the center of the Capitol.

George Washington, what a man he was. I heard a speaker recently, a college professor, say so many of the third world countries really are right where we were in the early days of this Nation. And I asked him to show me their George Washingtons, to show me the men who had power that were willing to walk away from it for the sake of liberty of the whole Nation. Some, like South Africa, had such leaders. Most have not. That is what has separated this Nation and made it great.

George Washington did not really want to leave the Army. He really did not want to preside over the Constitutional Convention. Each time he was convinced to do that because he was the man for such a time as that. And had he not been there and not served and not sacrificed, then we would not have had this Nation.

He really did not want to be President, but his fellow citizens pled with him. He served as President. But there is a picture in the rotunda of him giving up his commission, giving up the power. That just did not happen back in the 1700s. A man who led the military and won a great military battle turns in his saber, turns in the power, and walks away and goes back to being a farmer. It is extraordinary when we think about it for the time. Too many have come to accept such grace.

When we think about the selflessness during those times of other people like Governor Thomas Nelson, Governor of the great State of Virginia, he had a beautiful estate, a mansion there in

Yorktown. The war took its toll on his health and his estate. In the final battle there at Yorktown, high-ranking enemy officers were staying in his mansion, and he noticed that his soldiers were firing at Yorktown, but they were avoiding his mansion. And he asked them, Why are you avoiding firing at the mansion? You know there are enemy troops there in my home.

They said, Sir, it is out of respect for you basically. It is your home. We did not want to do that.

He said, There are enemy troops in there. Fire on my home.

They did. They killed many of the enemy. It helped them win the battle. But that is the kind of selflessness that has allowed us to win our independence and gain the Nation that we all have come to know and love.

As I go through some of the people in my life that taught me, like B.J. McDowell, who was a high school teacher, I built a pole barn with him one summer. A great American who had been a Marine in the Pacific. At one point he had shrapnel that ripped off his entire calf, and I saw the scar where they later sewed it back on. But he is a brilliant man, tough as a bulldog. He went out and the hospital ship was out in the water, and they were taking boatloads of people. But when he saw how terribly wounded others were, he could not take a position, he said, on those boats to go to the hospital ship. Even though he was in the horrible pain, he just waded out in the water so the flies would stay off. He had the rest of his calf in his hand, and he waited until all of the more serious people had been taken. The guy loved his fellow man. He loved America. He was a great American.

There was a guy from Winedale, Texas, who was telling me about landing at Sicily in the early morning hours. The lights were bright; he could have read a book if he had one in his landing craft. And as they got closer to the shore, bullets started bouncing back and forth across the front of the landing craft ramp. And all the men looked at each other because they figured, when the ramp goes down, we all die. They had been trained to come out, run abreast toward the beach as quickly as possible. The guy in the front of the landing craft said, Look guys, it sounds like from the way those bullets are going across here, if we run out abreast, we are all dead men. So why do we not try something different. Every man line up behind the man in front of him, grab the belt of the man in front of him, let us try going out single file, and I will go out first.

He went first. He was killed. But most of the men in his landing craft made it. That is the kind of selflessness that people exhibited to make this country great.

One of my classmates, Eddie Johnson, a singing cadet there at Texas A&M, a great guy, he was flying a jet down in the panhandle of Florida. His plane malfunctioned. He was told to

eject, to punch out, save himself. He said, If I do, this plane is going to kill a lot of civilians down below me. I am going to try to get this plane to the beach.

He did. He saved a lot of lives but lost his own. That kind of selflessness, again, is what made America great.

On September 11, Madam Speaker, there was an act of mean hatred by people possessed with evil intentions. But I am telling my colleagues there is one thing that is stronger than that evil hatred for so many innocent people, and that is love. That is love. And Americans have had it. We have had love for our fellow man. We want to help those who need help, and it is an honor and a privilege to have built on that.

Madam Speaker, it has been an honor and privilege to be here and to speak about these things.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Miss MCMORRIS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

FAREWELL ADDRESS

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

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam Speaker, I want to start by thanking the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT), who just gave us a wonderful presentation. He is a dear friend. And as I am about to say, there are a number of people in this Chamber I am going to miss, and the gentleman from Texas is certainly one of them.

Madam Speaker, last month I was asked by President Bush to join his Cabinet as the next United States Trade Representative. And tonight I am told that it is likely that the Senate will take up that nomination. If I am confirmed, I am told this will be my last opportunity to speak on the House floor. It is kind of awkward not having the confirmation fully completed, but I do not want to miss this opportunity to say a couple of things to my colleagues.

First, I rise tonight with very mixed feelings. If confirmed, I am very much looking forward to the opportunity to serve our country on the important trade issues that we face. But this was not an easy decision. I am going to miss serving the people of the seven counties in southern Ohio's Second Congressional District. It has been the greatest honor of my life, and I will be forever grateful to the people of the second district for giving me the privilege to serve in this great House.

I ran for Congress 12 years ago to try to make a positive difference in the lives of people and to take the commonsense values and the common sense

of the people of southern Ohio to Washington, D.C. To do that, I needed the help of my constituents, who stretch from downtown Cincinnati about 150 miles east through beautiful rural Ohio, all the way to Portsmouth, Ohio. Over the years that has happened.

So many people welcomed me into their homes, into their schools, their businesses, on their farms, into their hospitals, into their places of worship. Others have attended my town meetings, visited with me at parades, county fairs and festivals and invited me to speak at their meetings.

I will miss these sessions, and I will miss the valuable input that I have received. The people of the second district have helped me get a better sense through these meetings of the needs and concerns of the small business owners, the parents, the teachers, the veterans, our seniors, our young people.

Madam Speaker, one thing I am really going to miss is going into the classrooms and reading the children's book called "House Mouse, Senate Mouse," which I would recommend to my colleagues if they do not know about it.

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It is a great way to try to explain to kids what we do here and the important work of our legislative branch.

These experiences throughout the district have also made me more hopeful, Madam Speaker, about our future, as a region, but also as a country. I have met so many people and been so encouraged by the dedication of those people, who work hard every day to make our communities a better place to live and to work, and make our communities safer, stronger.

In particular, I will be forever impressed by those who selflessly volunteer their time and their knowledge to help others. And, of course, all of us must be forever grateful to those men and women in uniform who serve us and who put their lives on the line every day for the people.

Together, my constituents and I were able to achieve some great things for our people in the district and across the Nation. We successfully worked together on a wide variety of projects back home, ranging from providing needed funds for the construction of a world-class National Underground Railroad Freedom Center on the banks of the Ohio River, to saving and creating jobs at the Portsmouth Uranium Enrichment Plant in Piketon, an important part of our national energy strategy.

As a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, I am the vice-chair of the Committee on the Budget and a member of leadership, I have also had the opportunity to play a role in some important accomplishments here in Congress; welfare reform, lowering tax rates to improve the economy, responding to the attacks of 9/11 and strengthening our military.

I was also able to take some specific legislation that I authored across the

finish line to be signed into law. Often my legislative partner in that was my friend from across the aisle, a good friend and a thoughtful legislator, Congress BEN CARDIN of Maryland.

Some of our legislative successes included laws to stop unfunded Federal mandates; the first comprehensive reform of the Internal Revenue Service in more than 50 years, including adding more than 50 new taxpayer rights; four new laws that have helped reduce substance abuse and its consequences through prevention and education; and, of course, three laws that today allow people to save more for their own retirement. All these accomplishments help people.

I could not have done it without incredible staff, and I want to thank my dedicated staff, both past and present. I am so proud of them, so grateful for their professionalism, their skill, their commitment to and compassion for the people of Ohio's Second Congressional District. Without their expertise, their hard work, these accomplishments that I mentioned would not have been possible.

And I want to thank those in the office of the House Clerk who are here tonight, late, and who are always here for us, those in the cloakroom, those in the Doorkeeper's Office, the Capitol police officers and so many others who have become my friends here and who serve us so well as Members and serve our country well.

Madam Speaker, I am very proud of my time here in Congress, and I am proud to have served with a lot of great men and women who are here for the right reasons and who serve honorably. They are good public servants and many have become good friends.

There are too many Members, both Republican and Democrat, for me to mention here tonight, but there is one Member I would like to single out, and that is DENNIS HASTERT, the Congressman from Illinois's Fourteenth Congressional District. He is known by a lot of different names. He is the Speaker to all of us, he is Coach to a lot of us, he is a loving father, grandfather and husband. But to me, DENNY HASTERT is a good friend and he has been a mentor. I will be forever grateful to him for the opportunities he has given me to serve in leadership and for the many things that he has taught me.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I will wrap up tonight now with a plug for the Central American-Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement, which I do feel strongly about, but with a few words about the most important people in my life.

I would not be here today without the strong and constant support of my family. My inspiration for serving and for giving back to the community comes from my parents. I was blessed with two great parents, they have been tremendous role models, and I cannot put into words the gratitude I feel for them.

I am also very fortunate to have the best partner I can imagine in my wife, Jane. She does a lot for our community and she is the best mother I can imagine.

I could not be prouder of my three kids, Jed, Will and Sally for their many accomplishments. I himself also thankful for their willingness to allow me to serve, to have allowed me to serve here with my colleagues, to allow me to serve the people of Southern Ohio, and to have given their blessing to this new responsibility I will be undertaking, which will require me to travel more than I would like and to be away from them more than I would like.

I mentioned at my announcement that my 10-year-old daughter Sally had to admit to me that she had never heard of the U.S. Trade Representative, she joins a lot of other people in that, but she said it sounded like a really neat job. And it is. And it is a really important job. Trade affects every one of us. It affects our economic future in very fundamental ways. It also is fundamental to freedom and prosperity around the world.

Fortunately for me, the trade issues are also important to the U.S. Congress, and the House and the Senate are actively involved in so many issues that will come across the desk of the U.S. Trade Representative. As a result, if I am confirmed tonight, I will have the opportunity to work very closely with Democrats and Republicans alike on both sides of the Capitol.

This makes it a little easier, Madam Speaker, to leave the Congress. I want to thank you for allowing me to take the time tonight to express my mixed emotions as I contemplate leaving this, the People's House.

Good night, and Godspeed.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFazio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. FOLEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, May 5.

Mr. DENT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FOLEY, for 5 minutes, today.