

RECOGNIZING CHRISTOPHER VAUGHN FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

### HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Christopher Vaughn, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 495, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Christopher has been very active with his troop, participating in my scout activities. Over the many years Christopher has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Christopher Vaughn for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

### THE WAR ON TERRORISM

### HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" McKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

Mr. McKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a just cause that is facing a critical turning point. The outcome hangs in the balance, and Mr. Speaker, we should not kid ourselves into believing that victory is fore-ordained.

Churchill once said that there would not be war if both sides did not believe that they could win it. The enemy we face in Iraq, and in the broader war against the radical Islamists, is driven by an apocalyptic vision of God. And because such apocalyptic visions are rooted in faith and not facts, they are very hard to dispel. We, therefore, face an opponent who is neither open to reason or compromise. Nor will he necessarily be defeated by calculations of military strategy and prudence.

We face the paradox of a perilous time. At the opening of the 21st century we are opposed by an adversary who preaches the savagery and barbarism of the 12th century. We face in Iraq an enemy that will show us absolutely no quarter. And Mr. Speaker, I am bound to say that I think we in this Chamber, and indeed even in the country at large, have been slow to grasp that fact.

However, the difficulty of the fight should not dissuade us from waging it if the cause is just—and the cause is just. Mr. Speaker, I have had the sad duty to attend the funerals of several of the servicemen killed in Iraq who came from my district. There are those who say that we should not withdraw from Iraq because to do so would mean that they died in vain.

This is not correct. Nothing that we have done or will do, will ever subtract one ounce from the valor and nobility of those who have died in the service of their country. As Lincoln said in the Gettysburg Address, "We can not dedicate—we can not consecrate—we can not

hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract."

However, we should pause to note that our servicemen and women are fighting—and sometimes dying—because they know the terrible price that will be paid if our adversaries prevail. They have seen, as I have seen when I traveled to Iraq, what a world our enemies would have us live in.

It is a world filled by a grotesque and distorted vision of God. It is a world of slavery and submission where the Almighty is not a benevolent and loving Creator of His Children. But rather is a pagan idol that demands blood sacrifice and glories in the murder of the innocent.

You need look no farther than the carnage in Baghdad, or Kabul, or Mogadishu or, let us never forget, the Twin Towers, to see the truth in that axiom. That is what our enemy, for all his talk of God, seeks to do. He seeks to kill God by destroying God's children and God's creation. And we are all that stands between our adversary and the realization of his nihilistic vision.

Mr. Speaker, there are those in this House who are far better versed than I in the strategic and military calculations that are the essence of this conflict. There are those who say that we mistakenly entered the war in Iraq on the basis of flawed intelligence. This, I think, underestimates the nature of our adversary. Given the expansiveness of our enemy's nightmare vision, I think it is safe to say that there would have been war in Iraq no matter what we did.

That, of course, will be for the historians to decide.

But this much I do know, Mr. Speaker. We stand for hope. We fight for peace and a world that is free. We sacrifice now so that the little children that I met when I was in Iraq might live in a better world tomorrow. And because they will have a better world, we Americans will live in a safer one. To quote DeGualle, "Behind the terrible cloud of our blood and tears here is the sun of our grandeur shining out once again."

Mr. Speaker, I do have one concern. I think that we in this Congress have allowed too wide a gap to develop between the society we help to govern and the war we have been compelled to wage. We have to correct this, because we will not win this war—in Iraq or beyond—unless we as a Nation come to grips with what we face and begin to act accordingly.

We must never forget that, to quote Lincoln again, "Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it nothing can succeed." Right now I look around me and I see a Congress and a country distracted, and nothing could be deadlier to our security and our hopes for a better future.

To some extent this is understandable. America is, and has every right to be, tired of conflict. In 1917, for the first time, we went "over there" to make the world safe for democracy. In 1941, in Churchill's evocative phrase, the new world stepped forth, yet again, to the rescue and liberation of the old. Then after 1945 we stayed on to wage the long twilight struggle that came to be called the cold war.

Then, in 1989, a miracle. We stopped holding our breaths. The Berlin Wall came down

and the Soviet Union disappeared. The hair trigger nightmare of the nuclear armed world seemed to recede. We came off of the figurative tip-toes on which we had been standing for nearly 50 years. We had grown so accustomed to it that when the Cold War ended, we scarcely realized just how nerve wracking, and what a strain, it had all been.

Now here we are again. More war, more sacrifice, more death. It is not a pleasant picture—but it offers this. It offers hope. It offers an alternative to yet another in a long line of obscene and perverted visions that seem to be forever conjured in the minds of men.

Mr. Speaker, I have dared to say today something that very few of us seem willing to say. We could lose this war. There is nothing in the stars that says we must prevail. In history, freedom is the exception, not the rule. So I say to my colleagues, we must press on in Iraq. We must fight wisely, but we must not falter.

Most of all we must stand together. That way, when our children and grandchildren look back at this moment in history, they will say that at the threatened nightfall the blood of their fathers ran strong.

### TIME MAGAZINE ARTICLE

### HON. STEVE ISRAEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 27, 2006*

Mr. ISRAEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share the following article from Time Magazine with my colleagues in the House. I believe it contains some important insights into what we really need to focus on during the long war.

[From Time Magazine, June 25, 2006]

#### FORGET FLAG BURNING

(By Major General Robert Scales (Ret.))

Some in Congress appear to be taking a sabbatical from the long war on terrorism to introduce a constitutional amendment banning the burning of the flag. The debate over such an amendment may or may not be worth having, but one thing is clear: at a time when the country is at war, now is not the time for such tertiary considerations.

I understand reverence for the flag. It comes naturally to soldiers. We commit our lives to serving intangibles, swearing oaths to a piece of parchment or saluting an expanse of cloth decorated with stars and stripes. We understand symbolism because symbolism is what in large measure compels us to do a job that might result in our demise.

The American flag symbolizes freedom. The Constitution we soldiers are pledged to defend guarantees freedom of expression even when freedom of expression includes the right to deface the flag, however obnoxious that act may be. Of course, I'm old enough to remember flag burning when flag burning was "cool." I was in Hawaii, on R. and R., halfway through my tour in Vietnam. My wife and I were watching television when student war protesters in California—none of whom had the slightest chance of facing violent death in combat—illuminated their campus by torching Old Glory. I was appalled by the sight. A short time later, Walter Cronkite informed the world that my unit, the 101st Airborne, was beginning an offensive in the A Shau Valley. I left for Vietnam the next day to confront an enemy that undoubtedly would have punished those protesters had they burned the North Vietnamese flag in Hanoi.