

was an avid pilot, scuba diver and sky-diving enthusiast who made more than 200 jumps during the 1960s. But where he really made his presence known was in his philanthropic work.

Mr. Acopian was a self-effacing man who believed passionately in supporting the community quietly but with unmatched generosity. He was passionate about education. He made significant donations to Columbia University, to the Acopian Engineering Center at Lafayette College and to the Acopian Center for Ornithology at Muhlenberg College located in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

He was passionate about his faith, building the Saint Sarkis Armenian Apostolic Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, and giving generously to the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America and the Armenian Apostolic Church of America, as well as to local churches in Armenia.

He was passionate about nature, creating the Acopian Center for Conservation Learning at Hawk Mountain Sanctuary and the Acopian Bog Turtle Preserve, as well as endowing the environmental education program at the American University of Armenia and the Florida Institute of Technology.

He was passionate about the locality in which he lived, Easton, Easton, Pennsylvania. He gave generously to the Children's Home of Easton, a sanctuary for underprivileged youth. The State Theater of Easton and the Easton National Canal Museum. His contributions made children's lives better, raised appreciation for the arts in his community, and helped to preserve important local history.

As an immigrant to this country, Mr. Acopian was eternally grateful for the opportunities that had been afforded to him here. He showed that gratitude, in part, by providing \$1 million towards the construction of the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C., that is right, \$1 million to the World War II Memorial in Washington D.C. His generous donation was the single largest contribution to that fundraising effort.

I must tell a story, former Senator Bob Dole came to the Easton area several years ago and said that one day in front of a few hundred people he received a check for \$1 million for the World War II Memorial. He picked up the phone and called this man, Mr. Acopian. He said, Mr. Acopian, this is very generous. Is there anything you would like because of this very generous gift? Mr. Acopian wanted anonymity. He said no, there is really nothing I want, Senator. After a few moments, he thought about it and said, Senator, there is actually one thing, Senator, I do want. He said, I would like to have a seat at the dedication. Bob Dole said, well, heck, yes, he can have mine. That is the way Sarkis Acopian was. He sought anonymity, but Bob Dole blew his cover.

His greatest passion, however, was for his lovely wife of 59 years, Mrs. Bobbye Seitze Mixon Acopian. To-

gether the couple had two sons, Gregory, who is married to Karen; and Jeffrey, who is married to Helen, both of whom still reside in Easton. He is survived also by six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

IRAQ AND THE PRESIDENT'S FISCAL YEAR 2008 BUDGET REQUEST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, the devastating blast in the Baghdad market over the weekend was the worst suicide bombing since the American occupation began nearly 4 years ago, 121 killed and 226 wounded. The Iraqi Interior Ministry says approximately 1,000 people have been killed over the last week alone.

This so-called "surge" that the President is force feeding us is getting off to quite a start, isn't it? Indeed, The New York Times reported on Sunday that Iraqis are saying that the security situation has gotten worse, not better, with the escalation of American troops.

The National Intelligence Estimate released last week offers little hope that sectarian violence will abate or that Iraq can repair its political rifts between Sunni and Shi'a. Under these circumstances, with American soldiers thrown into this unwinnable occupation with no hope of turning the situation around, there is only one solution, bring our troops home.

I have introduced a bill, H.R. 508, with Congresswoman LEE and Congresswoman WATERS and 30 others, which will do just that. H.R. 508 will end the occupation within 6 months of enactment. H.R. 508 will prohibit the construction of permanent U.S. military bases in Iraq. It will restore the sovereignty of the Iraqi people, even as we continue to provide nonmilitary assistance and to support a short-term international stabilization force will be available, if requested by the Iraqi government.

What a difference from the White House approach. Staring at the colossal, tragic failure of his Iraq policy, what did the President do today? He submitted a budget that asked Congress to sign off on \$145 billion to continue waging war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Meanwhile, he wants us to make his tax cuts permanent, and he says the budget will be balanced by 2012. So where is the money going to come from? Why, of course, it is going to come from the most vulnerable members of society, that is where.

Actually, over time, the very troops and their families, who are sacrificing life and limb in Iraq today, will be paying for this debt.

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The President's budget seeks deep Medicare and Medicaid cuts at just the moment when we need to be expanding

access to affordable health care. Actually, it is simple, Madam Speaker. The money is there for the folly of occupying Iraq. The money is there for wealthy people to get tax breaks; but when old and when poor people need nursing home care, or kids need immunizations, suddenly it is time to tighten the belt.

It is a disgrace, Madam Speaker, this ongoing occupation of Iraq. It is not only morally indefensible; it is fiscally irresponsible. So many of our own communities need investment. So many of our own poor and middle-class families are taking on more and more risk, struggling to get by, getting squeezed economically. But we are spending our grandchildren's money on a fantasy that is getting young soldiers killed, igniting a civil war, inciting jihadists, inspiring hatred of the United States around the world, harming national security and making Americans less safe.

There is a solution: One, end the occupation; two, return Iraq to the Iraqis; three, spend our foreign affairs budget on humanitarian endeavors, not on war and conquest. Spend it on economic development, on democracy promotion, on building schools and hospitals.

In addition, bring our troops home. Bring our soldiers home. Bring our tax dollars home where they can be put to work meeting the needs of Americans, strengthening American communities.

GLOBALIZATION

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

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, when we look at the issue of globalization, inevitably the question of wealth and equity comes up. We see reports of massive payouts for executives, and the natural inclination is to question the fairness of this.

But the acquisition of wealth, we need to remember, is not a zero-sum game. If one worker brings in a big new client and gets a bonus as a result of that, that does not mean that someone somewhere else has to take a pay cut. The question we must ask ourselves is not are some individuals getting wealthier at a faster rate than others. The question is whether everyone is becoming more prosperous; is everyone's standard of living going up. If all individuals who wish to climb the economic ladder have the opportunity to do so, we are then on the right track. And the economic data show that that is exactly, absolutely the case in America today. With a workforce of 146 million, there are more Americans working today than ever before.

Unemployment is at an incredibly low 4.6 percent. Two million new jobs were created in the last year alone. Average weekly earnings grew by 4.8 percent over the same time period. And as we had reported last week, gross domestic product growth grew at an