

At 11 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m., His Excellency Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the French Republic, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Democratic Floor Manager escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The Members of the President's Cabinet;

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

JOINT MEETING DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The purpose of the joint meeting having been completed, the Chair declares the joint meeting of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 11 o'clock and 51 minutes a.m., the joint meeting of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The House will continue in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1227

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SALAZAR) at 12 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m.

PRINTING OF PROCEEDINGS HAD DURING RECESS

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the proceedings had during the recess be printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure; which was read and, without objection, referred to the Committee on Appropriations:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE,

Washington, DC, October 31, 2007.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Today, the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure met in open session to consider three resolutions for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, in accordance with 33 U.S.C. §542. The resolutions authorize Corps surveys (or studies) of water resources needs and possible solutions. The Committee adopted the resolutions by voice vote with a quorum present.

Enclosed are copies of the resolutions adopted by the Committee.

Sincerely,

JAMES L. OBERSTAR,
Chairman.

Enclosures.

DOCKET 2784: DELAWARE COUNTY AND CHESTER COUNTY STREAMS, PENNSYLVANIA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the United States House of Representatives, That the Secretary of the Army review the report of the Chief of Engineers on the Delaware River and its tributaries, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York, published as House Document 179, Seventy Third Congress, Second Session, and other pertinent reports, to determine whether any modifications of the recommendations contained therein are advisable using a comprehensive, watershed systems approach in the interest of ecosystem restoration, flood plain management, flood damage reduction, water quality control, groundwater and subsidence management, comprehensive watershed management, recreation and other allied purposes.

DOCKET 2785: ILLINOIS WATERWAY, ILLINOIS AND INDIANA

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the United States House of Representatives, That the Secretary of the Army review the report of the Chief of Engineers on the Illinois Waterway and Grand Calumet River, Illinois and Indiana, published as House Document No. 677, 79th Congress, Second Session, and other pertinent reports, to determine whether any modifications of the recommendations contained therein are advisable at the present time, regarding possible alternative locations for disposal of dredged material from the Calumet-Sag Channel Modification and Illinois Waterway, Illinois and Indiana.

DOCKET 2786: WHITE RIVER NAVIGATION, ARKANSAS

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the United States House of Representatives, That the Secretary of the Army review the report of the Chief of Engineers on White River Navigation to Batesville, Arkansas, dated December 23, 1981, and other pertinent reports, to determine whether modifications of the recommendations contained therein are advisable at the present time, in the interest of navigation, flood control, and environmental restoration including Federally-owned lands within the White River Basin, Arkansas.

DOCKET 2787: VERMILLION HARBOR, OHIO

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the United States House of Representatives, That the Secretary of the Army review the report of the Chief of Engineers on Vermillion Harbor published as House Document No. 231, 85th Congress, 1st Session and other pertinent reports, to determine whether changes to the recommendations concerning modifications to the breakwaters contained therein are advisable at the present time in the interest of flood damage reduction and related purposes in the vicinity of Vermillion Harbor, Ohio.

DOCKET 2788: DUTCHESS COUNTY WATERSHEDS, DUTCHESS COUNTY, NEW YORK

Resolved by the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the United States House of Representatives, That the Secretary of the Army review the report of the Chief of Engineers on the Wappinger Creek Watershed, Pleasant Valley, New York, authorized in accordance with Section 212 of the Flood Control Act of 1950 (Public

Law 516), 81st Congress, 2nd Session, and other related reports to determine whether any modifications of the recommendations contained therein are advisable at the present time in the interest of flood damage reduction, storm damage reduction, environmental restoration, navigation, watershed management, water supply, and other allied purposes, in Dutchess County Watersheds, that drain directly into the Hudson River in Dutchess County, New York.

There was no objection.

□ 1230

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to fifteen 1-minutes per side.

FILIPINO VETERANS EQUITY ACT

(Mr. HONDA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, as we approach Veterans Day, I rise to urge Congress to support the Filipino Veterans Equity Act. This important piece of legislation will restore U.S. veterans status to the surviving soldiers of the 250,000 Filipinos who were called into military service to the United States Armed Forces by President Roosevelt on July 26, 1941.

Of the only 22,000 surviving Filipino World War II veterans, I want to highlight Faustino "Peping" Baclog, who currently resides in Los Angeles, California. Peping was among the 75,000 Filipino and U.S. soldiers subjected to the 90-mile trek from Mariveles to Tarlac, better known as the Bataan Death March. He survived the atrocities of Japanese occupation and fought side by side with the Americans, only to have his service as a U.S. national and a veteran denied by the 1946 Re-scission Act.

We now have a unique moment to undo the injustice of that act and give honor and respect to this brave group of veterans. As Peping tells us, though, "They pay us to die, but they cannot pay us to live." For these men, the Filipino Veterans Equity Act will fulfill a promise we denied them for over 60 years, recognition of a grateful Nation that their service to our country is just as equal as the soldiers with whom they stood shoulder-to-shoulder on field of battle.

FUNDING OUR VETERANS

(Mrs. DRAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, this is day 38. That is 38 days so far that our veterans have not had the use of the increased funding for their benefits and health care. That's \$18.5 million a day not able to be used.

In June, this House passed this appropriation bill with a \$6 billion increase in a bipartisan manner. On September 6, the Senate completed their

bill. The President has agreed to sign this bill. Instead, the Democratic leadership has decided to use funding for our veterans as a smokescreen in an effort to pass billions in unrelated domestic spending.

Our veterans are not pawns in a political game. They are heroes. These funding issues should have been considered separately and on their own merits. Please join me in calling upon the Democratic leadership to put our veterans first and send a clean Veterans appropriation bill to the President now.

IN SUPPORT OF EQUITY FOR FILIPINO VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II

(Ms. HIRONO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, Filipino veterans are those who answered the call of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and served alongside our Armed Forces during World War II. They fought shoulder-to-shoulder with American servicemen, and we promised to provide full veterans benefits to them. While we have made some progress toward that goal, we have not yet achieved the full equity that the Filipino veterans deserve.

I am proud to be an original cosponsor of H.R. 760, the Filipino Veterans Equity Act, which, in essence, makes good on the promise that our government made to these brave men over 60 years ago.

Our Filipino veterans are in the twilight of their lives. Of the 250,000 soldiers that fought with us, only 18,000 survive today. Of that number, 2,000 reside in my State of Hawaii.

As we honor our veterans all across the country this Veterans Day, let us include those Filipino veterans who still await a promise unfulfilled.

BIBLES PROHIBITED IN CHINA

(Mr. MCCOTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, as the world stumbles toward the Communist propaganda extravaganza labeled the Beijing Olympics, somewhere Chairman Mao is looking up at us and laughing.

According to the Catholic News Agency, Bibles and all other religious symbols are among Communist China's list of athletes' "prohibited objects" due to "security concerns."

Since the leader of the Free World, President Bush, has articulated his eagerness to attend Communist China's Olympics, I am compelled to ask three questions:

Mr. President, how many Bibles will you be taking to Beijing? Will you visit the five bishops and 15 priests in prison for opposing the Communist regime's official church? And will you tell Chi-

na's Communist tyrants this fundamental truth: No good government denies God's presence.

HONORING OUR VETERANS

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank our Nation's veterans and their families for their dedication, their service and their sacrifice.

As we approach Veterans Day, I commend the Democratic leadership for working with our Senate colleagues to pass a Veterans appropriations bill last night. This bill is the largest increase in veterans funding ever, \$3.7 billion over what the President asked.

This bill will provide our veterans with desperately needed health care services, including funds specifically allocated to treat the rising number of veterans with traumatic brain injury and PTSD.

To date, we have lost more than 4,000 troops and 30,000 troops have been wounded in Afghanistan and Iraq. We must do everything we can to take care of our servicemembers when they come home to their families and their communities, and we will bring them home. But until that day, this Congress will do everything we can to take care of our veterans and their families.

BIPARTISANSHIP

(Mr. WALBERG asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALBERG. Bipartisanship. You hear this expression tossed around quite frequently in political circles, so much so that perhaps it has almost become a cliché.

Sadly, we don't see genuine examples of bipartisan cooperation in this Chamber enough, and this no doubt disappoints the American people. Over 140 days ago, Democrats and Republicans worked together to pass one of the largest necessary spending increases in the 77-year history of the Department of Veterans Affairs. To ensure the health and well-being of our veterans, this bill is a needed investment veterans care about and the care they need to receive.

Eight weeks ago, a similar version passed the Senate on a bipartisan basis. Instead of allowing the House and Senate to iron out minor differences yesterday, the House leadership insisted that veterans funding be held hostage for a wasteful, pork-barrel spending bill that would increase the deficit by \$10 billion.

No doubt this shameful game further disappointed the already jaded public perception of Congress.

Let's get back to bipartisanship and swiftly pass this important legislation in its original form. Then together, on behalf of our veterans, we can all celebrate when it becomes law.

VETERANS FUNDING BILL

(Mr. ETHERIDGE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, as a veteran of the United States, I rise in support of the House bill on veterans funding.

Over the last 5 years, hundreds of thousands of Americans, military personnel, have bravely served this country in Iraq and Afghanistan.

I am proud that North Carolina is home to many of these soldiers and also has one of the highest veteran populations in the country. Unfortunately, VA health care is still not adequately prepared to care for those who are returning from combat. Today, nearly 400,000 veterans are faced with unreasonable delays for their claims to be processed.

Yesterday, this Democratic House once again fulfilled its commitment to our veterans by passing a conference report that is \$3.7 billion over President Bush's request for veterans medical care, claims processing personnel and for facility improvements. The conference report includes the largest increase in funding in the 77-year history of the VA to fund these health care needs, as well as funds for 1,800 new processors to alleviate the claims backlog.

Despite a veto threat from this President, who is spending millions of dollars on roads, schools and health care in Iraq and Afghanistan, this House passed the VA funding bill on a vote of 269-142. The Senate should follow our lead, and the President should reverse his course and sign this vital bill into law.

MASTER GUNNERY SERGEANT JAMES PETERSON

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, a man that is faithful to his family, church and community, MGySgt James Peterson is distinguished and honored as a true American veteran.

His unit invaded Iwo Jima on February 19, 1945, and he fought bravely to see the American flag flown over Mount Suribachi. He then served 30 months in the South Pacific, after which he was assigned to be a drill instructor at the recruit depot in San Diego.

In honor of our veterans who have served and are serving this country now, MGySgt James Peterson of Aiken, South Carolina, is truly an American soldier through and through. Americans are in debt for his service in the Marine Corps, and Mr. Peterson will always be honored as an American soldier who fought to defend American freedom.