

RECOGNIZING THE ARMY'S 4TH BRIGADE—2ND INFANTRY DIVISION, THE "DRAGOON RAIDERS"

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

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division from Fort Lewis.

By June 30 of this month, the last of the, roughly, 4,000 men and women of the 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division will have returned home to Fort Lewis after completing a 15-month deployment in Iraq. The Dragoon Raiders, as the Brigade is known, deployed in Iraq in April 2007, a month earlier than expected.

During their deployment, the 4-2 supported operations in Baghdad, Baghdad's Northern Security Belt, and the Diyala Province. The Brigade cleared 2,216 IEDs from more than 87,000 kilometers of routes, ensuring safe travel for civilians and security forces. Soldiers from the 4-2 also captured more than 1,700 detainees and 220 high-value targets during combat operations.

In tribute to their brave service, three members of the Brigade were awarded the Silver Star, the United States' third highest award for combat valor. Their valorous service was not without cost, however. In the course of their deployment, the Dragoon Raiders lost 54 of their comrades, with another 424 wounded.

I want to express my deep condolences to the 4-2 Brigade and to the families of those fallen soldiers. Their contributions and sacrifices will not be forgotten.

The men and women of the 4-2 have done everything their country has asked of them and more. We all should have the utmost respect and admiration for their service and sacrifice.

FAIR OR FREE

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, the speech police are at it again. This time they want to police and control the radio airwaves. I'm not talking about the former Soviet Union that controlled what Russians listened to on the radio, I'm talking about the American speech police.

Radio shows that air conservative ideas in the free enterprise market seem to be listened to by more Americans than those that listen to liberal ideas. I don't know why that is, but it happens. So some don't like that. They say it's just not fair. So they want to force the private radio stations, with the use of the government speech police, to air ideas that are liberal as well as conservative. They call this nonsense the "fairness doctrine."

It is actually totalitarian state control of speech. And what does "fair"

mean? Fair means different things to different folks. In some places in the country like Texas, fair is where you take your chickens to. That's why the word "fair" is not in the Constitution. The Constitution protects free speech, not fair speech. It says Congress—that's us, folks—shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech. And the Constitution applies to the thieves of free speech and the government's speech police whether they like it or not.

And that's just the way it is.

USE IT OR LOSE IT

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

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, Americans continue to suffer the pain at the pump due to 7 years of missed opportunities and outdated policies. President Bush's energy plan was literally written by the oil companies, giving more public resources and billions in subsidies to the same companies that are raking in record billions in profits while Americans are reeling. That was the plan then; that's the plan now.

Every day, we hear our friends on the other side of the aisle demanding that we need to drill more holes. What we don't hear is anyone demanding that they drill on the 68 million acres they have. Legislation on the floor today will force those companies to produce oil and gas diligently on the 68 million acres of the public land, your land, that they already have. Experts say there are 4.8 million barrels of oil which would nearly double total U.S. production.

Madam Speaker, drilling has been the Republican slogan for years, and it will be so today. Today is finally their chance to put that slogan to the test, to tell Big Oil to drill now and to use it, or lose it.

JOURNEY FOR 9/11

(Mrs. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise to say "thank you" to the retired New York Giants' co-captain and Super Bowl champion, George Martin, for finishing his 3,200-mile trek across America to raise money and awareness for the sick men and women, heroes and heroines of 9/11 who are still suffering.

His cross-country journey started in New York just after the sixth anniversary of 9/11. It continued through Washington, DC, in early October where he met with Members of Congress about legislation that is pending here. We met, and he continued on his journey.

He finished in California last Saturday, and is now having a well-deserved rest. George is an inspiration to those of us in Congress who are working hard to pass H.R. 3543. We have over 115 co-

sponsors. It is the 9/11 Health and Compensation Act, and it is for the heroes and heroines of 9/11. It would treat and monitor all of those who were exposed to the deadly toxins, and it would treat those who are sick. It is the least we can do for these heroes and heroines. We should pass it before the seventh anniversary of 9/11.

DOMESTIC EXPLORATION

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

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I got a call yesterday from a constituent in my district who said he saw me speaking on the floor about domestic energy, and he was relieved. He was relieved because someone in Congress understood the effects that high gas prices are having on real families all over this country, because he didn't think anybody was paying attention. Well, guess what? Some people are paying attention.

We need to be looking at resources here at home to solve our energy problems. The United States Minerals Management Service found out that, out of our 1.76-billion-acre Outer Continental Shelf, only 3 percent is leased to oil and gas exploration, and nearly 85 percent of the lower 48 OCS remains untapped.

Madam Speaker, we can explore our domestic resources safely and effectively so we will not harm our environment.

I and my Republican colleagues will continue to talk about domestic exploration because we do have solutions, and somebody is listening.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN VIETNAM

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss human rights in Vietnam and the Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung's visit to the United States.

I understand that, when President Bush and Prime Minister Dung met, they discussed the importance of promoting human rights in Vietnam and that Prime Minister Dung told President Bush that the Vietnamese Government has made efforts and is committed to further promoting and improving human rights in Vietnam.

Now, as a long-time advocate of human rights in Vietnam and as a representative of one of the largest Vietnamese-American communities, we know that human rights in Vietnam have only been getting worse. The Government of Vietnam has continued to harass, arrest and to sentence peaceful democracy advocates to prison—oh, and by the way, also United States citizens of Vietnamese descent.

If there is any evidence of Prime Minister Dung's claim that human