

strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan to defeat al Qaeda and combat extremism. Because I will not allow terrorists to plot against the American people from safe havens halfway around the world. We will not allow it.

As we meet here tonight, our men and women in uniform stand watch abroad and more are readying to deploy. To each and every one of them, and to the families who bear the quiet burden of their absence, Americans are united in sending one message: we honor your service, we are inspired by your sacrifice, and you have our unyielding support. To relieve the strain on our forces, my budget increases the number of our soldiers and marines. And to keep our sacred trust with those who serve, we will raise their pay, and give our veterans the expanded health care and benefits that they have earned.

To overcome extremism, we must also be vigilant in upholding the values our troops defend—because there is no force in the world more powerful than the example of America. And that is why I have ordered the closing of the detention center at Guantanamo Bay, and will seek swift and certain justice for captured terrorists—because living our values doesn't make us weaker, it makes us safer and it makes us stronger. And that is why I can stand here tonight and say without exception or equivocation that the United States of America does not torture. We can make that commitment here tonight.

In words and deeds, we are showing the world that a new era of engagement has begun. For we know that America cannot meet the threats of this century alone, but the world cannot meet them without America. We cannot shun the negotiating table, nor ignore the foes or forces that could do us harm. We are instead called to move forward with the sense of confidence and candor that serious times demand.

To seek progress toward a secure and lasting peace between Israel and her neighbors, we have appointed an envoy to sustain our effort. To meet the challenges of the 21st century—from terrorism to nuclear proliferation; from pandemic disease to cyber threats to crushing poverty—we will strengthen old alliances, forge new ones, and use all elements of our national power.

And to respond to an economic crisis that is global in scope, we are working with the nations of the G-20 to restore confidence in our financial system, avoid the possibility of escalating protectionism, and spur demand for American goods in markets across the globe. For the world depends on us to have a strong economy, just as our economy depends on the strength of the world's.

As we stand at this crossroads of history, the eyes of all people in all nations are once again upon us—watching to see what we do with this moment; waiting for us to lead.

Those of us gathered here tonight have been called to govern in extraordinary times. It is a tremendous bur-

den, but also a great privilege—one that has been entrusted to few generations of Americans. For in our hands lies the ability to shape our world for good or for ill.

I know that it's easy to lose sight of this truth—to become cynical and doubtful; consumed with the petty and the trivial.

But in my life, I've also learned that hope is found in unlikely places; that inspiration often comes not from those with the most power or celebrity, but from the dreams and aspirations of ordinary Americans who are anything but ordinary.

I think of Leonard Abess, a bank president from Miami who reportedly cashed out of his company, took a \$60 million bonus, and gave it out to all 399 people who worked for him, plus another 72 who used to work for him. He didn't tell anyone, but when the local newspaper found out, he simply said, "I knew some of these people since I was 7 years old. I didn't feel right getting the money myself."

I think about Greensburg, Kansas, a town that was completely destroyed by a tornado, but is being rebuilt by its residents as a global example of how clean energy can power an entire community—how it can bring jobs and businesses to a place where piles of bricks and rubble once lay. "The tragedy was terrible," said one of the men who helped them rebuild. "But the folks here know that it also provided an incredible opportunity."

I think about Ty'Sheoma Bethea, the young girl from that school I visited in Dillon, South Carolina—a place where the ceilings leak; the paint peels off the walls, and they have to stop teaching six times a day because the train barrels by their classroom. She has been told that her school is hopeless, but the other day after class she went to the public library and typed up a letter to the people sitting in this Chamber. She even asked her principal for the money to buy a stamp. The letter asks us for help and says, "We are just students trying to become lawyers, doctors, congressmen like yourself and one day President, so we can make a change to not just the State of South Carolina but also the world. We are not quitters." That's what she said.

We are not quitters.

These words and these stories tell us something about the spirit of the people who sent us here. They tell us that even in the most trying times, amid the most difficult circumstances, there is a generosity, a resilience, a decency, and a determination that perseveres; a willingness to take responsibility for our future and for posterity.

Their resolve must be our inspiration. Their concerns must be our cause. And we must show them and all our people that we are equal to the task before us.

I know that we haven't agreed on every issue thus far, and there are surely times in the future when we will part ways. But I also know that every

American who is sitting here tonight loves this country and wants it to succeed. I know that. That must be the starting point for every debate we have in the coming months, and where we return after those debates are done. That is the foundation on which the American people expect us to build common ground.

And if we do—if we come together and lift this nation from the depths of this crisis; if we put our people back to work and restart the engine of our prosperity; if we confront without fear the challenges of our time and summon that enduring spirit of an America that does not quit, then someday years from now our children can tell their children that this was the time when we performed, in the words that are carved into this very Chamber, "something worthy to be remembered."

Thank you, God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

(Applause, the Members rising.)

At 10 o'clock and 15 minutes p.m., the President of the United States, accompanied by the committee of escort, retired from the Hall of the House of Representatives.

The Majority Floor Services Chief escorted the invited guests from the Chamber in the following order:

The members of the President's Cabinet;

The Chief Justice of the United States and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court;

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps.

JOINT SESSION DISSOLVED

The SPEAKER. The Chair declares the joint session of the two Houses now dissolved.

Accordingly, at 10 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m., the joint session of the two Houses was dissolved.

The Members of the Senate retired to their Chamber.

MESSAGE OF THE PRESIDENT REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE ON THE STATE OF THE UNION

Mr. PASCRELL. Madam Speaker, I move that the message of the President be referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered printed.

The motion was agreed to.

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WEINER) laid before the House the following resignation from the House of Representatives:

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 24, 2009.
OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER,
U.S. Capitol,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: This letter is to inform you that I have sent a letter to California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger informing him that I am resigning my position

as the United States Representative for the 32nd Congressional District of California effective Tuesday, February 24, 2009.

In December, I was nominated by President-elect Obama to serve as Secretary for the U.S. Department of Labor. I am truly honored that President-elect Obama has given me the opportunity to help America's working families and turn our economy around. It has been a privilege to serve the residents of California in the House of Representatives for the past eight years. I have served during one of the most challenging economic times in California's history, and have worked to help build a better future for our state and country.

I also want to thank you, Madam Speaker, all of my colleagues in the House, and in particular California's Congressional delegation. I have enjoyed working with them during my time in Congress. I am looking forward to continuing to work with you and my colleagues, in order to build a better country.

Sincerely,

HILDA L. SOLIS,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 24, 2009.

Governor ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER,
California State Capitol Building,
Sacramento, CA.

DEAR GOVERNOR SCHWARZENEGGER: In December, I was nominated by President-elect Obama to serve as Secretary for the U.S. Department of Labor. I am hereby resigning my position as the United States Representative for the 32nd Congressional District of California effective Tuesday, February 24, 2009.

It has been a privilege to serve the residents of California in the House of Representatives for the past eight years. I have served during one of the most challenging economic times in California's history, and have worked to help build a better future for our state. I am truly honored that President-elect Obama has given me the opportunity to help lead our nation forward during these difficult times.

I also want to thank you and your administration, as well as my colleagues in California's Congressional delegation. I have enjoyed working with you and them during my time in Congress. I look forward to continuing this important work in order to build a better California.

Sincerely,

HILDA L. SOLIS,
Member of Congress.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS), the whole number of the House is 432.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 25, 2009, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

641. A letter from the Director, Legislative Affairs Division, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — State Technical Committees (RIN: 0578-AA51) received February 9, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

642. A letter from the Director, Legislative Affairs Division, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Regional Equity (RIN: 0578-AA44) received February 9, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

643. A letter from the OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, DoD, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Indebtedness of Military Personnel [DOD-2007-OS-0025] (RIN: 0790-A108) received February 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

644. A letter from the OSD Federal Register Liaison Officer, DoD, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's final rule — Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Service (CHAMPUS); Voluntary Disenrollment from the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP) [DoD-2008-HA-0035] (RIN: 0720-AA69) received February 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Armed Services.

645. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting the 41st report prepared pursuant to Section 3204(f) of the Emergency Supplemental Act, 2000 (Div. B, P.L. 106-246), as amended; to the Committee on Armed Services.

646. A letter from the Counsel for Legislation and Regulations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting the Department's final rule — Public Housing Operating Fund Program; Increased Terms of Energy Performance Contracts [Docket Number: FR-5057-F-02] (RIN: 2577-AC66) received February 12, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

647. A letter from the General Counsel, National Credit Union Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Credit Union Service Organizations (RIN: 3133-AD20) received February 12, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

648. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) and Nonattainment New Source Review (NSR): Aggregation [EPA-HQ-OAR-2003-0064, FRL-8773-2] (RIN: 2060-AL75) received February 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

649. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) and Nontainment New Source Review (NSR): Aggregation [EPA-HQ-OAR-2003-0064; FRL-8773-3] (RIN: 2060-AL75) received February 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

650. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Regulation of Fuels and Fuel Additives; Gasoline and Diesel Fuel Test

Methods [EPA-HQ-OAR-2008-0558; FRL-8771-6] (RIN: 2060-AP17) received February 10, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

651. A letter from the Chief, Policy and Rules Division, Federal Communications Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — In the Matter of Unlicensed Operation in the TV Broadcast Bands Additional Spectrum for Unlicensed Devices Below 900 MHz and in the 3 GHz Band [ET Docket Nos.: 04-186 and 02-380] received February 12, 2009, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

652. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting certification of a proposed technical assistance agreement for the export of technical data, defense services, and defense articles to the Cayman Islands and the United Arab Emirates (Transmittal No. DDTC 143-08), pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2776(c); to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

653. A letter from the Acting Assistant Secretary Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting notification of an authorization of Danger Pay to U.S. Government civilian employees for service in areas where civil insurrection, civil war, terrorism or wartime conditions threaten physical harm or imminent danger to the health or well-being of employees; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

654. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Education, transmitting the Department's report on competitive sourcing efforts for Fiscal Year 2008, pursuant to Public Law 108-199, section 647(b) of Division F; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

655. A letter from the Chairman of the Board, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, Department of Labor, transmitting the Commission's Semiannual Report from the Office of the Inspector General and the Director's Semiannual Report on Management Decisions and Final Actions on Office of Inspector General Audit Recommendations, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

656. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Transportation, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

657. A letter from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President, transmitting a report pursuant to the Federal Vacancies Reform Act of 1998; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

658. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting notification of the Department's intent to accept a gift of land adjacent to wilderness areas for preservation as wilderness, pursuant to Section 6 of the Wilderness Act of 1964; to the Committee on Natural Resources.

659. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Interior, transmitting the Department's first Report to Congress for the North Slope Science Initiative, pursuant to Public Law 109-58, section 348(e); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

660. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's 2007 Annual Report in accordance with the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Convention Act; to the Committee on Natural Resources.