

Donald E. Valentine III, a Corporal in the U.S. Army, born in Houston, TX. Valentine joined the United States Army because of the 9/11 attack on this country proudly following in the footsteps of his father.

Jeremy W. Burris, a Lance Corporal in the U.S. Marine Corps, from Liberty, TX. Jeremy survived the initial blast of an IED explosive and heroically helped save the lives of two other wounded Marines before a second bomb was detonated—taking his life.

Eric Duckworth, a Staff Sergeant in the U.S. Army, from Plano, TX. Eric's only two wishes growing up were that he serve in the military and serve in law enforcement. He was blessed to be able to fulfill both of his dreams.

Scott A. McIntosh, a Corporal in the U.S. Army, from Humble, TX. Friends say that Scott always had a positive outlook, his mission in life was to meet and make friends with every person he came in contact with—and he did.

Shawn Tousha, a Sergeant in the U.S. Army, from Hull, TX. During Shawn's first tour of duty in Iraq he decided to re-enlist in the Army and make the military his career. He ended up serving three tours of duty in Iraq.

It has been said that "wars may be fought by weapons, but they are won by warriors. It is the spirit of the men who follow and the man who leads that gains the victory." That was said by General George S. Patton, Jr. near the end of World War II.

These noble 26 are just some of the 4,962 that have been killed in the line of duty taking care of America in America's current wars in the Middle East.

Madam Speaker, this is a photograph of the cliffs of Normandy. This is in Normandy, France, where 9,347 Americans are buried, most of them young kids. They liberated and saved France and the rest of Europe in the great World War II. They never came home. The guns have long since been silent on Normandy's shores, but the sands are still stained with the blood of the fallen soldiers.

On the 40th anniversary of D-day, on June 6, 1984, President Ronald Reagan stood at this cemetery and said "We will always remember. We will always be proud. We will always be prepared so we may always be free."

So, Madam Speaker, when the sun comes up Monday morning, we should fly the Flag, stand outside, look to the heavens and thank those who took care of America in the long, lamentable dark night of the hour of war.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1815

A PEACE PLAN FOR MEMORIAL DAY

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, next Monday is Memorial Day, when we honor the sacrifices of the men and women who have died in our Nation's wars. The American people will remember our fallen heroes in many,

many ways. We will pay tribute in our houses, in our houses of worship, in our community centers, in our veterans' buildings, and in our cemeteries. There will be family gatherings. There will be parades. Veterans will hold memorials across this Nation, and countless Americans will simply bow their heads and say a silent prayer of thanks.

Sadly, there are more fallen heroes to remember this year. Since Memorial Day last year, 394 of our brave troops have died in Iraq and Afghanistan, and by this time next year, I fear there will be more brave dead to remember and more military families who will be grieving; but Memorial Day should be more than a time to remember the bitter harvest of war. It should be a time for our Nation to seek peaceful alternatives to war so that no more of our brave troops will die. That's the best way to honor those who have given their lives for their country.

To accomplish this, however, we must make the military option the very last option that we would choose when we develop our national security policies. We've tried the military option. Where has it gotten us? We're still bogged down in Iraq and Afghanistan. Our foreign adventures have cost us over \$1 trillion so far, and they have contributed to the economic meltdown that we're experiencing now. In Afghanistan, anti-American feeling is spreading, and it has become a major recruiting tool for those who would harm our country.

I know that these problems were dumped into President Obama's lap when he came into office, and I know that he is a peacemaker. On Monday, in his meeting with Prime Minister Netanyahu of Israel, he called for talks with Iran, and he called for a two-state solution to the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. I applaud him for both of those positions, but I voted against the supplemental funding bill for Iraq and Afghanistan because it will only continue the policies of occupation, the policies of war that have failed us.

Instead, I urge my colleagues to support a different approach, an approach that will give us a real chance to succeed. I call this approach "Smart Security Platform for the 21st Century."

The Smart Security Platform would help to eliminate the root causes of violence in the world by increasing economic development aid and debt relief to the poorest countries. It would further address the root causes of violence by supporting conflict resolution, human rights, and democracy-building.

It calls for the United States to work with the international community to promote diplomacy and to strengthen international law.

It calls for reducing weapons of mass destruction, and it calls for reducing conventional weapons by supporting the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions. It calls for ade-

quately funding the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program to secure nuclear materials in Russia and in other countries and to reduce nuclear stockpiles.

It would invest in renewable energy to end our addiction to oil and to stop the flow of hundreds of billions of dollars to irresponsible regimes.

It includes strategies to strengthen international intelligence and law enforcement to capture individuals involved in violence, while respecting at the same time their human and civil rights.

Madam Speaker, Smart Security will show the world that America stands for peace once again. It will help protect the lives of our brave troops, and it will keep our country safe and free. That is the best way to honor the memory of our fallen heroes on Memorial Day.

U.S. STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, last week, Congressman JIM MCGOVERN introduced H.R. 2404, legislation to require the Secretary of Defense to submit a report to Congress, outlining the exit strategy for our United States military forces in Afghanistan.

I am an original cosponsor of this bill, which now has 78 cosponsors. I became a cosponsor of this bill because it has been nearly 8 years since the United States began its military operation in Afghanistan, and I am concerned that there is no clear strategy for victory or end point to our efforts in that country. Without focused and targeted objectives, adding more manpower to an effort in Afghanistan could cause the United States to go the way of many great armies and leave our troops in a never-ending, no-win situation.

I have heard from many Vietnam veterans who are concerned that Afghanistan could become the next Vietnam. For example, Andrew Bacevich is a West Point graduate, a retired colonel, a Vietnam and Gulf War veteran, and a professor of military history. He is also the father of a son who died in Iraq in 2007.

In an article published on May 18, 2009, in the American Conservative, entitled "To Die for a Mystique: The Lessons our leaders didn't Learn from the Vietnam War," he wrote, "In one of the most thoughtful Vietnam-era accounts written by a senior military officer, General Bruce Palmer once observed, 'With respect to Vietnam, our leaders should have known that the American people would not stand still for a protracted war of an indeterminate nature with no foreseeable end to the United States commitment.'"

He further wrote, "General Palmer thereby distilled into a single sentence the central lesson of Vietnam: To embark upon an open-ended war lacking

clearly defined and achievable objectives was to forfeit public support, thereby courting disaster. The implications were clear: never again.”

He further wrote, “Today, in contrast, the civilian contemporaries of those fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan have largely tuned out the Long War. The predominant mood of the country is not one of anger or anxiety but of dull acceptance.” . . .

“To cite General Palmer’s formulation, the citizens of this country at present do appear willing to ‘stand still’ when considering the prospect of war that goes on and on. While there are many explanations for why Americans have disengaged from the Long War, the most important, in my view, is that so few of us have any immediate personal stake in that conflict.”

Madam Speaker, while America’s military personnel faithfully conduct their missions abroad, elected officials here in Washington should take seriously their responsibility to develop a viable, long-term strategy for these operations. I have spoken to many in the Army and in the Marine Corps who say that our Nation needs an end point to its war strategy. Many of these servicemembers have gone to Iraq and Afghanistan more than once, and their desire to serve this Nation is greater than ever, but the stress placed on our all-volunteer force and on their families cannot continue forever.

While the United States continues to devote its blood and treasure in Afghanistan, the Afghan Government has yet to purge itself of many who are funneling support to the Taliban.

Our men and women in uniform deserve to have the President work with his military commanders and with the United States Congress to develop the best strategy for achieving our goals and for wrapping up our military commitment in Afghanistan. I hope that many of my colleagues in both parties will join me in cosponsoring Congressman MCGOVERN’s legislation, H.R. 2404.

Madam Speaker, before I close, as I do every night on this floor, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I ask God, in his loving arms, to hold the families who have given a child, dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

I close by asking God to continue to bless America.

HUNTINGTON’S DISEASE PARITY ACT

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

Mr. FILNER. Madam Speaker, May is Huntington’s Disease Awareness Month. I rise today with my colleague from San Diego, Congressman BILBRAY, in support of the 250,000 Americans affected by or who are at risk for developing Huntington’s disease.

This disease is a degenerative brain disorder for which there is no effective

treatment or cure. HD slowly diminishes the affected individual’s ability to walk, think, talk, and to reason. Eventually, a person with HD becomes totally dependent upon others for care. Because it is a genetic disorder, Huntington’s disease profoundly affects the lives of entire families—emotionally, socially and financially.

Over the last few months, several families in our San Diego area affected by HD have contacted us about the constant struggles they face. For example, Misty Oto lost her mother several years ago to HD. Her 40-year-old brother is now showing signs of the disease. Misty is also at risk for developing the condition as are her children.

If that weren’t bad enough, Misty and her family and countless others affected by HD are unable to receive the medical treatment and care they need. People with Huntington’s disease are continually denied disability Social Security benefits because of outdated medical guidelines. Once people with HD begin to receive disability benefits, they still must wait 2 years before they qualify for Medicare. As a result, thousands of families affected by HD are unable to receive the treatment and care they desperately need. Many wind up losing everything they own in simply trying to survive.

That is why Congressman BILBRAY and I have introduced H.R. 678, the Huntington’s Disease Parity Act of 2009. The bill directs the Social Security Administration to revise its criteria for determining disability, thereby making it easier for people with Huntington’s disease to collect disability benefits.

Mr. BILBRAY, I appreciate our joined support. I would yield to the gentleman.

Mr. BILBRAY. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to join with my San Diegan colleague, Mr. FILNER, in supporting H.R. 678. This is really one of those regulatory guidelines that doesn’t work and that doesn’t address the issue at hand. HD is one of those situations where the regulation is absolutely absurd and inhumane. The fact is that for most people 2 years of waiting may not now be very much, but for those with HD it could be a death sentence.

I am honored to join with my colleague in the movement to address this inequity and deficiency in our regulation. I am happy to see that there are going to be Members joining us in correcting this situation. I thank you, Congressman, for taking the lead on this.

Again, I guess it’s really important to show that community and citizen involvement does matter. I would like to point out, as my colleague did, that Alan Rappaport and Misty Oto have worked tirelessly at trying to address this issue. I urge my colleagues to join with me and with, most importantly, my chairman, BOB FILNER, in sponsoring this bill. Hopefully, we’ll be able to bring up H.R. 678 as soon as possible.

Mr. FILNER. Reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman from San Diego.

When we were both in local government, we worked together on numerous issues in San Diego, and I’m so glad we are working together here in the Congress.

As we said, there are two major parts of H.R. 678. Number one, the Social Security Administration must revise its criteria for determining disability to make it easier for people with Huntington’s disease to collect their benefits. It also removes the 2-year waiting period between receiving Social Security disability payments and their Medicare benefits. This will allow HD patients to get the treatment they need at the onset of the disease, when it’s most important.

This is not without precedence, Madam Speaker. In 2000, the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services waived this waiting period for those suffering from ALS, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig’s disease. Huntington’s disease is tragic, but our bill, H.R. 678, will help those who suffer from this disease.

We urge the support of our colleagues for this bill.

THE WAR AGAINST TERROR

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, President Lincoln said, “Let the people know the facts, and the country will be saved.”

Today, I listened to former Vice President Cheney give the facts to the American people about the war against terror. I think my colleagues who didn’t get to hear it today really ought to hear some of the things that he has said that were very, very important and relevant to the war against terror.

□ 1830

So I would like to read a few excerpts from his speech tonight so I hope my colleagues will take these to heart and hopefully put them on their Internet sites.

First of all, he said, “I was and remain a strong proponent of our enhanced interrogation program. The interrogations were used on hardened terrorists after other efforts failed. They were legal, essential, justified, successful and the right thing to do. The intelligence officers who questioned the terrorists can be proud of their work and proud of the results, because they prevented the violent death of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of innocent people.

“Attorney General Holder and others have admitted that the United States will be compelled to accept a number of the terrorists here, in the homeland,” in America, “and it has even been suggested U.S. taxpayer dollars will be used to support . . .” the terrorists here in America.

“The administration has found that it’s easy to receive applause in Europe