

Next fall, the United States' occupation will equal in length the Soviet Union's own physical involvement in Afghanistan. Like the Soviets, we continue to secure and bolster a failing state, while encouraging an ideology and system of government unknown and unwanted by its people."

Mr. Speaker, I want to again say to Captain Matthew Hoh, this took courage for you to speak out, as it took courage for you to fight for this country in Iraq. I hope that our colleagues here on the floor of the House will debate this issue, not only about tomorrow, what are we trying to accomplish in Afghanistan, but in the years ahead, what are we trying to accomplish?

Mr. Speaker, with that, before I close, as I always do, I will ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform; I ask God to please 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 will ask God to please bless the House and Senate that we will do what is right in the eyes of God; and I will ask God to give wisdom, strength and courage to the President of the United States that he will do what is right. And three times, Mr. Speaker, I will ask God, please, God; please, God; please, God, continue to bless America.

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

(Ms. FOXX addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING MAJOR TAD HERVAS

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise before the House today to remember an American hero, Major Tad Hervas of Coon Rapids, who died in Iraq on October 6.

It's so easy for us in the hustle and bustle of life to focus on our own challenges and our own concerns, and it's only natural for us to seek as much comfort and security as we can get in our own lives. But then something happens that comes to remind us that whatever success, security or hopes that we have depends on the sacrifice and the service of those who offer their lives in defense of our Nation.

Everything that we have as Americans was built on such a foundation over many generations. Every privilege that we will enjoy in the future will be bought with the heroic way our military performs its essential duty.

In the community of Coon Rapids, Minnesota, we continue to mourn the death of Major Hervas, who truly embodied the sacrifice that makes America what it is today.

Tad graduated from Coon Rapids High School in 1979. He went on to attend the University of Minnesota-Duluth, where he began a successful career in the military.

Major Hervas served in the Air Force in the very first Gulf War. After 9/11, he enlisted in the Minnesota National Guard, joining Minnesota's great 34th Red Bull Infantry Division. He was serving his second tour in Iraq when he lost his life in Basra just a few weeks ago.

Mr. Speaker, I have never worn our country's uniform myself, but one of the greatest honors of this job is all the opportunities I have to spend with those who do so. Hollywood movies tend to glamorize military folks and portray them as super men or super women, but what I have found to be so truly amazing is that they are just regular people who achieve super things. What makes them special is their drive to answer to a higher calling and truly put service to country above everything else.

As the Scriptures affirm, there is no greater love that a person can show than to lay down their lives for their friends. Major Hervas, over a period of decades, laid aside his own comfort, security and personal plans for his family, friends and neighbors, including millions of people who never, ever knew him. We owe him a debt of gratitude that we can truly never repay.

We stand with his father, Ned, and his mother, Barb, and his whole family in grief, and we assure them that we will do everything we can to try to help ease their pain in his passing.

Basra, Iraq is a long way from Coon Rapids, Minnesota, in every conceivable way. I know that the inspiration for Major Hervas' service was a love for his country and a desire to see freedom grow around the world so that others can enjoy the same freedoms that we all do. By creating a safer place for freedom to grow, Major Hervas gave a gift to future generations of Iraqis who may be able to live better than their predecessors were able to do.

Mr. Speaker, as we get back to debating health care and other important issues here like the economy, I want to make sure, and I hope that we will all take a moment to remember Major Tad Hervas and his sacrifice for all of us. He and thousands like him make our freedom possible and our future bright. Let us do everything in our power to make this a Nation that is worthy of the ultimate sacrifice that he made.

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

(Mr. DEAL of Georgia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. HUNTER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. WESTMORELAND addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I am glad to join my colleagues on the floor this afternoon to talk about the final stages of our push to complete what has been a very long journey to bring health care to the millions of Americans that don't have it, to lower the cost of care for the millions of small businesses and families that can't afford it, and to start finally doing something about the great burden to taxpayers in this entire economy of the cost of a system that outpaces all of our competitive neighbors across the globe by a two-fold margin. We will hopefully be joined here on the floor by some other Members who are just as interested in reform this afternoon.

Let me start out by saying that this really should be a bipartisan issue. Health care reform, which touches individuals no matter whether they are a Republican or a Democrat, whether they are a liberal or a conservative, should be a bipartisan issue. We should be sitting here working together to try to pass reform. Because when it comes down to it, there is, I think, broad bipartisan agreement, both in this House and out in the public, about what the problems are out there.

We have too many people that are playing by the rules, doing everything we ask, getting the job, being employed, putting food on their table for their family and their kids but they can't get health care insurance. Five out of six of the uninsured in this country are part of a family that have at least one full-time worker.

We agree that it doesn't make sense that there are so many people who are doing everything we ask and simply can't afford to have health care insurance. We also agree that it doesn't make too much sense that doctors have seen a lot of the joy be taken out of the practice of medicine as they spend more and more of their time filling out paperwork, hiring claims managers and fighting with insurance companies.

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We need to get physicians back to the practice of medicine and get the