

and mortars across borders in Gaza at Israel's civilians over the course of 8 years. These rockets were not aimed at military targets, but the goal was to try to kill civilians and instill a sense of fear in the Israeli people.

Thousands of Israelis living within range of Hamas rockets had their whole lives changed. Locating the nearest shelter as they went around town became second nature to them. Israelis living in the time of Sderot have just 15 seconds from the time a warning is sounded to take shelter from missile attacks. Young children did not know that this way of life was not normal.

When I visited Israel last year, I had the opportunity to meet with several Israeli families from Sderot. They told me compelling stories about living under the constant barrage of terrorist activity and the challenges of raising a family under these conditions, yet their attitude was, This is our home. This is our community, and we are going to stay and surmount this adversity. The families under attack faced difficult circumstances, but they were not willing to give up on a place they considered home, nor should they have to.

Since Operation Cast Lead, things have improved for Israelis living within the range of Hamas rockets, yet we should know, the attacks still occur. Since the end of the war, there have been an additional 300 attacks. This is, of course, far less than the 3,200 attacks in 2008 but, still, 300 too many.

At the time the story in The Jerusalem Post was written, 242 attacks had occurred since the end of Operation Cast Lead. The writer said that it was both shocking and sad that her friends would say, Only 242 attacks. She asked, In what other country do you think that it's a reasonable number of rocket attacks aimed at civilian targets in 1 year? Any terrorist attack is unacceptable.

Israelis hope for peace. They do not want war or conflict with their neighbors, but peace is a two-way street. Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has reiterated Israel's commitment to peace. He has said that he is ready to resume peace talks now and without condition. He even placed a 10-month moratorium on the construction of new homes in the West Bank to jump-start the peace talks.

It is my sincere hope that Israel's willingness to make peace will be reciprocated and that the terrorist attacks will cease. But if attacks continue, Israelis must be allowed to defend their homes, and we in the United States must assist in that effort and support their basic right to do so.

HONORING CARLOS HERNANDEZ GOMEZ

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, Isaac Asimov once said, "If my doctor told me I had only 6 minutes to live, I wouldn't brood. I'd type a little faster." For our dear friend and journalist Carlos Hernandez Gomez, it wasn't a matter of if. A year ago he was diagnosed with cancer, and tragically this week, he lost his battle. He was 36 years young.

For a year, Carlos never allowed a disease destroying him inside to show outside. He wrote, he reported, he lived. He never brooded. His courageous fight showed his strength as a person and a journalist committed to the ideals of a more responsive and transparent government.

There have been countless tributes to Carlos this week, both humorous and tearful, from the interns he graciously mentored at Public Radio to the President of the United States, whom he tenaciously covered when no one outside of Springfield knew his name or how to pronounce it. That's because Carlos treated everyone like a person and made it impossible not to adore him. Whether it was a witty nickname or a spot-on impression of a politician, Carlos brought everyone down to Earth with his disarming sense of humor.

He had an encyclopedic memory and an irrepressible hunger to learn. As a political reporter, those came in handy. He could remember names and details from election cycles and court cases as if it happened yesterday. As a person, this was just his nature. He asked his nurses about their families and could recall lyrics to obscure Beatles' songs without missing a beat.

His energy was infectious, and his passion for life was unmistakable. To know him was to love him.

Carlos attended Quigley Preparatory Seminary—no relation—and then studied philosophy at DePaul University. He once said that if he wasn't a reporter, he would have been a priest. He went on to work Extra News, Los Angeles' La Opinion, the Chicago Reporter, Chicago Public Radio, the Chicago Reader, and most recently, CLTV. With his trademark fedora and thick-rimmed black glasses, he was a throwback to a bygone era of journalism.

Carlos had such an insatiable need to cram details, insight, and vivid description into his reports that his producers tried to slow down his quick delivery. While he heeded those words, he would sneak in at the very end of his pieces, seemingly reducing "Carlos Hernandez Gomez" to one syllable with a heartwarming Puerto Rican lilt. It was a trademark that became just as recognizable as his hat. His signoff was so familiar that taxi drivers who listened to him loyally on public radio and recognized his distinctive voice would often give him free rides.

He was an old-school reporter, and he was a consummate Chicagoan who loved his town like family. He loved the official facets of the job, interviewing officials, pounding the pavement, working the political and court

beats he knew so well. But he also knew that he could often get people at their most real on a barstool at the Billy Goat Tavern or over a pastrami sandwich at Manny's Deli.

He covered the famous and the infamous, from Mayor Daley to Rod Blagojevich, from mob bosses to George Ryan, the news of whose indictment he was the first to break. He wasn't afraid to criticize the status quo, but he did so with such credibility that even the powers that be, whose feathers he'd ruffled, respected him. He was determined not to dumb down the news. He would rather do a thorough story about a complicated issue than a quick, superficial hit.

His commitment to the truth was matched only by his unwavering faith, which he would tell you were one and the same. He also loved Star Wars, Italian beef, the guitar, and his beloved wife, Randi. At the hospital this weekend when someone said that he was leaving us too soon, that 36 years wasn't enough, his brother Jason and his cousin Mark agreed but pointed out that he packed more life into 36 years than many of us could hope to do in twice the time. Today, it is hard to find solace in that revelation. For his family, friends, and all of us who knew Carlos, this is no way to begin 2010.

On Sunday night, I heard some news about questionable choices made by a local candidate and smiled. This is exactly the kind of story that Carlos would have loved to cover, to find the truth and report it, meticulously and with panache.

Even in death, Carlos Hernandez Gomez will brighten our days, and for that, we tip our fedoras and lift our bowed heads back up. He will be missed.

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

U.S. SENATE ELECTION IN MASSACHUSETTS

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, in 8 minutes the polls will close in Massachusetts. I don't know whether Mr. Brown is going to win or whether he is going to lose, but one thing I do know is that this shows very clearly that the people across this country—moderate, liberal, conservative—are all concerned about what we're doing in this Chamber and the Chamber across the Capitol.

You know, a lot of people will say, Well, it's all about health care. I don't think it's just health care. I think health care's a big part of it, Madam

Speaker, but I think it's also the kind of chicanery that we're seeing going on right now.

When you buy somebody's vote with \$300 million in Louisiana and you buy somebody's vote in Nebraska, and then when the unions start squealing because they think they're going to be paying too much for health insurance, you give them a \$60 billion tax break, break on their premiums, people across the country start saying, Hey, what's going on? Is anybody up there honest? You're buying votes with taxpayers' money. That \$60 billion break that the unions are going to get is going to be made up in part from a new tax or an additional tax on prosthetic devices and wheelchairs. The people who really need help are going to have to pay higher taxes for those things because you're giving a \$60 billion break to the unions.

So, Madam Speaker, I'm not going to talk for the whole 5 minutes tonight. I just want to make this point very, very clear, and I hope my colleagues back in their offices are listening as well. There is a message being sent to Members of Congress. There is a message being sent to the Senators across the Capitol, and it is that people want honest, fair government. They don't want a socialist government. They don't want the Congress controlling their lives. They don't want to have a bureaucrat between themselves and the doctors that they go see on a regular basis. In short, they don't want that health care bill, and they certainly don't want more taxes, and they certainly don't want Members of the Senate and the House being bought off by bribes that are being given to them by the leadership in order to get their vote on this health care bill.

Regardless of what happens in, now, 6 minutes, I think that the people of this country have got the message. They don't want socialized medicine. They don't want more government control over their lives. So I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, who may not be here right now, that they will take a hard look at the polling results and what happens tonight. Win, lose, or draw, it's going to show very clearly that an awful lot of Democrats, an awful lot of Independents as well as Republicans are very concerned about what's going on here in Washington.

I hope that down the road my colleagues who have political goals in mind will take all this to heart when they start casting their vote on this health care bill when it comes back from the Senate.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the Senate or its Members.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I beg to differ. I think that as

long as I am speaking in a generic term, it's not something that's not allowed. We talk about the Senate all the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members may not engage in unparliamentary remarks toward the Senate collectively or its Members.

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

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

HONORING PRIVATE FIRST CLASS GEOFFREY A. WHITSITT

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

Mr. INGLIS. Madam Speaker, I rise to remember Private First Class Geoffrey A. Whitsitt, a 21-year-old of Travelers Rest, South Carolina, Army Airborne, serving in Afghanistan, headed for Special Forces training and hoping to become an Army Ranger.

Geoff was 2 weeks shy of his 22nd birthday when, on January 13, an improvised explosive device was detonated near the Humvee he was driving, killing Geoff, his sergeant, and seriously wounding their gunner. Some Taliban or al Qaeda operative out there might be thinking that they killed an infidel. They didn't. They failed at three levels.

First, Geoff was no infidel. He was a believer. He was a believer in America and a believer in the King of all creation, a citizen of the freest, most blessed land in the world, and a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. Geoff wanted that kingdom to come. He prayed for that kingdom to come. He worked for that kingdom to come. He served for that kingdom to come. In the end, he went there before the invisible became visible here.

Those who detonated that IED failed at another level. They think they frightened Geoff's family, his friends and his countrymen. They're wrong. My wife and I visited the Whitsitts last night. Their faith in America, their faith in the author of our salvation, the Prince of Peace, the King of Kings is undiminished. They know that other Geoff's will run the hills and woods that Geoff loved to run in the northern part of our county. They know that another Geoff will come in last in his first cross-country meet and finish 16th in the State by the end of the season.

□ 2000

They know that another Geoff will take what he learned of love and books and faith in his home school and at Greenville Tech Charter High School and volunteer to serve his Nation.

They know that another dad will take another Geoff to the banks of the

Middle Saluda River for fishing and for talks about the essence of life. Those who detonated that IED failed at a third and higher level. They think that Geoff is dead. He isn't. He lives. He lives in our hearts and minds because he is one of our heroes.

He lives in the heart of his older brother, Steven, serving with steely determination in the United States Navy.

He will always live in the hearts of his mom and dad. They loved him, led him, admired him, and gave him up for the rest of us.

Their gift reminds us of the gift of all gifts—a father who had sovereign control over all aspects of His Son's substitutionary death, and who gave Him up for us all. Geoff lives in the nail-pierced hands of that Savior, and no one can snatch him out of those hands.

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

(Mr. GRAYSON 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 Ohio (Mrs. SCHMIDT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. SCHMIDT addressed the House. Her 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. MCCLINTOCK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

ISSUES OF THE DAY

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

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, it is an honor again to be here on the floor of the House of Representatives to talk about the issues of the day and talk about changes that have happened in our country over the course of the last year due to the leadership of President Obama and the Democratic Congress.

I know in today's world, in today's media-driven world where we like to talk about and have fights about different issues and let those fights kind of permeate society, sometimes it is very difficult for us as leaders in the country to talk directly to our constituents and to the American people about some of the changes that have been put in place.

If we look at just a little over a year ago, in the fall of last year, October of 2008, the difficulties facing our country, on the economic side, the collapse