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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MARCHANT).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 12, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable KENNY MARCHANT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

WHY ARE WE STILL IN AFGHANISTAN?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I had the privilege and the humbling experience of going to Walter Reed at Bethesda. It is a magnificent medical complex, and our young men and women deserve to have that kind of treatment. I was so impressed.

In visiting the wounded and thanking them for their service, I encountered a 22-year-old lance corporal who was

wounded during his second tour of duty in Afghanistan. Standing there in his room with his mother, he asked me why are we still in Afghanistan. I looked at his mother and I looked in his face and I said, I don't know. I said there are a few of us in the House trying to get our troops back home before the 2014-2015 deadline.

Mr. Speaker, I have beside me a photograph of a triple amputee, a soldier, with his wife, who has lost both legs and an arm. Yesterday I noted to the doctor who was escorting me around that I saw more double amputees than ever before. I saw some down in the rehab center, and I saw those in their rooms that have not gotten to that point yet because of their severe wounds. He said, Congressman, the number of double amputees is going up every week, every month, and it will continue to go up.

My question to the leadership of the House: Why don't you speak out, both parties, and call on Mr. Obama to bring our troops home before 2015?

It's kind of ironic. I represent the Third District of North Carolina and we got hit pretty hard, like most of the States all of the way up to Vermont, by the hurricane. It was so ironic last week that we passed a continuing resolution that had \$2.65 billion for FEMA to help those who have experienced disasters like wildfires in Texas to tornadoes to hurricanes—\$2.65 billion—but yet we found \$118 billion to spend in Afghanistan and Iraq. Where does that equal itself out? The American people get shortchanged while we send \$118 billion to Afghanistan and Iraq. It makes no sense.

That's why it's so ironic that the American people have given all of us in Congress an 18 percent approval rating. And here we will be passing trade bills today to send jobs overseas. That'll be great. The American people are tired and fed up.

But what bothers me more than anything are those young men and women

over at Walter Reed who are 20, 22, 25. I met a gunnery sergeant who's in his early thirties, both legs gone, trying to learn to walk.

I hope that the leadership in the House and Senate will join JIM MCGOVERN and many of us in both parties who are speaking out about getting our troops home before 2014-2015. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to those people who are protesting Wall Street, whether I agree with you or not, you have a right to protest. Join us in protesting the war in Afghanistan. We are beginning the 11th year. And as the 22-year-old lance corporal said to me, Why are we still there? I couldn't answer him. I don't know. I don't know. Karzai gets \$10 billion a month, and the people who've lost so much in the hurricanes and tornadoes, they get a measly pitance to what Karzai gets.

Please, American people, join us and put pressure on the House and Senate, and let's bring our troops home.

Mr. Speaker, my close is this: I 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 ask God to bless the House and Senate that we will do what is right in the eyes of God for his people today and his people tomorrow. And I ask God to give wisdom, strength, and courage to President Obama that he will do what is right in the eyes of God for God's people today and God's people tomorrow. And three times I will ask from the bottom of my heart, God please, God please, God please continue to bless America.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair reminds Members to direct their remarks to the Chair.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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