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House of Representatives

The House met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PALAZZO).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 13, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVEN M. PALAZZO 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 11:20 a.m.

AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I'm back on the floor again to talk about bringing our troops home from Afghanistan.

I had the privilege and the honor to be at Walter Reed in Bethesda on Tuesday, and I talked to so many of our young men and women who have lost legs and other parts of their body and just continue to wonder why in the world the leadership of the House does not join together and call on Mr.

Obama to bring our troops home before 2014-2015.

Mr. Speaker, I'm holding up right now from The Wall Street Journal a rather lengthy article that says, "Afghan Opium Output Surges." That is real encouraging; our young men and women walking the roads of Afghanistan, getting their legs blown off, and yet the drugs in Afghanistan are surging. That's great news, I guess, for the dealers.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to that, on October 5 in a poll, it says one in three vets see Iraq-Afghanistan wars as a waste. And I read: "A new opinion survey says one in three U.S. veterans of the post-9/11 military believe the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are not worth fighting. Most of the vets polled by the Pew Research Center also think that after 10 years of combat, America should be focusing less on foreign affairs and more on its own problems."

I'm pleased to see Ms. WOOLSEY from California on the floor because she has joined many of us in the Republican Party and her Democratic Party in continuing to grow the opposition to staying in Afghanistan until 2014-2015.

Well, you might say, You keep saying 2014-2015. So I want to make reference to testimony of former Defense Secretary Gates. This was on February 16, 2011, and it reads: "By the end of this calendar year, we expect there to be less than 100,000 troops to be deployed in both of the major post-9/11 combat theatres, virtually all of those forces in Afghanistan.

"That is why we believe that beginning in fiscal year 2015"—Mr. Speaker, I'm going to read that one more time: "That is why we believe that beginning in fiscal year 2015, the United States can, with minimal risk, begin reducing Army active-duty end strength by 27,000 and the Marine Corps by somewhere between 15,000 and 20,000. These projections assume that the number of troops in Afghanistan will be signifi-

cantly reduced by the end of 2014, in accordance with the President's strategy. If our assumptions prove incorrect, there's plenty of time to adjust the time and schedule of this change."

Mr. Speaker, what that means is the end of 2014 becomes 2015; 2015 becomes 2016.

I have a poster here that ran in the Greensboro paper in a Sunday edition. They had put in their paper a letter from JIM MCGOVERN and me calling on the President to bring our troops home before 2014. The title says, Mr. Speaker, "Get Out." And the soldiers are bringing a flag-draped coffin off a plane.

I don't know how much longer we have to continue to spend \$10 billion a month to prop up a crook named Karzai. I just made reference to a Wall Street Journal article that opium surges. It's a corrupt country. It's never going to change. We might as well just face the fact that we won, bin Laden is dead, al Qaeda has been dispersed all over the world, and it's time to bring them home.

Mr. Speaker, with that, I'm going to be handing out to anyone that comes to my office a picture of marines carrying a flag-draped coffin, and I say call on the leadership all the way to the White House, to the House, to the Senate, and ask them to bring our people home.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will ask God to please bless our men and woman in uniform. God, please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. God, in Your loving arms, hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And I will close by asking God to please bless the House and Senate. I will ask God to give wisdom, strength, and courage to the President. And three times I will ask, God please, God please, God please bless America.

□ 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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