

investment here to the United States. We should be looking at what we can do to empower entrepreneurs to revitalize our economy and restore our job market.

Mr. Speaker, attacking private enterprise won't create a single job here or elsewhere. In fact, the danger of isolationist, mercantilist rhetoric is that it can spawn bad policy that further stifles innovation and economic growth.

If we want to have a constructive debate that leads to policies that will encourage growth and job creation, we need to look at the facts, and the facts are very simple. Engaging globally through exports, imports, outsourcing, in-sourcing, and all the many ways of tapping into the dynamic, competitive worldwide marketplace is the best way to get Americans back to work.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues not to succumb to the politically expedient but economically damaging rhetoric of isolationism.

#### STOP MILITARY RAPE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to implore this body to finally take meaningful action to end the epidemic of rape and sexual assault in the military. For 25 years, Congress has held dramatic hearings on this issue. It has rocked the military branches. Committee members have beat their chests and demanded answers from decorated generals and military leaders who testified. Congress demanded reports. These reports were provided and are now gathering dust on shelves around Washington, D.C.

The time for reports is over. Now it's time for action to solve this problem.

The solution is to take the reporting and investigation of cases of rape and sexual assault out of the military chain of command and place them in a separate office independent of the chain of command with the authority to investigate and prosecute within the military.

Last week I called for the House Armed Services Committee to hold a hearing on the widespread sex scandal at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. No hearing date has been set.

The charges of rape, assault, and sodomy leveled against six instructors at Lackland are astonishing. One instructor is accused of raping or assaulting 10 victims, and another confessed to having sexual relationships with another 10 victims of his own. Yesterday we learned that 12 instructors are under investigation for sexual misconduct with trainees and that a criminal investigation is ongoing on four different Air Force bases now.

Like many cases of rape and sexual assault, the perpetrators are not denying that they engaged in sexual misconduct; they simply contend that the sex was consensual. It comes down to

the word of the accuser and the accused, the instructor against the trainee. In the military, this usually means the perpetrator gets off or receives a disproportionately small punishment, and the victim endures an arduous and humiliating legal process with little sense of justice at the end.

Every day more disgusting news is unearthed about Lackland. Everyone wants to know: What is being done about it?

This scandal is remarkably similar to the Aberdeen scandal that rocked the Army in the 1990s. Fifteen years ago, a Republican-led Senate held a hearing on a sex scandal at the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland.

□ 1010

The Army brought charges against 12 instructors for sexual assault on female trainees under their command. Nearly 50 women made sexual abuse charges, including 26 rape accusations. One instructor was cleared. The remaining 11 were either convicted at court martial or punished administratively.

In an interview about the scandal, then-Assistant Secretary of Defense Kenneth Bacon said:

The issue here is the relationship between a trainer and a trainee. The Army regulations bar intimate relationships between trainers and trainees, between drill sergeants and trainees, because they are fraught with misuse of power, with misuse of influence, or the possibilities of misuse of power and influence.

This may be hard for some in the civilian world to relate to, but it is the constant reality within our Armed Forces. It is ingrained in our military servicemen and -women to follow the orders of their chain of command and never disobey.

Here is an excerpt from a 1996 interview with an Army recruit who was raped by her instructor at Aberdeen. The victim, a South Carolina native who joined the Army in December of 1995 as a way to pay for college, said her instructor once ordered her to the bathroom. "A few minutes later he came in behind me, and that's when he started to tell me to do certain things," she said. "To disrobe?" Asked the reporter. "Mm-hmm," she said. She said she never screamed, never said "no," only that she was traumatized. "When you had sex in the bathroom, was it something you wanted," the reporter asked. "No," Bleckley said. Nothing has changed.

Last month in Texas, two victims were asked if they resisted when their Air Force training instructor lured them into a dark supply room to have sex. "No," they said. They froze.

What is happening at Lackland Air Force Base is no different than what happened at Aberdeen Proving Ground 15 years ago. After that scandal, we heard assurances about how seriously the crimes were taken and how "we're going to get to the bottom of this problem." Yet clearly the military is unable to police itself on matters of rape and sexual assault.

I called for a hearing into the Lackland scandal because we need to know once and for all why instructors have been permitted to abuse power so freely. And we need to know from top brass that the phrase "zero tolerance for sexual assault in the military" is a fact, not a talking point.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 12 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

#### PRAYER

Reverend Greg Lafferty, Willowdale Chapel, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, we bless You this day for You are good. You make Your Sun rise on the evil and the good; You let Your rain fall on the just and the unjust.

You give all people everywhere life and breath and everything. Yet we recognize that in this great Nation, we are among the most blessed.

You've granted us freedom and abundance, safety and security, the rule of law, and neighborly love.

Guide us, Lord, that we may steward these good gifts for the benefit of all. And today, Lord, grant this House of Representatives the wisdom, humility, and diligence to govern well, that in some measure good might overcome evil, beauty might outshine ugliness, and love might undo hate. And in this, Lord, may You be honored and may our Nation dwell in deeper peace and safety.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. MALONEY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.