

THANKING THE PEOPLE OF THE 12TH DISTRICT OF FLORIDA FOR THE HONOR TO SERVE IN THE UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. CANADY of Florida. Mr. Speaker, some time in the next few days, the last vote of the 106th Congress will be cast. For those of us who will not be returning next year, that vote will mark the end of our legislative career.

Mr. Speaker, 260 years ago, Samuel Johnson wrote of those "points of time where one course of action ends and another begins," times when "we are forced to say of something, 'this is the last.'"

For those of us who will soon end our course as Members of Congress and begin some new endeavor, the sense of the honor it is to serve here is felt more keenly now than ever before. As I approach the point in time when I am forced to say with the vote I cast that this is the last, I wish to express my thanks to the people of the twelfth district of Florida for giving me the opportunity to serve as their representative over the last 8 years.

What a great privilege it is to serve in this House and to participate in the great American enterprise of government by reflection and choice. What an awesome privilege it is to be chosen to come from the communities we represent to this House and to take on the responsibilities imposed by our oath of office: the responsibility to support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; the responsibility to bear true and faithful allegiance to that Constitution; and the responsibility to well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which we enter. I will always be humbled by the knowledge that the people of the district I represent had the confidence in me to entrust me with these important responsibilities.

God has blessed our Nation in many ways. It has been a single blessing for the people of the United States to have a Constitution, a Constitution which has indeed secured for us the blessings of liberty.

Among the chief objects of our Constitution was to establish justice. The work of this House involves many mundane issues of passing significance. Much that takes place here will not long be remembered, but when we act to further the constitutional goal of establishing justice, we deal with matters of enduring significance.

As Members of this House, we can come to stand and to speak in this Chamber. We can rise in this place to speak against injustice; and when truth stumbles in the public square, we can sound a warning that in our life as

a people, as well as in our individual lives, nothing is more important than the truth. We can sound a warning that justice is in peril whenever the truth is not respected. As Members, on occasion we have the privilege to stand here in defense of the powerless and to speak for those who cannot speak for themselves. The value of the opportunity to do such things is inestimable.

To all those who have made it possible for me to serve as a Member of this House, I owe a great debt of gratitude, a debt of gratitude which I do not have the words to express as I would like. I can simply say, thank you for allowing me to be your Congressman.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION

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

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to talk for just a few minutes about an issue that is critical not only to my district, but to communities and children all across this country. This issue is school construction. I am pleased that several of my Democratic colleagues have agreed to join me this evening to talk about school construction and other priorities in the Democrats' education agenda. I shall restrict my remarks mostly to school construction.

Today is October 25. The fiscal year started October 1; and yet, the Republican leadership of this House has failed to do its work and get the work done for the American people. To put it in school terms, they are tardy and they are incomplete. They have failed the test of leadership for the American people. Today, the House passed a stop-gap spending measure to keep the government from shutting down for one more day. This is the fifth time this year that we have had to pass one of these bills just because the leadership, the Republican leadership has failed to get the people's work done.

Specifically, they have failed to act on important educational priorities, like the bipartisan school construction bill that is desperately needed in communities all across this country. The bill would provide \$25 billion in school construction bonds to build new schools, renovate them, and to relieve overcrowding, reduce class size, and enhance the opportunity for discipline in the classroom and improve education by making sure that all of our children get the kind of individual attention that they need to learn.

Mr. Speaker, I have been working with my colleagues on both sides of the political aisle to pass this bill since I first came to this people's house 4 years ago. We have gathered more than 228 members on H.R. 4094; and yet, the Republican leadership has refused to simply bring this bill to a vote.

As this Congress crawls to its conclusion, more than 3 weeks late, the educational funding bill is the very last priority of the Republican leadership. While education languishes under the threats of cuts and the current congressional leadership has loaded up the appropriations bill with special interest pork, we are still waiting.

Last week, I told this body about a Senator from Arizona's observation that the leadership's pork has swelled each of the spending bills that have been passed. For example, he pointed out that the transportation appropriation contains some \$700 million in transportation earmarks for the Chicago Metropolitan Transit Authority in the home State of the Speaker of the House. The transportation appropriations bill also earmarked \$102 million for a bridge across the Mississippi River in the home State of the majority leader of the other body. A senior Republican appropriations member got \$1.5 million to refurbish something called the Vulcan Statue in Alabama.

Today, I was shocked to read in the paper that one of the Republican appropriation members describing the raid on the U.S. Treasury by the chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations. The House Republican described items like \$1.25 million for repairs to a church, \$176,000 for a Reindeer Herders Association for somewhere in southeastern Alaska. That Republican concluded by saying, "You need a cargo plane to carry all of this money back."

Mr. Speaker, each of these projects may very well merit Federal support. These projects may not be the big spending Federal pork that they appear to be. I am not an expert on these items. But as a former State superintendent of the State of North Carolina, I know that our local neighborhood schools need our help. Our schools are bursting at the seams, and our communities do not have the resources to build or repair and provide the quality schools that our children need. As a result, children are stuffed into overcrowded classrooms, substandard facilities and rickety trailers that they should not be in.

My Republican colleagues like to talk about block grants, but when it comes to their own special projects, they are not shy about adding earmarks, and all of us in this body know what earmarks are. They are directed projects to be spent specifically for that purpose. If they were not so important, why did they not just put them in the transportation bill and let them decide at the local level how to spend the money. When it comes to roads, airports, bridges and prisons, special interest pork is powerful when it comes to powerful politicians.

Mr. Speaker, we should be able to come up with common sense legislation to build a few schools for the children in this country, and I think H.R.

4094 is that common sense bill. Mr. Speaker, I call on the Members to pass it and pass it now. Prisons ought not to be nicer than our schools.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important to remind my colleagues that the bills we passed here are much more important than the abstract arguments about outlays and budget authority. These bills reflect our values, and these bills demonstrate what our priorities are.

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF SERVICE IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, last evening, rather late into the night, a number of my colleagues came here to the floor to do a Special Order celebrating or recognizing my retirement, I am not sure which. But it was certainly something that I appreciated, and I am not going to try and discredit the fine things that were said. All of those were very much appreciated.

But I did want to recognize my colleague from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS), who arranged for the group to come to the House Chamber; the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. PORTER); the gentlewoman from Illinois (Mrs. BIGGERT); and on the other side of the aisle, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. STENHOLM); the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. COSTELLO); and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI). I appreciate very much their comments and the recognition of the years that I have spent in this body.

I would like to say that serving in the United States Congress was the fulfillment of an ambition that I probably first thought about when I was in high school, and serving on the Committee on Agriculture and being a chairman there was part of that dream that I had for many years. So my almost 10 years in this body has been very fulfilling, very rewarding, and certainly a highlight in my life. The ability that I have had here to grow and to learn and to develop I think is something that one will take with them forever.

Mr. Speaker, I wish that I could say this to everyone in this country: The people in this House are some of the finest people that a person could meet anywhere, on both sides of the aisle. I cannot think of one person that I have served with in this House that I did not like, that I did not find had merit to what they said and believed in what they fought for here.

Unfortunately, the American people I do not think understand how we come here and how we fight and how we talk and stand for issues that are important to us, issues that we believe in. And even though we may disagree to a

great extent, I never questioned somebody's motives or judgment, and that is, to me, a great honor. Everyone that I have served with here is a good person, and they are serving this country and our system.

I often say to many people, do not complain about the harsh rhetoric in the House. We never see tanks, we never see troops in the streets of this country because we fight our issues out right here on the floor of the House, and every society has to have a safety valve and it has to be a place for those issues to be vetted. This is that place. It is a great institution.

Mr. Speaker, I will always be proud to have been a part of this House, to have served in the Congress of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, thank you to you, thank you to every Member of this House.

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INDONESIA

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, once again I rise to share my concern over the continued bloodshed in Indonesia. I continue to receive reports that, despite statements of the Indonesian government in Jakarta, the violence, destruction and murder continues in Ambon.

The people living in the Maluku are pleading for the international community to get involved and bring them relief, both in terms of humanitarian aid and physical protection.

Reports from Indonesian NGOs state that refugees are not only neglected, but are harassed.

Recently, at least 32 people were killed in a day-long attack by Muslims on an outlying village in Ambon, the capital of the Maluku Islands. Eyewitnesses stated that the Jihad attackers were aided by government soldiers during the attack on the village of Hatiwe Besar.

Many who were killed died violently. Most of them, including a 10-month-old infant, were shot and their bodies were tossed in the fires of houses burned by the attackers.

In a different account of recent violence, families in one village that refused to fight were killed and their bodies were found deposited in the wells in the village.

Yet another account tells of women and girls who, at the sound of gunfire, "were desperately clawing at the small yellow buses, hammering on the side for the driver to stop and let them on. As we slowed down, they tried to board our vehicle. I had never seen such fear in people's faces, people who knew the sound of automatic guns meant that

the army was in action and that death was not far away."

More eyewitness accounts reveal that even 3 weeks ago Jihad warriors were still moving by boat into the Maluku from Java and surrounding islands.

One man said, "We desperately need weapons to defend ourselves. Nobody cares about us. Nobody offers to help us. We cannot trust the army because they are often supporting the Jihad fighters. The politicians and authorities talk a lot, but their words and promises are not translated into action."

Many people who witness the violent attacks confirmed that, although the Indonesian Army was present during the attacks, either nothing was done to protect the villagers or some of the soldiers actually joined the aggressors in shooting at the escaping villagers.

Unfortunately, even people such as the current leader of the People's Consultative Assembly, Dr. Armien Rais, openly supported calls for Jihad or an Islamic holy war against the Christians and other religious believers in Indonesia.

However, there are other Islamic leaders who clearly state that this jihad should not be happening. "A.T. Zees, a Muslim leader in Minahasa, told a crowd of Protestant, Catholic, Hindu, and Buddhist leaders Sept. 14 that the jihad fighters should leave . . . In Islam, jihad is a holy war against all evils—not murdering Christians, destroying their houses and churches, robbing, and doing other contemptible deeds," he said. "A number of peaceful Muslims have tried to protect Christians."

Why does the world not pay attention to the continued violence in which reportedly over 4,000 people have been killed and over 350,000 are now refugees?

When the three U.N. workers were killed in East Timorese refugee camps, the whole world raised their voices and condemned the killings—rightly so. Yet, thousands have died in the Maluku, but instead of outrage, silence has reverberated.

Church leaders and other community leaders are pleading for the international community to send aid and protect the people against death from the Jihad fighters. Church leaders say that, if the U.N. will not send peacekeepers, the least we ask is that ships be kept ready to evacuate the surviving Christians. Otherwise they will be forced to choose between Islam and death.

Mr. Speaker, a whole population has been targeted and is slowly being wiped out or forced out of their homeland. Why will the Indonesian Government not act so that the killing stops? Where is the outrage in the international community? Something must be done, or we will see the destruction of an entire society.

Both Christians and Muslims from this area want peace. They have lived in peace for many years and in friendship with their neighbors.