Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I do have an inquiry of the majority leader. I do join the gentleman in the fervent hope we can complete our business for the week by Tuesday night. In the event that it was necessary for us to convene on Wednesday morning, could we convene at 9 a.m., in the hopes that maybe we could wrap up our business on Wednesday morning and not continue into Wednesday afternoon? Mr. ARMEY. If the gentleman from Texas will yield further.

Mr. BONIOR. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the inquiry. The gentleman makes a very good point, and I have to say, I think in full confidence, that as a matter of respect for our colleagues, should we have to provide an unanimous consent request, I would guess that the gentleman would hear a resounding silence when asked if there were any objections. I appreciate the question.

Mr. SHERMAN. I thank the majority leader for doing everything possible to accommodate us.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for California.

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business of the House adjourn today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Platts). Under the Speaker's announcement policy of January 3, 2001, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

AMERICANS FACING UGLY THREATS AT HOME

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

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, as America launches its grand military operations to launch a global war on terrorism, some Americans are facing additional ugly threats here in the home front. They are not from foreign terrorists but, regrettably, they are fellow citizens.

Since the attacks on New York and Washington last week, many Arab Americans, Muslim Americans, Sikhs, and other Americans of South Asian heritage have become the targets of terrorism, bigotry and violence based solely on their faith, their heritage, or their choice of traditional clothing.

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World Trade Center, and one a convenience store owner named Balbir Singh Sodhi was shot dead last week in Phoenix by an angry gunman calling himself a Sikh. Other Sikhs have been facing harassment and humiliation in our airports, and every American should deplore this backlash. It is morally repugnant.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, Indian and Pakistani Americans died in the attacks, and they have become targets of retaliation in the aftermaths. In Dallas, a Pakistani Muslim grocer named Waqar Hassan was shot dead in a hate crime on Saturday.

In New Jersey, businesses owned by Indian Americans have been spray painted with crude epithets, warning them to leave town. Such intimidation is reminiscent of the KKK or Nazi Germany. It has no place in modern America, and all of us must stand with our neighbors in the face of such ignorance and hatred.

I am reminded of the remarks that were made on the floor of the House last Saturday morning between 12:45 and 2 a.m. in the morning when the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) said on this floor in a comment or remarks that she made on the resolution, we had to condemn this kind of bigotry, that she was locking arms that weekend with religious leaders in the Chicagoland community, rabbis, ministers, priests, imams and others, and walking through the streets of her community in solidarity against this kind of repression and intimidation.

Mr. Speaker, mosques and temples have been vandalized, business owners shot and killed, school children taunted, and women attacked with stones and knives. As we have just heard from the gentlewoman from Louisiana (Mr. COOKNEY), in this House a colleague referred to the head covering some Sikhs or Muslims wear out of respect for God as a diaper, and his spokesman went on to say that all turban-wearing airline passengers should be taken aside and questioned.

Mr. Speaker, this runs directly against the very ideals that make our country great. It runs against the ideals of equality of tolerance of diversity and, yes, our own democracy. We are a Nation built by immigrants, a Nation of strength, not weaker for the many people and cultures who proudly call it home, and we must stand united as one people in this difficult time and this time of crisis.

So I say to my friends and colleagues here in this House and in the Senate, when this happens, join with your brothers and sisters of different faiths and races and nationalities and ethnicities and bind together and show your support for those who have been singled out unjustly.

America will prevail against terrorism, and we will prevail not just through the strength and the courage of our military but through the enduring strength of our most cherished principles. Only if we stand by our ideals and our neighbors will we successfully defend the Nation that we love.

HEALTH CARE FOR MILITARY RETIRES

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

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for the opportunity to speak to the people tonight about the terrible tragedy that occurred a week ago Tuesday, about the terrible loss of life for not only people who serve in the military at the Pentagon, the folks that worked at the World Trade Center, the people on those airplanes, but the firefighters who lost their lives trying to save the lives of others. I think it has caused us all to reflect and hopefully appreciate more those people who work every day to look out for us.

It also brings to mind the importance of rewarding those people who serve us, treating them well, paying them well, giving them the best possible equipment because as the President spoke last night, they will be called upon in the very near future.

One of the promises that has been made to those people for decades, certainly since World War II and in the Army recruiting those years all the way up to 1991, was a promise of free lifetime health care if they served their country honorably for 20 years or more in the military.

Mr. Speaker, I regret to inform my fellow citizens that because of the failure of an agreement between the Department of Defense and Medicare, those military retirees who were hoping to take that benefit to a military treatment facility will probably be turned away on October 1.

I say I regret that because, as we probably know, more than half of our Nation’s military retirees have chosen to retire near a military treatment facility. That is their family. We as a Nation asked them to leave their parents, leave their loved ones to go to places like Vietnam, Persian Gulf, Panama. We are getting ready to ask them to go to places like Afghanistan.

In doing so, for many of them, they lose the ability to maintain their nuclear family, so their family becomes the Air Force, the Marines, the Army, the Navy.

Since they were 18 years old, they were told they could go to a military treatment facility; but now because of the draw-down in the Department of Defense, the Department of Health and Human Services has made the decision that for those who have reached the age of 65, you cannot go to the base hospital anymore. You have got to find a private sector doctor. You have got to leave the country. I think that is wrong.

Again, over half of our Nation’s military retirees intentionally bought a home near a base so they could use that base hospital, and now the same Nation that can provide $16 billion in foreign aid, the same Nation that can waive the budget rules to bail out the airlines, give their corporate executives 20 and $30 million a year to run those companies into the ground, the same Nation that can spend money left and right, waiving the rules anytime they feel like it for those who really have not earned it to this extent are going to tell our Nation’s military retirees that because you do not fit quite right into the budget we cannot find the money to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I am asking for an amendment that has already passed this House overwhelmingly about a year ago right now. There were 406 of my colleagues who voted to say to our Nation’s military retirees that they could continue to use that base hospital and that Medicare is going to reimburse that base hospital for their care. After all, the sailors, the soldiers, the Marines, the airmen paid their Medicare taxes just like everybody else; and it is their choice to go to a military treatment facility, then that is where they ought to be able to go.

Unfortunately, the law now blocks them from doing so. We sent that bill over to the Senate; and unfortunately the Senate chose to take our language that says they have to do it and said to Medicare, they may do it, they can reach an agreement if they feel like it. Well, the bureaucrats at Medicare did not feel like it; and so now our soldiers, our airmen, our sailors, our coast guardsmen, they are the ones that have to suffer.

Mr. Speaker, I am asking for a real simple thing on the defense authorization bill next week. I am asking for an amendment that provides for an opportunity for this House to speak in favor for fulfilling the promise of lifetime health care to our Nation’s military retirees and a Nation that is going to find $320 billion to defend itself that just last week spent an additional $40 billion on defense, one would think we could find a hundred million or so to do that for our Nation’s military retirees.

I am particularly disturbed, Mr. Speaker, that you have put the word out that if I so much as ask for that amendment, the Speaker will pull the defense authorization bill. Let me say that again. If an elected representative of the people of south Mississippi so much as asks for a recorded vote on an amendment to fulfill the promise of lifetime health care for our military retirees, the Speaker of the House says he will not allow that bill to take place at all.