

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent for 2 additional minutes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot entertain that request.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

□ 2330

HEALTH CARE FOR MILITARY RETIREES

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

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Mississippi.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi. I would like to thank my colleague from Hawaii and my other colleagues for bearing with me.

Mr. Speaker, the point I want to make is, I wish this Member had the power to keep some bills from coming to the House floor. I wish I could have kept NAFTA from coming to the floor because it has lost so many jobs for my fellow Mississippians and every American. I wish I could have kept portions of that tax bill that saw to it that half of the \$1.2 trillion in benefits went to the wealthiest fat cats in America, not the average Joes.

Mr. Speaker, if you can find the time and waive the rules to give the fat cats a tax break, you can find the time and you can waive the rules to let our military retirees go to the base hospitals. I am asking for an up or down vote. Be a decent human being and give us that vote.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

REGARDING ASPECTS OF SEPTEMBER 11 EVENTS

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues. I am due on a TV broadcast that starts rather soon. I know this sounds rather late, but it is prime time back in my own California.

I rise to address several aspects of the recent tragedy, the recent outrage. I want to associate myself with the statements of the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BONIOR) when he came to this floor and talked about how important it was that we treat everyone with dignity and with respect, and decried several incidents involving discrimination against those of the Muslim, Sikh and Hindu faiths.

Let us, though, also applaud the 99.999 percent of Americans who in fact today are treating their fellow Americans with tolerance and respect. I had a large public meeting in my district in

which one of the two leaders of our Islamic community commented that, yes, we should all treat everyone with respect and, yes, he was chagrined by some recent reports. But he only wondered how much worse it would be in any other country in the world for any other minority group. And, in fact, in our own country in the 1940s, we did not act with the same level of respect and tolerance that we are showing today.

Let us remember that America is not anti-Muslim and not anti-Islam. In fact, the last three military engagements of the United States were for the purpose of defending Muslim people. We restored the independence of Kuwait. We then went on to save the Bosnian Muslims from genocide. And then we bombed a Christian country, Serbia, because of what Serbia tried to do to its Albanian Muslim minority. And now American and NATO troops are engaged in Macedonia for the purpose of achieving a just result for the Albanian Muslims who are a minority in that country. So let us not only condemn every act of intolerance, but let us applaud an overwhelming majority of Americans who are acting with tolerance even at a time when emotions run high.

Let me comment on those who suggest that we modify our foreign policy in the Middle East in order to placate Osama bin Laden, the Taliban, and other extremists. These calls do no honor to the greatest generation and its response to Pearl Harbor. After Pearl Harbor, there were some who suggested that all we had to do was change our foreign policy in the Far East, allow Japan to conquer all of China, and then we could avoid conflict. Instead, the greatest generation made the greatest sacrifices to win the greatest victory. It would be a dishonor to that generation for us to act any differently now that we have suffered the greatest loss of American life on American soil since our Civil War, a loss of life two to three times what we suffered at Pearl Harbor.

But not only is appeasement dishonorable, it is also, in this case, impossible. Because what motivated Osama bin Laden was a hatred for the fact that American troops are somehow "defiling" the soil of Arabia by being stationed there in defense of the Saudi and Kuwaiti regimes. Remember that if those soldiers were not there, Saddam Hussein would control not only Kuwait but also Saudi Arabia, also the Emirates, and he would control 70 percent of the world's oil reserves. But even a withdrawal of American soldiers from the Arabian peninsula would not be enough. It would just whet the appetite of Osama bin Laden, who will not rest until every Arab leader who is even moderately pro-American is displaced and killed, including the entire Saudi royal family.

But even that would not placate bin Laden, who would demand not what Arafat is demanding with regard to Palestinian-Israeli relations but the total destruction of 5 million Israelis. But even that would only whet his appetite. Bin Laden will not rest until every girl in every part of the world is kicked out of school, until the concept of female illiteracy is enshrined worldwide. I do not think that appeasement of bin Laden is possible. But even if it were, if you can change American foreign policy in the Mideast by an act of great terror, then what about those who disagree with our policy in Colombia or Kosovo, Macedonia, Sumatra, Sri Lanka or Taiwan? If we establish the policy that terrorists can change our foreign policy, then every terrorist will try to control the only superpower by an act of super terror.

We must stand by our friends in the Middle East and show that we cannot be controlled by terrorists.

□ 2340

ASSISTING AIRLINES AND AIRLINE EMPLOYEES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PLATTS). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, many times the legislative process proceeds as the American people watch, and there is sometimes much confusion. There is no obligation for any of us to take the added time that this House sometimes does not allow to be able to discuss a very important subject.

Because I come from an area that is heavily impacted, as I would imagine most of my colleagues, by the legislation that we have just passed, I believe it is important to discuss extensively in the brief time that I have, or at least broadly, the legislation that dealt with the Air Transportation System Stabilization Act that was debated today.

For the first time it appeared, since the heinous acts of September 11, 2001, that many Americans might say they were back to business as usual. There was a divided debate, I consider it a healthy debate, on the approach that we should take for something that all of us agreed with, that is, to provide assistance to the airline industry pursuant to the Federal actions that were taken after the September 11, 2001, heinous terrorist actions.

We, the United States Government, grounded the airlines of America. Certainly we have the responsibility to compensate them for Federal actions that resulted in large losses of revenue. At the same time, let me say to the American people that that grounding also took into account the safety of