

medal, we witnessed a tremendous spirit of devotion and community pride. The communities of Fredonia and Dunkirk threw a fund raising drive to get Jenn's parents to Beijing, and held a rally to send her off to the Olympics. The effort of this devoted community are yet another reason why I am proud to represent Western New York.

I applaud her parents, Mark and Sue Stuczynski, and wish them the best as they share this achievement with their daughter. They should be proud of having raised one of Western New York's greatest ambassadors.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate Jenn, her parents, her family, and Jenn's hometown and her community of Fredonia as they celebrate this wonderful accomplishment.

ENERGY POLICY

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, my fellow colleagues, sometime in the next week the House is going to be asked to make some decisions on energy policy. But I think we need to reflect on the last few years, and that is, the United States went into Iraq for one reason and one reason only, oil. And when we did that, the price of oil didn't go down, it went up.

That the oil companies are running our energy policy is not a secret in this country. They have kept oil off the market while they jacked up the price. They have helped to restrain the supply while the price has skyrocketed and the American families paid for that. So to give the oil companies more drilling rights is simply a guarantee that we are going to pay more for oil, not less. Wake up, America.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCNERNEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE LAST DOUGHBOY—THE LONE SURVIVOR

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, it was 90 years ago this November that World War I was over; the 11th month, 11th day, 11th hour, it ended.

Frank Buckles was in that war and is the last of his generation. Of the 4.7 million Americans that were mobilized during the First World War, Frank Buckles is the very last doughboy.

His remarkable life began in Bethany, Missouri, where he was born in 1901, during the administration of President McKinley. At the tender age of 16, Buckles lied his way into the United States Army when he enlisted to fight in the First World War. He was rejected by several recruiters, but he was not deterred until he finally found a recruiter that would take him. He joined the United States Army, and he drove an ambulance in Europe during World War I.

Mr. Buckles served in the First World War, and was held then as a prisoner of war by the Japanese for 3 years during World War II.

At the incredible age of 107, Frank Buckles has lived through 46 percent of our Nation's history. Today, he resides on the family farm he purchased near Charlestown, West Virginia, purchased after the first war.

Mr. Buckles is one of the forgotten veterans of a forgotten war. He is the lone survivor of World War I.

During World War I, nearly 116,000 United States warriors gave their lives for this country. 4.7 million served, and they changed the tide of that stalemate war and ensured victory for the Allies. When the doughboys landed in France, our allies were impressed with their fighting spirit, and their tenacity stunned our enemies. When they returned to the United States, there were no parades or major memorials established in honor of them. They returned to the Roaring '20s, and America didn't want to talk about the war because America had decided to move on. Then the depressions of the 1930's hit, and the service of the veterans became a distant memory. Then World War II came, and America never got around to honoring the World War I vets.

Today, we have three memorials to our major wars on modern history on the National Mall. They were built in order: Vietnam Memorial, then the Korean Memorial, and then the World War II Memorial. They were built in reverse order. But there is no national memorial, Mr. Speaker, for the World War I veterans. This was the war that was supposed to be the war to end all world wars.

World War I marked the beginning of the history of modern war. It was the war that brought America into the forefront as a world power. It was the first war to be fought on three continents. And World War I was the first industrialized war with the introduction of major technology in weaponry like machine guns, tanks, artillery guns, and airplanes.

In the 3-week long Meuse-Argonne Offensive, the largest U.S. engagement, 18,000 Americans were killed. Approximately 1,000 doughboys a day were killed. Some are still buried in Europe in graves known only by God.

Many of the servicemembers who survived the tolls of war and came back

home to the United States had already contracted a deadly flu virus while they were in France, and many of them died in the United States after the war from that flu.

World War I should not be forgotten. In World War I there were no photographs taken, and after the war no blockbuster movies were made to tell the story.

So today, I was honored to be with Frank Buckles at a press conference at the D.C. World War I Memorial on the National Mall.

Since 1918, the men and women who served in World War I have gone without a national memorial to recognize their service to our country, and it is time that this changed. That is why I have introduced the Frank Buckles World War I Memorial Act. This bill would restore the District of Columbia's World War I Memorial and expand it so it serves a location on our mall for all those that served in World War I.

After 90 years of no national recognition, it is time these doughboys were given the thanks that they are due. After all, Mr. Speaker, they were the "fathers of the greatest generation."

When they went off to war in World War I, they sang the song of George M. Cohen, "Over There," and it went something like this:

"Over there. Over there. Tell the world that the Yanks are coming. The Yanks are coming, and we won't be back until it is over, over there."

Mr. Speaker, it is time to honor the lone survivor of World War I and the other doughboys that went to war over there in the forgotten war, World War I, and build them that national monument on the mall.

And that's just the way it is.

THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION MUST ADDRESS NATIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES

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

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, we need to begin planning now for the issues our country must focus on when the new President takes office.

This will be the first presidential transition to occur during a time of war in many years. In addition, the next administration will face enormous budget pressures and national security challenges that will require sustained spending and the partnership of the Congress. Let me take this opportunity to discuss what I believe will be the top defense challenges for our next President.

First, we must develop a clear strategy to guide national security policy. Since World War II, the United States has been the indispensable Nation. But our Nation's ability to sustain this

leadership role is jeopardized because we lack a comprehensive strategy to advance U.S. interests.

The next President must collaborate with Congress and the American people to formulate a new, broadly understood and accepted strategy to advance our national security interests. The next Quadrennial Defense Review of the Department of Defense must translate this strategy into a clear roadmap for organizing the Department and setting priorities in the next 4 years.

Second, we must restore America's credibility in the world. The full range of threats to our national security can only be addressed through the consistent and determined efforts of multiple nations working together. The new President will set the tone, but the U.S. can only lead and help reinvigorate international institutions if other nations believe we are credible, just, and intend our efforts to serve interests beyond our own.

Third, we must refocus our efforts on Afghanistan. The situation in Afghanistan is deteriorating. Violence by the Taliban and al Qaeda is rising. Attacks against the coalition are increasing. And, safe havens in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region are thriving. The genesis of the 9/11 attack was in Afghanistan, and any future attack on our homeland is likely to originate in Afghanistan or in the border region with Pakistan.

Until our country is prepared to lead and act decisively and persistently, problems in Afghanistan will continue to fester. Our efforts in Iraq have diverted resources and focus away from the war in Afghanistan. We must refocus our efforts, and work with the international community to provide the necessary leadership, strategy, and resources to Afghanistan to ensure success in that mission.

Fourth, we must responsibly redeploy from Iraq. The men and women of our Armed Forces have done a magnificent job in Iraq, but the citizens of both the United States and Iraq agree that it is time for the U.S. military to come home. Our challenge is to manage that redeployment and to ensure that it reduces further strain on our military without jeopardizing the gains made in Iraq.

We must continue to protect U.S. citizens in Iraq, pursue terrorists, and help train and equip the Iraqi Security Forces. U.S. combat forces must be freed up to begin the process of resetting, rebuilding, and also refocusing in Afghanistan. The United States will face new challenges to our security and our interests in the future, and we will need the military units that are in Iraq to be returned to their full capability to effectively address them.

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Fifth, we must recruit and retain a high-quality force. Our forces are the

most highly trained and educated in the world, but we face serious challenges to maintain the quality of force we have today.

The cost to recruit and retain servicemembers has skyrocketed in recent years. And the tendency of Americans to serve in uniform has significantly declined as fewer young people are exposed to the military experience. Finding men and women who are physically and mentally qualified and willing to serve is an ongoing challenge.

Sixth, we must ensure a high state of readiness for our forces. Our troops have been engaged in combat operations for nearly 7 years, and it has strained our military to the breaking point. Restoring readiness will take a significant investment of time and money, easily exceeding \$100 million, but it must be done if we are to expect our military to respond ably when we need them. We are already at risk. Either we fix our readiness problems immediately, or else risk emboldening those who would seek to do us harm.

Seven. We must develop a more comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy. With the al Qaeda and affiliated groups still presenting a major threat, the United States must apply "lessons learned" and be open to the advice of our allies. The key is to fight smarter and not necessarily harder by more effectively utilizing a range of tools beyond just the military-led, kinetic approaches to counterterrorism.

The new administration must more aggressively pursue strategic communications strategies, intelligence and policing work, targeted development assistance, and a range of other counterinsurgency and irregular warfare tools.

Eight, we must strike a balance between the near-term fixes and long-term modernization.

Each of the military services will have to address the fundamental imbalances in their current plans to simultaneously modernize and reset equipment, grow the number of ships in our Navy.

Nine, we must reform the inter-agency process.

And, ten, we must deal with the looming defense health care crisis.

With increasing defense health care costs, difficulties in recruiting and retaining medical professionals, and the overwhelming demand placed on the medical system as it attempts to support thousands of men and women returning from combat, as well as their families, there is a perfect storm brewing, and in the next few years, that storm will be upon us.

These and other national defense challenges will confront our Nation in the months and years ahead, and Congress and the administration must work together on a bipartisan basis to seriously address these issues. The security of the American people is at stake.

H.R. 6662: THE FALLEN HERO COMMEMORATION ACT

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, throughout the history of our Nation, members of the United States Armed Forces have selflessly given their lives to secure and protect the freedoms Americans enjoy today.

Today, members of the United States Armed Forces are serving our Nation in Iraq, Afghanistan and many other parts of the world.

Without a loved one serving in our military, it is sometimes possible for Americans to overlook the sacrifices that have been made and continue to be made by members of the Armed Forces on behalf of our Nation. It is for this reason I have introduced H.R. 6662, the Fallen Hero Commemoration Act. This bill would permit media coverage of military commemoration ceremonies, memorial services conducted by the Armed Forces, and arrival services for members of the Armed Forces who have died on active duty.

Currently, the Department of Defense does not permit arrival ceremonies for, or media coverage of deceased military personnel returning or departing from Ramstein Air Force Base or Dover Air Force Base.

Mr. Speaker, this ban on media coverage has not always been the case. Many of my colleagues in the House will remember that during the Vietnam War, images of arrival ceremonies and the flag-draped caskets of our servicemembers appeared regularly on TV and in newspapers.

In 1985, the media covered a ceremony at Andrews Air Force Base for members of the Armed Forces killed in El Salvador. It was not until 1991, during the Persian Gulf War, that the Department of Defense stopped permitting media coverage of the returns of the remains of fallen servicemembers.

However, in 1996 the media was granted access to Dover Air Force Base to photograph the arrival and transfer ceremony for the remains of Commerce Secretary Ron Brown and 32 other Americans killed when their plane crashed in Croatia. President Clinton was present to receive the flag-draped caskets.

In 1998, the media also photographed an arrival ceremony at Andrews Air Force Base for Americans killed in the bombings of U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya. The Department of Defense restated the ban on media coverage at Dover Air Force Base and Ramstein Air Force Base in 2001.

However, in 2002, the media was permitted to photograph the transfer of flag-draped caskets at Ramstein Air Force Base that carried the remains of four United States servicemembers killed in Afghanistan.