

clear. While Democrats support a strong military and support using our military when necessary, we do not support squandering it.

My concern, Mr. Speaker, is that we are starting to see visible signs of strain in our military. I do not want to see it break. My colleague, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN), will speak to these issues momentarily.

The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is that all Members should support our men and women in uniform, we should not deploy them wantonly, and we should give them the compensation, recognition, and tools they, as well as their families, need and deserve. I know I speak for all Democrats in saying we honor their service.

HOUSE DEMOCRATS SUPPORT OUR TROOPS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio, Mr. Speaker, I would like to start off by thanking the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), our leader on the House Committee on Armed Services, for his very thoughtful remarks.

I too rise this morning, Mr. Speaker, to talk about how House Democrats feel about our national security. My colleague, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), talked about how Democrats are unanimous in supporting our men and women in uniform. I wholeheartedly agree with that. The gentleman from Missouri also made the point that we are perilously close to breaking the force, and I agree with that observation too, and that is what I would like to focus on here this morning.

Extended global deployment is straining our forces. Fifteen hundred American troops have been killed in Iraq so far, despite the President's claim a year ago that our mission was accomplished. The implications of these decisions and these remarks is that our recruiting is suffering. The Marine Corps missed its recruiting goal for January. The Army missed its goal for January and February. Items not funded in the Marine Corps request include \$13.9 million for recruiting.

It also goes without saying that the war in Iraq and Afghanistan is using up our equipment at an accelerated rate. Current projections are that it would take the Army at least 2 years to recapitalize its current equipment. Unfunded requirements include: In the Army, \$443 million for small arms; \$544 million for the Stryker armored vehicle. The Marine Corps list includes \$145 million for ammunition; \$104 million for light armored vehicles.

Mr. Speaker, these are the very things that our troops need most in Iraq and Afghanistan, yet they have been relegated to the Services' unfunded priority list.

The Air Force, Mr. Speaker, is projecting a \$3 billion deficit in its operations and maintenance budget for fiscal year 2006. Navy leaders directed their regional commands to absorb a \$300 million reduction in base operating funds as a result of the war costs. The Army's shortfall in base operating support is projected to be \$1.2 billion.

Mr. Speaker, forcing the military services to absorb costs of this magnitude is important for several reasons. The budget request for our military services is not adequate for war and general operation. We are about to pass a 2005 supplemental and we will need a 2006 supplemental.

Democrats believe the administration should be honest with the American people about the real cost of the war. Is the administration doing everything it can to address equipment shortages, personal protective gear and the armored vehicles for the troops? Figures in this budget suggest that the Department of Defense may be robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Does the administration have a plan for success in Iraq and to pay the costs of this war? Repeated supplementals is no way to go about doing this country's business. We would not have to make such difficult decisions with regard to our troops' safety if Republicans had not insisted on tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans.

Administration witnesses have not been able to tell us what the benchmarks for success are in Iraq. They do not know when Iraqis can protect themselves. They cannot describe how they intend to integrate the Sunni, Shia, and Kurd factions into those security forces. They cannot describe the new government's plan to ensure inclusion of these groups into the body politic. They cannot tell us when essential services will be fully restored. They cannot tell us how much Iraqi oil revenue is helping to pay the cost of providing security in Iraq, which was promised to us before we went into this war. It has been 2 years since we invaded Iraq, and we should, by now, have a strategy for success.

House Democrats support our troops. We work to ensure they have the equipment and training and to ensure that they succeed in Iraq and Afghanistan. We support taking care of their families here in the States while they are deployed. We cannot do that in a smart, cost effective way that protects the taxpayers without a plan for success in Iraq and honest budgeting for the military departments here at home.

We also need to mention the veterans. The pending budget resolution proposes \$798 million in cuts to mandatory programs. It is unconscionable, I say to my colleague from Missouri, that we are going to have all these troops coming back to the United States and not have the veterans benefits that they need, deserve, and that they have earned.

NATIONAL BIKE SUMMIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we come to the well of the House often to speak of weighty and contentious issues. This morning, I speak on an important but a lighter note, because this week we have hundreds of cyclists from all over America who are coming to Capitol Hill as part of the National Bicycle Summit.

Fifty-seven million Americans ride bicycles every year. Thirty-three million rode bikes in the last month. And on a daily basis there are approximately one-half million bicycle commuters.

The bicycle industry is an important part of our economy. There are over 6,000 bicycle shops, 2,000 companies that deal with bicycle manufacturing, and tens of thousands of employees. There is a large and emerging industry of bicycle tourism. Yet there is a significant area of difficulty that the cyclists will bring to Capitol Hill pleading their case. Half the Americans are not satisfied with their cycling environment. And although cycling makes up about 7 percent of the total trips, it represents a disproportionate number of the fatalities, and it receives less than 1 percent of Federal funding.

There are significant areas where bicycling could make a difference, not just in terms of transportation. We find in the area of increasing focus on our health habits a growing concern about obesity. Public health officials agree that everyone should have 30 minutes of physical activity every day, and children need an additional 20 minutes, at a minimum, of vigorous activity several times a week, yet 78 percent of our children fall short of this goal.

Well, those of us in Congress can give some good news to the bicycle advocates we will be meeting with. The near unanimous passage of the transportation legislation last year continues the legacy of transportation funding in enhancing the community infrastructure. We have seen, under the ISTEA and the most recent legislation, the overall funding raised from less than \$5 million a year in 1988 to over \$423 million in 2003.

There is an opportunity to enhance the cycling environment with the important Safe Routes to School program that will be able to fund and plan routes that allow our children to be able to walk and bike safely to school. There are other opportunities that we might talk to our friends about. I have introduced, with my colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY), the Bicycle Commuter Act to extend transportation commuter benefits for those who bike to work. There is the Conserve by Bike program, wherein the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) is seeking to explore additional ways to understand and communicate

the energy savings associated with promoting bicycling.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, our friends from around the country will be joining us this week for the Bicycle Summit. I would urge my colleagues who are not part of the over 160 members of the Congressional Bike Caucus to join this week, to get their official Bike Caucus membership pen, and to join us for a ride at 2 p.m. on Friday with the members of the Bike Caucus and the Bicycle Summit around Washington, D.C..

Mr. Speaker, this is an opportunity for us to do something in a very "bike-partisan" way that will make America healthier, make our families safer, and enhance economic security while we do something that enriches the life of us all.

THE NATION'S FISCAL CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from California (Mr. CARDOZA) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. CARDOZA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize our Nation's fiscal crisis and budgeting process that, frankly, defies logic.

As we consider the budget this week, let us keep a few facts in mind:

First, our Nation's debt is out of control. We are expected to run a \$427 billion deficit in 2005, with more deficits projected well into the future. This is \$600 billion if you count what is being stolen from Social Security trust funds.

Second, we do not even have a firm grip on where our money is going. For example, at the Department of Defense, only 6 of 63 departments are able to produce a clean audit. That is less than 10 percent.

Third, the Bush budget omits so many major expenses that the budget is virtually a sham. The administration has essentially cooked the books using Enron-style accounting.

So here we are trying to pass a budget that hides half our problems. Already we know that foreign holdings in the United States, as far as United States debt, are on the rise and that the trade deficit is totally out of control.

Mr. Speaker, I hope this Congress will wake up and restore fiscal responsibility. The Blue Dog Coalition's 12-step reform plan is a good place to start. It requires a balanced budget, stops Congress from buying on credit, and puts a lid on spending. The time to stop digging is now.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 10 a.m.

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 17 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 10 a.m.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Florida) at 10 a.m.

PRAYER

The Most Reverend Edward J. Slattery, Bishop, Diocese of Tulsa, Oklahoma, offered the following prayer:

O God, Creator of us all, in Your love You have invited us to address You as Father; and therefore, Father, we call upon You and ask You to bless the members of our Nation's House of Representatives.

Bestow upon our elected officials full gifts of wisdom and insight, courage and perseverance; that their capacity to know the truth might be deepened and their desire to choose the good strengthened.

Turn their hearts to You, Father, and move them each day to pray for Your guidance, that they might lead our Nation in peace, preserve our cities in harmony, and guard our people and their liberties.

Grant them so to love justice and fairness that the laws they enact this session might promote tolerance and equality, bring dignity and respect to the poor, and a message of hope and healing to Your world.

Hear us, Father, we pray. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HENSARLING 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.

WELCOMING THE MOST REVEREND EDWARD J. SLATTERY, BISHOP OF TULSA

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

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to introduce our guest chaplain who so thoughtfully and graciously led us in prayer this morning.

The Most Reverend Edward J. Slattery serves as the third Bishop of the Diocese of Tulsa. Bishop Slattery was ordained a priest on April 26, 1966 for

the Archdiocese of Chicago by the late John Cardinal Cody.

During his time in Chicago, Bishop Slattery served as Pastor of St. Rose of Lima Parish. This was an inner-city Hispanic parish on the south side of Chicago.

Additionally, Bishop Slattery served as President of the Catholic Church Extension Society, a funding agency for the American home missions.

In late 1993, Pope John Paul II notified then-Father Slattery that he had decided to name him Bishop. On January 6, 1994 the Holy Father ordained 13 men as bishops. Among the 13 men was one American, Edward J. Slattery.

A week later, Bishop Slattery was installed as the third Bishop of the Diocese of Tulsa at Holy Family Cathedral.

By the grace of God he continues to serve over 80 parishes in 21 counties, as a shepherd for the People of God in eastern Oklahoma. It is an honor to have Bishop Slattery as our guest chaplain and I know my colleagues join me in welcoming and thanking Bishop Slattery for being with us here today.

SEEDS OF PEACE

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the administration for their strong stand in bringing peace to the Middle East and to all regions in the world.

Several weeks ago I displayed an editorial drawing showing where the seeds of peace had been planted thanks to our work in Afghanistan and in Iraq. Syria is withdrawing from Lebanon. Iraqi citizens have voted in its first democratically held election. India and Pakistan are cooperating over Kashmir. The Israelis and the Palestinians are making strides towards settlement of their long-standing disputes. Libya has surrendered its nuclear arms. And now as we turn our sights on Iran and North Korea, we urge them to join other nations in surrendering these dangerous weapons.

Only through this administration have these strides and gains been made possible. Only through the firmness of this presidency have we finally stood up to terrorists worldwide and said enough is enough.

Finally, leaders of the Muslim community have stood up and rebelled against Osama bin Laden, commemorating the one-year Spanish train bombing.

Finally, people are starting to recognize freedom and peace do have a cause, they do have a price. The cost is loss of life of American personnel. But if peace comes to the world, those sacrifices would have been worth it.

STOP FUNDING A CROOKED WAR

(Mr. KUCINICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1