

There was no objection.

EMINENT DOMAIN DISASTERS

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, you can never satisfy government's appetite for land or money. They always want more.

Today the Federal Government has taken and controls over 30 percent of the land in this Nation. States and local governments and quasi-governmental units have taken and control another 20 percent. Tremendous amounts of land in my home area of east Tennessee have been taken by numerous Federal agencies and departments. Not all of this is bad, but people in government have never been sensitive enough about taking other people's property. They just do not seem to realize how much this can hurt a person or a family. In fact, very few people get concerned about this until it is their land or their home that is being taken.

Fortunately, this has not happened to me or my family, and I am not on some personal vendetta, but many people in east Tennessee have had this heartbreaking experience happen to them. These people were for the most part people like many of my ancestors, good, intelligent, hard-working people, often poor, often with not a lot of education, but people with common sense, and often smarter in reality than the elitist do-gooders who came in and used the power of the Federal Government to take their homes.

To show how much this can hurt, I would like to read a letter that was published in the Knoxville News this past Sunday from a man who no longer lives in my district, but whose family home was in my district. This is the letter from John Webb of Gainesville, Georgia, a man whom I have never met.

He wrote, "In the spring of 1964, there was a storm that hit Marion County, Tennessee, that resembled the recent storms of Katrina. It left behind people who were devastated and lives that were changed forever." He says, "I was only 12 years old at the time and was on a camping trip with the Boy Scouts when I was told that I had to go to the hospital to see my father. There was a good possibility that he would not live through the night.

"The name of the storm was the Tennessee Valley Authority; my father had a stroke during a battle with the government agency which had condemned his farm of 110 acres on the Tennessee River.

"A panel of judges decided during the next 12 months of deliberation that the offer made by TVA to purchase my father's farm for \$240 per acre was indeed too low and that it should pay the outrageous sum of \$400 per acre.

"Court records show that the TVA experts stated under oath that this

property had no present or future value as anything but farmland."

Mr. Webb continues, "Even as my father lay in bed completely paralyzed on his left side from the stroke, unable to be present at proceedings, the court system granted TVA its wish, using the power of eminent domain.

"With the simple stroke of a pen, my father's farm was gone, completely against his will.

"Left behind was a woman with two teenagers to raise, a husband who required 24-hour medical care at home, and a future that looked as bleak as those victims of the hurricanes."

"For the next 3 years," Mr. Webb writes, "we learned a lot about bed sores, bed pans, and what it was like for a once proud man to lose his health and his humility.

"My father finally succumbed to pneumonia, and my mother lived for another 20 years with the aid of family, friends and Social Security.

"I still wonder about how all of our lives would have been different if it had not been for the power of politics and money. John E. Webb of Gainesville, Georgia."

Mr. Speaker, if we do not wake up and realize how important private property is both to our freedom and our prosperity, we are going to destroy our Nation. Politicians love to create parks, and this sounds so good, but when we continue to take more and more private property, we have to continually raise taxes on the property that remains in private hands, and we drive up prices on that remaining land. More and more young people cannot then afford homes, or they have to be jammed together in high-rises, condos or homes on postage-stamp-sized lots. In addition, the government cannot and does not take as good of care of land as private owners do.

We need to put more people in office who understand how hurtful it is when government takes property and takes people's homes and farms, and we need to put more people in office who will pledge to take better care of the land government already has and stop government land grants and give poor and lower-income people a chance to own property and appreciate this very important part of the American dream.

□ 1645

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 2744, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2006

Mr. PUTNAM, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-257) on the resolution (H. Res. 520) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 2744) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural

Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

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

(Mr. SCHIFF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 5 minutes at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

URGING CONGRESS TO MAKE WISE BUDGET CHOICES

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, since 2000 this Congress has racked up more than \$3 trillion in additional new debt, and by the year 2008, we will cross the \$4 trillion mark. Why? It is trying to do something that no other Congress and no other President has ever tried in American history. It is trying to fight two wars with four tax cuts. This Congress has served as an ATM machine to the special interests, showering them with billions of tax breaks and tax shelters and handouts of the hard-working tax dollars of the American people.

Yet suddenly our Republican friends are finding themselves as fiscal hawks. In fact, right now the House is working to slash more than \$50 billion from education, health care, environmental programs, all that are important investments for the American people. Why? So they can do another \$70 billion in tax cuts for the wealthiest 1 percent in America.

At the same time that these so-called fiscal conservatives are complaining about the deficit, they are trying to add a total of another \$100 billion in tax cuts to the special interests.

I ask my colleagues, are these the right choices for the American people? We are now paying \$445 billion to date for the war in Iraq, \$20 billion to rebuild Iraq. We just have a spanking new dam in Mosul, Iraq, with all of the levees, yet we cut the Corps of Engineers here in the United States, which affected the levee in New Orleans.

In fact, we built 110 primary health care centers in Iraq, vaccinated 3.2 million children in Iraq. This Congress cut \$10 billion from Medicaid, cutting Medicare programs, cutting back community health care clinics in the United States and training of doctors.

In Iraq, we have rehabilitated 2,700 schools, trained 36,000 secondary teachers. What do they do in America? They cut \$806 million from our schools and education programs, \$6 billion from our Pell grants and other higher education programs.

We funded 3,100 community development projects in Iraq; yet the community development project investment fund here in the United States, cut by \$250 million.

We are investing in Iraq and trying to provide Iraq a future that we are denying the American people. I have no problem. We made a decision on Iraq. We have an obligation, but we do not have an obligation to cut back on America's future. There is no choice in the sense of American children and their future playing second fiddle to those who are in Iraq.

If you go through American history, every President in the middle of a war has thought about how do I make sure America is stronger when we come back from that war and it ends? Abraham Lincoln, in the middle of the Civil War, thought of the land grant college systems. President Roosevelt during the middle of World War II thought of the GI bill and passed it 11 months before the war came to an end. President Eisenhower, on the heels of Korea, funded the Interstate Highway System that built America and made it what it is today. President Kennedy, during the struggles of the Cold War and Vietnam, envisioned a man on the moon.

What does this President and what does this Congress offer America during the middle of the war on terrorism? Cuts in education, cuts in health care, cuts in our Corps of Engineers, cuts in our development and investments here in America.

Every President, every Congress thought about America after the war, thought about how we built a brighter future. They thought about not only what we did overseas, but how we were going to do it here at home and make sure that every American had a brighter future. Only this President and this Congress, because of their careless and reckless policy of trying to fight two wars and fund it with two cuts that has added \$4 trillion to the Nation's budget.

Today we are thinking about cutting \$806 million from our education investments, cutting \$6 billion from our investments in higher education, eliminating investments in America's Amtrak system, cutting back our investments in the Corps of Engineers' program which invests in all of our infrastructure projects like what happened in New Orleans. No other President and no other Congress has thought of a future in which America is less after the war than it was before the war.

What is going on now? Families are facing an energy crisis where energy is now running about \$3 a gallon. Home heating costs are going to go up 50 percent this winter. Inflation has increased at its fastest rate in 15 years.

Hundreds of thousands of fellow citizens have lost everything in the gulf coast. Health care costs are running up at close to 15 percent, nearly four times inflation. Educational costs and higher educational costs are running at about a 10 percent annualized increase over inflation.

These are difficult times, and these times are when people look to their fellow citizens and their community and their government. What is this Congress doing? Rather than building up America, this Congress is cutting back on the investments we need to make America a stronger place tomorrow.

We can do better than we are doing today. We can make a change in the right choices for America. We should find ways to balance the budget without doing it on the backs of our children.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for Congress to change its tune. It is time for Congress to begin to represent the people's interests and the people's House rather than the special interests.

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

(Mr. BURGESS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order at this time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF CINCINNATI, OHIO, NATIVE MARINE CAPTAIN TYLER SWISHER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mrs. SCHMIDT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of a brave soldier who died in Iraq nobly defending our freedom and in the service of our country. Marine Captain Tyler Swisher was killed in a roadside bomb attack near Al Amariyah in Iraq on Friday, October 21, 2005.

Tyler is remembered as someone who overcame so many obstacles in his life. He was a small child, and as a child he struggled with a learning disability, but he would take on his school work with a gritty style of persistence, and he succeeded. He devoted himself to his work. Tyler's tough and determined style was something that he exhibited throughout his life.

In high school his small frame just hovering over 100 pounds did not keep him from doing what he loved, playing football, and while he spent much of his time at Mariemont High School on the sideline, he was still in the game.

He joined the Marines because he loved his country. He soon loved the Marines and chose to make it his career. He loved his country so much, he chose to serve not one, but three tours of duty in Iraq, just as in his youth he would not quit. He was so proud to be a Marine, but more proud to be an American. He really loved his country.

My community continues to be blessed with people like Tyler who unselfishly give their time and, in some cases, their life so that we may continue to enjoy the freedoms we hold so dear.

He loved his family. Tyler is survived by his wife Stephanie; his daughters Ashleigh and Madison; and a son Jacob; and his parents, who live in Pierce Township. All of us mourn Tyler's loss, and we are grateful, eternally grateful, for his braveness and his valor and his valiant service to our country.

I ask my colleagues to join me tonight and each and every night to pray for his family in their time of need. May Tyler rest in peace.

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

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim my time out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

IRAQ AND THE REPUBLICAN DISSENTERS

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, this morning we learned that Harriet Miers has withdrawn her nomination to the United States Supreme Court. The stated reason had to do with executive privilege for legal advice she had given to the President that she did not want to reveal, but I do not think you need to be an expert tea leaf reader to see that public support for Ms. Miers' appointment, particularly among conservatives, was scarce, actually absent. As a result, Ms. Miers decided to step aside.

Perhaps there is a lesson here that we can apply to another initiative, an initiative of the White House that is rapidly losing public confidence. Two-and-a-half years into the Iraq War, it could not be clearer that the President's policy is one with tragic consequences. It is time for the President to admit his mistake and change his course. Over 2,000 of our brave soldiers are dead. That is 2,000 too many.