

HOW THE 20-YEAR WAR STARTED

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, how did the 20-year war get started? It had been long assumed that the United States Government, shortly before Iraq invaded Kuwait in August of 1990, gave Saddam Hussein a green light to attack. A State Department cable recently published by WikiLeaks confirmed that U.S. Ambassador April Glaspie did indeed have a conversation with Saddam Hussein one week prior to Iraq's August 1, 1990, invasion of Kuwait. Amazingly, the released cable was entitled, "Saddam's Message of Friendship to President Bush." In it, Ambassador Glaspie affirmed to Saddam that "the President had instructed her to broaden and deepen our relations with Iraq." As Saddam Hussein outlined Iraq's ongoing border dispute with Kuwait, Ambassador Glaspie was quite clear that, "we took no position on these Arab affairs."

There would have been no reason for Saddam Hussein not to take this assurance at face value. The U.S. was quite supportive of his invasion and war of aggression against Iran in the 1980s. With this approval from the U.S. Government, it wasn't surprising that the invasion occurred. The shock and surprise was how quickly the tables were turned and our friend, Saddam Hussein, all of a sudden became Hitler personified.

The document was classified, supposedly to protect national security, yet this information in no way jeopardized our security. Instead, it served to keep the truth from the American people about an event leading up to our initial military involvement in Iraq and the region that continues to today.

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The secrecy of the memo was designed to hide the truth from the American people and keep our government from being embarrassed.

This was the initial event that had led to so much death and destruction—not to mention the financial costs—these past 20 years. Our response and persistent militarism toward Iraq was directly related to 9/11, as our presence on the Arabian Peninsula—and in particular Saudi Arabia—was listed by al Qaeda as a major grievance that outraged the radicals who carried out the heinous attacks against New York and Washington on that fateful day.

Today, the conflict has spread through the Middle East and Central Asia with no end in sight.

The reason this information is so important is that if Congress and the American people had known about this green light incident 20 years ago, they would have been a lot more reluctant to give a green light to our government to pursue the current war—a war that is ongoing and expanding to this very day.

The tough question that remains is was this done deliberately to create the justification to redesign the Middle East, as many neo-conservatives desired, and to secure oil supplies for the West; or was it just a diplomatic blunder followed up by many more strategic military blunders? Regardless, we have blundered into a war that no one seems willing to end.

Julian Assange, the publisher of the WikiLeaks memo, is now considered an enemy of the state. Politicians are calling for drastic punishment and even assassination; and, sadly, the majority of the American people seem to support such moves.

But why should we so fear the truth? Why should our government's lies and mistakes be hidden from the American people in the name of patriotism? Once it becomes acceptable to equate truth with treason, we can no longer call ourselves a free society.

MAKING AMERICA FIRST

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the President for his message last night, and I especially would like to focus on one aspect of the message.

The President indicated to us that sitting together was important. It has great symbolism, and it's a positive thing; but he also indicated to us that this is not the final step in the process. Sitting together can never, never replace working together. So it is what we do today—last night he said tomorrow—sitting together tonight, he indicated, but working together tomorrow; this is where we have to focus our energies and efforts. We must work together. And if we're going to work together to fulfill what I believe is a great challenge—and that is America first, to make America number one—if we're going to make America first, America number one, we absolutely have to focus on education.

Education is important because the jobs, as we go forward, will require much more education than we have been allowed to have and have good jobs in the past. We must focus on education to have the good jobs that we want. And jobs are a priority for all of us.

Some statistical information is available to help us better understand why we need to focus on education.

Currently, about 25 percent of our students are completing high school. Over the next 10 years, half of all new jobs will require more than a high school education. If we compare our 15-year-olds to 15-year-olds around the world, we find that we are 20 when it comes to science literacy; China is number 13; Korea 3. The U.S. is number 28 when it comes to mathematics literacy among our 15-year-olds; China is number 1; Korea number 3. The U.S. is

ranked 16 when it comes to reading literacy among 15-year-olds, China is number 1, Korea number 2.

We must focus on and maintain an educated workforce. An educated workforce requires that we understand that we have to have quality teachers and that we are going to have to make sure that these teachers will invest in education themselves because they see it as a means by which they can have a livelihood.

I understand that most teachers don't teach simply because they want money. They teach because they want to be with children, and they want to see children learn. This is important. But teachers have to feed their families, too. I support making sure that teachers get a decent day's pay for a hard day's work. I support teachers and making sure that the teachers are available to educate our children.

If we're going to have America first, we have to have a first-rate health care system. We had a great sickness-care system. We were among the best when it came to sickness care. We spent a hundred billion dollars a year treating persons in emergency rooms, in facilities outside of primary care facilities.

But if we're going to be number one, we had to move away from the \$2.5 trillion that we were spending annually on health care, which translates into \$79,000 a second—17.6 percent of GDP—and by 2018 it would have become \$4.4 trillion per year—more than 20 percent of GDP—\$139,000 a second.

To have America first, we've got to educate our people and we've got to have them receive quality health care. Quality health care can never be underestimated because of the way it impacts the workplace.

America can be first. I stand for America first. I love America. And I stand here today to say to my colleagues across the aisle that I am willing and ready to reach out and work with you to help make America first because if America is first, not only is the United States a better place, but the world would be a better place because of the values that we hold so near and dear to us.

We believe in liberty and justice for all. We believe in government of the people, by the people, for the people. We believe that every person ought to succeed on his merits or fail on his demerits. That's what America gives to the world—the notion that there is a fair system that allows anyone to rise to the top, to reach the zenith of life, the best that life can offer. We take this to the world, and I want America to be first so that the world can benefit from what America has to offer.

Thank you, Mr. President, for your message. And I assure you I have taken the challenge that you have accorded us. I will work with others to make sure that we get beyond the symbolism of sitting together and move to working together which will make the difference in the lives of the people in this country and, indirectly, the people around the world.

God bless you, Mr. President, and God bless the United States of America.

TRIBUTE TO CORPORAL ERIC M. TORBERT, JR., U.S. MARINE CORPS, OF LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with a heavy heart to remember and honor Corporal Eric M. Torbert, Jr., of Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

On December 18, 2010, Eric was killed by an explosion while conducting combat operations in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan.

In 2007, Eric displayed his willingness and enthusiasm to serve and defend his country by enlisting in the United States Marine Corps at Parris Island, South Carolina. He was then assigned to the 1st Combat Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, California. He deployed to Afghanistan in October in 2010.

Eric understood what it means to live a life with purpose. He served a cause greater than himself. He served the cause of liberty. Eric gave his life to bring hope to all freedom-loving people as did many marines before him in the 1st Marine Division.

Activated aboard the battleship Texas on February 1, 1941, the 1st Marine Division is the oldest, largest, and most decorated division in the United States Marine Corps with nine Presidential Unit Citations. Eric has joined this storied tradition of service and excellence.

Before deploying to Afghanistan, Eric married Marcelle L. Sebastian on June 12, 2010. Marcelle supported Eric when he joined the Marine Corps in 2007 and throughout his entire career. Her steadfast care and sacrificial love for Eric and our Nation deserve our sincerest gratitude.

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Eric was a leader. He was a caring husband, a friend, a son, a brother, and a devoted member of a local band. He leaves behind family and friends proud of his service and his distinguished career in the military.

Eric earned a number of awards during his service in the Marine Corps, which demonstrates his commitment to our Nation and his professionalism as a marine. His personal service awards include the Purple Heart, Combat Action Ribbon, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal, and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

May God grant to Eric's family the peace that surpasses all understanding. We grieve their loss. Our prayers and most heartfelt gratitude go out to them, and I offer them my deepest con-

dolences. I am humbled by the dedicated service and sacrifice of their loved one.

Eric's valor and service cost him his life, but his sacrifice will live on forever among the many dedicated heroes this Nation has called to defend freedom. He joins the revered ranks of the many thousands of men and women throughout American history who have given their lives to secure the freedom of the people of the United States of America and the freedom-loving people around the world. He is an inspiration to us all. *Semper Fidelis.*

SUPPORT BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, last night the President spoke to Congress and to the Nation about the need for increased funding for biomedical research, both to improve the quality of life of our Nation's citizens, and to generate new economic investment. He is right, and we must heed his call on this initiative.

Cancer research is a vital part of our Nation's biomedical research enterprise, but our Federal commitment to this promising field has not kept up with the rapid pace of scientific innovation. In fact, when you take into account medical inflation, our funding commitment to the National Cancer Institute and the National Institutes of Health has actually been cut over the past 7 years. We can, and must, do better.

We will only see new, promising cancer therapies that increase survival and life quality through a sustained, multi-year commitment of Federal funding for cancer research. There is only one failure in cancer research. It's when you quit or you're forced to quit because of lack of funding. When Federal cancer funding is cut or not sustained over the long term, we lose not only promising cancer research, but we also lose talented cancer researchers.

President Nixon recognized this 40 years ago when he signed the National Cancer Act. At that time, less than 50 percent of cancer patients lived 5 years beyond their diagnosis. Today, with advances in early detection, healthy lifestyles, and new cancer therapies, the survival rate is 65 percent for adults and 80 percent for kids. That would not have happened without a significant investment in Federal research funding. The National Cancer Act led to a continued, sustained investment in cancer research that funded the research community to develop a new generation of smart drugs that help thousands of cancer patients every single day.

Smart drugs are highly targeted to attack fast-growing cancer cells without damaging healthy cells. Drugs like herceptin for breast cancer, avastin for lung cancer, gleevec for gastrointestinal stromal tumors inhibit or

block cancer cell growth. In fact, less than 10 percent of cancer deaths are attributed to the original tumor. It's when cancer metastasizes, when it grows, when it advances to a vital organ the cancer becomes lethal.

All this could not be more important to the community that I serve in western New York. Buffalo, New York, gave the Nation and the world cancer research when the New York State Cancer Laboratory was first established by Dr. Roswell Park in 1897. Roswell Park Cancer Institute continues that mission today. And the research put out by doctors has led to many breakthroughs that alleviate suffering due to cancer every single day.

Roswell Park is one of 40 National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer centers around the country that are the engine for our Nation's war on cancer. An important part of Buffalo and western New York's future relies upon the success of research completed at Roswell and companies at the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus coming to market, creating new small businesses, and high-quality jobs. If we don't have a sustained investment in cancer research moving forward, the promise of that research and the jobs it will create will be lost. The time to act is now. Cancer is estimated to cost our Nation \$263 billion in 2010 alone, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support a renewed commitment to cancer research because there is no better time than now. Alleviating suffering and death due to cancer in our lifetime should not only be Congress's goal; it should be America's goal. And we should insist on a huge Federal investment toward that goal.

CITY OF HOPE 10,000TH BONE MARROW TRANSPLANT

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

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to City of Hope, a renowned biomedical research and treatment center in my district. On January 13, City of Hope reached a milestone few in the world have ever achieved. Doctors performed their 10,000th bone marrow transplant, 34 years after they completed one of the most successful transplants ever, and it was the first.

But this is more than just another milestone. This is a time to remember the thousands of children and adults who have benefited from City of Hope. Patients like Rodrigo Nunez, a Mexican immigrant who, at the age of 17, became ill. After a transplant and the kindness of the community, he graduated from college. He has proudly spent over two decades as a nurse at City of Hope.

Please join me in congratulating City of Hope for their achievement and wish them luck on the next 10,000.