

□ 1730

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 743.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HENSARLING). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

AMERICAN PARITY ACT

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, tomorrow the United States House of Representatives will vote to borrow \$75 billion as an emergency supplemental: some of the funds to support our troops in Iraq; some for large new discretionary or a slush fund to be made available to the President, the Secretary of Defense and others; some \$10 billion in foreign aid, military assistance; \$2.4 billion for Iraq itself, and now \$700 million of that is humanitarian assistance. But the rest is to help rebuild Iraq, and I will go into that in a moment.

But the thing is that the House is going to vote to borrow this money. We are not going to revisit the tax cuts. We are headed toward a record deficit this year; but we will not revisit the tax cuts, more than half of which in this House of Representatives are targeted toward the wealthiest in this country, those who earn over \$273,000 a year, an average of \$90,000 for every millionaire in those tax cuts. God forbid we should ask them to help contribute to this emergency, that we should reduce their tax cuts and not borrow this money but collect the funds from those who can afford to help contribute. But that is where this House of Representatives is headed.

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) and I hope to offer an amendment. We will go to the Committee on Rules. I expect we will be denied, but our amendment in principle is very simple, and that is to say if the United States House of Representatives is going to borrow \$1.7 billion to begin to implement contracts, which I have here, from the Federal Government of the United States to provide universal health care in Iraq, which of course 44 million Americans have no health insurance whatsoever, tens of thousands of Oregonians, to rebuild their highways and bridges, and we have a \$4 bil-

lion bridge problem in Oregon, about a \$270 billion bridge problem nationwide, we are going to borrow money to do that in Iraq. We are going to borrow to build 6,000 schools in Iraq when we do not have enough money to educate our kids here, and we are going to borrow money for a number of other things: airports, sewer, water, and a whole host of infrastructure. But guess what, there is not a penny in this bill for the economic recovery of the United States of America.

I lost another 800 jobs in my district today. Where is our assistance? Where is our economic stimulus? It is not in the tax cuts for the wealthy and trickle-down. It is not in borrowing more funds to fund this, driving us further in debt and ultimately driving up interest rates in this country. There is a more responsible way to approach this, and there is also a way to approach it so that we are responsible to the American people. Fund this by reducing the tax cuts or eliminating the tax cuts.

The United States of America is at war. This would be the first time in the history of our Nation that we have reduced taxes in a time of war, and we are reducing taxes at a time when we are headed already for a record deficit. We are looking at doubling the national debt probably in the next decade. We are going to have the economic profile of Argentina with a \$500 billion trade deficit on top of this, but we are going to borrow the money.

And what are our kids going to come home to if we do not invest here in the United States of America? They are going to come home to the bill, not in the first couple of years they come home; but when they get a little bit older, they are going to come home to that bill. That bill is going to come home to them. And they may well not come home to good jobs because we are failing to stimulate the economy. We could act much more responsibly in this body in approaching this situation, but I fear we will not.

But I will go to the Committee on Rules. I will pretend that this is on the up and up and ask them to allow us a vote on the American Parity Act. That is to say, for every dollar we spend on health care, on schools, bridges, highways, water infrastructure, all needs well documented in our Nation and in Iraq, there should be a comparable dollar sent down to the States; and preferably this money should not come from borrowing. It should come from reducing tax cuts to the wealthiest among us who could at least do a little bit to help share this burden.

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

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

SUPPORT AMERICA'S TROOPS

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

Mr. SKELTON. Madam Speaker, yesterday the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed Concurrent Resolution 109, a resolution that calls on families of America's servicemembers to display the Blue Star and Gold Star banners in their homes or in their businesses. The gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SHADEGG), the gentleman from California (Mr. HUNTER), and I asked families to restore this proud tradition, first established during the First World War and because our country is at war in the Middle East and around the world in the fight against terrorism.

I want to take this opportunity to encourage all Members of Congress, and indeed all Americans, to support our men and women in uniform, now and in the days ahead. I would like to explain why and suggest a few ways in which we could do something concrete to benefit our troops. When our Nation calls, servicemen and women volunteer. They volunteer to be the point of the spear, protecting the Nation's interests both here and abroad. Today we have an all-volunteer force, and let me say it is the finest, best-trained fighting force the world has ever seen. It is not just the 1.4 million active duty servicemembers I am referring to. There are also 875,000 citizen soldiers, National Guardsmen and Reservists, part-time volunteers who serve when called. A growing number of these service soldiers have been called. They have been called to serve on multiple deployments over the past decade. Over 218,000 National Guardsmen and Reservists have been activated since September 11, 2001. Over 31,000 of those are now serving in Iraq.

The question is what can we do to show our appreciation to these dedicated men and women. Let me make a few suggestions.

First, Members of Congress can reach out to the troops and their families in their districts. I urge my colleagues to visit the National Guard armories in their towns and cities across the country and talk with the servicemembers, talk with their families, or visit a Reserve center or active military base and spend time with these brave and courageous individuals. In the district I am privileged to serve is Whitman Air Force Base, the home of the B-2 bomber; and Fort Leonard Wood, which has an engineer battalion that is deployed.

While I have always been a great believer in getting out and spending time with our troops, there are other ways we can support our military. Because of heightened security concerns, the Defense Department has discouraged Americans from sending letters and parcels to our deployed troops. However, the Department has a virtual thank you card at Defend America Web site which I will make available