

School was built to consolidate these schools. For the first ten years or so, Pelkie Agricultural School operated as a K-10 school with an agricultural focus. The concepts of agriculture (for boys) and home economics (for the girls) were articulated and integrated into all aspects of the curriculum.

In the mid-1940's, the school began the first of many changes caused by declining enrollment and dwindling finances. The school first changed to a K-8 school and then eventually a K-6 school. As innovations and curriculum changes occurred in Michigan education, Baraga Township decided to implement a new and innovative concept. Eventually this led to the designation of the school as a lower elementary building for the entire district. The elementary school is currently filled to capacity and wisely used by the district.

When asked what role the school plays in the community, a local resident responded that the school was and continues to be the center of the community. It is the place for all community activities except church services. MSU Extension Study Clubs, 4-H Clubs, physical fitness programs, preschool programs, Agricultural Extension meetings, as well as the Baraga County fair are held there. Everyone has fond memories from their times at Pelkie Agricultural School and the community takes pride in doing everything they can to keep the school in good condition.

Over the years, the school has provided many important needs for the community including educational programs for soldiers after WWII. The school received federal funding under the GI bill to offer educational services and training in agriculture to area men returning home after the war. Five teachers dedicated themselves to teaching night classes to returning GIs in efforts to help them become productive independent farmers on the land that their Finnish forefathers had cleared a generation earlier.

The caliber of education offered at Pelkie Agricultural School is revealed through their many distinguished alumni. For forty-four years, Mrs. Ida Fitzpatrick, one of the school's teachers and its principal, directed the education of community youth. The school has produced many farmers, professors, traders, musicians, teachers, writers, and doctors. Among those we can cite as having attended Pelkie Agricultural School are Dr. LuAnne Ruona, psychiatrist and faculty member at George Washington University, Dr. Paul Niemisto, a professor and composer of music at St. Olaf's University, and Mr. Dan Maki, professor of History at Finlandia University. I am proud of their commitment to education and their contribution to their individual professions.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you and our House colleagues to join me in wishing the best to the people of Pelkie in celebrating 70 years of education at Pelkie Agricultural School and the seven original one-room country school houses. We also extend a hearty, "Well Done!" to the Reunion Planning Committee. I am sure that many former Pelkie residents will be drawn back home for this celebration, so that families may be reunited, old friendships renewed, and a remarkable quality of life rediscovered.

RELATING TO THE LIBERATION OF  
THE IRAQI PEOPLE AND THE  
VALIANT SERVICE OF THE  
UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES  
AND COALITION FORCES

SPEECH OF

**HON. MAJOR R. OWENS**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 17, 2004*

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to strongly condemn and denounce this cynical resolution which seeks members of Congress to once more endorse the needless war against Iraq. The world is certainly not safer now than it was before the attack on Iraq. Indeed, just the opposite is true. We are bogged down in a war at the wrong place which drains dollars, manpower and creative decision-making energy from our government. This administration has placed our nation in a deadly vise that blocks us from a more effective pursuit of terrorism. Let me just cite one critical example: Pakistan! We are losing our long-term ally, Pakistan, as a result of blatant neglect. The one Islamic nation which clearly has "weapons of mass destruction" has received low priority and second class treatment from our government. Even after the President of Pakistan chose to take great risks to assist in the war against the Taliban in Afghanistan, the U.S. offered this nation an economic assistance package of less than one billion dollars. At the same time this administration was offering Turkey several billion dollars merely to allow our troops to pass through on their way to Iraq. Pakistan also has a population of more than 150 million people while Iraq only has 25 million people. Nevertheless we are proposing 27 billion dollars to rebuild Iraq while offering the loyal ally, Pakistan, less than one billion dollars.

Mr. Speaker, we are losing our most valuable ally in the war against terrorism because we are obsessed with Iraq. Because I have a large Pakistani-American community in my District I was invited to visit Pakistan 2 years ago. Everywhere there was obviously admiration for America; however, everywhere there was also disappointment and bitterness with respect to the treatment of Pakistan by successive U.S. governments. In the end there is a feeling that their nuclear weapons program is the only way they can command the appropriate attention from the U.S.

Be assured that no high school sophomore is expected to believe that the sale of Pakistan's nuclear secrets to other nations was a crime committed by one super scientist acting without the assistance of the government. These deadly sales to North Korea and other rogue nations represent defiance and revenge expressed by a nation that deems itself to have been grossly mistreated.

Emergency diplomatic and economic assistance are needed to save Pakistan from becoming a Taliban victim or an overt enemy. Loyalties in the nation are now almost evenly divided and the present government is walking on a very thin line. Diverting just a quarter of the economic assistance approved for Iraq to Pakistan would send a meaningful message to our long-term ally. Who is losing Pakistan? The Iraq obsessed White House is losing Pakistan.

Problems in Iraq are impacting on all types and levels of decision-making in Washington.

We have been forced into a hardship budget for domestic programs. While there is no Federal aid for public school construction here at home, we are spending billions to build schools in Iraq. While fifty percent of the Black males in New York City are unemployed, billions of dollars are being spent to provide jobs to Iraqi men. There is a possibility that the bitterness and desperation which is the fertilizer for terrorism will create a unique incubator in America.

Is the world better off since we ventured into oil rich Iraq? Are Americans safer? Is the war against terrorism being conducted effectively? The answer to all of these questions is no. Should we pass this resolution which pretends to honor the troops but has been concocted to ambush legislators into stating that they endorse the war in Iraq? The answer is no.

TRIBUTE TO THE REPUBLIC OF  
TUNISIA

**HON. ROBERT E. (BUD) CRAMER, JR.**

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 18, 2004*

Mr. CRAMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the government and citizens of the Republic of Tunisia on the forty-eighth anniversary of Tunisian independence.

On March 20, 1956, Tunisia declared its independence from France and the United States was one of the first countries to recognize an independent Tunisian state. For forty-eight years, Tunisia has been a strong ally of the U.S. and has helped to encourage the values of liberty, democracy, and free enterprise throughout Africa and the world.

In addition, Tunisia has worked closely with the United States to promote international peace, stability, and progress. In fact, Mr. Speaker, Tunisia was one of the first nations to condemn the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and offer its support in the global fight against terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, all of Tunisia's people will be in joyous celebration. I rise today to join them in the commemoration of their independence.

RECOGNIZING ALFRED P.  
GERHARDT, JR.

**HON. JIM GERLACH**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, March 18, 2004*

Mr. GERLACH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the American Legion's Eighth District Commander and Wawassan Post 422 Post Commander Alfred P. Gerhardt, Jr.

Alfred P. Gerhardt, Jr. received his draft notice on Pearl Harbor Day, December 7, 1966 and spent three months and ten days at Fort Lewis, Washington when he was honorably discharged on April 27, 1967.

In 1968, he went to Baptist Bible College in Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania as a part-time student during the spring semester and eventually went on to work as a nursing assistant at the Coatesville Veterans Administration Hospital in Coatesville. He subsequently retired from there after 15 years of service on March 28, 1998.