

America, many of whom do not even pay Social Security tax. And he is replacing that money with these bonds. And now the President questions whether the government will honor these bonds with the full faith and credit of the Government of the United States.

So Republicans have a great new idea: Social Security will not hold the bonds anymore. They will issue them to individuals. Now, if we are not going to honor these bonds for all the people of America, what assurance do people have that those individual bonds will be honored, and the Republicans want to charge them a management fee and a so-called claw-back. So anybody that takes one of those individual bonds, if it is honored, is guaranteed to get less than they would under the existing system. Oh, that is a great plan, guys.

#### PROTECT THE FLAG

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

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, let us talk about something positive that both Republicans and Democrats are going to do today and that is pass the flag protection amendment.

Sixteen years ago, a difference of one vote, the Supreme Court by one vote erased 200 years of tradition that our forefathers set to protect our flag. Who supports it? In May, 81 percent of the American people supported this amendment; 146, all the veterans organizations, many of them here today, first responders, police, fire, our military men and women; all 50 States have ratified resolutions saying that they will ratify when this amendment passes.

We have 300 signatures. This bill passed by 300 votes; and for the first time we have a chance, an opportunity to pass it in the Senate.

Some claim that it impinges on the first amendment. It does not. There are some of my colleagues that will oppose this amendment. They are honorable men, but the supermajority oppose their position. Take a look and ask the men and women at Walter Reed or Bethesda, ask the police and fire that stood on top of the Trade Center and ask them and they will tell you. Help pass this amendment today.

#### INVESTIGATE GUANTANAMO BAY

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the House had an opportunity to see what really happened at Guantanamo Bay. If the Republicans are so sure that nothing bad happened there, why can we not have some hearings?

Now, they continued to be reassured by the White House. This is the White House that told them there were weap-

ons of mass destruction in Iraq. This is the administration that told them that the oil industry in Iraq would pay for all the reconstruction. We are now about \$300 billion in. And this is the administration that last month said we are in the last throes of the insurgency.

If anybody on this floor ever served in the military, you know that what went on in Abu Ghraib and what goes on in Guantanamo did not start at the private and the corporal level. It started at the top. And until we do an investigation of the policy papers that were put out of the White House from the Attorney General who was then the President's counsel and the general, General Sanchez, he just got promoted. This is the guy in charge of Abu Ghraib. They put six or eight guys in jail, but he got a promotion. That needs an investigation.

#### VITAL WORK AT GUANTANAMO BAY

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the vital work that takes place at Guantanamo Bay. To say, as a member of the Senate Democratic leadership recently did, that this base is similar to Nazi Germany or Pol Pot is not only deeply offensive but also wholly incorrect.

Mr. Speaker, I visited Guantanamo twice with the House Committee on Armed Services. Let me tell you what I observed there: new and up-to-date facility that allows for the humane treatment of prisoners; prisoners being treated with dignity and in accordance with the Geneva Convention; detainees freely practicing their religious observances.

Mr. Speaker, the overwhelming majority of American troops are performing with honor. When someone throws around offensive slurs for the purpose of political posturing, they jeopardize the very safety of the men and women who protect us and add resolve to those terrorists who wish us harm. These slurs are a horrific disservice to the American people who are counting on us to stop terrorism from once again rearing its ugly head within our borders.

#### THREE-LEGGED STOOL

(Mr. MELANCON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MELANCON. Mr. Speaker, we have all heard of the 3-legged stool that each of us should build when we are looking towards our retirement. Two of these legs, pensions and individual savings, are the responsibility of the individual and the employee.

Mr. Speaker, as events over the last month have shown, it is clear that the pension leg of the stool is being seri-

ously undermined by companies who are striking their responsibilities to live up to the promises they made to their employees. The best example of this comes in the form of United Airlines who sold out its employees the first chance it got as a way to come out of bankruptcy.

Employees who have been promised \$100,000 a year pensions will now have to settle for \$45,000 a year, a dramatic cut in their promised benefits. That may still seem like a lot of money, but these employees were promised a lot more, and they are not going to receive it.

Couple that with the giant market crash in 2000 when the stock market lost \$9 billion. Mr. Speaker, there is no question that there is a lot of uncertainty right now, and maybe that is why Americans are so determined to keep one thing that is certain, that is, Social Security from being privatized.

#### PATIENT CHOICE

(Mr. PRICE of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, as a third-generation physician who has practiced medicine for over 20 years, I have seen colossal increases in health care costs. Unfortunately, they do not seem to be slowing down. Health care costs are rising much faster than one can imagine, and in just the last year they have gone up by 8 percent. Employers continue to pass these costs on to their employees in the form of increased deductibles and payments for prescriptions and care. Employees have no choice but to pay these costs because they are stuck with somebody else making decisions about their care.

It is time we start thinking about health care in a new way. It is time to put patients back in charge. Nobody knows better than the patients themselves what kind of health care they need.

Mr. Speaker, change in our health care system is needed now more than ever before, and health care should respond to the needs of patients.

H. Res. 215, the Health Insurance Patient-Ownership Plan, puts health care choices back into the hands of patients where they should be. I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 215.

#### TRADE DEFICIT

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, this Republican Congress may go down in history as the most fiscally irresponsible Congress in the history of this country. Our record budget deficit, our record debt, we have over \$7.8 trillion in debt, and each citizen's share is over \$26,000. Last week we learned that our trade deficit set a new record, over \$195 billion in the first 3 months of this

year. That is 6.4 percent of GDP on an annual basis, the largest trade deficit in the history of our country.

This Congress is not just raising the debt ceiling, and we have raised this debt ceiling three times recently, this Congress is shooting the Moon. It is totally out of control. And these irresponsible, wanton budget policies will be borne by our children and our grandchildren. Is that the legacy we want to leave?

#### GITMO MENU

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, let us look at the breakfast menu: pancakes with syrup, orange juice, butter and milk or raisin bran cereal or oatmeal and a bagel and orange juice and butter. Then for lunch we have pita bread, hamburger, honey glazed chicken, and potatoes.

What am I talking about? Not the Days Inn, not the Hampton Inn, not the menu here at the Capitol; but I am talking about what prisoners will be eating today in Guantanamo Bay. This is where the Democrats say they are being subjected to cruel and unusual punishment.

I will go on with the dinner menu. We have cooked potatoes, seasoned lentils, pita bread, potato wedge, wheat bread, fresh fruit, cauliflower. I will kind of admit that making them eat cauliflower is a little bit tough on them, but we do not make them eat beets or broccoli on the other hand.

You have got also lemon pepper chicken, pasta beef, fried chicken, honey chicken, bayou chicken. This is today's menu at Guantanamo Bay. There is where Democrats are saying we are being cruel and unusually mean to prisoners, prisoners of war, prisoners of terrorism, prisoners who because of their confinement have kept us from having another 9/11 attack on American soil. This is just one of the things they will not tell you about Guantanamo Bay.

#### SOME WAR ON TERRORISM

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, this morning's New York Times reveals that a new classified assessment by the Central Intelligence Agency says Iraq may prove to be an even more effective training ground for Islamic extremists than Afghanistan was in al Qaeda's early days because it is serving as a real-world laboratory for urban combat and that Iraq, since the American invasion of 2003, had assumed the role played by Afghanistan during the rise of al Qaeda as a magnet and a proving ground for Islamic extremists from Saudi Arabia and other Islamic countries.

Mr. Speaker, we know that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. We know there was no connection between Iraq and Osama bin Laden. We know the President deceived the American people on these subjects, got us into an unnecessary war, and has now created a danger zone in Iraq, a country that was no danger, no threat to the United States and now is a training ground for more al Qaeda extremists who will be more and more endangering to the United States in terrorism.

We have created a training ground. We have created a training ground for terrorists because of the President's deception of American people. Some war on terrorism.

□ 1045

#### DETROIT PISTONS ARE ALIVE AND WELL

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, this is not an insignificant matter I say to my colleagues.

It should be noted that the San Antonio Spurs have lost five games at home until last night, and I bring this to the attention of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), my dear friend on the Committee on the Judiciary, that this is the first time that we have gone to seven games in 11 years, and no one has ever won their last two games in a national basketball championship on the road.

So it is with bated breath that I let everyone know that the Detroit Pistons are alive and well and, I think, up to this incredibly important athletic contest tomorrow night.

#### INDIVIDUAL TAX SIMPLIFICATION ACT OF 2005

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

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I have served in this House since 1988, and I have been on the Committee on Ways and Means since 1993. A lot has changed over this time, but one thing still seems to stay the same and that is the need to bring simplification to our Nation's Tax Code.

The former chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means said he was going to rip the Tax Code out by its roots so that we could start over and create a new system that was far more simple. He was unsuccessful, as have been most reformers that I have seen in my time on this committee.

Year after year, the problem gets worse. It is easy to call for simplification, but it is a lot harder to achieve it.

Last week, I introduced H.R. 2950, the Individual Tax Simplification Act of 2005, which I have done now for 6 years

in a row. It is an outstanding first step in achieving a simpler Tax Code.

My bill would eliminate, and listen to this, it would eliminate the alternative minimum tax in a revenue-neutral fashion. It would also take 200 lines from tax forms, schedules and worksheets and make capital gains much easier to calculate.

As I have indicated, this is 6 years now that we have offered this legislation, but every year that passes our Code grows more and more complex. We have an opportunity to do away with the alternative minimum tax.

#### CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT AUTHORIZING CONGRESS TO PROHIBIT PHYSICAL DESECRATION OF THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 330, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 10) proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States authorizing the Congress to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Pursuant to House Resolution 330, the joint resolution is considered read.

The text of H.J. Res. 10 is as follows:

H.J. RES. 10

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein), That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years after the date of its submission for ratification:*

“ARTICLE —

“The Congress shall have power to prohibit the physical desecration of the flag of the United States.”.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. After 2 hours of debate on the joint resolution, it shall be in order to consider the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in House Report 109-140, if offered by the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT) or his designee, which shall be considered read, and shall be debatable for 1 hour, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent.

Pursuant to section 2 of the resolution, the Chair at any time may postpone further consideration of the joint resolution until a time designated by the Speaker.

The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) each will control 1 hour.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I will control the time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from New