

**ARMY SPECIALIST KAMISHA
BLOCK—DAUGHTER OF TEXAS**

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, small towns and rural America are historically notable and courageous for sending their young sons and daughters off to fight the wars of America. When volunteers are called for duty, it is these close, small communities that seem to always answer America's call to arms. When one of their number is killed in war, the entire community is emotionally affected.

In southeast Texas, the small town of Vidor has lost one of its daughters of democracy. Army Specialist Kamisha Block was killed in Baghdad August 16, 2007, in the hot war for Iraq.

Kamisha Block became the first female from southeast Texas to die in this war. She enlisted in 2005 at the age of 18 in the United States Army.

Mr. Speaker, Kamisha volunteered for the Army when this country was at war, and she probably expected to be sent to the desert of the gun and the valley of the sun. She joined the Army right out of high school. Specialist Block was a military police officer, and eventually wanted to be in law enforcement with a career in the FBI or the CIA.

She was assigned to the 401st Military Police Company, 720th Military Police Battalion and 89th Military Police Brigade out of Fort Hood, Texas.

Kamisha and her best friend, Amanda Buck, grew up together. As Amanda says, we rode the school bus together from kindergarten all the way up through high school. Amanda said Kamisha knew where she was headed in life, had a big heart and genuinely wanted to help people.

Specialist Block's death hit her family hard, and the whole community mourns for her. Her loss has not gone unnoticed. Let me explain.

Local newspapers, the Examiner and the Beaumont Enterprise, carried numerous front-page stories about Block and her life. In this small town of Vidor, Texas, almost every business had posted a message for Block and words of support for her family on signs and placards.

When Specialist Block was returned to Texas draped in the cloth of the red, white and blue, the funeral procession traveled through rural areas and small towns. The Patriot Guard led the procession with their 75 motorcycles, many carrying large American flags. Next were the numerous police vehicles from the nearby communities.

As the funeral proceeded, hundreds of teary-eyed people lined the streets of Beaumont, Texas and Vidor, Texas, removing their hats, placing their hands over their hearts, and waving American flags. Cars even pulled off the road and drivers stood out of their vehicles to pay honor and respect to this warrior. People came out of their homes

and stood on their porches in honor of the dead.

According to a local paper, The Examiner, Jamie Reynolds, a friend and coworker of Block's at the Waffle House in Vidor, said, "It was so amazing. I had chills all up and down my arms. It was overwhelming."

Mr. Speaker, showing silent respect and tribute is what people do in southeast Texas when one of their kids is killed in war.

People who knew Block from the Waffle House said that she was always happy with her bright eyes and endearing smile as she served waffles, eggs, and grits and a happy spirit.

While Jerry and Jane Block, the parents of Kamisha, mourn the death and absence of their daughter, America owes them our gratitude and our patriotic appreciation.

Specialist Kamisha Block while serving in Korea and Iraq was awarded several commendations. She was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, the Good Conduct Medal, Operation Iraqi Freedom Service Ribbon, and the Bronze Star.

Here is a photograph of Kamisha Block, not yet 21 years of age. She died at the age of 20. It has been said "that how we yet live will echo throughout eternity."

Specialist Block showed in a mere 20 years the example of compassion, duty, determination, love of country, and love of God that will echo in her small town of Texas throughout eternity.

Rare breed these women warriors who go to war for the rest of us.

And that's just the way it is.

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

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1700

**HONORING CORPORAL PHILLIP J.
BRODNICK**

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Corporal Phillip J. Brodnick, a courageous young soldier who died in Iraq on August 22, 2007. As we mourn his loss, we use this time to honor his life and express our gratitude for his dedicated service.

Phillip Brodnick was born in Mokena, Illinois, and lived in Burbank until he was 8. He then moved to Frankfurt, Illinois and graduated in 2000 from Lincoln-Way High School. After graduation, Brodnick's desire to serve his country led him to enlist in

the Army, and he soon served a 2-year tour of duty in Kosovo before being discharged in 2002.

However, the country's need and Brodnick's desire to serve led him to re-enlist in the Army in 2005.

In August of 2006, Brodnick was deployed to Iraq as part of the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division based out of Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. His excellent service, leadership and ability were soon recognized, leading to a recent promotion to the rank of corporal.

Although initially scheduled to return home in June, Corporal Brodnick dutifully accepted a 4-month tour extension in Iraq. Tragically, on August 22, Corporal Brodnick and 13 other soldiers were killed when the Black Hawk helicopter they were on crashed. He was only 25 years old.

Aside from his military service to our Nation, Corporal Brodnick is remembered as patriotic and as a great friend and also as an animal lover who always looked out for his family. He aspired to one day follow in his father's footsteps and become a police officer.

While attending his wake last week, I was moved by the large number of lives that Corporal Brodnick had touched in his 25 short years. Today I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning the loss of Corporal Phillip J. Brodnick. We will never forget his sacrifice and are forever indebted to him, as well as all of our soldiers who have died for making the ultimate sacrifice for our country. Our thoughts, prayers and deepest sympathies are with Corporal Brodnick's family and friends in this difficult time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ELLSWORTH). 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.)

NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

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

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, this House will soon be considering a reauthorization of No Child Left Behind. Now, when President Bush signed No Child Left Behind into law 5 years ago, the theory went that schools would raise their standards and strive to make improvements and that this would then eventually trickle down and assist all, even the underperforming students that needed the help the most. Now as we now reconsider this reauthorization of this bill, I submit that many of these changes brought on by this bill have had tremendous burdensome unintended consequences.