

So today, I was honored to be with Frank Buckles at a press conference at the D.C. World War I Memorial on the National Mall.

Since 1918, the men and women who served in World War I have gone without a national memorial to recognize their service to our country, and it is time that this changed. That is why I have introduced the Frank Buckles World War I Memorial Act. This bill would restore the District of Columbia's World War I Memorial and expand it so it serves a location on our mall for all those that served in World War I.

After 90 years of no national recognition, it is time these doughboys were given the thanks that they are due. After all, Mr. Speaker, they were the "fathers of the greatest generation."

When they went off to war in World War I, they sang the song of George M. Cohen, "Over There," and it went something like this:

"Over there. Over there. Tell the world that the Yanks are coming. The Yanks are coming, and we won't be back until it is over, over there."

Mr. Speaker, it is time to honor the lone survivor of World War I and the other doughboys that went to war over there in the forgotten war, World War I, and build them that national monument on the mall.

And that's just the way it is.

THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION MUST ADDRESS NATIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES

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

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, we need to begin planning now for the issues our country must focus on when the new President takes office.

This will be the first presidential transition to occur during a time of war in many years. In addition, the next administration will face enormous budget pressures and national security challenges that will require sustained spending and the partnership of the Congress. Let me take this opportunity to discuss what I believe will be the top defense challenges for our next President.

First, we must develop a clear strategy to guide national security policy. Since World War II, the United States has been the indispensable Nation. But our Nation's ability to sustain this leadership role is jeopardized because we lack a comprehensive strategy to advance U.S. interests.

The next President must collaborate with Congress and the American people to formulate a new, broadly understood and accepted strategy to advance our national security interests. The next Quadrennial Defense Review of the Department of Defense must translate this strategy into a clear roadmap for organizing the Department and setting priorities in the next 4 years.

Second, we must restore America's credibility in the world. The full range of threats to our national security can only be addressed through the consistent and determined efforts of multiple nations working together. The new President will set the tone, but the U.S. can only lead and help reinvigorate international institutions if other nations believe we are credible, just, and intend our efforts to serve interests beyond our own.

Third, we must refocus our efforts on Afghanistan. The situation in Afghanistan is deteriorating. Violence by the Taliban and al Qaeda is rising. Attacks against the coalition are increasing. And, safe havens in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region are thriving. The genesis of the 9/11 attack was in Afghanistan, and any future attack on our homeland is likely to originate in Afghanistan or in the border region with Pakistan.

Until our country is prepared to lead and act decisively and persistently, problems in Afghanistan will continue to fester. Our efforts in Iraq have diverted resources and focus away from the war in Afghanistan. We must refocus our efforts, and work with the international community to provide the necessary leadership, strategy, and resources to Afghanistan to ensure success in that mission.

Fourth, we must responsibly redeploy from Iraq. The men and women of our Armed Forces have done a magnificent job in Iraq, but the citizens of both the United States and Iraq agree that it is time for the U.S. military to come home. Our challenge is to manage that redeployment and to ensure that it reduces further strain on our military without jeopardizing the gains made in Iraq.

We must continue to protect U.S. citizens in Iraq, pursue terrorists, and help train and equip the Iraqi Security Forces. U.S. combat forces must be freed up to begin the process of resetting, rebuilding, and also refocusing in Afghanistan. The United States will face new challenges to our security and our interests in the future, and we will need the military units that are in Iraq to be returned to their full capability to effectively address them.

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Fifth, we must recruit and retain a high-quality force. Our forces are the most highly trained and educated in the world, but we face serious challenges to maintain the quality of force we have today.

The cost to recruit and retain servicemembers has skyrocketed in recent years. And the tendency of Americans to serve in uniform has significantly declined as fewer young people are exposed to the military experience. Finding men and women who are physically and mentally qualified and willing to serve is an ongoing challenge.

Sixth, we must ensure a high state of readiness for our forces. Our troops have been engaged in combat oper-

ations for nearly 7 years, and it has strained our military to the breaking point. Restoring readiness will take a significant investment of time and money, easily exceeding \$100 million, but it must be done if we are to expect our military to respond ably when we need them. We are already at risk. Either we fix our readiness problems immediately, or else risk emboldening those who would seek to do us harm.

Seven, we must develop a more comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy. With the al Qaeda and affiliated groups still presenting a major threat, the United States must apply "lessons learned" and be open to the advice of our allies. The key is to fight smarter and not necessarily harder by more effectively utilizing a range of tools beyond just the military-led, kinetic approaches to counterterrorism.

The new administration must more aggressively pursue strategic communications strategies, intelligence and policing work, targeted development assistance, and a range of other counterinsurgency and irregular warfare tools.

Eight, we must strike a balance between the near-term fixes and long-term modernization.

Each of the military services will have to address the fundamental imbalances in their current plans to simultaneously modernize and reset equipment, grow the number of ships in our Navy.

Nine, we must reform the inter-agency process.

And, ten, we must deal with the looming defense health care crisis.

With increasing defense health care costs, difficulties in recruiting and retaining medical professionals, and the overwhelming demand placed on the medical system as it attempts to support thousands of men and women returning from combat, as well as their families, there is a perfect storm brewing, and in the next few years, that storm will be upon us.

These and other national defense challenges will confront our Nation in the months and years ahead, and Congress and the administration must work together on a bipartisan basis to seriously address these issues. The security of the American people is at stake.

H.R. 6662: THE FALLEN HERO COMMEMORATION ACT

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, throughout the history of our Nation, members of the United States Armed Forces have selflessly given their lives to secure and protect the freedoms Americans enjoy today.

Today, members of the United States Armed Forces are serving our Nation in Iraq, Afghanistan and many other parts of the world.

Without a loved one serving in our military, it is sometimes possible for Americans to overlook the sacrifices