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No. 32

## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
February 26, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 7, 2014, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

### AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, I am on the floor again today to talk about Afghanistan—the absolute waste of life and money.

A lot of people don't realize this, but if you go back to 2001, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have spent over \$1.5 trillion, which averages out to about 11.2 million tax dollars paid every hour by the American people.

In today's national paper, the USA Today—and other headlines—the head-

line is this: "Obama to Karzai: Time running out for security deal."

Madam Speaker, based on recent polls, this would be good news for the American people if we would not continue this relationship with Afghanistan. It is nothing but an absolute waste of the taxpayers' money, and the American people are sick and tired of it. A recent poll last week by Gallup showed that almost 50 percent of the American people believe that the war in Afghanistan was a mistake to start with.

I can honestly say this: If it was not a mistake to start with, it is a mistake now that we continue to support and spend money on a corrupt leader named Karzai.

Madam Speaker, as I listened to the Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel yesterday talk about financial pressure on our military and the budget that he will be supporting that Mr. Obama has proposed, I wonder why we in Congress are not allowed to debate on the floor of this House—and I am not talking about the Senate now—whether we believe that we should have a 10-year agreement with Afghanistan.

Again, we are talking about spending anywhere from \$3 billion to \$4 billion a month. It is borrowed money from the Chinese and Japanese, and we continue to raise the debt ceiling because we cannot pay our own bills. It is time for the Congress to speak out on behalf of the American people and say enough is enough.

To be clear, this agreement that President Karzai has adamantly refused to sign, as The Washington Post reported earlier this week, during a December visit to Kabul, Hagel suggested that the late-February NATO meeting—meaning this week—was a cutoff point for Afghan President Karzai to sign the bilateral strategic agreement that sets the terms for a post-2014 U.S. presence.

Madam Speaker, we cannot any longer police the world. We can hardly

afford to pay our own bills without going to foreign governments to borrow money.

Madam Speaker, it is time for Congress to reach out and to say that we listen to the American people. When we are talking about not even being able to take care of our veterans, and we are going to cut programs for children and senior citizens, and even our veterans are in jeopardy of getting the benefits that they have earned, it is time for the American people to put pressure on Congress to have this debate that many of us in both parties would like to have, quite frankly.

Madam Speaker, I have beside me a photograph of a young man named Eric Edmundson. Eric, in 2005, was in a Humvee that was hit by an IED that exploded. Eric has been in the national Wounded Warrior Project ads across this Nation.

Eric is like so many of the wounded. We just don't really think about them every day, but we should. Eric has a wonderful wife. His mom and dad were able to retire to New Bern, North Carolina, which is in my district, and help Eric have a quality of life.

Madam Speaker, I can honestly tell you that we have got so many veterans that we are going to need to take care of who earned the right for this government to take care of them that we are going to have a tsunami that is going to hit this Congress in a few years, and we are going to wonder how in the world can we give these wounded and their families what they have earned and deserve.

Madam Speaker, it is time for this Congress to put pressure on the leadership of the Republican Party and the Democratic Party to force a discussion and a debate on the future of our financial involvement in Afghanistan.

With that, Madam Speaker, I am going to ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please bless the wounded, to bless

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g.,  1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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