

escaped from his Taliban captors in Afghanistan and was on the run for 3 days. Unfortunately, he was recaptured. It shows you that we have those that are still in harm's way as we pull out from Iraq and start to withdraw from Afghanistan.

But we can never forget—we should never forget—the sacrifice that these young men and women have given to this country. They truly are the 1 percent that need to be talked about because they have volunteered at great risk to themselves and to their families.

I have three sons that are currently serving in the United States Army. And I know what it's like to have a son go to war. On numerous occasions now, my sons have been called. And one still is in Iraq today. So we can never forget about the sacrifice not only of the men and women in our armed services but how about their families and loved ones that they leave behind.

The warrior ethos says, We never leave a man behind. And I call upon the President and I call upon this great body to make that same statement, that we will never leave a man behind, that we will do everything within our power to make sure that we get these kids back home. And I call them kids because I have three sons, and I still call them kids, even when they're 30 years old. It is about doing the right thing.

So today we're putting forth a resolution, this resolution, asking for the House to exert its will, to talk about our unending commitment to those that have given up their freedoms to protect us.

In this season of Christmas, we need to think about the families that are out there whose loved one is being held captive, either in Iraq or Afghanistan. We cannot forget them. We should not forget them. And this great country should stand up for those that have stood up for us. We should express our outrage and our feeling that we will never leave a man behind on the battlefield, ever.

Madam Speaker, I just want to implore this body to stand up and vote for this resolution, talking about the sense of this Congress and supporting those men and women who have given so much and have asked for so little.

God bless America.

□ 1120

AMERICA WELCOMES TROOPS HOME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join some of the calls of my colleagues and to indicate that I thought this a very special day, December 15, 2011. A few hours ago in Iraq, Secretary Leon Panetta performed the Casing of the Colors Ceremony, which is to acknowledge the col-

ors—the red, white, and blue—that our brave men and women fought under in Iraq.

We have soldiers still fighting around the world, and I was just speaking to my constituency. We know that one brave soldier from North Carolina even lost his life in the waning hours of the ending of this war.

And so at the beginning of December, in Houston, I called for the Yellow Ribbon Campaign and for America to wrap herself in yellow ribbons, both in respect of our returning soldiers, to acknowledge a job well done, and to welcome them home to an unsilent America.

I would like to thank Speaker BOEHNER, Leader PELOSI, Whip HOYER, and Majority Leader CANTOR for joining and indicating that they would support the wearing of yellow ribbons by our Members today and tomorrow, both in celebration and in recognition of the heroism of our troops and, yes, acknowledgment of our fallen heroes.

This war was almost 9 years, one of the longest wars that America has ever fought. It was a war that used \$800 billion, moneys that I hope we will invest in our returning troops and their families and all Americans as we go forward.

The loss of life was very painful, the idea of the burden on families. So I believe these yellow ribbons, although meager, will symbolize this Congress being unified as Americans, saying thank you to our troops. And, frankly, we have many other challenges that we should be addressing and making sure that our troops come home to a place that is welcoming.

This morning, our whip made a very important point about the maturity of America. Many remember the days of the Vietnam War. We know the passion in that war. But, unfortunately, it appeared that those who were called to battle by the Commander in Chief were the ones who received the ire of those who had a different opinion. America has now matured, and we recognize that whenever our soldiers accept the call of battle, they are for all of us. The treasure that they shed, the blood that they shed, has no respecting of anyone's political affiliation.

So I am grateful to have the opportunity to call upon us in a bipartisan manner to wear these ribbons that were put together by the Young Scholars Academy in Houston. The founding principal is Dr. Anella Coleman. They worked very hard on these ribbons, and I think it is important to teach our children early on to appreciate the democracy that they live in and appreciate the freedom that they have and to recognize those who are on the front lines.

I call upon the Iraqi Government as well. My point is that the soldiers have left them a gift—a gift which they can build on or they can undermine. A gift of democracy, freedom, the understanding of friendship, taking care of children, even in spite of what may be

violent outbursts. Will they have a democratic government? Will they allow those who are in Camp Ashraf, who are stated to be in a camp that will close by December 31, will they resettle the refugees in this camp non-violently, peacefully, Iranian exiles who fled to Iraq? They are concerned about their refugees in many countries, as they do these refugees. I will be calling upon countries to treat the Iraqi refugees fairly, as we all would. But it is a burden on the present Government of Iraq to live peacefully, to accept religious differences and promote religious freedom and the First Amendment and the right to the dignity of life.

And so let me thank the leadership for joining us. Members will find these ribbons in their Cloakroom, each Cloakroom. Let us join together and say: Thank you. Welcome home to our troops, a job well done. God bless you, and God bless America.

ENERGY SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, what does the Iranian nuclear threat to Keystone XL pipeline and the payroll unemployment insurance, doc fix, and jobs bill all have in common? Well, I'm going to use this 5 minutes to tie them together.

Yesterday on the floor, we addressed a concern of the Iranian nuclear threat. We did so with two pieces of legislation: H.R. 1905, the Iranian Threat Reduction Act; and H.R. 2105, the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Non-proliferation Reform and Modernization Act.

Why did we bring these bills to the floor? We brought these bills to the floor because of our concern of a nuclear Iran that has threatened its neighbors and one of our closest allies, Israel.

So what's the Iranian response? Well, I would turn your attention, Madam Speaker, to an article published yesterday, December 13, from FOXNews.com, with the title, "Iranian Official Threatens Military Drill Sealing Off the Strait of Hormuz."

I will read the first two paragraphs: "A high-ranking Iranian official has said Iran's military will practice sealing off the Strait of Hormuz, the world's most important oil transport channel, in a provocative move that illustrates Iran's capability of disrupting the world's oil supply.

"The announcement Monday by Parviz Sarvari sent oil prices up about \$3 to \$100 a barrel based on the speculation of a disruption during the military drills."

Sarvari, a member of the Iranian Parliament's National Security Committee, is quoted as saying, "Soon we will hold a military maneuver on how to close the Strait of Hormuz," in a statement reported by Reuters. "If the

world wants to make the region insecure, we will make the world insecure.”

So the Keystone XL pipeline—which is the second part of this discussion—we heard on the floor yesterday, and it was acknowledged by both sides that, at a minimum, 20,000 jobs would be created, maybe up to 110,000 jobs. We also heard about organized labor being all in on the Keystone XL pipeline. I quoted a couple of members of organized labor. One would be Brent Bookers, director of the construction department at the Laborers’ International Union of North America. He said, “For many members of the Laborers, this project is not just a pipeline; it is a lifeline.”

But what doesn’t get told about Keystone XL pipeline enough is its importance for energy security.

Now, look. If Iran can shut down the Strait of Hormuz, why do you think we’re in the gulf? Why is the Middle East so important? We all know why it is; because that’s where all of the crude oil is.

So why would we not access the third largest oil supply to the Earth from our northern neighbor, Canada?

The map is right here. Right up here you have the great Canadian oil sands in Alberta. The red line is already a pipeline called the Keystone pipeline. What is being proposed is the Keystone XL pipeline, which would help bring Canadian crude to the oil refineries in Texas.

□ 1130

Now, I already have Keystone crude oil coming to my refinery in Wood River, to the terminal in Patoka, and to the Marathon refinery in Robinson, Illinois, and that crude oil, once refined through pipeline, goes to Cleveland, goes to Detroit, goes to Chicago and goes all over the country. There can be no more secure route for crude oil for this country than the Keystone Pipeline and the Keystone XL Pipeline. Do we dare as a country still have to fret over threats by a member of the Iranian parliament because they want to shut down the Strait of Hormuz? We will have to continue to worry about this unless we continue to build and work with our Canadian allies on the Keystone XL Pipeline.

We know it’s a jobs issue, we know it’s an organized labor issue, and we know it’s an energy security issue. And I just thought this story was timely with respect to our vote to hold Iran accountable. So we’re on the record: We need energy security and we need the Keystone XL Pipeline.

RAPE IN THE MILITARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SPEIER) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, I rise again today to highlight the epidemic of rape and sexual assault in the military. This is the 14th time that I will

stand on this floor to tell the story of yet another victim. Each has proudly served their country, each was violently attacked, and each was subjected to a system of justice that protects the perpetrators and punishes the victims.

Make no mistake, the United States military is the finest in the world. But even the Department of Defense recognizes that there is a deep-rooted problem of military sexual trauma that must be addressed. DOD estimates that there are some 19,000 soldiers who are sexually assaulted or raped each year in the military. It’s a staggering figure. Sexual assault in the military is a cancer that is undermining readiness, unit cohesion and morale, and fixing this broken system will strengthen our military, not weaken it, as some have argued.

Today, I want to tell the story of Specialist Andrea Neutzling. Originally from a small town on the banks of the Ohio River, Specialist Neutzling served in the Army from 2000 to 2004 and then served in the Army Reserves from August 2004 until April 2010. She has served her country in Korea and twice deployed to Iraq.

In 2002, while serving in Korea, Specialist Neutzling was sexually assaulted by an intoxicated colleague outside the latrine. She decided to report the assault to her command, and her assailant was sentenced—sentenced to 5 days of base restriction. That was it.

In August of 2005, Specialist Neutzling was deployed to Iraq, and again one of her fellow soldiers sexually assaulted her. But after learning what “justice” meant for a previous perpetrator and not wanting to be seen as a troublemaker, she decided not to report the sexual assault to command. Instead, she simply slept on a cot, her rifle pointed toward the door for days. Several months later, she was deployed again to Iraq. After being in the country for 2 weeks, Specialist Neutzling was brutally raped and physically assaulted by two soldiers. The two soldiers were from a unit that was scheduled to depart Iraq, and their unit was being replaced by Specialist Neutzling’s unit. The soldiers were drunk when they raped her and threatened to beat her if she struggled. Specialist Neutzling suffered serious bodily injuries from the rape.

Again learning what “justice” meant from her previous perpetrator, Specialist Neutzling decided not to report the rape to command. She didn’t say a word about her rape for a week until another woman in her unit informed her that her perpetrators were showing a video of the rape and bragging about it. After learning this, Specialist Neutzling reported the rapes to her command.

So what happened this time? Her command told Specialist Neutzling that they did not believe that she had been raped because she “didn’t act like a rape victim” and “did not struggle

enough.” Her unit commander also told her that he decided not to disclose Specialist Neutzling’s allegations of rape to the investigative services because he didn’t want the men separated from their unit. If the men were charged, they would have to stay in Iraq or would have to go to Kuwait.

Additionally, Specialist Neutzling’s command unilaterally downgraded her complaint of rape to sexual harassment. Her assailants were scheduled to leave in 2 weeks, and they left on time facing no charges.

In the current military chain of command structure, the commander did nothing wrong. Commanders can issue virtually any punishment, or in this case, no punishment at all. Command has complete authority and discretion over how a degrading and violent assault or rape under their command is handled. They are the judge and jury.

We need to end this unjust and horrific pattern, and we need to end it now. That’s why I have introduced H.R. 3435, the STOP Act, because it’s time. It’s time to stop this horrific culture in the military.

AMERICA IS NOT BROKE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MURPHY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I have listened to a lot of Republicans here on the House floor and back in Connecticut talk about how they think that the only way to build up America is to tear down government and start divesting from our public institutions. That’s simply not the history of this country. Over the last 100 years, we’ve become the world’s leader by layering massive private investment on top of massive public investment. And yet day after day, I listen to the right wing come down to this floor and tell the American people that we can no longer afford to make these kinds of investments that we used to make in roads, in rails, in schools, and in new technologies.

And, so, it’s time that the rest of us stood up here and told them that they’re simply wrong, that America is not broke. We have all of the resources and all of the willpower necessary to make the investments we need in order to regain our global competitive edge, but only if we start dealing with facts rather than just with political rhetoric.

So, over the next few minutes, I want to show you four pretty simple charts that debunk this myth that our Nation is broke and that we can’t muster the resources necessary to meet the challenges of a global century.

Let’s start here. The United States is still the richest country in the world. In fact, our GDP ranks us at the top of the list among G-20 countries. And for all of the talk about the rise of China, India, and Brazil, our country is still