

clear, and I pray the leadership of this Nation will consider and do what is right by bringing our soldiers home.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of this Special Order this evening.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

□ 2230

SEEKING AN ALTERNATIVE TO WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BONNER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished Speaker, and I am delighted to be able to join the chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus and my colleagues in following up on this outstanding Special Order that the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) has led and to thank him. I do not think we appropriately thanked him as the time has run out for his wisdom and insight in bringing us together this evening.

This is a very trying time for the chairman in his leadership role and for this Congress, and for him to have the courage to be able to stand up on the floor of the House and convene his colleagues, knowing of the name-calling that is going on in this country, but I think as I have spoken to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) earlier, he has admitted that he is willing to risk affection and admiration to be able to tell the truth and to speak on behalf of the Nation's constituents who are concerned about the direction this Nation has taken and certainly the choices that we are making, choosing war over peace, and actually not choosing life over death.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to say that I rise this evening to really speak to the deafening silence that we have seen occurring in the realm or in the august halls of this particular body, and that is that we have come now to almost the brink of a decision; I will not say the brink of war, I am going to say the brink of a possible decision and yet, this Congress, the 108th Congress, Mr. Speaker, has not taken up the question of a declaration of war. The silence is enormously deafening, I say to my colleagues, for this reason.

The Constitution is clear when it enunciates the powers of this Congress in article I, section 8, along with the duties of imposing and exercising taxes and paying debts and providing for the common defense and general welfare. It announces clearly to declare war and

make rules concerning captures on land and water. Somewhat antiquated language, but it is very clear, Mr. Speaker, that this body has a duty and obligation to declare war. The President is the Commander in Chief, and we fully respect and understand that. And as he is the Commander in Chief, he can deploy troops.

Yes, the Congress entered into, or this Nation entered into, the Korean conflict, the Vietnam police action; but because Congress fails to act, it does not abdicate its duty and its responsibility. The one thing America needs to understand is that there is no doubt or any question that if we were under imminent attack, it is clear that the Commander in Chief could defend, along with the armed services, the United States military, this Nation. In fact, the war powers resolution clearly enunciated that perspective by statute, that if any President felt we were under imminent attack, as was indicated to us in October of 2002, that President could engage in the protection of this Nation and report back to the Congress.

Sadly, and maybe graciously, Mr. Speaker, we are not under imminent attack. We were not under imminent attack in the October 2002 debate and, in fact, I would say that our colleagues, our friends, Members of this body and the other body, deserve to re-debate this question because, Mr. Speaker, we did not know of the dire circumstances of North Korea. We did not know of its unclassified now state or status, of its ability or potential of, if you will, creating and having nuclear weapons. So now we have our war missiles and our troops focused on Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to my colleagues that this is the time for this Nation to see this democratic body debate the question of war, up or down, should we declare war against Iraq. We will not harm our troops. We have all stood here and said that we do not divide on our troops. There is no divide. The mission is in question. But we will lay down our lives for our troops as they are ready to lay down their lives for this Nation.

Why castigate those of us who allegedly are accused of being unpatriotic when everyone knows that the armed services comes from all of our respective districts?

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important this evening as the time seems to be shortened, I believe it is important to look for, Mr. Speaker, an alternative. There is another way. And I demand, if you will, that this House debate the question that we indict Saddam Hussein, that we leave 50,000 troops and bring the others home, that we seek to put in humanitarian aid, we fight for the Mideast peace, and we fight the war against terrorism; but we find an alternative, because it is better to choose life over death and peace over war.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. CARSON of Indiana (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and March 19 on account of personal business in the district.

Mr. SNYDER (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and the balance of the week on account of medical reasons.

Mr. HYDE (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of medical reasons.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. RYAN of Ohio) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. CARSON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WATERS, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SESSIONS) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today, March 19 and 20.

Mr. OSBORNE, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. FEENEY, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. BILIRAKIS, for 5 minutes, March 25.

Mrs. BLACKBURN, for 5 minutes, March 19.

Mr. TANCREDO, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota, for 5 minutes, March 19.

Mr. DUNCAN, for 5 minutes, today.
(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. SOLIS, for 5 minutes, today.
Mr. EDWARDS, for 5 minutes, today.
Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 36 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, March 19, 2003, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1183. A letter from the Director, Regulations Policy and Management Staff, Department of Energy, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Electronic Registration