

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, especially with so many in the gallery today, I rise to defend JOHN KERRY from the onslaught on the floor today, a decorated veteran in Vietnam, a person who received three Purple Hearts and the Silver Star for serving with distinction. And now, because he is a candidate for President of the United States, he receives the unbridled attack from the opposition.

We ought to rise above this here on the floor of the House and across the Nation in this debate. What we need to do is focus on the issues that this country desperately needs to address, seniors that need prescription drugs, people that are out of work and unemployed.

What we need is leadership, the kind of leadership that JOHN KERRY provided in the fields of Vietnam, that he has provided with distinction in the United States Senate, and that he will provide as President of the United States.

THE BENEFITS OF MEDICARE'S NEW DRUG PROVISIONS

(Mr. BLUNT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, for too long seniors have been paying extraordinary high prescription drug costs with no relief measures in sight. But thanks to the recently signed Medicare and Prescription Drug Improvement and Modernization Act, Medicare will now provide drug cards to all seniors who need them at a cost ranging from a \$30 maximum each year to free.

These cards, even for those who would get them for free, are completely voluntary. They will be made available to seniors beginning June 1 of this year. Low-income seniors will have a \$600 annual credit on their card. Seniors can sign up for a Medicare-endorsed discount card as early as May 3.

Seniors are encouraged to find out what card is best for them by calling 1-800-MEDICARE and asking about drug savings. Seniors and their families can visit www.medicare.gov to find out more about which card is best for them where they live.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all seniors and people who care about them to inquire about enrollment, to see if this is a better plan for them, and to begin immediately saving on their drug costs.

CREDENTIALS NEEDED FOR THOSE ATTACKING JOHN KERRY

(Mr. MCDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I came to the floor to talk about Earth Day, but listening to what is going on out here makes me think I will change my subject.

I spent 2 years, 1968 to 1970, as a psychiatrist in the United States Navy taking care of people who lived through what JOHN KERRY went to war about, and for anybody to come out here and attack his war record, you have to have pretty good credentials.

Now, if you served and showed up for drills at your local National Guard, I think those would be acceptable credentials. But if you were in the National Guard and you did not show up, you were AWOL for a whole year, you have got real nerve to start an attack on JOHN KERRY's character.

During that war many people on both sides of the issue, whether we should go to war or were against the war, acted bravely. But some people were simply not available. They never showed up for their flight physical. They were not there.

ATTACKS ON JOHN KERRY SHOULD NOT BE COUNTERANDED

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, one of the things America abhors is a sneak attack. President Roosevelt in this Chamber described December 7 as a day that would live in infamy.

What I saw a few minutes ago is a sneak attack on a Member of the U.S. Senate by a bunch of my colleagues who came down here and disparaged him, contrary to the rules of the House. The Speaker repeatedly admonished them for violating the best traditions of this House, and my colleagues continually came to the Chamber to continually violate those traditions of this House.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give notice that we have a long time in this election period coming up, and we have problems deciding what we are going to do about Iraq, and it is not going to help us if we turn this into a Chamber of personal assassination.

Let me just say, there is a lot of nerve in this Chamber attacking a guy who has a Bronze Star, a Silver Star and Purple Hearts in the tradition of his Nation, and it should not be counteracted by the Speaker ever under any circumstances, whether Democrats are in the Chamber to object or not.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman will state it.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I just want to raise a question. Is it proper, is it appropriate, is it a violation of House rules for Members of this body to attack Members of the other body by name?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. When a Member of the Senate is a presumptive nominee for President, it is proper and fair to speak about the Senator's

record, but not to make personal attacks.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding this person is not even the nominee of his party yet.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has not purported to identify an actual nominee.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state it.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, is it appropriate for the Speaker, who presides over this Chamber, when there is a clear and direct personal attack using personally disparaging comments about a Member of the United States Senate on a repeated basis, is it appropriate or allowable for the Speaker to interject and prohibit that activity, even without a Member of the Chamber expressing a concern?

In other words, does the Speaker have the ability to exercise preemptory power to enforce the rules of this House when there is a sneak attack disparaging the personal integrity of a U.S. Senator?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is the Speaker's role, and the Member should have seen the Chair admonish those not following the rules.

HONORING THE GARDEN GROVE ELKS CLUB

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Garden Grove Elks Lodge 1952 for their contributions to my community of Garden Grove, California.

The Garden Grove Elks Club is just one of thousands of Elks chapters across this Nation. They operate on the ideals of charity and patriotism, contributing to schools, police and fire departments, and also working with their youth in their community.

The Elks Club consists only of volunteers, those citizens who strive to make a difference based solely on the goodness of their heart.

I would also like to recognize Elks Lodge 1952's newly installed officers: Dave Offhaus, Dave Skelton, Gary Mueller, Randy Barrows, Lynn Johnson and Jim Faulkner. I wish these new officers much luck in the coming year, and I would also like to extend my appreciation for all that they do for our community.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will clarify what he had said to the gentleman from Washington.

In the event that a Member does need to be interrupted for improper references to presidential and nominated

candidates, the Chair will interrupt the Member and admonish the Member if he is not in comportment with the rules.

MAKING IN ORDER AMENDMENT IN LIEU OF AMENDMENT 3 PRINTED IN HOUSE REPORT 108-466 DURING CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2844, CONTINUITY IN REPRESENTATION ACT OF 2004

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker I ask unanimous consent that during consideration of H.R. 2844, pursuant to House Resolution 602, the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary be considered as the original bill for the purpose of amendment, and the amendment I have placed at the desk be in order in lieu of the amendment printed in part B of House Report 108-466 and numbered 3.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the amendment.

The Clerk read as follows:

An amendment offered in lieu of amendment No. 3 printed in House Report No. 108-466 offered by Mr. SKELTON of Missouri: In section 26(b) of the Revised Statutes of the United States, as proposed to be added by the bill, add at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) PROTECTING ABILITY OF ABSENT MILITARY AND OVERSEAS VOTERS TO PARTICIPATE IN SPECIAL ELECTIONS.—

“(A) DEADLINE FOR TRANSMITTAL OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS.—In conducting a special election held under this subsection to fill a vacancy in its representation, the State shall ensure to the greatest extent practicable (including through the use of electronic means) that absentee ballots for the election are transmitted to absent uniformed services voters and overseas voters (as such terms are defined in the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act) not later than 15 days after the Speaker of the House of Representatives announces that the vacancy exists.

“(B) PERIOD FOR BALLOT TRANSIT TIME.—Notwithstanding the deadlines referred to in paragraphs (2) and (3), in the case of an individual who is an absent uniformed services voter or an overseas voter (as such terms are defined in the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act), a State shall accept and process any otherwise valid ballot or other election material from the voter so long as the ballot or other material is received by the appropriate State election official not later than 45 days after the State transmits the ballot or other material to the voter.”

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered read and printed in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

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

There was no objection.

CONTINUITY IN REPRESENTATION ACT OF 2004

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 602 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2844) to require States to hold special elections to fill vacancies in the House of Representatives not later than 21 days after the vacancy is announced by the Speaker of the House of Representatives in extraordinary circumstances, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. Points of order against consideration of the bill for failure to comply with clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed 60 minutes, with 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration and 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. FROST), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all

time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

(Mr. HASTINGS of Washington asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, House Resolution 602 is a structured rule providing for the consideration of H.R. 2844, the Continuity in Representation Act of 2004. The rule provides 60 minutes of general debate with 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration and 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary.

The rule waives all points of order against consideration of the bill for failure to comply with clause 3(c)(4) of rule XIII requiring the inclusion of general performance goals and objectives in a committee report.

The unanimous consent request just agreed to provides that the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill shall be considered as an original bill for the purpose of amendment which shall be considered as read.

The original text for purpose of the amendment will not include the text of part A of the Committee on Rules report. The unanimous consent agreement also makes in order the bipartisan amendment of the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. SKELTON), the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT), and the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY) in lieu of the Skeleton-Maloney amendment printed in part B of the Committee on Rules report.

The rule provides that the amendments made in order shall be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the whole House or in the Committee of the Whole.

Finally, the rule waives all points of order against the amendments printed in the report and provides for one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

Mr. Speaker, the tragic events of September 11, 2001, made clear that, as much as we might wish otherwise, at some point in the future it may be necessary to replace a large number of Members of this body killed in some type of a terrorist attack.

As my colleagues know, the Constitution has always required that the vacancies in the House, no matter how many or what their cause, be filled only by popular election of the people. The timing of such special elections is set on a state-by-state basis. Some States require that congressional vacancies be filled relatively quickly