

Therefore, I do not take lightly the responsibility of fighting for voting rights, and that is why I stand today at the conclusion of this day to say to this House that we hope no one left here embittered, believing that this should not have been done; that I will get you in the appropriations process; I will make sure your bill does not pass; I will see you in the committee room.

I hope that does not happen, Madam Speaker. I hope that the collegiate response of the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT), who presided, who I give great accolades for his demeanor and temperament, I hope that will be the temperament of the Republican leadership throughout this body's time. I hope that individual Members will not take it personally. I hope that they will not undermine their oath of office and demean the dignity of this place by punishing people for utilizing democracy.

Then I would simply say that in the backdrop of the tragic loss of our good friend and colleague, Bob Matsui, and the passing of our former colleague, Shirley Chisholm, two Members that were so different in time and age but yet represented the focus of this body, and that is representing the people, today we attempted to represent the people. We represented people not only in Ohio, but where people felt they were disenfranchised all over the Nation. So in that representation, I am proud.

As we look to the future and the backdrop of the tragedy that is going on in Asia, people now who have no places to live, no places to vote, no places to eat, no places to go and get medical care, no places to be educated, we in America should be highly grateful for what has transpired in this country on this very day.

As we do so, might I say that I congratulate those who are now engaged in the humanitarian help going on for the tsunami victims.

I would also like to applaud the efforts of a group that has founded itself in Houston, Houston's Solution for Tsunami Victims. There are many other groups that have formulated in Houston as well, but this group in particular came together in less than 48 hours after the tragedy, and they are representatives from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Thailand and all over our community, those who came together to find out what they could do.

I am gratified that on this Sunday they will come together again. January 9, 2004, we will be at the University of Houston Wellness Center in Houston, Texas, inviting all the community to come out and provide medical relief and as well to save the children by providing diaper items and bottles and other dry items for children who are in need in these devastated areas.

I look forward as well to joining my colleagues in visiting Sri Lanka in the days to come and hopefully bringing a

sense of hope to the people who are now hopeless.

This is an important democracy in which I stand in the most powerful lawmaking body in this Nation.

I am gratified to be able to stand here, one, to salute the process today that was one founded in democracy, equal protection and due process; but I am also very grateful to stand here today to salute America and all of those who have risen to the occasion in aid of those in the Asian area that are suffering from the tsunami devastation.

I will also make mention of the legislation that is now gaining great bipartisan support, the temporary protective status to be given to those nationals from those areas so devastated who are not able to go back and their legal documents are expired. I hope we will move swiftly on that legislation, because it will add to the humanitarian stance of the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, the United States Congress, and the American people.

We all can do better, and we can do better united together. I want to applaud Houston's Solution for Tsunami Relief Victims. I want to applaud all of the relief efforts going on around the Nation and all of the international aid groups in the United Nations for rising to the occasion.

As I close, let me admonish those who are participating in this relief effort that this is a short-term stance that we are taking right now. We will need a long-term investment. The \$350 million that the United States has offered, it may not be enough; and I hope this Congress will rise to the occasion and make it sufficient.

On that, let me say, Madam Speaker, I am grateful that we have a Constitution that allows me to speak under the first amendment. I am grateful that we have a process that allows democracy to follow through today. I am more grateful that we have a large heart in the United States that is drawn together from every nook and cranny, every hamlet, every city, every rural area, that is now participating in this massive relief effort for those so devastated.

Let me also ask for prayers for families who have lost loved ones, including those Americans that have now died, and let us ask for prayers for those who are now suffering. We hope that we can stand in the doorway and prevent more disease and more death that may come from this terrible disaster.

I ask as I go to my seat that God bless the United States of America, God bless this process, and God bless those that are suffering today in the world.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BACA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. DEFAZIO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of duties in the district.

Mr. KIND (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. ORTIZ (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of important business in the district.

Mr. STARK (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of escorting the Matsui family to Sacramento, California, where the late Honorable Robert T. Matsui will lie in state in the California State capitol.

Mr. STUPAK (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of travel problems.

Mrs. TAUSCHER (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business.

Mr. WYNN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mrs. BIGGERT (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of official travel overseas.

Ms. GRANGER (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of being out of the country on official business.

Mr. SHADEGG (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of a death in the family.

Mr. SHIMKUS (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of his traveling with a congressional delegation to Jordan.

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 Mrs. JONES of Ohio) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

Mr. CONYERS and to include extraneous material, notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost \$5,867.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 2, 109th Congress, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Accordingly, pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 2, 109th Congress, the House stands adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, January 20, 2005.

Thereupon (at 5 o'clock and 42 minutes p.m.), pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 2, the House adjourned until Thursday, January 20, 2005, at 10 a.m.