

the Commandant of Cadets Department.

On leave from Valley Forge during World War II, General Medenbach served as Secretary of the General staff of the Army Air Corps Tactical Training Command and the Air Corps Training Command and later, in North Africa, Italy, France, Germany and Austria as a military government planner and officer under Field Marshal Alexander and General Eisenhower.

Following active duty, General Medenbach returned to Valley Forge and served in the Pennsylvania National Guard. His many decorations included the Legion of Merit, the European Service Ribbon with two battle stars, the American Defense Ribbon, the Meritorious Service Unit Award, and the Pennsylvania State Guard Reserve Distinguished Service Ribbon. He was also listed in Who's Who in America.

During his Valley Forge service, General Medenbach served in or assisted in the establishment of practically every department of the institution as an associate of the founder, Lieutenant General Milton G. Baker. He held the post of adjutant and chief of staff, as well as deputy superintendent, and served for more than 30 years as the commandant of cadets.

He became the president on the retirement of General Baker and retired as superintendent emeritus in 1971. More recently, he served the school as volunteer historian and archivist and as the vice president and secretary of the Chapel Foundation Board of Directors.

During the many years of his long service, General Medenbach was the driving force in establishing the high standards of character, personal discipline, drill, ceremonies, and individual fitness that have been the hallmarks of military excellence at Valley Forge.

It is with great sadness that we mourn his passing, and our thoughts and prayers go out to his family at this time, as we thank him for his service.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### THE BLUE DOG COALITION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. ROSS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, this evening, on behalf of the 44 member strong fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog coalition, I rise to spend an hour this evening talking with you and Members of this body about the Blue Dog Coalition's desire to restore fiscal discipline and common sense to our national government.

Over the next hour, we plan as members of the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog coalition to talk on this floor about the Blue Dog Coalition's 12-point plan for budget reform. We plan to discuss our accountability measures, because we believe it is time to restore accountability, fiscal discipline, and common sense to our national government.

Before I begin the formal presentation this evening, and will be joined by other members of the Blue Dog Coalition, I would like to take a moment to recognize Sergeant Marcus Wilson. Sergeant Wilson grew up in Dermott, Arkansas, in southeast Arkansas, in our congressional district back home.

This afternoon I had the honor to go to Walter Reed Army Hospital where I was able to sit down and visit with Sergeant Wilson and his wife and his son and thank him for his service to our country. He is there because of injuries suffered in Iraq.

Before that he served in Afghanistan. All of us have different ideas about what we should be doing with this post-war Iraq policy. But one of the things that I believe is absolutely critical and important is that as Members of this Congress, and as American citizens, that we remain united in support of our men and women in uniform. This evening I pay tribute to Sergeant Marcus Wilson of Dermott, Arkansas, and thank him for his service to our country and pray for him as he recovers from injuries he suffered in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I wish you could have been with me there this afternoon in conversations with Sergeant Wilson because he makes all Americans proud with his attitude, his attitude of perseverance, his attitude of service to our country as a soldier in the United States Marines. Again, I pay tribute and salute Sergeant Wilson.

Mr. Speaker, on this day my brother-in-law leaves to go to Kyrgyzstan,

which is the entry point for Afghanistan, much like Kuwait is the entry point for Iraq, for his second mission there. I hope that all of us will keep him and all our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan and elsewhere across this globe in our hearts and in our prayers.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying purpose of the fiscally conservative Blue Dog Coalition is to demand a balanced budget in this country. Mr. Speaker, it was not too long ago from 1998 through 2001 that we had a President named Bill Clinton, from my native State, from my home State, who gave us a balanced budget.

One of the ways he did that was with PAYGO rules in place on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, rules that the Republican leadership threw out after they took control of the House and Senate and the White House in 2001, the beginning of the 107th Congress.

What we have witnessed over the past 6 years has been absolutely staggering, if not startling. We have seen the largest deficit year after year after year until we have accumulated the largest debt ever in our Nation's history.

As members of the fiscally conservative Democratic Blue Dog Coalition, we are committed through our 12-point plan for budget reform and through our accountability package to restore fiscal discipline to our Nation's government.

As we begin this evening, today the U.S. national debt is \$8,701,316,295,722.43. We ran out of room. For every man, woman and child in America, their share, your share of the national debt, \$29,035.60, what we refer to as the debt tax, d-e-b-t, which is one tax that cannot be repealed, cannot be cut until we go away and get our Nation's fiscal house in order.

If this is not startling enough, what's even more alarming is the fact that our Nation is borrowing about \$1 billion a day. On top of that, we are spending about half a billion every day paying interest on the debt we have already got before it increases by another \$1 billion a day. It is important that we get our fiscal house in order, that we return to the days of a balanced budget, that we restore fiscal discipline to our national government, because it is about priorities.

Many of America's priorities, honoring our soldiers, giving them the resources they need to get the job done, honoring our veterans and providing them the services that they were promised and so desperately need, especially with this new generation of veterans coming back from Iraq and Afghanistan and other parts of the world, the priorities in education, and so many other areas that are going unmet, half a billion dollars a day is not going to those priorities, they are going to simply pay interest on the debt we already got before it increases another \$1 billion just about every single day.

We want to do something about this. We want to effect change. We are sick