

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE
SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Mrs. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2. An act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2004.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2) "An Act to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 201 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for the fiscal year 2004," requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. HATCH, Mr. NICKLES, Mr. LOTT, Mr. BAUCUS, Mr. ROCKEFELLER, and Mr. BREAU, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 46. Concurrent resolution to correct the enrollment of H.R. 1298.

HOMELAND HEROES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to bring to the attention of the body another member of a group that we are referring to as homeland heroes. This is a group that has not had the attention that it deserves. It is a group of people who have suffered mightily as a result of the fact that the Federal Government has chosen to abandon them. And yet they fight on, sometimes facing overwhelming odds, sometimes facing the scorn of many of the people in their own community, some of the members of the press. But, nonetheless, they fight on for their own lives, for their life-style, and for the generations behind them that have paved the way for their existence in the area around Douglas, Arizona, and on our southern border even beyond that.

Tonight I want to pay a tribute to a lady I had the opportunity, the great opportunity to meet when I visited the Douglas, Arizona, area a couple of months ago. She came at that time to tell her story, and I found it quite compelling. Her name is Olga Robles. She is a second-generation Mexican American. She lives in Douglas, Arizona. Olga Robles describes herself as an American citizen with Mexican roots. That is where she got into trouble with her Mexican neighbors about a half mile south of her home in Douglas, Arizona. Olga Robles is criticized and attacked because she does not want to be called a Mexican American. She says she is not a hyphenated American. She

is 100 percent American. She was born, raised, and educated in Douglas, Arizona.

For the first 18 years of her life, she lived two blocks from the Arizona-Mexico border. Her mother still lives in that house, and Olga is a full-time caretaker for her mother, who is now 89 years old. Her own home is eight blocks from the border. She is married to Frank Robles, a retired Phelps Dodge worker, and has two sons. She is a registered nurse and has worked at Douglas Hospital as a health professional and as a health professional for EPA and Vision Quest.

From 1979 to 1984, she was an elected local official, a councilwoman in the city of Douglas. She served her community with dignity and great energy. All her life she had been a hardworking citizen, and she is widely known and respected in her community.

Why do I call Olga Robles a homeland hero? I do so because she has suffered, and she is suffering today, for standing up for her rights as a citizen and speaking out against the permissive policies that this government employs toward illegal aliens. She has been personally vilified and shunned by the advocates of unrestricted immigration and proponents of open borders. When she speaks openly and candidly about the problems caused by illegal aliens, she is attacked and told to shut up and "be a good Mexican."

In December, 1999, she was attacked and vilified by name in the Mexican newspaper *El Clarion* in the town of Agua Prieta, a town right on the border. She was called a traitor and a racist for opposing illegal immigration. She was called these things for saying that the laws of this land should be upheld, the laws that she has obeyed, the laws her family has obeyed, the laws that she has every single right to expect her neighbors and her countrymen to obey.

One illegal alien who was caught on her property told her angrily, "We have a right to be here. Santa Ana sold it too cheap, and we want it back."

Now, Olga Robles grew up two blocks from the border and had Mexican parents and grandparents. She said she never had a personal problem with illegal aliens until about 10 years ago, when the situation changed. And, Mr. Speaker, it is amazing to me that time after time, as I have come to this floor and introduced this topic and sort of inducted someone into the Hall of Homeland Heroes, that there is a similarity in their stories. They have all been living through very difficult times. They have all been challenged by what is happening on the border, by the flow of illegal immigration into this country, and they all say it is a relatively recent or relatively new phenomenon.

Beginning in the early 1990s, the illegal aliens started coming across the border in larger numbers, she says. About 5 years ago, the flow of illegal aliens through Douglas became really

heavy and created a big increase in local crime. The illegal aliens have torn down the fences on her property seven times as they hurry to get through her yard and further away from the border. She would call police and the police would say, we cannot do anything; they are illegals. Call the border patrol.

Now, every single resident of Douglas, Arizona, and in every city in this Nation has a right to expect their local police department to come and help them if their rights are being violated, if their land is being despoiled, if their property is being destroyed. But along the border, this has become commonplace, and police departments, for one reason or another, have decided to shirk their own responsibility and duties. And I will tell you there are sheriff departments and police departments along that border that have become corrupted by the phenomenon of illegal immigration and the drug money that is attendant to it.

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Mr. Speaker, they told a resident of the city to forget about it. They are illegal aliens. It is somebody else's problem. No, it is the problem of any law enforcement official in the United States of America. When she did call the Border Patrol, they would come too late and never capture anyone.

Because there has been a lot of attention paid to the problems in Douglas, Arizona, and because there has been a lot of attention paid to the problems with the administration in Douglas, Arizona, with the mayor and other members of the city administration, because people are becoming concerned that their city government may not be in fact as responsive as it should be on these issues and there may be reasons for that, allegations of corruption certainly abound, and because of that, things are beginning to change in Douglas.

Police now come quicker and will apprehend illegal aliens if they are breaking the law, and they will turn them over to the Border Patrol. Illegal aliens often showed up in her yard in broad daylight. If she called the Border Patrol, the aliens would threaten her and call her names.

There are people who bring people into this country illegally and get paid for that. There is a story about this kind of thing happening in the papers here recently. It is a horrible, horrible story about the death of 19 people, including a small child, as a result of the actions taken by people who were smuggling these folks into the United States illegally. They are called coyotes, who are Mexican tour guides, in quotes, who will help a group of illegal aliens get across the border for a hefty price of between \$1,000 and \$1,500. These coyotes scout out vacant houses in Douglas and the surrounding area and tell the illegal aliens how to find them. They become safe houses. These vacant homes and homes for sale are fair game for these criminal gangs.