

profound benefits to our Nation as a whole by allowing Americans to spread the message of freedom and democracy around the world. In addition, having a passport and traveling abroad enables Americans to see the American influence on the world first-hand, including the tremendous amount of humanitarian aid given by Americans through both the public and private sectors.

Americans of all ages are our best ambassadors and we should promote policies that encourage them to travel, to forge connections with people from other countries, to foster mutual understanding and tolerance and to help open new doors to peace.

The timing of our efforts could not be more critical. I think we can all recognize that America needs a boost in foreign public opinion and I am confident that connections made with American travelers can and will make a huge difference improving our image abroad.

So, for all of these reasons, when Lonely Planet, which I am pleased to say is located in Oakland in my district, first raised the idea of a national passport month, I immediately embraced it.

I am proud to have introduced H. Res. 327 and to be part of this campaign to recognize the importance of international travel, and I am overwhelmed by the support we have received. In April of this year, Lonely Planet presented me with over 5,000 petition signatures from people all over the country who support these efforts. And this campaign has the support of a broad coalition of over 70 supporting travel organizations and associations to corporations like American Express and Yahoo.

Moreover, the U.S. Department of State is on record in supporting September as National Passport month. I want to read a quote from its letter: "Since September is a time of the year when schools are re-opening and many students are considering travel or study abroad, it is a highly appropriate month to promote public awareness of the value of the U.S. passport. The Department shares your appreciation of the U.S. passport and supports your resolution."

So, today I'm pleased the House will go on record in support of proclaiming September National Passport Month.

Again, I want to thank all the supporters of this resolution and I look forward to working with you all to ensure the White House issues this proclamation in ample time for the inaugural National Passport month celebrations this September.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, BUREAU OF
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, August 29, 2005.

DEAR Ms. LEE: Thank you for your letter addressed to Secretary Rice regarding H. Res. 327, a resolution to encourage President Bush to proclaim September National Passport Month. It is a pleasure to acknowledge your comments on the positive impact international travel has on individuals and the global community. We, too, recognize the value of travel as a means of enhancing international understanding.

Even though the State Department will issue more than 10 million passports this fiscal year, still less than 23 percent of Americans have a passport. The Department strives to make the process of issuing passports to U.S. citizens as efficient and as courteous as possible. Since September is a time of the year when schools are re-opening and many students are considering travel or study abroad, it is a highly appropriate

month to promote public awareness of the value of the U.S. passport. The Department shares your appreciation of the U.S. passport and supports your resolution.

Sincerely,

MATTHEW A. REYNOLDS,
Acting Assistant Secretary.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 327.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS ARE FIGHTING FOR BORDER SECURITY

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans understand that in this post-9/11 world we cannot separate national security from border security. On that fateful day back in 2001, we learned that the "business as usual" mentality simply does not work anymore. What our Nation needs is a clear immigration enforcement strategy that reduces the threat posed by those who are breaking our laws.

It is estimated that roughly 12 million illegal aliens now reside in the United States. Each year the number grows by another 700,000. Yet we are arresting the same number of illegal aliens as we did back in 1977, despite the fact we have many more illegals coming in than we used to.

Obviously, something has to be done. That is why House Republicans voted to pass a major border security bill this past December. This bill strengthens our borders, implements employment eligibility verification systems, cracks down on those who knowingly hire illegals, empowers local law enforcement to enforce our immigration laws and expedites the swift deportation of illegal aliens.

This is something that has to be done and we cannot compromise on this. Our Nation's security is at risk, and nothing else is more important.

D-DAY AND THE YOUNG AMERICANS

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, the silent ocean roar now covers the battlefields on the shores of France.

They fought for a people they did not know in a place they had never been and consecrated the soil of freedom by the self-sacrifice of their own blood.

There are 9,386 Americans buried on the cliffs of Normandy, France. 1,557

are still missing 62 years later. They gave their youth so Europe could have a tomorrow. They came not to conquer, but to set a people free. That D-Day invasion of France was the beginning of the liberation of Europe.

Those that served that day jumped from the sky in the darkness, or went ashore in the face of massive gunfire. They were the young Americans that went to land in Normandy on June 6, 1944. They defeated the evil forces of the Axis and they did not come back until it was over over there.

History refers to those that died and those that lived as the Greatest Generation. They are our fathers and our grandfathers. They defended the honor of liberty and proved there is something worth fighting for, and there is something worth dying for. And that's just the way it is.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN NAGORNO-KARABAKH

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to bring attention to the problem of internally displaced persons, or IDPs in Nagorno-Karabakh in the Caucasus. The situation is disheartening because aid is needed and, unfortunately, the United Nations refuses to allow its organizations like UNHCR and UNICEF to operate in the country largely due to Azerbaijan's opposition.

Because internally displaced persons remain within the borders of their home country, primary responsibility for protecting and assisting them rests with their national authorities. However, I strongly believe there is also a responsibility that lies with the United States and the international community to bring rightful attention to this issue and consider ways to ease and eventually end the plight of these displaced individuals.

Mr. Speaker, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as the Soviet Union was collapsing the people of Nagorno-Karabakh made a peaceful request to reunite with Armenia, from which they were arbitrarily separated by Joseph Stalin in 1921.

□ 2300

Azerbaijan responded with a campaign of ethnic cleansing and full-scale military attack on Nagorno-Karabakh.

As a result of Azerbaijan's aggression, 30,000 people died, and hundreds of thousands fled the region. About 36,000 Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan and some 71,000 displaced ethnic Armenians now reside in Nagorno-Karabakh.