

I admire the willingness of Prime Minister Barak to persevere. I believe he does this because he understands what is truly in his country's long-term interests. I hope the United States Government will continue to be a strong supporter and partner of Israel and, in particular, make it clear to the extent that Israel does withdraw from some of these areas, potentially exposing itself to some of the problems that might come up that the United States will continue to be a reliable partner. But it has to be noted that the kind of negativism, the kind of extreme hostility which Prime Minister Barak's openness has called for on the part of many Arabs cannot be helpful.

I admire, as I said, Prime Minister Barak for not being deterred by this. He is not allowing the extremists to undermine his efforts, but they ought to understand and people elsewhere ought to understand that there is a price to be paid for this. So I hope, Mr. Speaker, that as Prime Minister Barak goes forward in partnership with the U.S., we will begin to see responsible leaders in the Arab world exercise the kind of reciprocal approach that the prime minister's courage deserves.

CONDEMNING A BOUNTY OFFERED FOR BORDER PATROL AGENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, under ordinary circumstances, I would not rise to the floor of the House to discuss as delicate an issue as this if we had been briefed by law enforcement officials, the Department of Justice or the Border Patrol, for the issue is so troubling that I do not even think Americans would want this kind of terrible proposal to be promoted.

□ 1900

But the fact that article was in the Houston Chronicle today brings me to the necessity of addressing this question publicly. "Bounty Offered for Killing Agent of Border Patrol," Houston Chronicle, today, Tuesday, June 6, 2000.

The reason I come to the floor of the House is to condemn any such attempt to put a bounty or to ask for an assassination of any of America's law enforcement officers or, for that matter, anyone in the United States who are lawfully performing their duties.

This request for a bounty on a Border Patrol agent has been asked for by Mexican activist Carlos Ibarra Perez. Certainly, the border between the State of Texas and the other border States and Mexico has had some troubling times. Yes, there has been an infusion of illegal immigrants. There have been acts that have been acted upon by citizens illegally trying to pro-

tect their properties. But I think that it is important for those of us who have responsibility and oversight over law enforcement personnel throughout this Nation to condemn this heinous request, to indicate that there is no reason that anyone should call for a bounty and for an act to assassinate or kill another human being and particularly in this instance.

This also calls for this Congress to act expeditiously to provide the extra funding that will necessitate or provide for extra Border Patrol along that border.

In addition, I will be asking the Department of Justice to provide more FBI agents in that area to ensure that this may be what I believe it is, an idle threat. But no life should be taken for granted. And though we have much to do at the border to protect all the individuals who are there, Border Patrol, those who see the necessity to come into this country illegally, and that is wrong, but to protect the area and the people who live there and the lives of people who are in the midst of that, if you will, confusion.

But to be able to sit idly by while someone calls for the assassination of a Border Patrol agent, any Border Patrol agent, is intolerable and should not be accepted.

I am asking that we continue to monitor that area, that the Department of Justice keeps a watchful eye, that more funds are provided for Border Patrol agents, along with more training, and that increased law enforcement is added to that area to ensure the protection of the protectors.

There is no excuse that we should stand idly by, as I have indicated, while these kinds of threats are made whether or not this is a citizen of Mexico. And let me applaud the leadership of Mexico and the foreign policy representatives of Mexico who have, likewise, condemned this travesty.

But this kind of public display of disrespect for the law and disrespect for human life is not to be tolerated; and I, for one, will not tolerate this kind of bounty being set upon law enforcement officers who are doing their job.

I am shamed that this has even happened. I ask for Carlos Ibarra Perez to withdraw such a request. I ask for those who even may be thinking of it to not even dare. And I ask the law enforcement of this country to provide the necessary protection and support for these law enforcement officers, the U.S. Border Patrol, who are doing simply their job.

CLEAR ACT OF 2000

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. DEMINT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEMINT. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Citizen Legislators Caucus

and on behalf of many of my colleagues in the Caucus, I am proud to introduce today the Citizen Legislature Empowerment through Access to Resources bill, or, more simply, the CLEAR Act of 2000.

The Citizen Legislators Caucus was established to enhance the effectiveness of term-limited Members of Congress through a positive and constructive agenda. One of the priorities of our Members is working with other Members of Congress to advance legislation that encourages citizen representation and citizen involvement in Government.

Citizen legislators are the lifeblood of a representative democracy. I am honored to serve with so many honorable men and women in this body who have put aside successful careers in other areas of life to come here for a short time to represent their districts and serve their country. Doctors, lawyers, farmers, teachers, small businessmen, people from all walks of life come here for a time to help secure the future of our country and then return home to move on to other areas of service.

I believe such an attitude of service and representation is in keeping with the best examples of our Founding Fathers, as embodied most profoundly in the life of George Washington. President Washington held his positions of leadership in our country, including the presidency, as something with which he was entrusted for a limited time, not for a lifetime.

Our country is a democracy, and a well-informed citizenry is the most important asset of any democracy. Over the past few years, we have worked to put in place a number of important reforms that have changed the way Congress works, giving greater information, access, and control to the people. We have cut committee sizes, we have imposed term limits on committee chairman, and made common sense decisions, such as Congress abiding by the same laws as the rest of the country must live under.

As we move into the 21st century, the Internet provides an incredible opportunity for Congress to continue our reform agenda. We must open the door to Congress for the citizens to see more of what we do and why we do it. The CLEAR Act allows for the posting of reports and issue briefs prepared by the Congressional Research Service for Members of Congress on Member and committee Web sites. The American people, students, teachers, small businessmen, farmers should be able to get this information and facts on which we as Congress base our decisions.

As we work to secure the future of our country, it is important to provide the people with the greatest information possible about their Government. This is a common sense next step in reforming our Government and returning decisions and freedom to the people.