people and tribes so that you may come to know one another,” so that we may come to know one another.

As leaders and as Members of Congress, let us take the message that we articulated so well this evening and spread that throughout our country over these next days and weeks and months, I think we will have done a good service. When the world watched our national prayer service earlier today, as many alluded to in their speeches on the floor today, they heard the healing words of many faiths: a Muslim Imam, a Jewish rabbi, and Christian clergy. Mr. Speaker,

These Americans, like the rest of the world, all worship God in their own way, but the common faith they share, what we have witnessed in the torrent of goodness this week, the neighbors helping neighbors, strangers helping strangers, is that hate can never conquer our Nation’s spirit. That is the common faith that they share, that hate can never conquer our Nation’s spirit.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, this week, thousands of people in New York and Washington lost their lives in a brutal assault on our Nation that was a calculated strike at the heart of our freedom and national unity. Millions of Arab Americans, South Asian Americans and American Muslims around the country have shared our sorrow and outrage at Tuesday’s terrorist attacks. They have donated their blood, their money, their food and their time to the rescue and recovery efforts at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Now these same individuals who have mourned and prayed with us have come under suspicion by their neighbors and the threat of additional violence in the form of hate crimes at their homes, schools, community centers and mosques. As a part of our effort to protect America from violence, we must unequivocally condemn the attacks against these groups and pledge to protect their civil rights and civil liberties.

My district is home to one of the largest Arab and Muslim communities in the country. It is vital that we distinguish the beliefs of these Americans from the perpetrators of Tuesday’s violence, and recognize that American Muslims share our values and contribute significantly to our communities. If we fail to do so, then we will have seriously undermined the very principle we find our-selves vigorously defending in the wake of freedom—the same principle we find our-selves vigorously defending in the wake of Tuesday’s violence.

All Members should stand to condemn any acts of bigotry, violence or discrimination against Arab Americans, South Asians and American Muslims and call upon Americans of every faith and heritage to stand together in this time of national crisis. We must pledge that in our pursuit of national security government agencies will work to avoid activities that encroach upon the civil rights and civil liberties of citizens or legal residents of the United States.

As we should have learned from the shameful history of internment of Japanese-American citizens during World War II, the civil rights and civil liberties of discrete groups of minorities should be specially considered during times of domestic and international turmoil. Our sense of community with fellow Americans of Arab and South Asian descent and those of the Muslim faith should not be counted as another casualty of Tuesday’s senseless violence.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their time this evening, and I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The watch has pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the 107th Congress, 1st session):

(1) condemns any acts of violence or discrimination against Arab Americans, South Asian Americans and American Muslims, and call upon Americans of every faith and heritage to stand together in this time of national crisis. We must pledge that in our pursuit of national security government agencies will work to avoid activities that encroach upon the civil rights and civil liberties of citizens or legal residents of the United States.

(2) condemns any acts of violence or discrimination against Arab Americans, South Asian Americans and American Muslims, and call upon Americans of every faith and heritage to stand together in this time of national crisis. We must pledge that in our pursuit of national security government agencies will work to avoid activities that encroach upon the civil rights and civil liberties of citizens or legal residents of the United States.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

October 27

AMENDING IMMIGRATION AND NATIONALITY ACT TO PROVIDE PERMANENT AUTHORITY FOR ADMISSION OF "S" VISA NON-IMMIGRANTS

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 1424) to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide permanent authority for the admission of "S" visa non-immigrants, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and I will not object, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS) for a comment on the bill.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me.

Mr. Speaker, this issue comes before us at a very appropriate time. It was about 2 days ago, maybe 3 days ago now considering the time is after midnight, authority ran out for our government, through the Attorney General, to be able to bring in alien witnesses for cases involving terrorists, of all things; meaning that when the Attorney General, the Justice Department, and the intelligence communities of our government were able to mount a case against terrorists, so appropriate in view of the events of the past week, that they could bring in people with special information under what was called the "S" visa, a special program to permit aliens to come in for the specific purpose of providing information and testifying, as it were, in these cases constructed by our Justice Department against terrorists.

This authority has run out, and it ran out almost immediately after the events took place in the Pentagon and in New York. So we have to reauthorize it as fast as possible. That is why we are here tonight, because now it becomes even more urgent that we be in a position to be able to authorize the Attorney General to continue building the cases against these new terrorists now and others yet to come, we hope not, which we will do everything we can to prevent, but we must reauthorize the authority for these special visas, these "S" visas that would permit this extra arm of law enforcement to work its will.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Continuing to reserve my reservation of objection, Mr. Speaker, let me thank the gentleman for bringing this important initiative to the floor of the House tonight, particularly with the great need that we have. It is obvious that we are in a time deep sorrow, the time in which Congress continues and will continue to seek all possible avenues which would help provide assistance to
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the American public in our time of need.

This legislation, as the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GEKAS), the chairman has indicated, is appropriate as the U.S. attorney and the Attorney General are looking to bring solution to the heinous acts that occurred this week.

The Violent Crime Control Act of 1994 created the "S" nonimmigrant visa classification. We need to restore this visa which expired on September 12, 2001. Without this legislation, law enforcement will not be able to bring in foreign nationals who may be able to provide their needed information. It is well known that the search for the perpetrators of the heinous acts that occurred on September 11, 2001, is an international search.

Right now, the number of visas to bring in individuals are limited, 200 visas are for those who provide critical information about crimes. Fifty visas are specifically devoted to those who can provide critical information about terrorism. An application for the "S" nonimmigrant visa must be made by a Federal, State or local law enforcement agency or by a court, and once an individual enters on an "S" visa, he or she is admitted for the purpose of cooperating with law enforcement.

This is crucial inasmuch as our Attorney General and all of the additional officials are looking to bring some resolution, great resolution to this enormous tragedy. These visas are particularly necessary because many of these people are in danger in their home countries after they have cooperated with an investigation or testified in a criminal proceeding.

There is much that this Nation has to do to, ultimately, in our future to bring closure to the terrible loss of life. In order to do this expeditiously, we need the insight of these individuals around the world who will come and testify and bring evidence so that we can put an end to these evil acts.

This legislation, I believe, is important, and so the objection that I have expressed is one that I am willingly now prepared to withdraw and ask that my colleagues do support this legislation so that we can move expeditiously in what we need to do to solve the terrible act that occurred this week.

Mr. Speaker. I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PERMANENT AUTHORITY FOR ADMISSION OF "S" VISA NONIMMIGRANTS.

Section 214(k) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(k)) is amended—

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Mr. Speaker, as we stand here tonight, behind you is our flag, which is the greatest symbol of our country. And as we have the energetic give and take of public debate on the floor of this Chamber to do our duty, to represent freedom, to represent our constituents and our very American way of life, we recognize, I know, that we could not be here to have our debates and our agreements and our disagreements if it were not for the veterans of our country, who from the beginning of our revolution up through today, as our military stands ready always, as our troops are overseas in situations that put them in harm's way, and we always know through all of this that the colors do not run on that flag and neither have our veterans.

I mention the veterans because they are so important to us. Mr. Speaker, I believe also we should mention that we realize that somewhere in this tragic amount of individuals who lost their lives, there are veterans; but we also recognize in fact that there are nonveterans that have also in fact lost their lives. And it is fitting that those targeted, whether veterans or non-veterans, should receive in tribute the symbol of our great Nation, the American flag, that has been flown across the United States Capitol, the structure that houses our great institutions of democracy.

Tragically, the victims of this savage attack are numerous. Though there are many victims, each should be honored. Every single one of them. This resolution will permit Members to show that they, this Congress, and our country mourn the loss deeply of our fellow citizens and we are in solidarity with those that have had the ultimate price of their lives taken away from them and we are in deepest sympathy with their families.

It has long been the law of this Nation that there are many victims of war who have not served in our armed services, but they all assuredly were casualties of war, and they should be recognized as such. I hope all Members will join me in passing this resolution.

Mr. BAIRD. Reclaiming my time, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the distinguished gentleman from Ohio and the gentleman from Maryland for introducing this legislation. And, parenthetically, I would like to thank them both for their support of recent efforts to counsel the staff and other Members of this body to help them deal with the events surrounding the tragedy of Tuesday.

Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, two great symbols of the United States were attacked along with thousands of our countrymen. When the symbols of the World Trade Center took with it the lives of thousands of innocent men, women, young children, and senior citizens. We have grieved.