

and perish and yet, what we will have is another generation rising up in bitterness and hatred against us.

Mr. Speaker, the United States and Britain do not need that, and we should not allow untold millions to suffer needlessly in Afghanistan.

#### MUNICIPAL PREPARATION AND STRATEGIC RESPONSE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor for me to rise this evening and discuss very important legislation that we intend to introduce tomorrow on the floor. My colleagues should know that this is the collaboration of more than 45 Members of Congress who have gone home and listened to their leaders, listened to their local fire chiefs, police chiefs, emergency medical people, allied health professionals, and who understand the importance of having a Municipal Preparation and Strategic Response Act. That is what our bill is called: the Municipal Preparation and Strategic Response Act of 2001.

The September 11 terrorist attacks on the United States has prompted increasing debate and attention to several proposals addressing homeland security in the United States at the Federal level. The President is to be complimented for his appointment of Tom Ridge, who we believe will do an outstanding job in spearheading this effort in our Nation.

The one thing that the recent attack made clear was that for this new kind of warfare being conducted against the United States, that those truly in the frontline of defense are indeed our local firefighters, our police force, our emergency medical teams, the allied health professionals that get involved in meeting this kind of imminent emergency.

□ 1800

It has not been lost on Members of Congress as we have gone home to our districts and talked to people about what has happened at the World Trade Center, in the fields of Pennsylvania, and at the Pentagon that the first to respond was not the FBI, the CIA, the FAA, or our Armed Forces, but indeed, they were firefighters, they were police officers, they were emergency medical teams, they were our allied health professionals.

These are the individuals that are most in need, at this very critical juncture of homeland defense, of the support and money necessitated to carry out homeland defense to make sure that our people here at home are safe and secure.

To do this, they require appropriate funding, and funding that will allow them from the bottom up, starting with our local communities, to become more involved with the strategic planning, and to be able to coordinate with State and Federal agencies in such a manner that will provide commonality of communication, that will allow them to prepare themselves with the various kinds of equipment they are going to need to handle this new threat, this new era that we are living in.

I am proud to join more than 45 Members in sponsoring this very important legislation. The nuts and bolts of this legislation are as follows:

This legislation would provide a total of \$1 billion in funding to towns, cities, and tribes for strategic planning needed to ensure that local emergency responders, including municipal, private, and volunteer fire departments, police departments, emergency medical technicians, EMTs, paramedics, and other health professionals are fully prepared and equipped and trained for emergency and security issues that arise from terrorist attacks.

It would also provide for the development of coordinated regional responses to terrorist attacks or other catastrophes utilizing Federal, State, and local agencies, and provide an additional \$250 million to the COPS program and \$250 million to the assistance to the firefighters program to establish grants specifically for counterterrorism response, training, and equipment; and most importantly, as we have heard from all of our local officials, with no local matching funds required.

It is important to emphasize how critical it is that we are proposing no local matching funds for these programs. The threat to our communities is now, and we cannot give those at war with the United States the opportunity to strike while our communities spend years saving enough money to pay the local match for Federal grants to provide the training and equipment necessary to safeguard the American people today.

In the edition of the Hartford Courant this past Sunday in my district, they talked about specific interviews they have had with local police departments who say that they are in no way prepared for the kind of terrorist threats that currently we can face here in this Nation.

With the State Department predicting it is near a 100 percent certainty that given the most recent attacks on Afghanistan that there will be a response, it becomes abundantly clear that we need to make sure that our front line defenders, that those who are the first to respond to these attacks, have the money in place, the training in place, the communication that is necessary in order for them to do their jobs.

Our bill specifically establishes a \$1 billion grant program for cities, counties, towns, boroughs, tribes, and other municipal or regional authorities to develop local emergency response plans that include the following, and I think it important to enumerate on these specific goals: That develop strategic response plans that provide for a clearly defined and unified response to terrorist attacks or other catastrophes. Municipal leaders feel very strongly, in acknowledging their role as the first responders, that it is important that Congress not make decisions in a vacuum; that we reach out to our local municipalities, that we involve discussion from the bottom up, and not foist a top-down decision upon them, so that we are better prepared to coordinate the activities and procedures of various emergency response units, and that we better define the relationship, the roles, responsibilities, jurisdiction, command structures, and communication protocols of emergency response units; that we coordinate response procedures with similar emergency response units in neighboring units of local government, as well as with State and Federal agencies; that we identify potential local targets of terrorism, and include specific response procedures for each potential target, notwithstanding concerns about our local schools, about water supplies, about nuclear generating power facilities. It is important that we take this kind of forward-thinking action, and we do so now.

The bill will also allow communities to prepare and issue reports to units of local government, State legislators, and Congress that include recommendations for specific legislative action; conduct public forums or other appropriate activities to educate the public about potential threats and steps the public can take to prepare for them.

I do not think there is a community that any Member of Congress has visited since September 11 where people have not been willing to roll up their sleeves and say, what can we do to help? But in meeting with our local officials, they have also said, as much as we are willing to help, we lack the necessary resources to do so.

The best way that we can help and engage in homeland defense is to make sure that our local municipalities have the resources available to carry out this function.

To help accomplish this goal, we have asked FEMA to designate for each State a representative, not to dictate but to assist and advise units of local government with the development of a strategic response plan, act as a liaison between units of local government, and coordinate the sharing of information about Federal Government initiatives and protocol.

It is clear in talking to a number of local officials, as well, that the commonality of communication is at the heart of being able to respond successfully. It is this commonality that local municipalities seek, recognizing that to have commonality nationwide is going to require an enormous effort with regard to coordinating all the various agencies at local, State, and Federal levels.

But it definitely needs the input of our local municipalities. It definitely needs the information that so many of them are anxious to share with us. It definitely requires the kind of coordination that will identify the gaps in our program, will identify where there are overlaps, and seek to better coordinate our response, no matter what the act of terrorism may be.

It is so critical, as we have witnessed in what happened and transpired in New York, in the fields of Pennsylvania, and at the Pentagon.

I am proud that this is a bipartisan effort, as well, and that Members like the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON), the founder of the Congressional Fire Services Caucus, is a co-sponsor, and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. STUPAK), who heads up the Congressional Law Enforcement Caucus, is also a sponsor of this critical legislation that has more than 45 Members who have already signed on.

I am also pleased to announce that we have met with several groups representing first responders. They have agreed with the need to have a coordinated local approach, including the National Association of Police Organizations, the National Sheriffs Association, the International Arson Investigators, the National Volunteer Fire Council, the Congressional Fire Services Institute, and the National Association for Fire Chiefs.

In addition, we are also in the process of soliciting input from the National Council of Mayors, the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities, the National Association of Regional Councils, and the New England Association of Regional Councils; the point being, here again, of making sure that as we put forward solutions to this problem, as we seek to work with Tom Ridge and the administration, and as Congress seeks to look at this issue in a rather broad fashion, that we not forget our local communities, that we not forget who indeed are the first responders, that we not forget who truly are our front line of defense.

One can only recall the statements of so many of us who have been to New York, and so many people who have talked about the faces of the heroes that they saw climbing up the stairs to go save those who were in need. They were valiant heroes. The best thing I believe that we can do to respect their memory is to make sure that we are

providing the appropriate kind of funding, and the ability for them to respond with the kind of equipment and the kind of training and strategy necessary to defend against terrorist attacks.

I am pleased to be joined by an esteemed colleague on the Committee on Armed Services who understands this issue very well, and has always been in the forefront of supporting local firefighters and policemen, as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ).

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague for yielding to me. I heard the gentleman while I was watching in my office. I thought I would really like to come down and talk a little bit about what has happened.

I was in New York yesterday, and I know that many of the people who worked in the buildings in the World Trade Center came from Connecticut. My husband used to work in one of those towers, so that we are very well aware that Connecticut lost several people in that tragedy.

I ask the gentleman, was it not wonderful to see our firefighters and our police officers, and even those people who volunteered their time in our emergency, people who respond in emergencies, who went down to help during this disaster, this real disaster that happened to our country?

Somebody was asking me the other day when I was talking to some of the volunteers, the Red Cross volunteers in New York yesterday, someone said to me, did you in California, my State, really even understand what this all is about? And I looked at them, and I said, "You are looking at volunteers who are from California who have come to spend 2 or 3 weeks here to try to help, even if it is just to serve food to these firefighters and servicemen and women who are working down at ground zero; or the fact that these planes had people headed to Los Angeles, many of them from my region. They also died in this disaster in New York.

It is not just that. As we went around, I was kind of laughing. I saw one day on the television the Oregon delegation had taken 1,000 people to New York to try to spend money, because they had heard that so many people were out of work in New York. I think of the devastation, the real devastation and the toll on a city.

We from California are also pretty based on tourism. My own district has Disneyland in it, the happiest place on Earth. Today, it does not have a lot of people there, which means the people are losing their jobs, hotels are having to shut down, restaurants are not serving food. So this devastation has gone not just to New York or to the Pentagon area, but really across the Nation.

I wanted to come down, and I know that the gentleman and I have spoken

so often about all the work that is being done in New York. These people who are doing this, whether they are being paid, whether they are our firefighters, whether they are our reservists or our National Guard or just our volunteers, have their whole heart in it. Across America, we are suffering because of this attack.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentlewoman from California for sharing with us her experience and the sentiments, not only of people from her native California, but people across this great Nation of ours.

I believe the silver lining of all of this is that we are a nation that has come together. It is clear that September 11 has perhaps forever changed this Nation, but perhaps also with an eye toward our communities coming together, with neighbors caring more about one another, with specific outreach that is going on in our communities.

□ 1815

In going back to my community and talking to a number of the firefighters and emergency medical people who, in fact, went to New York City as well, the volunteer efforts across the Nation have just been outstanding.

I come back to the point, though, of our legislation, which is the one thing the municipal leaders have said to me repeatedly is let us make sure when Congress gets together that it does not forget who, in fact, are their front-line defenders, who are the first responders; and as the case is with homeland defense, any act of terrorism is more likely to have firefighters, police officers, sheriffs, emergency medical teams, allied health professionals, all being the first people to arrive on the scene. Therefore, they want to be included in the planning.

Forty-five legislatures have already signed on to the proposal, also feel very strongly about meeting with Tom Ridge and his new task force which is an enormous responsibility. And, again, we applaud the President for his selection and look forward to working with him in this endeavor but want to make sure that we get bottom-up solutions as well from those that are in the front lines.

They are all asking what they can do to help, and they are anxious to provide the Nation with their knowledge, with their expertise. We ought to highlight and spotlight these individuals who are in the field, who do understand intuitively some of the problems we are going to face, and to develop a commonality of communication to get them the strategic planning money that they are going to need, the funding for equipment that they are going to need, to deal with heretofore issues that while they may have been talked about in the press, while we may have heard about them for some time, September 11 has changed all that, and

now we have got to respond and the time for us to act is now.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I would say to the gentleman that he and I have had many conversations, not just here on the floor but in our walks and in talking every day. And we are very concerned that the money that we are spending, and let us face it, we are spending billions of dollars since September 11 on security and on helping the airline industry; and we are very concerned, whether it is the employees who are being laid off and their need for medical care, for health insurance, whether it is for unemployment benefits lasting longer than 26 weeks, whether it is what is happening to the people being laid off at motels as I see in my district.

It also is about the fact that when these types of attacks hit, it could happen in a city where the Federal Government cannot get to it. We just cannot get in there fast enough, and what we will need is our local firefighters and our local law enforcement officers. Our local health clinics and hospitals will take the brunt of any other type of attack like this, and we need to ensure that we are funding not only at the top but also funding within communities, funding the workers, funding the doctors, funding the hospitals, funding the ability of our communities to respond.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, reclaiming my time, someone who understands that and who has done an outstanding job in the 107th Congress is the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCARELL), who also is currently on a terrorist task force and has been one of our leaders, especially in the area of firefighting. And his bill last year I think has done immeasurable good and hopefully with additional funding coming forward will be able to assist again those very important front-line defenders, our firefighters, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCARELL).

Mr. PASCARELL. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, I would say to the gentleman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ) and the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) I am reminded when we discuss homeland security and the great task that is before us all some words by Walt Whitman when he was at this House, when he was at this very House during the Civil War.

He wrote, "One is not without impression after all amid these Members of Congress of both Houses, that if the flat routine of their duties should ever be broken in upon by some great emergency involving real danger, in calling for first class personal qualities, those qualities would be found generally forthcoming and for men not now credited with them."

I think those words are fitting and I want to commend my colleague, the

gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), and I want to commend the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ), because the task is upon us.

I cannot emphasize enough to the Americans that are watching and listening, I cannot emphasize enough how important that we need to bring what we are talking about to the local level; and I want my colleagues to know and I report to them that yesterday I convened a meeting which we only had 2 days to put together of police chiefs in my district, of fire chiefs in my district, of hospital administrators in my district, of those who have dealt with infectious diseases, of the emergency coordinators in two counties that I represent in New Jersey, the State police who have done such a fantastic job in coordinating things in our State of New Jersey.

That group that I have described, if we can hold them for more than a half an hour together that is pretty good. I am lucky if I can hold my family together for 5 minutes. We were there for 2 hours; and I say to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), this should be a real focus of our work, to get these folks who are so knowledgeable, who understand what training means, who understand preparedness, who know what communications will mean in times of tragedy, who know what counseling is all about, we need to be speaking, getting off our chest what is on it, how critical this is. For 2 hours.

I am collecting materials that I will bring to this floor and bring to the legislation so that we will put our legislation and make it better after introducing it.

We are still coming to terms; and I think you would agree with me with September 11, it is not something that simply fades into the night.

What was carried out, this assault on thousands of innocent people who were enjoying the freedom of America, the perpetrators showed us the absolute depths which humankind can sink. But in this immediate aftermath, we have all witnessed something else. We have also seen amid the carnage and amongst the destruction the amazing heights of benevolence, of decency, courage that America offers. We witnessed America's first responders.

I commend the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) for understanding that we have been trying to talk sense into the folks who come here today about that our first responders do not need a wave and a pat on the back so much, but they need the resources. They need the training. They need the equipment. They need the apparatus.

When I look at what happened in New York State and New York City, the numbers of human beings taken, of brave men and women who rushed into those buildings, 343 firefighters, numer-

ous police officers, members of the Port Authority Security Team, and then 92 vehicles destroyed worth close to \$50 million. This is nothing that we can simply offer our condolences about. We have a responsibility, do you not agree?

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Let me first of all recognize the outstanding job that you have done both as an architect of this specific legislation and your outstanding work both in the last session and this session in terms of bringing to Congress the importance and need of firefighting, as you have eloquently pointed out the need for training, the need for counseling, the need to see that there are appropriate resources there at the point of delivery.

Clearly, if we have learned anything from September 11, and with all due respect to our great Federal agencies of the CIA, the FBI, our armed services, the FAA, those first on the scene, those rushing up the stairs all came from our local communities. And that was true in Pennsylvania. It was true at the Pentagon. It was true in New York City.

I hope the gentleman will stay as we enter into further dialogue, but I am proud to say that we have been joined by another architect of this legislation, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL), who also understands the importance of funding local initiatives and is also a co-author of this legislation.

Mr. HILL. I thank the gentleman and my good friend, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON), for yielding me a bit of time. I want to also commend the gentleman for the work that he has put forth on this particular idea. It is a good idea, and it is an idea that I can support wholeheartedly.

The September 11 terrorist attack on the United States has made us more aware of the threats that exist in the world today. It has also made us more aware of how we can combat these dealers in death. Your Municipal Preparation and Strategic Response Act of 2001 is a crucial step toward improving our ability to deal with acts of terrorism. In rural districts like mine in southern Indiana, the firemen and policemen and emergency medical teams are often the first line of defense against disasters. Often funding for these great protectors of ours is lacking.

September 11 has made it clear that for a new kind of warfare, we need a new kind of warrior. It will now take more than just our military and intelligence forces to keep us completely safe. We must make sure that first responders in our cities and towns have the training, the equipment, and the personnel to effectively respond to any disaster. It has got to be a bottom-up approach because the police officer that patrols your street or the firefighter that is your neighbor will be

the first person in any disaster scene. They are taking the greatest risk as we saw in New York City and they are providing the greatest service.

It is our duty to provide for the common defense and general welfare of the United States. To accomplish that is now our duty to give them the best tools possible to face that risk and to provide that service. Your bill provides \$1 billion of grant money that will go directly to local cities and towns to support emergency responders. It will also provide \$250 million to the COPS program and \$250 million to the Firefighters Assistance Program, which has already benefited fire departments in southern Indiana.

In the past, some may have taken our first responders in our communities for granted. This bill, our bill, would help ensure that that never happens again; and I thank the gentleman for yielding to me.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. HILL), who indeed has been a warrior himself on behalf of local firefighters, police and law enforcement individuals. I thank the gentleman who gives me far too much credit. The genesis of this legislation, indeed, came from those front-line responders. It was their input. As the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) has pointed out, as the gentleman has eloquently stated, as we go back and talk to our local municipalities, we hear this repeated all across the Nation.

Is that what the gentleman has found in his 2-hour meeting?

Mr. PASCRELL. That is exactly what I have found, and I cannot emphasize it enough. One of the things that came across in our meeting yesterday morning, in this event for a counterterrorism response, training and equipment are very critical. However, this is not going to make sense on a local level unless mayors and councilmen and committeemen understand that we are under the severest of alerts.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. The gentleman will understand this firsthand, as he is a former mayor.

Mr. PASCRELL. Yes, I do. Mayors are there 24-7. And mayors and councilmen and committee people cannot put this aside, cannot put this as an addendum. This must be a crucial part of every municipality's operation.

□ 1830

And there are places to find out this information.

We are going to help. We are going to do our part in a bipartisan way in the Congress of the United States, but there is not one community which should shrink from the responsibilities that they have within themselves. Every one of us, as individuals and as communities, must develop plans. We are going to help them do that. The emergency teams and their counties in

districts throughout America are going to help them do that. We are going to provide the resources to do this. This is something that has not been on the front line, and we are going to put it on the front line.

I want to commend the gentleman again. Being a mayor, of course, as the gentleman knows, the mayor is the father, the sociologist, the parent. You are everything when you are a mayor, be it a small town or a large town. This is what makes America so great, that small towns and large towns work together, particularly in times of crisis.

And I can assure the gentleman that there is no greater responsibility that we have on this floor than to communicate back to the mayors of the many towns we have in our districts that they better have a plan, they better be able to deal with their hospitals, with their firefighters, with their first responders and EMTs and their police officers. They better be able to deal with the State police in their areas, and the county police and sheriff departments in their areas. If they do not have a plan, what happens if communication goes out? What is the backup? What is the second line of defense?

We understand that many of the things we talk about in biochemical warfare will mean that first responders, who will be the first on the scene and not knowing what even they are attacking, are put in real life jeopardy. We cannot allow that to happen, and we must do this yesterday. So there is no time.

I want to assure the gentleman he will have my total cooperation, and I know across the line here we will have the cooperation of all our colleagues.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. I want to thank the gentleman especially for the outreach he has done in various caucuses but, as has been acknowledged from the outset, this is a bipartisan effort.

I think the heartening thing that is going on in America as we respond to this tragedy is the way the country has reacted. It is the way this body, in truth, which oftentimes is very partisan, but on this issue, from the night of the attack, when we all stood together, Democrat, Republican, Senate and House, on those steps out front and spontaneously broke into God Bless America, from that point forward we understood how clear this mission was; that it is important for us, especially at the grass roots level and with local government to make sure that we are providing resources to our front line defenders.

I especially want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) as well, who has been a champion, and who has worked with the gentleman on many issues that involve firefighters, and for the lead he has taken and for his willingness to recognize how important it is going to be for

us to get resources back to our local communities.

I also want to indicate to our colleagues who may be listening this evening and to those out in this great country of ours that are listening to call in, to implore people to sign onto this legislation. We are having a press conference tomorrow with a number of associations and groups and Members who have already signed on to the proposal, but we are hoping to attract more original sponsors of the bill and hope that in true bipartisan fashion, in the way that the gentleman has reached out to so many, that we are able to bring this legislation forward and hopefully enact it before we leave here so that our first line responders get that money when they need it, because, as the gentleman so eloquently pointed out, they need it yesterday. They need it now.

We were caught off guard. We were stunned. We have gone through, clearly, a period of mourning that, as the gentleman indicated, I do not know that we will ever get over. But to honor the memory of those brave heroes is to make sure that we are prepared for this response; that part of our resolve towards terrorism is at every single level of government and then intercoordinated between them.

Again, this is an experience the gentleman knows about better than most. One of the issues that was raised locally with the individuals and firefighters, police officers, municipal leaders, mayors and State legislative representatives in my meeting was that, look, there needs to be better coordination. Somehow we have to get on to a system of commonality of communication. Was that part of the gentleman's experience?

Mr. PASCRELL. Absolutely. If we do not have that coordination or that education, then we have panic. There is enough fear in this country. Walt Whitman hit on it 135 years ago. We must rise to the occasion. And he looked around in this very House and saw, as he was attending to folks during that Civil War, because he was a nurse, he knew that maybe a Congressman once in a while had his head down, but when the call came, he knew that they would respond and respond accordingly. He had that faith over 135 years ago in this Congress. We have that faith now.

We need to reduce the panic. We need to reduce the fear. And nothing will do that better than knowledge. Nothing will do that better than all levels of government and all levels of the community being involved in this plan. And I just want to leave by thanking the gentleman again for bringing us together on this issue.

Mr. LARSON. I thank the gentleman again for all his help, and would only add as well that I think the important lesson for our children with regard to September 11 is how this Nation responded.

It has been noted by many how several events, including sporting events and celebrity activities, were canceled. It was a time when our children really, truly got to appreciate the difference between celebrities and heroes. The events of September 11, and those brave heroes and heroines in New York, those that boarded planes, those who proceeded with the heroic acts in the fields of Pennsylvania and those at the Pentagon are indeed heroes.

We have become a Nation now that understands the importance of community and working together and extending a hand to our neighbors and not painting with the broad brush of prejudice the many because of the acts of a fanatical few. These are important lessons for our children to understand. It is important that they understand how our constitution works and how we must safeguard our liberties and our freedoms and how we must stand together as a Nation.

As Members of Congress, we must understand that aside from the rhetoric that we put forward, that we have to provide the resources, and those resources have never been needed more than they are today for our local communities. We hear this loud and clear from them. There is not a Member of the Congress on either side of the aisle who does not understand or appreciate the needs of their local mayor or selectmen, volunteer fire department, law enforcement officials, or emergency medical help people.

This is something that Congress simply must respond to and act now. We must embrace the agenda and proposals of the President and of his new appointee, Tom Ridge, with respect to homeland defense, and then come together as a body and act soon. Tomorrow is the first step in that action.

We will be introducing this piece of legislation, and we hope to get further input from our municipalities so that Congress can join together to make sure that our municipalities are prepared, so that strategically, and from the standpoint of having appropriate equipment, and from the ability of us to respond appropriately, we will be prepared.

#### IMMIGRATION REFORM AND BORDERS OF INTEGRITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WILSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, the issue I wish to address tonight is the issue that I have had the opportunity of addressing several times on this floor, it is the issue of immigration, immigration reform, and specifically the problems we are encountering in this country as a result of our inability to develop over the past several

years a mechanism, some way or other, to actually have borders with integrity.

For quite some time, it has been the prevailing point of view in this body, I think, and certainly in the past administration, and, to a certain extent, even the present administration, that the concept of open borders was appealing, and appealing for a variety of reasons, some of which had to do with economic benefits that may accrue to the country as a result of having massive flows of individuals and goods and money back and forth across borders.

There is that kind of argument to be made with regard to the issue of immigration and open borders, and that argument held sway. There was also a political argument, and that was that, in fact, if we could get a large number of people into the country, and that those people could stay here without detection, eventually have children, and those children of course would become American citizens by virtue of being born here, it was a long-term strategy, I agree, but nonetheless the strategy was that those people would become part of a political party and cast votes primarily for one of the political parties in the country. And, of course, that is the Democratic party.

That was another reason why it was so hard to ever affect change. It was so difficult to ever get anybody to pay attention for any call for immigration reform because we had those two sides. On the Republican side, we had a great deal of opposition to immigration reform from business and industries that wanted cheaper labor and that wanted to be able to access large numbers of immigrants, both legal and to a large extent, unfortunately, illegal immigrants in the country for the purposes of getting their labor and doing so for a sort of reduced price.

So with those two very powerful forces at work, it was very difficult to ever advance the idea of immigration reform. Anyone that attempted to was automatically subjected to derision, name calling, and the like for being both racist or xenophobic or a wide variety of other kinds of nasty names, because immigration was an important issue to them. To me certainly it is, and it has been for quite some time.

But there has been a huge shift in attitudes here, I think, in the Congress of the United States, and certainly, to a large extent, even in the country itself. That is to say, I think for the most part if we would have asked people before how they felt about immigration, especially illegal immigration, a majority would always say they were opposed to it and that they wished that we would do more to stop it. And this, by the way, interestingly, was a majority of white Americans and a majority of black Americans and a majority of Hispanic Americans. All of them felt the same way about the issue of illegal immigration.

Now, the majorities were not huge, but they usually were always the majority opinion; that we should do something about immigration, especially illegal immigration. But ever since September 11, of course, things have shifted dramatically. And I must say, Madam Speaker, that there is absolutely no way I would ever want to have this issue won in the halls of Congress or anywhere else because of the events that we had here on September 11.

□ 1845

But for whatever reason that is where we are. Things have changed, and I am glad they have. I am glad there has been at least now more and more emphasis placed on and attention paid to the whole issue of immigration and immigration reform.

As we approach the legislative process here and we begin to develop pieces of legislation to deal with the events of September 11, we will undeniably be looking at legislation emanating out of the Committee on the Judiciary that is sometimes referred to as the antiterrorist package of legislation. That is coming up relatively soon, I understand.

It is truly unfortunate that most of that package got watered down. It is almost incredible, as a matter of fact, to recognize that as part of the overall strategy that this government is going to employ to deal with the issue of terrorism, that we would not concentrate heavily on securing our borders and trying to do everything humanly possible to stop people from coming into the United States who have evil intent. This is not easy. It is not easy to do. It is not easy to identify people who are coming here with that kind of intention, but there are certain indicators that America may have a problem with various individuals.

It is amazing to recognize the following:

In 1990, the U.S. passed a series of immigration laws. They were sponsored by a member of the other body from Massachusetts, and it instructed the State Department employees that mere membership in a terrorist organization or advocacy of acts of terrorism should not exclude foreigners from receiving U.S. immigration visas. Mere membership in these kinds of organizations should not exclude anyone from getting a visa.

Again, in light of everything that has happened, this seems almost unbelievable that any Member of this body, this body or the other body, would ever say such a thing, would ever put such a thing into law, but that is exactly what happened. This is sometimes referred to as the fellow traveler law because for a period of time there was an immigration law that said foreigners may not come into the United States if you belong to an organization that has