

Now it has changed. So now what do we do? How long are we going to keep this goofball activity going on at the border, two different lines run by two different agencies with two different sets of regulations? How long is that going to happen? The INS, how long will they be unable, unwilling, but certainly for a long time, but even now unable to check various data banks? How long will it be before we actually put into place some method of tracking a person who comes into the United States under a particular visa for a particular purpose, and then we will be able to find out if that person is not living up to that set of regulations? How long will it be until we do something like that? Every day that we wait, Mr. Speaker, is a risk that we should not take.

□ 1930

I cannot guarantee, as I have said over and over again, I certainly cannot guarantee that we will be able to completely and totally seal the borders from people who should not come into the United States; but I can guarantee this, that we have to try. We have to try. Just because people steal from banks and do so successfully almost every day in this country does not mean that we should leave the money on the counter. Simply because they do it, why should we try to stop them? Just because they come across the border illegally does not mean we should not try to stop them from coming illegally. And no matter how unpleasant this is to talk about, no matter how difficult it is because, of course, we run into all of these issues, we run into both domestic and foreign policy agendas that conflict with our attempts to deal with border security. Mexico will not like it, I have heard. That is true. The Canadians might not like it. That is true. That is tough. That is tough. It is not the safety of Mexico or Canada that I am primarily concerned with here, but it should be their concern also because in the total scheme of things, we are all in this boat together. It is not just the United States Government that these terrorists want to topple and our way of life they want to destroy; it is the West's way of life and Western Civilization that poses a threat to them by its very existence.

Our Nation, I believe, suffers as a result of massive immigration, and has for years. I was here long before September 11 talking about immigration and my concerns with regard to massive immigration, legal and illegal. I think there are major problems for the United States as a result of it. But regardless of the cultural issues, the quality-of-life issues as a result of huge population growth, all brought on by immigration, and some of those old figures that I used to use, not old, just figures I used to use here before September 11 when I used to concentrate

on sort of the demographic problems of immigration, massive immigration, showing that by 2050 we may reach, if things go as they have been for the last several years, according to the Census Bureau, if our population grows at exactly the same rate as it has been growing for the last couple of decades, that by the mid-century, we will be at the half-a-billion mark in this country population-wise; and 90 percent of that increase from now until mid-century will be as a result of immigration, legal and illegal. Believe me, those numbers do not count the kinds of things we have talked about here: 4 million people running around the country who just simply overstayed their visa; they are not even counted in that figure.

So regardless of all of that, regardless of the kinds of problems that the Nation faces in terms of resources, resource allocations, the degradation of the environment, and again, the quality-of-life issues that confront people all over this country; talk to people from Los Angeles, if we do not think that the quality-of-life issue is relevant when we talk about immigration. Every time I give this particular speech and I walk back to my office, there are calls, most of which are from California and people saying they are very supportive; some, of course, not so supportive, but most are; and they attest to the fact that there is a quality-of-life issue to massive immigration, huge numbers of people coming across the borders. We cannot sustain it. We cannot build infrastructure fast enough to sustain it, to sustain a high quality of life.

Those are the issues that we used to address before September 11. They are still important. They are still meaningful. I wish that we could make the case just on those points alone. But I have never been able to overcome the opposition of the political side of the process here that says, those people will eventually become good members of the Democratic Party, so let us not keep them out, and on the other side here saying, we need them for cheap labor. I have never been able to really wrestle with those two big Goliaths. Those are very tough, very difficult, very powerful interest groups.

But now, forget all of that. There is something far more significant and immediate. Those threats I mentioned, those problems were all long-term threats to the health of this Nation and the survivability of the Nation as we know it. But what I am talking about now is, of course, immediate threats to our survivability. I am talking about people who came here for the express purpose of murdering thousands; and they would not care if it were millions, of our fellow citizens. That is why they came, and they were able to come across our borders without the slightest bit of concern; and they were able

to stay here, even in violation of our visa laws, without the slightest bit of concern.

It is despicable, Mr. Speaker. We cannot rationalize this in any way, shape, or form. And if we can, if anybody in this body can rationalize the past and say well, gee, we just did not know it would ever turn out to be anything like this; although again, prior to September 11, I must say that I and many other Members talked about the dangers to the security of the Nation with having porous borders. But regardless, if one can rationalize in one's own mind that we had to do it that way, that it was really just the altruistic nature of our country that it says "give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free" on the Statue of Liberty, all that meant that we had to open our borders, go ahead, rationalize it away; but now, think about the future, think about tomorrow. Think about the unthinkable, the possibility of another event as big as, if not worse, than the last one, and imagine what it would be like having to rationalize their position then and say, I knew it could happen but I chose to ignore it and not vote for immigration reform. Mr. Speaker, I choose not to be in that situation, and I hope a majority of my colleagues will join me in our attempts to reform this system and keep America safe.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHROCK). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 37 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 2105

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KINGSTON) at 9 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3061, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2002

Mr. LINDER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 107-233) on the resolution (H. Res. 258) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3061) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.