

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, February 8, 2005

The House met at 2 p.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, strong to save, on Super Bowl Sunday as Americans settled in to watch the annual spectacle of a football game, the face of the Nation was mirrored on our television screens and projected across the world just as it began.

Was America the Beautiful ever rendered more beautiful than when a host of blind students was witnessed singing and signing for a deaf world?

Our national anthem followed, sung by a combined choir formed of the various branches of America's military forces held in high-range restraint. Here, Lord, was vulnerability and strength. Here honesty, bravery, and grace were brought together in harmony. Justice and mercy embraced before the silent millions and You, our God, were glorified in our humanity.

May the strains of America's moving song penetrate this Chamber, guide this session of Congress, and bring into focus the voice of the future and invite the participation of all in the work of democracy. For You are our hope and salvation, now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. SOLIS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

BORDER SECURITY IS HOMELAND SECURITY

(Mr. DELAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, border security is homeland security. It is odd we even need reminding about that fact especially after 9/11. But just as homeland security is national security, so

border security is homeland security. It is really simple, Mr. Speaker. There are violent men who wish to commit atrocities against innocent Americans; and most of them, not all, but most of them come from outside the United States. The 19 men who hijacked commercial passenger planes on September 11, 2001, to fly them into American buildings to perpetrate mass murder exploited our porous borders and ultimately succeeded in their mission of evil.

Since that time, we have made numerous reforms to numerous programs and agencies and systems to prevent such exploitation and such treachery from ever again bloodying our soil.

But, Mr. Speaker, the job is not done. The job is not near done. The holes that remain in our border security systems are not small; they are gaping. And they are glaring to our terrorist enemies. They are coming for us, Mr. Speaker, and politics will not stop them. What will?

Last year, Congress asked the bipartisan 9/11 Commission that very question, and here is what they said in their report: "The Federal Government," the report reads, on page 390, "should set standards for the issuances of birth certificates and sources of identification such as driver's licenses."

Fraud in identification documents is no longer just a problem of theft. The Federal Government should restrict terrorists' freedom of movement because without it, we learn on page 65, "terrorists cannot plan, conduct surveillance, hold meetings, train for their mission, or execute an attack.

"Today more than 9 million people are in the United States outside the legal immigration system," we read on page 390.

"Once in the United States," the commission says on page 49, "terrorists tried to get legal immigration status that would permit them to stay here, primarily by committing serial, or repeated, immigration fraud by claiming political asylum. Immigration cases against suspected terrorists are often mired for years in bureaucratic struggles over alien rights and the adequacy of evidence.

"There is also evidence," we learn on page 64, "that terrorists used human smugglers to sneak across borders."

In other words, Mr. Speaker, there are gaping holes in our border security system that, 3 years after 9/11, still remain untouched by any reform. This week, the House will finally consider

the kind of reforms our border security system desperately needs, reforms called for in the 9/11 Commission's report, reforms American families demand and deserve.

Border security is homeland security, and this week we will begin the process of saying so in the law.

VETERANS AFFAIRS BUDGET

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise concerning the budget cuts President Bush has proposed on the Department of Veterans Affairs. It is nothing more than a smoke screen to make the overall budget numbers look better while veterans are going to have to shoulder most of those costs. The budget makes veterans pay \$250 to enroll in health services and doubles their copayments for prescription drugs, changes which will affect more than 2 million veterans. It makes veterans wait longer for claims to be processed, delaying very vital medical services. It provides a dismal 1.7 percent increase in funding, far from the 14 percent the Veterans Affairs Department really needs to sustain its current services.

President Bush's budget also forgets about the new veterans serving abroad. Over 1,400 have been killed, 11,000 injured, and 10 in my district alone have been killed. These military families are struggling right now. They lack mental health care and other needed services such as bilingual services. They also lack burial funds. Let us keep our commitment and not cut back the budget.

NEVER GIVE UP

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

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, last week in Ashland, Virginia, Randolph Macon College hosted Guilford College for a collegiate basketball game. With the game tied in overtime and six-tenths of a second remaining, a Randolph Macon player was awarded two free throws. He converted his first one and intentionally missed the second, concluding that time did not permit Guilford to make a play.

Normally, that would have been sound strategy, but Guilford's Jordan Snipes grabbed the rebound and desperately heaved the ball the length of

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.