

IN TRIBUTE TO AMERICA'S
PATRIOTS

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

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, 200 years ago George Washington, in his farewell address, said that the love of liberty was interwoven into the ligament of every American heart.

Our country has changed much over the last two centuries. But one thing that has not changed is the sentiment Washington expressed: The love of liberty still burns in every American heart. On countless battlefields around the world, American patriots for over two centuries have repeatedly taught us the eternal truth: freedom is never free.

We are reminded of their ready sacrifice today, as the Speaker of the House so eloquently noted, as we reflect upon those now who serve overseas in harm's way, and also as we reflect upon the fact that 25 years ago, our first American prisoners of war returned from Vietnam. One of those brave patriots who answered the call of freedom and paid an immeasurable price serves in this body with us today: The distinguished gentleman from Texas Mr. JOHNSON.

I am honored to join the Speaker and my colleagues in paying tribute to SAM JOHNSON, and all those patriots like him, for their heroism, for their sacrifice, and most of all for their love of liberty.

DEMOCRATS' AGENDA

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

Ms. KILPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, as we speak, Democrats in the House and Senate are joining the President and the Vice President to talk about our agenda for America. That American agenda includes education, reducing class size, hiring 100,000 new teachers, health care, making sure that people in America can choose their doctor, can receive the quality care that they deserve; also securing Social Security, making sure that it is secure into the new millennium, making sure that we modernize it and to expand it so that 55- and 56-year-olds who have been excluded from their jobs, who have been laid off, can buy into a medical program for themselves and their families.

Mr. Speaker, we stand ready to serve the American citizenry. We are happy today that the Senate and House Democrats are joining the President and Vice President in announcing to America that we will work for them, but we will work in securing and making quality education for all our children.

Mr. Speaker, this is a great day for the American citizenry.

IRAQ

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

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, the morning papers today recorded that Russia was providing weapons technology to Iraq. We have known for years that China has done the same thing. Does this mean that we must attack them as well as Iraq?

Instead, though, we give foreign aid to both China and to Russia, so indirectly we are subsidizing the very weapons that we are trying to eliminate.

I would like to remind my colleagues that bombing a country, especially one halfway around the world that is not a direct threat to our security, is not a moral act. A moral war is one that is defensive and a legal war is one that is declared by Congress. We should only pursue an act of war when our national security is threatened.

Bombing will solve nothing. It will open up a can of worms. We should not condone it. We should not endorse it. We should not encourage it.

Please think carefully before we permit our President to pursue this war adventure.

REFORM THE IRS NOW

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, just when we thought things could not get worse at the IRS, they have.

I picked up this Washington Post article last week. The title is "IRS Goof Creates Returns That Keep Returning." At first I thought it was a joke, but then I learned that the IRS did make, in fact, a huge goof, about a million packets of 1040 forms sent out to the taxpayers had preprinted address labels. That is not going to do anyone any favors.

The famous world class computer system over at the IRS will read the bar code on the preprinted label and, one might ask, will it then send it to the proper location for processing? No, sir. It will not. It will send the form right back to you. In fact, we can even imagine the making of an infinite loop, with our 1040s just making around-the-world tours, back and forth between our houses and the IRS.

Mr. Speaker, the IRS is still out of control. It is enough. It is time for some radical reform at the IRS.

THE RUSH TO WAR

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, President Bush sent the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and others to

brief House Members prior to and during the previous Gulf War. This has not been done this time.

Most Members of this body know only what they have read or heard in news reports. Why this rush to war? Why all this eagerness to send young American men and women into harm's way? The case has not been made.

I am certainly not defending Saddam Hussein. I voted for the last Gulf War and many have forgotten how close that vote was. But last time Hussein had moved on another country and was threatening others. Many nations, including our own, have weapons of mass destruction, nuclear and otherwise. Has there been any overt action or indication that Hussein is getting ready to use his? We have not been told.

The American people are not clamoring for war, Mr. Speaker. War should be the most reluctant decision we make, and then only when there is no other reasonable choice. As ABC's Forrest Sawyer asked on Nightline last night, Are we about to do more harm than good?

RECOGNIZING SAM JOHNSON

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

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor my colleague and friend, the Honorable SAM JOHNSON. Twenty-five years ago tomorrow, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JOHNSON) left Vietnam after nearly 7 years as a prisoner of war. He was shot down April 16, 1966, while flying his 25th mission over Vietnam. SAM JOHNSON can teach us all a thing or two about valuing and never taking for granted our freedom because SAM JOHNSON lost his for 7 years.

I would like, Mr. Speaker, if I could, to read one paragraph, an excerpt from his book "Captive Warriors." It says a lot about the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JOHNSON), my friend.

"I turned my attention toward God. When the guards increased their patrols and their vigilance and my talks with Howie had to be stopped, I could still talk freely to God. I knew with certainty that He was present in that dark, cramped closet of a cell. He listened when I prayed. This I knew without doubt. He answered me. When Bible stories and verses of comfort came into my thoughts, I knew He placed them there. I was comforted and encouraged. And I began to know my creator in a way I had never known Him before.

"I know now in retrospect that God's intimate interaction with me in the Mint strengthened me and built my faith so that I would be able to trust him in the darkness of the terrible days that still lay ahead for me."

SAM JOHNSON, a great American and defender of faith and freedom, we salute him today.

ATTACKING JUDGE STARR

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, Former Arkansas Governor Jim Guy Tucker; Clinton business partners Jim and Susan McDougal; former Arkansas Judge David Hale; former Associate Attorney General and Rose Law firm partner of Hillary Clinton and golfing partner, Webb Hubbell; Arkansas businessman Eugene Fitzhugh; Arkansas businessman Charles Matthews; Arkansas appraiser Robert Palmer; White-water real estate agent Chris Wade; Arkansas banker Neal Ainley; former top Clinton aide Stephen Smith; Arkansas Little Rock developer Larry Kuca; and Arkansas businessman William J. Marks, Sr., 13 people either convicted or pleaded guilty.

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I wonder how these people feel when they hear over and over again from James Carville and the Clinton attack machine, who defend ethical outrages that Judge Starr's investigations have "turned up nothing."

White House tactics bring to mind a tactic known to every trial lawyer: When you have the facts, argue the facts; when you have the law, argue the law; when you have neither the facts nor the law, attack the prosecutor.

Nothing to show? Maybe Judge Starr's attackers might want to ask those 13 people what they think.

DISMISSING THE ELECTION CONTEST AGAINST LORETTA SANCHEZ

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on House Oversight, I call up a privileged resolution (H. Res. 355) and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 355

Whereas credible allegations by contestant Robert Dornan of election fraud in the 46th Congressional District of California were received by the House of Representatives and an investigation has been conducted under the authority of the Federal Contested Election Act;

Whereas that investigation was repeatedly hindered and delayed by the lack of cooperation by the Department of Justice, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and key witnesses;

Whereas the delay and lack of cooperation included the following:

(1) The refusal of the Immigration and Naturalization Service to provide any information to the Committee on House Oversight until the Service was subpoenaed and the failure 8 months after the subpoenas to provide the accurate information needed by the Committee.

(2) The refusal of key witnesses to provide evidence under the provisions of the Federal Contested Election Act.

(3) The refusal of the Department of Justice, in complete disregard of a resolution passed by the House of Representatives, to

enforce the Federal Contested Election Act by prosecuting any of the 11 witnesses who refused to comply with the provisions of such Act which require production of evidence on a timely basis;

Whereas despite the lack of full cooperation from witnesses and government agencies, the investigation of the election contest in the 46th Congressional District of California has resulted in evidence that over 700 illegal votes were cast in that election, including votes cast by persons who were not citizens of the United States;

Whereas the evidence of illegal voting comes from the following sources:

(1) The Registrar of Voters of Orange County has indicated that 124 absentee ballots were cast illegally in the November 1996 General Election.

(2) The Committee on House Oversight's comparison of Immigration and Naturalization Service records and Orange County voter registration records provide evidence that more than 600 additional votes were illegally cast in that election;

Whereas the number of votes shown to be illegal by clear and convincing evidence is less than the post-recount 979 vote margin by which the election was decided;

Whereas it is critical that the incidence of illegal voting be reduced and eliminated in future elections and that the ability of investigators in future election contests to detect and punish voter fraud be enhanced;

Whereas the Committee on House Oversight should continue its investigation of illegal voting practices and recommend to the House of Representatives legislative measures to reduce voter fraud and improve the integrity of the voting process; and

Whereas the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Appropriations should closely examine the operations of the Department of Justice and the Immigration and Naturalization Service to ensure that proper steps are being taken to enforce the laws of the United States and accurately provide information on the citizenship status of individuals, as required by Federal law: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the election contest of Robert Dornan, contestant, against Loretta Sanchez, contestee, relating to the office of Representative from the 46th Congressional District of California, is dismissed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMP). The reported resolution constitutes a question of the privileges of the House and may be called up at any time.

The gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before us dismisses the contested election in California's 46th District. That is clearly the substance. The real story is that in the process of examining this particular contested election, it is clear that voter rolls across the country are suspect.

We all know that elections are fundamental to our democracy. Free and fair elections are essential in selecting our Representatives in this Republic. The belief on the part of people who cast their ballot that their ballot may be negated by someone who should not have been able to vote in an election

erodes the fundamental basis of our democracy and our Republic.

There have been attempts in this process to argue that our concern about making sure that only those people who are eligible to be registered and, therefore, eligible to vote, was not the focus of our concern. Their arguments have been that, quite frankly, what we are doing is "racist;" that we are on a "witch hunt."

It is extremely difficult to understand why someone would not want to make sure that voter rolls are accurate. It is without contention, Mr. Speaker, that in those areas involving people who wish to become naturalized citizens that there are enormous problems today. We discovered just this week that the Immigration and Naturalization Service has hired one of the big five accounting firms to examine the way in which their process operates.

We have been accused of racism because we thought we needed some firmer identification than is currently available from the INS. The INS now admits that they are going to look at a proposal which requires digitized photographs and fingerprints at the beginning of the process, in the middle of the process, and at the end of the process.

It just seems to me that if that system is admittedly flawed, and that people have become citizens who should not have become citizens, or, even more regrettably, those private organizations who participated, ostensibly, in bringing this citizenship about, utilized the opportunity to interact with these nascent citizens in a way that put them on voter rolls illegally, has got to be investigated until it is resolved.

Included in the Coopers & Lybrand report is the suggestion that these private operations should be shut down. In the particular contested election in front of us, one of those private organizations, Hermandad Nacional, had 60 percent of the people it registered flawed. That kind of a ratio either indicates sloppiness or an unwillingness to follow the rules. Which clearly indicates we should not use these private organizations. Now, whichever instance it is, it simply means voter rolls are flawed.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 8 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan, (Mr. VERN EHLERS), the chairman of the task force, to give my colleagues an understanding of the details of this particular examination of an election beyond the normal examination of contested elections historically. And thank goodness we are finally looking at the problems behind the surface.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman of the committee for yielding me this time. I am pleased to come to the House and report on the results of a very thorough investigation of the DORNAN-SANCHEZ contested election race.

I was given the following charge by the chairman of the committee, when I