

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 called for the overthrow of the United States Government. We were concentrating on members of the International Communist Party at the time. If you were a member of some organization that had committed an act of terrorism, you could not come into the United States.

But in the heyday of political correctness, at a time when we were searching our souls to figure out how we could possibly apologize for being who we are as Americans, when the philosophies of relativism, moral relativism were being breached in all of the campuses around the country and all of the textbooks were telling people our culture was no better than any other, and we could not possibly characterize another culture as being inferior to ours, that kind of what I would certainly call muddle-headed thinking ruled the day. It certainly did in the media, it certainly did in academia, and it certainly did in the halls of Congress. Political correctness.

One of the more bizarre aspects of that muddle-headed thinking to which this Nation went and to a certain extent still exists, even here in the halls of Congress, as evidenced by the fact that we watered down the terrorist bill, but as a result of that we passed this law that instructs 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.

In an article in "Human Events" it says, "Under the law as it is written,

someone who belongs to a Middle Eastern terrorist group and has publicly stated the desire that the World Trade Center towers be blown up, cannot, on those grounds alone, be denied permission to legally enter the United States as a prospective citizen. In such a case, the ultimate decision of whether to grant the immigration visa is up to the State Department officials, subjective evaluation of a person's knowledge and intent."

According to the official Foreign Affairs Manual posted on the State Department's Web site, immigration law requires that a foreigner must be denied a visa if he or she has, quote, "indicated intention to cause death or serious bodily harm and/or incited terrorist activity."

If they come in and say I would like to apply to a visa to the United States of America, the consular office official says, here, fill this out. If you put down I intend to blow up your buildings, then I can keep you out. Then you can say it does not look like you have filled out this paperwork correctly because I cannot let you in as long as you state this.

These things would be funny if they were not so tragic and idiotic. It is just a manifestation of this goofball thinking of how dare we think that we cannot keep someone out of our country because their culture may be inferior. And I am going to state categorically there are cultures that are inferior to ours. There are cultures that do not put as much emphasis on human rights, on individual human rights, and on human freedom; and I believe that makes them inferior to ours. And I do not mind saying so.

I believe in the past we fought with cultures and political organizations inferior to ours. I believe that Nazism and communism were inferior in many ways, and certainly worthy of our disdain. And they rose to the level of those kinds of organizations and groups and philosophies that we should be wary of, and we should try our best to keep people out of the United States if, in fact, they proposed to advance these ideas.

It is not to our benefit that these people come in. Things happen when they come. Sometimes places get blown up. Sometimes people are killed. Sometimes governments teeter, thank goodness not ours, but certainly in other countries. These acts of terrorism have been successful in bringing governments down.

I am not suggesting for a moment that if tomorrow we were to be able to place troops on the border, which I hope we can do, or completely revise and improve the quality of the work done by the INS, which would be an astronomical undertaking, and improve the technology that we use as sensors to see whether or not people are coming across the border, I do not for a moment suggest if we did all of these things we would make our borders impervious to these incursions. Someone could get through.

What I suggest, Mr. Speaker, is that we have to try. We have to try. We have constructed a strategy, a military strategy to deal with the Taliban and Osama bin Laden and the al-Qaeda group that he directs, and any other terrorist organization that gets in our sights.

We have described in detail to the American public that strategy. We will go in initially with the assets that we can deploy there in the air, both missile and airplanes; and we will try to destroy the infrastructure.

We hope that we can develop an indigenous population that will support our efforts and will act against the Taliban. We will seek out these organizations even if they are some place outside of Afghanistan and perhaps go after them also.

At the same time, we will use humanitarian efforts. We will drop food packages and leaflets and go into psychological operations, and we will broadcast into Afghanistan and drop pamphlets. This is a multifaceted war on terrorism. All of that I agree to. I believe it is important.

But there is another important facet to the war, another important strategy that for some reason has not really developed into a well-publicized or even well thought out strategy as far as I can tell because I have not seen anything so far that would indicate that we have developed a strategy to indicate that we have tried to keep these people out to begin with. I have not seen a detailed, thought out, well-thought-out, well-delineated strategy to try to keep them out to begin with. That is amazing.

It is, of course, our responsibility to think of every imaginable way there might be in order to defend and protect the lives and property of the people of the United States. Well, it certainly seems to me only logical and only rational that part of that strategy be something to do with the protection of our borders.

There is no doubt about certain things that happened on September 11. One is that all 19 of the hijackers and terrorists were here from another country. I think, although we do not know this now because the INS and the Department of Justice will not tell us, but I think we will find that most of them were here on visas, various kinds of visas, and that many of them had violated their visas, and would have, therefore, been eligible, not just eligible, but would have been placed in a situation of being deported had we found them, had we known about it. We did not know about it, but that is not too surprising because there are, according to recent estimates, somewhere near 4 million people in the United States who have simply overstayed their visas, making them illegal immigrants into the United States.

So every time we talk about the number of immigrants who come across the border every year illegally, and how those numbers are added to

the total numbers every year when we talk about illegal immigration into the United States, we do not, for official purposes, count the at least 4 million people who are here illegally as a result of visas infractions. People who have overstayed their visas, people who have just simply forgotten about it, walked away, they know there is nothing that is going to happen to them. There is not much fear in the heart of anyone out there who has simply decided to hang on, stay and live your life in the United States. Get a job, vote.

I know you are not supposed to, you are not supposed to do that if you are not a citizen, but it happens. One of the individuals we know, we found out voted twice. No, they were not here illegally. I am saying one of the individuals, one of the hijackers. He was known to have voted. I am sure that we will find many more who did the same. It is not that unique. It is not that unusual.

We do not know exactly how much it happens, but we have this thing called the motor-voter law which is such a flimsy attempt to try and actually bring any degree of validity to our voting system.

□ 1900

Anybody can get a card. Anybody who wants to can get a driver's license. Anybody who wants to can get a Social Security card.

In Denver, one can go to a flea market, but there are a variety of places. I just happen to know about this one place because an ex-governor of the State of Colorado, Richard Lamm, will talk about it periodically. This is an issue with which he is involved also, the issue of immigration and immigration control.

He went to this flea market, and he purchased after about I think 15 minutes of haggling over the price, and I can't remember for sure, I think it was something like fifty dollars starting up to about a hundred, maybe got him down to fifty dollars, but he purchased a driver's license, a Social Security card and a variety of other documents right there on the spot. They can take one's picture in the little booth and ring up a little card and the person is off to the races.

With that, of course, a person can do almost anything, including, by the way, vote. So do we believe that these people who are here illegally do not vote simply because on the form that you fill out it says are you a U.S. citizen and you have to check that off, yes, I am; oh, okay, well now you are and therefore you can vote?

Well, that fraud is rampant in this arena, and the fact is that there is very little that any of these people who are here illegally, any of the millions of people who have overstayed their visas, very little they have to worry about. They can take up life just like any other American, and unfortunately, they can act in ways that are certainly detrimental to our health as a Nation.

The scope of the problem is almost mind boggling, and it is a result of the complete ineptness on the part of the INS to actually address their responsibility, the responsibility with which they have been charged for years, to try on the one hand to maintain the integrity of the borders and on the other hand to help people who want to come here legally. They have completely lost their way, Mr. Speaker.

I will tell my colleagues that in a debate I was having in Denver on the radio with a lady who was I believe was the public affairs person for the INS in Denver, she stated when asked by the moderator why is it the INS does not round up all these people who are here illegally and send them back home, she said that is not our job. That is not our job. Our job is to help them get here and get legal.

Now, I think she was confused about her job, but I also believe that she is not unique at all in thinking that that is her job. That was the job of the INS, to simply get people here as much as they could, get them legal because they put very little resources into actually sending people back who were here illegally, finding the ones who had violated their visa status or had come across the border recently, very little effort was placed in that, and almost all the effort was placed on getting people here, getting them legalized, getting them eventually to become citizens of the United States.

My colleagues may recall, Mr. Speaker, the previous occupant of the White House forced the INS to rush through as quickly as possible and as many as possible applications for citizenship and get them qualified to vote before the last election. I think it was in the congressional elections actually before that that this occurred, but there was such a press to get people into the ranks of voters who were here as immigrants, that a huge, huge faux pas occurred and thousands, estimates are up to 60,000 people were made citizens of the United States who had criminal records, had felony convictions against them. They became citizens because they were rushing them through so quickly.

So it was not just this lady who was arguing with me on the radio who has this concept about the INS. The INS is the culture because actually it is an old, established agency and a lot of bureaucratic inertia, and there are many, many good employees, many of them who have contacted my office by the way, many of them who have actually written us letters saying, Mr. TANCREDO, you are right to do what you are doing, to say what you are saying, because the INS is in bad shape; it needs to be reformed. All of its efforts are directed in areas not related to the actual security of our borders or the strength of the immigration control process.

For the most part these people feel as though they are crying in the wilderness and they are. It is true they are

because that particular agency simply does not care about the fact, did not care and to a large extent I think still does not care about the possibility of having people come across this border who would do us harm.

Why do I say that? Well, let me give you another statistic that is almost amazing, and again, it goes to the scope of this problem.

Every year, as I say, there are millions of visas which are violated. We give out something near 30 million visas a year, and that only represents a small portion of the people who come to the United States. There are over 550 million visitors to the United States every year. So less than 10 percent of that number end up being required to have a visa. So 30 some million visas, 35 million approximately visas are handed out every year and somewhere near 40 percent of those are violated in the course of the year. So somewhere near 12 million people every single year are here in some violated status; that is to say, they are here illegally.

A lot of them still do go back home at some point in time. It is true, we do not end up with 12 million people a year, but we have ended up with 4 million. Massive problem, 12 million a year violated. What do we expect the INS to do? Well, I know that it is tough, that is a tough job, how are we going to keep track of them. Very difficult to do. It is a matter of resource allocation.

How about this one, Mr. Speaker, forget about the 4 million who are here illegally, have simply walked away from their visa requirements and are just simply living life as they wanted to as an American citizen. Forget about that for a moment. Think about this.

Of the millions of people who are here and who have violated their visa, we do get some of them into the judicial system. They are brought to the bar. It is usually, by the way, not for simply overstaying their visa. Usually it is for committing a crime, and in the process of arresting and finding out about them we realize, oh, by the way, they are also here illegally because they overstayed their visa and so they were brought to court, an immigration court, and an immigration law judge listens to the case and a decision is made, and he or she hands down a verdict, and the verdict could be that they are to be deported.

So now we actually go through a couple of hundred thousand cases a year of people who violate their visa, come before a judge and are ordered to be deported, couple of hundred thousand a year approximately. Maybe 40,000 of that number annually will actually be deported. The rest walk away, turn around and walk away.

We know that there are about a quarter of a million of these people out there. I think it is probably far higher, but right now even the INS will attest to the fact that there is at least a quarter of a million people wandering

around the country, not just as visa violators, not just as overstaying, but they have committed a crime and they have been ordered to be deported and they are simply walking around the country.

Why, Mr. Speaker? Because the INS could care less, pays absolutely no attention to it, turns around, walks away from the immigration control point and says you are essentially on your own. Why? Because they do not care. It really boils down to that. They do not care. It is not a big deal to them.

I have heard from individual agents. I have heard from retired agents. We had an INS agent in my office just last week. He has been on the job a long time. He is still afraid of being fired if he becomes known publicly, and we are supplying him right now with all of the information necessary so that we can protect him if we have to through whistleblower laws because if I can get him to come public with his stories, many years, I will not say how many because that would help identify him, but many, many years in the INS as an agent who has worked in almost every aspect of immigration control. If I could just get him to tell his story publicly, people would be amazed. We would be amazed. The general public would be amazed. The INS would not even be slightly surprised because, of course, they know their own culture. They know that what I am saying here is accurate, that they do not care about people here illegally.

A lot of sound and fury is going to be directed toward the INS right now as a result of what happened on September 11, and let me go to another article here. This one appeared in the Los Angeles Times on September 30. It says, The September 11 terrorists did not have to steal into the country as stowaways on the high seas or border jumpers dodging Federal agents. No audacious enemy, quote, inserted them commando style. Most or all appeared to have come in legally on the kinds of temporary visa routinely granted each year to millions of foreign tourists, merchants, students, and others. Nothing in the backgrounds of these middle class men from Saudi Arabia, Egypt and elsewhere apparently aroused suspicion among the State Department's consular officers who review visa applications.

Let me point out once again that even if there is something suspicious that had come up, by law, that could not keep them out, like if they had belonged to some terrorist organization. Jot down al Qaeda, I am a member. That could not have kept them out.

Once here the 19 hijackers-to-be did not have to fret much about checkpoints and police stops, even after some of their visas expired and they became illegal immigrants. The suicide attacks that killed 6,000 and more have brutally exposed shortcomings in airline security and intelligence gathering, but the strikes also highlighted another vulnerability. This is the Los

Angeles Times, Mr. Speaker. It says, another vulnerability, the Nation's visa granting and immigration regime, and if that is not an understatement, highlighted some shortcomings.

It goes on to say that the entire system is principally geared toward meeting another kind of threat, people of modest means whose concealed aim is not to bomb or wreck havoc but to work illegally in the United States.

Moreover, proposals by Congress to keep closer track of immigrants living in the U.S. have been delayed or blocked because of complaints that the new rules will be too restrictive. That the Members know has happened.

We have actually passed laws in this Congress, in 1996 specifically, that were designed to try to do something about the fact that we cannot keep track of anyone who is here, especially student visas and what happened? The colleges and universities got upset with us and said we are academicians, we are not paper shufflers, we are not supposed to be just filling this stuff out, and essentially they have not done it. They have not kept track of people.

We are going to have to try to deal with that of course eventually, but they would not dirty their hands, the universities, with trying to keep any sort of records and documentation of whether or not this particular alien here in the country, visa holder of a particular nature, usually a study visa, is actually doing what he or she said they were going to do.

Going back to this article, what little is known of the hijackers' history in this country suggests a certain confidence that immigration law could be circumvented where necessary. Again, what an understatement. For example, it says confidential records indicate that two possible hijacking ring leaders, Mohamed Atta and Marwan Al-Shehhi, presumed pilots of the jets that hit the World Trade Center, overstayed their initial visas.

□ 1915

Hey, you know, they and, what, 12 million other people that year.

"It is an abuse that can void the travel document."

Yes, it can, but, of course, somebody has to find them.

"But despite having no valid visas, both men left the country and were allowed to return on flights through Miami and New York last January, said an INS official who reviewed the records."

So, now, look what we have here, Mr. Speaker. Listen to this again. Not only do they overstay their visa, but, okay, you cannot find them. I know it is a problem. Oh, gee, there are 12 million. How are we going to find all the people that overstay their visas? But these two guys, they were both on invalid visas, both left the country and were allowed back in, through Miami and New York last January.

"Other hijackers have been in the country on lapsed or otherwise invalid

visas as, authorities say. Officials declined to provide more specifics."

That is certainly true. We have asked, my committee, my caucus, I should say, the Immigration Reform Caucus and others, have asked the INS for specific documentation about these 19 hijackers. I want to know who they are, I want to know where they came from, and I want to know what was their status in the United States. All we have is anecdotal information here and there, because what they sent me back was a press release issued by the FBI that listed all 19 of the hijackers. It had absolutely nothing to do with their visa status except for two here on some sort of study visas, and one of them had overstayed his, if I remember correctly.

As many as 4 million, I mentioned this, legal tourists and others have become illegal immigrants, according to government and academic estimates. These are the people with visas who overstayed them and stay here. They never go home. Federal officials acknowledge that they have no idea where all these people are.

In 1998, as part of a crackdown on illegal immigration, Congress passed a series of laws zeroing in on abuses of temporary-resident status, with changes including expediting the expulsion of convicted felons and bogus asylum claimants. But other congressional mandates were never put in place.

One measure directed the INS to develop an automated system to track the entry and departure of all visa holders. Another provision called for the accounting of hundreds of thousands of holders of student and other temporary visas.

However, Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that I have to report this, because, again, the powerful interests that I mentioned at the beginning of my presentation, in this case it turned out to be the powerful special interests of businesses and commercial interests that violently, vehemently opposed any of the restrictions that we had passed, that were to be placed on people entering into the country so we could keep some sort of track of them. Especially people from the Canadian border states complained that the new reporting requirements on people exiting the country would slow down transport or commerce. The Canadian Government also balked. The plan was put off. Likewise, academic institutions also objected to more controls, as I mentioned earlier, on their growing population of foreign students. That plan too was put on hold. All these things had been passed, Mr. Speaker. All of them were simply junked.

Now, here is an interesting aspect of this. One of the September 11 hijackers who went by the name of Hani Hanjour entered the country on a student visa ostensibly to study English at the Berlitz School in Oakland. There is no record that the Saudi ever enrolled, school officials say. No one checked.

There is no law requiring schools to verify student visas. So we are now, of course, going to be looking at putting something like that in place.

The fact is that the INS complains when these things are brought to their attention. They complain that they do not have the resources. They simply have not been able to develop enough resource allocation from the Congress. We have not given them enough money so that they have not been able to put enough agents on payroll and that sort of thing.

The reality is, of course, in the last several years we have quadrupled the budget for INS; but it has gone essentially to waste. It has not gone into the area of enforcement. It has gone to, unfortunately, build a bigger bureaucracy in areas that have nothing to do with immigration enforcement.

There are many questions that we have to ask INS; and we have to ask ourselves, Mr. Speaker, about this issue of immigration, especially in light of the fact that this threat of terrorism comes from an identifiable group of alien males between the age of 20 and 35 and that we can now get a profile. They can and do quite easily travel in the United States.

What is more alarming, Mr. Speaker, what is really incredibly annoying, is that however those people got into the United States before September 11, they could get into the United States on October 10. Six thousand are dead; threats of biochemical terrorism, nuclear terrorism, abound. We read in the paper, I hear one of my colleagues, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS), over and over again telling the media that it is not a matter of if, it is a matter of when we will have to experience another one of these kinds of attacks.

Every time I hear that, my heart sinks, because, of course, not just because of the fact that is a distinct possibility, but because of the fact that in this particular area, in this one area of immigration control, we have essentially done nothing to stop it, and the bill that we will see soon coming to this floor does essentially nothing to stop it, nothing with regard to immigration control.

We will call it a bill to deal with terrorism, an anti-terrorism piece of legislation. But, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the most significant activity with which we as a Nation should be involved, that is, the protection of our borders, the protection of the life and property of the people who live in this country, our number one role, as I say often from this microphone, it is more important than all of the other things we do. It is more important than all of the other Departments that we fund. The role of the protection of the life and property of the citizens of the United States is paramount. And where does that begin? It seems to me it begins at our borders.

We can certainly, and certainly should, go beyond our borders to find

people like Mr. bin Laden and others and deal with them wherever they are; but the next, and I mean not just the next thing to do, but along with that, at the same time, certainly we should be doing everything we can do, mustering every ounce of our energy in this country to defend the border.

Let me suggest something that could be done tomorrow. It would not take any activity on the part of this House. We would not have to pass any law, we would not have to go through a committee, we would not have to come to a vote, we would not have to deal with it at all. The President of the United States could pick up the phone and call the Governors of the various States that are on the borders, north and south, and ask them to deploy some of their resources in the form of National Guard troops on the border to help us defend that border.

We do not have to even use the regular military of the United States, active duty military of the United States. We could, of course, employ without that. There is something referred to as the posse comitatus law which people suggest would be problematic if we wanted to actually employ troops on the border, active duty troops.

We do not have to deal with that. We could go to every Governor and say would you please do that. I believe that most, if not all, of the Governors would agree to call up the National Guard and allow some of those resources to be placed on the borders, to help us defend the border. That could happen tomorrow.

We could demand from Mexico and from Canada their help in defending the border. We could threaten, if they did not give us that help, that there would be ramifications, economic ramifications and others, diplomatic, if they would not agree to providing support and resources on the border, to help us defend our border. We could do that tomorrow. It does not require any action on the part of this Congress.

Then the Congress has certain other responsibilities. One, we could establish a brand new immigration control authority. We could essentially abolish the old INS. For all intents and purposes, Mr. Speaker, it would be the best possible thing we could do. We could replace it and the various other organizations that are all out there unfortunately sometimes stepping all over each other; we could abolish those agencies. That would require, of course, congressional action, administrative approval; and we could combine them all in one border defense agency.

We could take away certain responsibilities that are now given to the Department of Justice and INS, given to the Department of Agriculture, given to the Treasury for customs enforcement.

Right now we have customs, and this is one of the more bizarre stories that has come to light during this debate. You can, and often people do, people

who are attempting to come into the country illegally for various purposes, will stay behind, say, somewhere behind the border, say in Mexico in this case, watching through binoculars, watching the various lines. Because, you see, in certain lines, an INS officer will be in charge, and they can do certain things; but they cannot do other things in the course of their investigation of you as you cross the border.

In the other line you may have a Customs official, and they are in the same situation. They can do certain things, but things that INS cannot do. But they are not together.

So people actually watch, and this happens, Mr. Speaker; and it has been attested to more than once, people actually watch the lines to try to figure out which one is being watched by an INS agent and which one is being watched by a Customs official. Because the Customs official, by the way, or the INS guy, one or the other, I cannot remember which now, cannot open the trunk. That is within one of the regulations. One can do it, but the other one cannot open the trunk.

So if you are going to smuggle drugs into the United States, for instance, you watch to see which line is the line that is being handled by the agent that cannot open the trunk, and that is the line you get in.

This is again almost mind-boggling, but it is absolutely true, because we have got so many different kinds of organizations trying to run the border; and none of them talk to each the other, none of them share information with each other.

The INS has at least three, sometimes they say four different kinds of computer systems, none of which talk to each other. If you were a person in Saudi Arabia that wanted to come to the United States and you go to get a visa application, there is no way for that counsel or official to check that application through a series of data banks that might come up with something that is important. They only have one. They do not have the State Department. They do not have the FBI's or the CIA's. They cannot cross-check. So, of course, many times, many times, if you are not on the State Department's list of bad people, but you happen to be on the FBI or CIA list, it is okay, no problem. You can get through, your computer will not identify you.

It is amazing how incompetent we have become; and it is because, again, as I say, the culture, the culture in the INS and the whole immigration community that says, really, who cares? Bring them in. Do not worry about it.

We go back to the whole issue of moral equivalence again and the idea we should not probably be keeping anybody out that wants to come to the United States. What right do we have to do something like that, to suggest they should not come in? This is the kind of bizarre thinking we were dealing with.

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.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. BAIRD) to revise and ex-

tend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. MCKINNEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SANCHEZ, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BAIRD, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. FOLEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. SOUDER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FOLEY, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS REFERRED

Concurrent resolutions of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. Con. Res. 63. Concurrent resolution recognizing the important contributions of the Youth For Life: Remembering Walter Payton initiative and encouraging participation in this nationwide effort to educate young people about organ and tissue donation; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

S. Con. Res. 76. Concurrent resolution honoring the law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency rescue personnel, and health care professionals who have worked tirelessly to search for and rescue the victims of the horrific attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001; to the Committee on Government Reform.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, October 11, 2001, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4184. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting notification that the Secretary has invoked the authority granted by 41 U.S.C. 3732 to authorize the military departments to incur obligations in excess of available appropriations for clothing, subsistence, forage, fuel, quarters, transportation, or medical and hospital supplies, pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 11; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4185. A letter from the Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a copy of the "Annual Report on the Department of Defense Mentor-Protege Program"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4186. A letter from the Chairman, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting a report entitled, "Merger Decisions 2000"; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4187. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Office for Civil Rights, Department of Education, transmitting an Annual Report, "Guaranteeing Equal Access to High-Standards Education"; to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

4188. A letter from the Acting Administrator, Energy Information Administration, Department of Energy, transmitting the Energy Information Administration's Annual