PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Will H. Wilson of South Carolina, moved to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 260) recognizing the 40th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council’s declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions, the declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions; and to extend his remarks. The motion was agreed to.

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 260) recognizing the 40th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council’s declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions, the declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions; and to extend my remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL’S DECLARATION ON THE RELATION OF THE CHURCH TO NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 260) recognizing the 40th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council’s declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions, the declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions; and to extend my remarks.

The motion was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

IMMIGRANT RIOTING IN FRANCE

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, failure to integrate immigrants into a country’s society is evident in the 11 days of rioting, looting, destruction, and lawlessness in France. The 5 million Muslims in France, many of the youth feel disenfranchised and discriminated against by the French government.

Some of these third-generation immigrants to violence across France with nearly 5,000 vehicles burned, stretching into the heart of Paris. As a person of French heritage, I am particularly shocked that 34 police officers are injured, including 10 wounded by gunshots. This outburst of violence is a chilling reminder that appeasement is a failed course which leads to greater violence.

I am particularly disappointed France did not show resolve in the Cold War as defenders of freedom actively defeated Communism, and I am disappointed France has not shown resolve in the global war on terrorism, as we resist terrorists from London to Baghdad to Bali. But our hearts and our heritage are with France, which we treasure as America’s first ally. With resolve we can stop extremism at its source: peace can be restored.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes the 40th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council’s promulgation of Nostra Aetate, the declaration on the relation of the Roman Catholic Church to non-Christian religions;

(2) appreciates the role of the Holy See in combating religious intolerance and religious discrimination;

(3) encourages the United States to continue to serve in a leading role in combating anti-Semitism and other forms of religious
It is a historic declaration, and we should remember its essential message: the need for interreligious dialogue and religious respect, and that is a message that is still vitally important today.

Seen from this perspective, today, that anyone knows all the internal politics that went into writing it, but even in the press at the time, it was known to be controversial.

Why should we be talking about it here in the House of Representatives? Why should we be talking about a Roman Catholic document? Is it even appropriate here? Well, certainly not in a worshipful or a theological or an ecclesiastical way, but this is an important document in our history that says a lot to us as Americans.

Remember, there is much that we honor in our country’s history. There is much genius that we see in our founding documents, in our Constitution, in our religious belief and religious practice, and freedom from religion. That is rare, even today. It truly was a stroke of genius by our Founders. And, as so much, in our constitutional heritage it is still a work in progress.

Freedom of religion, freedom for religion, freedom from religion are concepts that are hard to incorporate into our lives. We are not talking about simple tolerance, but a recognition that if we are a nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all are created equal, then it is not enough just to recognize the right of each other to exist, but as a nation we need to do the right thing. It is a positive thing that comes from learning from and drawing on and building up each other. So it is indeed appropriate that...
some differences in their permitted diets and certain times that they could not eat certain things. He was comfortable in his tolerance for the others.

But then he went on to talk about the most painful recollection of his life, a confrontation in upstate New York with anti-Semitic comments about his friend to go unchallenged. He quoted the great American poet Gwendolyn Brooks: “We are each other’s business; we are each other’s harvest; we are each other’s magnitude and bond.”

Martin Luther King in a different, but related, matter said, “Through the laws that we pass, such as we pass in this body, ‘we cannot change a person’s heart. But,’ he said, “we can restrain the heartless.”

Like Mr. Patel, none of us can go back, but we can look back and we can see the progress that has been made in the last 40 years to fulfill the spirit of Nostra Aetate; and we can continue every day to take action to ensure that it does not happen in our schools, in our communities, in our cities and towns.

Nostra Aetate was not empty sentimentality; it was historic, important, and effective. It made a difference in the history of the world. As Rabbi David Rosen, the Director of the American Jewish Committee’s Interreligious Department, wrote, “Even if the effect of this transformation has not fully reached the rank and file around the world, its ramifications cannot be overestimated, and there is much to give thanks for on this anniversary. The anniversary 40 years ago at the end of October is well worth recognizing.”

Nostra Aetate was the first statement on interreligious respect that had been issued in the 2,000-year history of the church. Rabbi Gary Bretton-Granatoor, Director of Interfaith Affairs at the Anti-Defamation League, reminded the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and me that the pilgrimage out of the wilderness took 40 years from Egypt to Sinai to Canaan. He said that it is not surprising that in 40 years, we have not fully achieved the vision of Pope John XXIII around the world or here in this country, but we have made enormous progress. Rabbi Bretton-Granatoor said that the church and all people of faith examine themselves anew in relation to other peoples of faith.

We need to ensure we carry this message of religious respect to all that we do here. We can learn the spirit of Nostra Aetate and take action to check religious bigotry, religious hatred and advance the American experiment—the American Dream—of a more perfect union, built not just on respect, but on an understanding that we are indeed a nation founded, dedicated to the proposition that all are equal, and all have something to contribute to America’s success.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers at this point. I would just conclude by welcoming also the resolution’s expression of support for the United States to continue to lead the fight against anti-Semitism and other forms of religious and racial prejudice and discrimination, and that people of all faiths have a critical role to play in that matter.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.