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Senate

The Senate was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Friday, June 3, 2011, at 10:30 a.m.

House of Representatives

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 1, 2011

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WESTMORELAND).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 1, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable LYNN A. WESTMORELAND to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

CHINESE EXCLUSION ACT OF 1882

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. CHU).

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce an action to address an injustice carried out on this very floor that

Congress has never atoned for, the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

A century ago, the Chinese came here in search of a better life; but they faced harsh conditions, particularly in the Halls of Congress. Congress passed numerous laws to restrict Chinese Americans, starting from the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, to stop the Chinese from immigrating, from becoming naturalized citizens, and from ever having the right to vote.

These were the only such laws to target a specific ethnic group. The Chinese were the only residents that had to carry papers on them at all times. They were often harassed and detained. If they couldn't produce the proper documents, authorities threw them into prison or out of the country, regardless of their citizenship status. Political cartoons and hateful banners like these were hung in towns and cities and printed in papers. At that time of this hateful law, the Chinese were called racial slurs, were spat upon in the streets, and even brutally murdered.

Only after China became an ally of the U.S. in World War II was this law repealed in 1943, 60 years after its passage. It has never been formally acknowledged by Congress as incompatible with America's founding principles.

That is why, as the first Chinese American woman elected to Congress, and whose grandfather was a victim of this law, I stand on the very floor where the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed and announce that I have introduced a resolution calling for a formal

acknowledgment and expression of regret for the Chinese exclusion laws.

When the exclusion laws were first introduced, there was a great deal of debate in Congress over their merits. The U.S. had just abolished slavery. The 14th and 15th Amendments had recently been ratified. Slavery had been defeated, and freedom seemed more certain. The national atmosphere led many in Congress to stand up against the discriminatory anti-Chinese laws. But over the years, those standing for justice almost all disappeared. By the time 1882 came around, Members of Congress were fighting over who deserved the most credit for getting the most discriminatory laws passed and standing against the "Mongolian horde."

Representative Albert Shelby Willis from Kentucky pushed relentlessly for the exclusion laws, lambasting the Chinese. Standing in the same spot where I am now, he said the Chinese were "an invading race" and called them "alien with sordid and un-republican habits." He declared the "U.S. was cursed with the evils of Chinese immigration" and that they disturbed the "peace and order of society."

But there were a brave few, a small minority who fought hard against prejudice and principles of freedom. One such man was Senator George Frisbie Hoar, whose statue now stands proudly in the Capitol. He stood up to all of the Chinese exclusion laws and voted against each. He said in 1904 when the laws were made permanent, "I cannot agree with the principle that this legislation or any legislation on the subject

□ 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.



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rests. All races, all colors, all nationalities contain persons entitled to be recognized everywhere as equals of other men. I am bound to record my protest, if I stand alone."

And stand alone he did. The final vote against the Chinese in the Senate was 76-1. What Senator Hoar stood up for is what I am asking Congress to stand up for today: that all people, no matter the color of their skin, or the nation of origin, are the equals of every other man or woman.

America came to be what it is today through immigrants who came from all corners of the world. Chinese immigrants were amongst them. They sought a place to live that was founded upon liberty and equality. They came in search of the American Dream—that if you worked hard, you could build a good life. It is why my grandfather came to the United States.

But when the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed, the truths that this Nation holds as self-evident—that all are endowed with the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness—were discounted by the very ones elected to uphold them.

And so for a generation of our ancestors, like my grandfather, who were told for six decades by the U.S. Government that the land of the free wasn't open to them, it is long past time that Congress officially and formally acknowledges these ugly laws that targeted Chinese immigrants, and express sincere regret for these actions.

With my resolution, Congress will acknowledge the injustice of the Chinese Exclusion Act, express regret for the lives it destroyed, and make sure that the prejudice that stained our Nation is never repeated again. And it will demonstrate that today is a different day and that today we stand side by side for a stronger America.

AUTHORIZING MORE WARFARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, last week this body passed the National Defense Authorization Act. In doing so, yet again, it put a stamp of approval on a more violent, belligerent, and militaristic defense policy.

While my friends in the majority continue to posture about Federal spending, they are eager to authorize billions and billions on military programs and policies that don't make America safer.

During last week's debate over the Defense bill, they voted down an amendment that would have brought the Department of Defense funding levels down to the same 2008 levels they want to impose on domestic discretionary spending. Obviously, the Republicans believe in a blank check for the Pentagon, but austerity for everyone else.

They rejected my amendment to eliminate the V-22 Osprey, a multibil-

lion-dollar aircraft with a performance and safety record so shoddy that even Dick Cheney tried to eliminate it when he was Secretary of Defense. They also rejected an amendment that would have prohibited the use of funds for permanent bases in Iraq and Afghanistan, despite the fact that an anonymous officer in Afghanistan was quoted in yesterday's Washington Post as saying, "We've become addicted to building." That officer added that supplemental appropriations, with its billions of dollars for construction, "have been like crack cocaine for the military."

It gets worse, Mr. Speaker. The Defense bill includes a radically expanded authorization for the use of military force. It completely undermines the War Powers Act, empowering the President, whichever President, whom ever is in that office, to declare war regardless of whether an attack against the United States is imminent, regardless of whether our national security has been threatened. The language doesn't even specify any geographic limitation.

□ 1010

The Republican majority couldn't even bring themselves to support an amendment that called simply for a plan within 60 days to transfer responsibility for Afghanistan's security to Afghanistan—a plan—so we can begin the process of redevelopment. Just a plan within 60 days. As our distinguished Democratic leader said here on the floor last week when we were debating this, who could be against that?

Well, apparently the overwhelming majority of House Republicans could be against it and are against it and voted against it. Then they topped it off by voting to eliminate the modest public investment in the U.S. Institute of Peace, an institute that carries out real, well-respected, lifesaving work on peaceful conflict resolution around the world.

Last night the majority played a game of chicken with the global financial credibility of the United States, holding a vote on the debt ceiling that was designed to fail.

I challenge them: You want meaningful spending cuts as a condition for a debt ceiling increase? Then stop giving the Pentagon unlimited use of the taxpayers' ATM card. Stop putting the full faith and credit of the United States on the line in order to wage more war.

You believe in fiscal discipline, and you think everything should be on the table? Then let's talk about saving \$10 billion a month by ending the war in Afghanistan, and let's bring our troops home from Iraq and Afghanistan.

HONORING JACK SUTHERLIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPs) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPPs. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor a constituent of mine

from the 23rd District of California. His name is Mr. Jack Sutherlin.

Mr. Sutherlin, of Santa Maria, California, served honorably in the Coast Guard during World War II. He was stationed off the California coast. Mr. Sutherlin's brave actions on December 25, 1943, resulted in the safe passage of two escort carriers down the Pacific, along the coast, and into San Diego Bay.

I am very proud to represent Mr. Sutherlin, an example to us all for his dedication to our country and for his lifetime of serving our community.

Mr. Speaker, the debt we owe to our Nation's veterans is immeasurable, and Mr. Sutherlin is no exception. In fact, he's an example of those of that Greatest Generation who served nobly during the Second World War. His actions in 1943 leave me humbled and honored by his sacrifices. We can never repay his service, but we can act honorably on his behalf and behave in a way that is indicative of a grateful Nation.

Singling out events like these are important to remind us that acknowledging our veterans' bravery and sacrifice is never done. Despite the decades that have passed, our country remains indebted to the heroic actions of Mr. Sutherlin and his many brothers in arms.

It's also imperative to remember that we are still a Nation at war and that veterans who served decades ago or just months ago or are serving today deserve our support, our appreciation, and our profound gratitude. Mr. Sutherlin waited too long to be officially recognized, and I'm sure he would agree that all veterans deserve timely and genuine acknowledgements of their service.

I am proud of the work my staff completed to assist Mr. Sutherlin achieve a formal recognition from the commandant of the United States Coast Guard. Just a few days ago, the veterans clinic in Santa Maria, California, hosted a reception and a ceremony where the letter of recognition from the commandant was read and where many of the Coast Guard on active duty stationed at Morro Bay, California, were present to see someone of the generation preceding them being acknowledged.

I consider my work on behalf of veterans to be one of my most sacred responsibilities as a Member of Congress. Veterans like Mr. Sutherlin represent the best this country has to offer, and ensuring his work is recognized is of paramount importance. It's an honor to represent a man of such integrity, conviction, and dedication to his country. I'm proud to include his service in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of the United States Congress.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.