

This is a crucial time in our history. Our policy of foreign interventionism has contributed to this international crisis. How we define our enemies will determine how long we fight and when the war is over. The expense will be worth it if we make the right decisions. Targeting the forces of bin Laden makes sense, but invading eight to 10 countries without a precise goal will prove to be a policy of folly, lasting indefinitely, growing in size and cost in terms of dollars and lives, and something for which most Americans will eventually grow weary.

Our prayers and hopes are with our President that he continues to use wise judgment in accomplishing this difficult task, something he has been doing remarkably well under the very difficult circumstances.

But here at home it is surely a prime responsibility of all Members to remain vigilant and not, out of fear and panic, sacrifice the rights of Americans in our effort to maximize security.

Since the President has already done a good job in locating, apprehending, and defunding those associated with the 9/11 attacks while using current existing laws we should not further sacrifice our liberties with a vague promise of providing more security. We do not need a giant new national agency in order to impose a concept of Homeland Security that challenges our civil liberties. This is an idea whose time has not yet come.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHROCK). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CUMMINGS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### FARMWORKER HOUSING CONDITIONS IN U.S.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this time today to discuss an issue that is very important to me and, hopefully, to the Nation, and that is the issue of housing conditions of farm workers in this country.

The Housing Assistance Council released their report on findings from a survey of farm worker housing conditions on September 20, 2001. Structural problems, broken appliances, overcrowded living conditions were common findings among farm workers' homes. Unfortunately, families with children are suffering the worst conditions.

This survey is the first nationwide of farm worker housing in 20 years and confirms what smaller studies and anecdotal descriptions have been saying all along; that is, farm workers work incredibly hard to put food on other people's tables, but all too often live in dismal conditions.

The survey revealed that half of the homes surveyed were overcrowded, and three-quarters of those crowded units were occupied by families with children. Twenty-two percent lacked at least one functioning major appliance, such as stove, refrigerator, bathtubs or toilets; twenty-two percent had serious structural problems; and more than half lacked access to a working laundry machine.

Children lived in two-thirds, or 65 percent, of the units classified as severely substandard; and 60 percent of the homes were adjacent to fields where pesticides were applied.

I recognize that there are several needs that this country faces today, security being among the first, education, health care, nutrition and poverty. This study dramatizes many of those needs, and the main need being that hardworking Americans and their children should not be living in squalid and unhealthy conditions. These are housing conditions that none of us could stand to be in, not even for a second. Nobody should be subjected to such adversity.

This major research project was conducted over a 3-year period, from 1997 through 2000. Data on 4,625 housing units in 22 States and Puerto Rico were collected in a non-random survey by more than 100 outreach workers and 16 organizations that work with farm workers around the country, and analyzed by the Housing Assistance Council. Major funding was provided by USDA and HUD.

I continue to be impressed by the quality and the content of this study and other studies conducted by HAC. After reading the study, I was appalled to learn that in America we still have such horrendous living conditions. We have made very little progress in this area. It is disheartening and disappointing that we live in such a rich country and do not make available decent housing to invited farm workers, where the law requires that we should, to those who are tilling our fields and picking the fruits and vegetables which help feed all our families.

It is particularly worrisome to note that such a large proportion of farm worker families with children live adjacent to fields where pesticides are sprayed. This means that they are affected with long-term effects in their families and in their bodies.

I would like to focus on the fact that we do need more money to fund these programs, both the USDA as well as HUD. It is imperative that we recognize that many of these Federal programs, such as HUD, can assist our farm workers. On this floor, during the HUD administration appropriation, we voted against this. We should put monies back into HUD to make sure we assist in this program. The report clearly shows the need for a full-scale national study for farm workers, especially pertaining to housing, education, and health.

I would like to reiterate my avid support for finding ways of funding the

farm workers' housing needs, but also that there are many other programs that we need to commit ourselves to. I want to congratulate Housing Assistance Council, its executive director, for this document and the work it makes available for all of us who care about farm workers who work so hard.

#### HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, during this difficult period in our Nation's history, the Members of this Congress, like Americans all across this country and like many people around the world, have grieved the loss of many lives taken by the evil acts of enemies of our country and of freedom-loving people all across the world. In the past days and weeks, Americans have demonstrated a spirit of unity and solidarity not only to assist in every possible way the recovery efforts taking place in New York and Washington, but also to ease the pain of the thousands of people directly and indirectly affected by this tragedy, and also to show that we, as Americans, stand together as a Nation.

Together, Americans all over the country and across the world have cried, Americans have held vigils, and have searched for ways to make sense out of these senseless acts. Together, over the past few weeks, we have made an effort to resume our way of life, and slowly but surely we are getting back to work. As one Nation, and as partners with other countries around the world, we now seek those responsible for the terrible events of September 11; and we will stick together to bring those responsible to justice. Just as we have been united in our grief and efforts to help the victims of September 11, we now are united in supporting our troops as they take the necessary steps to defend our freedom and our security.

Mr. Speaker, one of many remarkable things that we have witnessed during these past weeks has been the striking and spontaneous display of unity among the people of this great Nation. Individuals from every race, ethnicity, and spiritual belief have joined as one to wear the red, white and blue and fly our flag and sing our national anthem. It has been noted in news reports and a number of interviews that it is remarkable how quickly our differences have been put aside to tackle this Nation's tragedy.

And as remarkable and moving as these displays have been, as a Nation we must remain steadfast in respecting and upholding the American principles that make our Nation unique in the world. Just as most of us have stood together to remember those who have fallen, to remember their families and their friends, we have sadly witnessed some terrible attempts from individuals resulting from misguided prejudice and anger. I am referring, of course, to the increased acts of violence that have been perpetrated against Arab Americans, Muslims, and Sikhs living in our own country.

Like all Members of Congress, and particularly the Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, we condemn these actions and call on every American to celebrate, and not undermine, the principles that have made this country great. To celebrate the richness of our country, it is with honor that Members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus take the floor of the people's House tonight to pay tribute to every single American and to highlight the contributions in particular of Hispanic Americans during this Hispanic Heritage Month.

During the next hour, my fellow members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus will speak about Hispanic Americans and highlight their many contributions to our great country. We will do this not to create division among Americans, but to celebrate the very strength and richness which makes our country great.

Every year America celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 through October 15. During this time, we highlight the growth and the spirit of the vibrant Latino community of the United States. As leaders of a community that today numbers 40 million-plus, the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus continue to work for America and for Americans so that everyone in this country has access to the best education, the best health care, and the best jobs that will result in an even stronger and vibrant country.

Mr. Speaker, tonight the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus will raise issues such as education, law enforcement, business, economic development, health care, and many other issues. But before I yield to my colleagues, I want to conclude my opening remarks by saying that by taking the floor of the House tonight and honoring the diversity of America, the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus send a loud, clear, strong signal to those in our country and abroad who wrongfully believe that freedom and diversity are a weakness.

From this building, which one month ago was a target of hatred and evil, tonight stands proud as a symbol of this great Nation and of her great people, we, the members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, want to say that as a Nation we have the will, we have the strength, and we have the resolve to

continue to live by the guiding light and civil liberties set forth by our Founding Fathers.

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Mr. Speaker, tonight let me start by recognizing a good friend and critical member of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, my colleague from the 15th District of Texas.

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Hispanic Heritage Month. Indeed, our Hispanic language, culture and history is recognized and appreciated worldwide by millions of people. I am pleased that the President has again designated September 15 through October 15 as National Hispanic Heritage Month.

Today, Hispanics make up the largest and fastest growing minority group in the country. We have produced scholars, entrepreneurs, scientists, musicians, philosophers, and Nobel Prize laureates.

Approximately 500 years ago, our ancestors led the way in the great rediscovery of the Americas, including the ground we now know as the United States of America.

Today, however, my remarks will focus on the education of Hispanic Americans. Our education history parallels the development of the public schools and the treatment of other minority groups in our educational system.

Because time does not permit, I will only go back a few years to make my point regarding the treatment of Hispanics in our society. Twenty-four years before the renowned *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, the League of United Latin American Citizens filed class action suits on behalf of Hispanic children who were the victims of discrimination of public schools.

I, myself, would have been forced to walk to a segregated school far from my home if not for the resolve of my brother, a Korean war hero, who demanded that the nearby white elementary school accept me and my brothers. In the rest of the country, all through the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, the education of Hispanic children was dependent on decisions made by our judicial system.

Finally, in 1965 Congress began to respond to decades of inaction with the creation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The ESEA has helped to galvanize local and national civil rights and educational organizations to rally and support Hispanic students in public schools. Throughout the years we have enjoyed the support of the National Council of LaRaza, the Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund, the National Association of Bilingual Education, as well as hundreds of other organizations who monitor the treatment of Hispanic children and young adults in our Nation's educational system.

In 1965, our low-income Hispanic children were finally targeted for special assistance in local schools. Hispanics

were included in the title I population for economic reasons. However, it was not until the mid-1990s that limited English proficient children were identified as being in need of academic programs to improve their academic achievement. Today, title I, as it is commonly known, serves more Hispanic children than any other ethnic group in the country.

The fight is by no means won. Even today, we are concerned that because of funding, the pending Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorization will not allow the full participation of all children and limited-English proficient children.

In addition, critical programs that help limited English migrant children, such as the National Bilingual Education Act, have been slated for drastic policy and administrative changes by the administration and are severely underfunded. Yet, Hispanics continue to have the highest dropout rates in the Nation. Exacerbating this problem is the acute shortage of qualified teachers teaching in their major of study. The Department of Education has indicated that we need an additional 50,000 new qualified bilingual teachers now. This is important because by 2025, one in every four public school students is projected to be Hispanic.

Students who have post secondary aspirations face limited, but significant choices in selecting colleges and universities. Sixty percent of all Hispanics in higher education are enrolled in Hispanic-serving colleges and universities, better known as HSIs. These institutions produce most of the baccalaureate and graduate degrees from Hispanics nationwide.

Mr. Speaker, we in the Hispanic Congressional Caucus are committed for increasing educational opportunities for Hispanic students. The conferees on the education bill have received our suggestions for improving the ESEA so it responds directly to our concerns. We will continue to advocate for Pell Grants, for GEAR UP, for TRIO, more funding for Head Start, and Hispanic-serving institutions, and all of the exemplary programs that enhance equal educational opportunities for our children, youth and adults.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I am asking my colleagues for their support in joining with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus to write a new and more positive history and heritage for Hispanics in our Nation using education as our cornerstone. Let our legacy be not only assisting Hispanic children, youth and adults to avail themselves of educational opportunities, but in helping to create the future leaders of this great country. Hispanics have contributed a large share of medals of honor winners in defending America.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all of my colleagues to join me in ensuring that those lives lost for our great country are honored through new educational opportunities for millions of our children.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) for his leadership not only in education, but on many border issues for a region of the country that has been largely ignored.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ), who has done great work for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus and as a member of our Border Caucus, in many areas, in particular health, health care, identifying the diseases that disproportionately affect Latino communities.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES) for providing this opportunity for us to be here today to speak on Hispanic Heritage Month and the contributions that Hispanics have played throughout the country.

I also want to congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) on his efforts in education. There is no doubt that the issue of education has been one of the main issues from the beginning. Most Hispanics, no matter what, always recognize that that is one of the few issues that we see, one of the few ways of fulfilling the American dream, and the dream of being able to go forward, and education allows an opportunity to make that happen. Once again, I congratulate the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) for playing a significant role in the area of education and LULAC.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to express my deepest sympathy to the families of those lost in the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. On September 11, agents of evil and hatred declared war against our country, seeking to use terror as a weapon in cowardly attacks.

By targeting symbols of American strength and success, the terrorists intended not only to destroy the bricks and mortar that hold our Nation together, but also to assault the core values and the civil liberties at the foundation of our democracy. We face new challenges for which we are not fully prepared, and we recognize that we have also failed in not being up to the challenge. Part of this challenge also is a recent rash of violence against other Americans and immigrants solely because of the fact that they might be Arab or Muslims.

This is an affront to all Americans and to American civil liberties, exactly what the terrorists would want us to do. This is the time for us to unite and to have better understanding. It is a time to embrace the very diversity that is the source of our national pride for so many Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here also very proud because I see people reaching out and reading books on Islam, reading material, trying to educate themselves on Muslims and the different religions, and that is going to be important for us to be able to grasp what we are confronting, as well as having a better understanding of different people.

Mr. Speaker, September 15 through October 15 is Hispanic Heritage Month. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the contribution and achievements of our Hispanic community. We are Puertorriquenos, Cubanos, Chicanos, Dominicanos, and Mexican Americans. We are from Central America, South America. We come from Florida, California, Texas, and the other 50 States. We come from New York and Washington, D.C. also. We are Americanos. We represent a broad spectrum of color, cultural values and political beliefs. We have strength in the numbers and our desire to better our communities. Our goals are one and the same with the rest of America.

I want to take this opportunity to talk about three special Americans that we feel very strongly about, three Mexican Americans. These three are Medal of Honor recipients, and I want to take this opportunity to talk about them and their history and their accomplishments.

In so doing, I also want to add that Mexican Americans and Hispanics in general have over 37 Medal of Honor recipients within our ranks. We take pride during these times of difficulty, our people have been there to stand for America.

It was beautiful this past weekend to go to a meeting in Pearsall, Texas, a little community where over 250 people were giving a collection of food for the needy. There was a veteran there over 80 years old. He came to me and in all sincerity said, I am 81 years old, but if you need me to go to Afghanistan, I am ready. Tears almost came to my eyes as he said that. He meant it, and I know that we have a lot of Hispanics out there willing to give of themselves.

In that same light, let me talk about a man, a hero of ours, Cleto Rodriguez, who we have named a school in San Antonio after, Cleto Rodriguez Elementary, as well as a highway. He was a rifleman. His unit was attacked, and he strongly defended the Paco Railroad Station in Manila in the Philippine Islands.

While making a frontal assault across the open field, his platoon was halted 100 yards from the station by intense enemy fire. On his own initiative, Cleto Rodriguez left the platoon. He went on his own accompanied by one of his friends and continued forward to a house that was 60 yards from the objective. Although under constant enemy observations, the two men remained in this position for over an hour targeting and firing at the people that were there.

It was estimated that they killed over 35 hostile soldiers and wounded many others in that specific scrimmage. As they moved closer to the station, discovering a group of Japanese replacements, they attempted to reach the pill box. They opened heavy fire, killing an additional 40 enemy soldiers and stopped subsequent attempts for the men to be able to get replacements again.

As the two went forward, the story is they kept on firing and were able to kill the machine gun people. The figures are shown and reflected in the numbers as the recipient of the Medal of Honor. The enemy fire became even more intense as they advanced within 20 yards of the station. Then covered by his companion, Private Rodriguez boldly moved to the building and threw five grenades one at a time through the doorway killing an additional seven Japanese, destroying a 20-millimeter gun as well as wrecking a heavy machine gun.

□ 2015

With their ammunition running low, by that time they did not have any more bullets or very few, the two men started to return back to the American lines, providing cover for each other as they withdrew. During this movement, Private Rodriguez' companion was killed. In 2½ hours of fierce fighting, the team of two killed, it is estimated, over 82 Japanese, completely disorganized their defense and paved the way for the subsequent overwhelming defeat of the enemy at this particular point.

Two days later, Private Rodriguez again enabled his comrades to advance when he single-handedly killed six Japanese and destroyed a well-placed 20-millimeter gun by his outstanding skill with his weapons, gallant determination to destroy the enemy, and heroic courage in the face of tremendous odds. Private Rodriguez, on two occasions, materially aided the advance of our troops in Manila. That is the story of Cleto Rodriguez and the beautiful work that he did in behalf of all of us.

I also want to take this opportunity to talk about Roy Benavidez, another Mexican American from our area. Cleto was from San Marcos, Texas, and lived in San Antonio, where he joined the military and where the school is named after him.

Roy Benavidez, also a Texan who also lived in the San Antonio area, I want you to know that the late Roy Benavidez, who received the Medal of Honor in 1981 for valor in Vietnam, is the latest soldier whose name will be borne on a Navy ship. Navy Secretary Richard Danzig announced September 15 that the next in a series of resupply ships will be named the U.S. Naval Ship Benavidez. The retired Army master sergeant died at age 63 on November 29, 1998 in San Antonio. He was buried with full military honors at Fort Sam Houston there in San Antonio.

"Our Bob Hope class of ships are resolute assets that are always quietly there in the background providing our needs," Secretary Danzig said in his announcement. They are capable of coming forward in a vital way when America calls for reinforcement of its combat needs around the world. Roy Benavidez personified that same spirit throughout his life, and most powerfully during a single action that saved lives in combat."

The Benavidez is scheduled to be launched next summer. It is the seventh in a class of 950-foot-long roll-on/roll-off sealift ships. The diesel-powered ships are 106 feet abeam, displace about 62,000 long tons and can sail at a sustained 24 knots.

I want to mention to you a little briefly on Roy Benavidez and his background and his history. Mr. Benavidez was in the Army and was also a special forces soldier. He was of Mexican descent and also part Yaqui Indian ancestry. He also coauthored a book, "Medal of Honor, a Vietnam Warrior's Story."

"Roy was a soldier to be emulated by those wearing the uniform and an example of a self-made person, a real hero to our community and to all Americans. He was a role model to many young Hispanics and made a lot of public appearances at schools," said retired Army Master Sergeant Charlie Hoffman, who had commented about his friend. He enjoyed the fact that Roy Benavidez took his time to talk to our kids.

Benavidez' destiny took him to Vietnam where as a member of Detachment B56, 5th Special Forces Group Airborne, 1st Special Forces, he challenged death on May 2, 1968.

A staff sergeant at the time, Benavidez distinguished himself by gallantry. The citation credits him with helping to save the lives of eight of his special forces comrades during helicopter evacuations during a firefight with North Vietnamese regular forces there in Vietnam.

Benavidez suffered a broken jaw, 37 bullets as well as a bayonet. I will repeat that again. He suffered not only a broken jaw, 37 bullets in his body, but he was also bayoneted. He was also mauled so bad that his officers were going to give him the Distinguished Service Cross because that could come quicker because they assumed he was going to die. But he did not. He was later awarded the Medal of Honor. The story is he knew his troops were out there and there were eight of them that had been isolated and hurt, and he asked to go and be dropped. The story is that as they let him go, he said, "What do you need?" He says, "I'm a special forces guy. I don't need anything. Just drop me there." The story is that they dropped him there and he was able to get some guns from some of the ones who had already been killed and he was able to fight off a large number of the enemy there as he fought and helped the lives of those individuals.

Master Sergeant Roy Benavidez was a true American hero, rising from humble origins in south Texas to become an Army legend. The Navy's recognition of his selfless service is truly an appropriate tribute to Master Sergeant Benavidez' memory and to the ideals of our Nation that he epitomized. He is only one of 37 Hispanics that have received this honor.

I want to take this opportunity to also mention one additional Medal of

Honor recipient. He is a close friend of mine, a good friend that continues to work in San Antonio, to work with young people to keep them off of drugs, to work on a variety of different projects with veterans, to making sure that he reaches out to those veterans that are homeless in helping in a lot of ways, and, that is, the Medal of Honor recipient Louis Ricardo Rocco from San Antonio. Louis Ricardo Rocco, a warrant officer, distinguished himself when he volunteered to accompany a medical evacuation team on an urgent mission to evacuate eight critically wounded Army of the Republic of Vietnam personnel. As the helicopter approached the landing zone, it became the target for intensive enemy automatic weapons fire. Disregarding his own safety, Warrant Officer Rocco identified and placed accurate suppressive fire on the enemy positions as the aircraft descended toward the landing zone. Sustaining major damage from the enemy fire, the aircraft was forced to crash land, causing Warrant Officer Rocco to sustain a fractured wrist and hip and severely bruised back.

Ignoring his injuries, he extracted the survivors from the burning wreckage. He sustained burns to his own body. Despite intensive enemy fire, Warrant Officer Rocco carried each unconscious man across approximately 20 meters of exposed terrain to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam perimeter. On each trip, he went for each one, not once but eight times. His severely burned hands and broken wrist caused excruciating pain, but the lives of the unconscious crash survivors were more important to him than his personal discomfort. He continued his rescue efforts. Once inside the friendly position, Warrant Officer Rocco helped administer first aid to his wounded comrades until his wounds and burns caused him to also collapse and finally lose consciousness. His bravery under fire and intense devotion to duty were directly responsible for saving these men and others. His unparalleled bravery in the face of enemy fire, his complete disregard for his own pain and injuries and his performance were far above and beyond the call of duty and were in keeping with the highest traditions of self-sacrifice and courage of the military service. And so I am real proud because I have the distinct pleasure of knowing Louis Ricardo Rocco, a man who not only during the time of war was there for those people that are in need but continues to be there now in the service as he reaches out to young people, young Hispanics in San Antonio and throughout south Texas and wherever he goes as he talks about the importance of staying in school and staying off of drugs. I take pride in just mentioning those three, but there are many more Hispanic Medal of Honor recipients that have taken the call of duty.

I also want to take this opportunity to talk a little bit about the issues that confront Hispanics. We are con-

cerned as Hispanics about education, as the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA) talked about. We are concerned about our schools and our children and where they attend. We are concerned about vital resources for our seniors who face illness, poverty and challenges to their quality of life. We are also concerned about access to quality health care. It is unacceptable that Hispanics account for one-fourth, 25 percent, of the 44 million uninsured but make up only 12.5 percent of the population in the United States. So you see the disproportional issues that we still need to confront.

Our poor access to quality health care services and education results in our community being disproportionately affected by disease such as diabetes and HIV/AIDS. As we make gains in the area of HIV/AIDS, we also see the disproportionate numbers of those people that are impacted by AIDS. As we look at the issue of diabetes, we also see that Hispanics are disproportionately also hit on diabetes. For those at the forefront of health care and health care policy, this fact is not new and we recognize the troubling issues.

We have certainly come a long way since the time of Dr. Hector Perez Garcia, founder of the American GI Forum in 1948. He had a goal of providing good health care for veterans who needed it and for everyone. Dr. Garcia in his formation of the GI Forum pushed forward the issue of health care and the importance. His admittance into medical school 8 years earlier was incredible, to say the least. This was an era when the University of Texas Medical School in Galveston admitted only one Mexican American per year, and at that time that seemed to be the quota. I am proud to say that we have come a long way from that era.

Recently we had Dr. Francisco Cigarroa, who became the first Hispanic president of the medical school at the Health Science Center in San Antonio, the first of its kind in this country. Hopefully we will have a lot more Dr. Francisco Cigarroas as we move forward and as we allow for opportunities for young qualified doctors to be able to not only get their degrees but to be able to rise in their positions.

In the area of health care, as chairman of the Hispanic Caucus on Health, I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Elena Rios, President of the National Hispanic Association, who has done tremendous work in the area of health care, and people at home like Charlene Doria Ortiz, Director of the Center for Health Policies, who continues to look at the issues of health and making sure that the needs of Hispanics and Latinos are met and who have dedicated their lives to improving the Latino community.

I would like to also take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all the individuals who have worked so tirelessly to improve the lives and the health of Latinos and to promote the importance of nurses, doctors and

health advocates. In the area of health care, we recognize that there is a big gap there. When it comes to nurses, we have a large, disproportionate number that are needed. We look forward to making sure that we make some advances in those areas.

I want to thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES) for allowing me the opportunity to say a few words. I want to thank him for the work he has provided.

Mr. REYES. I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) for his leadership and his dedication and also for chronicling the Medal of Honor winners, three of 37 Medal of Honor winners that come from the Hispanic community. We are blessed, Mr. Speaker, in our caucus, in the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, with having Members of our caucus that have diverse backgrounds, diverse interests, much like other Members of Congress that focus their attention on issues that they feel should be a priority for this Congress.

Next, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) has a small business and an economic empowerment background. With that, I yield to the gentlewoman from California.

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Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I come to this floor today to honor and pay tribute to all fellow Hispanic Americans and to highlight some of their excellent contributions made to us here in the United States. Hispanic Americans have helped shape all aspects of the American experience and have greatly influenced America's culture and our society.

Hispanic Americans have played an integral part in our country's exceptional story of success. We have served heroically in every American conflict. You just heard my colleague indicate there were 37 Hispanic Americans who earned the Nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor. I believe there were 38. I will settle for 37, but I think it was 38.

The United States academic and scientific communities have benefited from the contributions of Hispanic Americans, like physicist Luis Walter Alvarez, who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1986, while business leader Roberto Goizueta, chairman of Coca-Cola and a Cuban-American business leader is very well recognized and coined the phrase "Coke is it."

These are only two of the many examples of Latinos that have made invaluable contributions in the United States. I can name some of the sports figures, but that is not my bag. There are others. There is our Lieutenant Governor in California, Cruz Bustamante. In entertainment, we have Edward James Olmos, to name one of the many. In health in California, we have Diana Banta, who heads the State Health System.

Latinos are no longer a new immigrant population. Rather, they are now

the legislators, the business people, the nurses, the teachers, the construction workers that keep our communities running.

They were among those who passed away in the horrific tragedy on Tuesday, September 11. They were also among the finest who participated in their rescue efforts this past month. My own Norwalk constituent Macolvio "Joe" Lopez, Jr., a dedicated construction worker, a Little League volunteer and a family man, was among those who tragically died on United Airlines Flight 175, the second plane to hit the second tower of the World Trade Center.

Hardworking Hispanic Americans have made tremendous invaluable contributions to economic development to the United States. Hispanic business generates nearly \$200 billion annually and employs over 1.5 million Americans, which makes a tremendous significant impact on our national economy. Latino business has grown by 30 percent in the past 7 years, five times faster than the average United States business; and we are very proud that Latino-owned businesses are the second fastest-growing segment of small business, right behind women-owned business. These numbers, though they show how strong our influence is, still face challenges such as lack of access to capital, and this keeps them from developing and growing, expanding their business.

While America benefits from the fruits of Hispanic labor, we, too, should be able to gain access to the American dream and its credit system. Credit extended to women all over the world has been credited to have had a great effect on economic development at the local level.

Unique to this business community is the extremely high number of Hispanic female entrepreneurs, "Latina-Style," the magazine that was started by a young woman in California, Anna Maria Arias, who unfortunately died last week, was one of the new entrepreneurs who found a niche and created a much-needed vehicle to give information about Latino leaders and to be able to give information and show the business world that Latinas were very much in the business economy.

We have 382,400 Latina-owned business firms in the United States which generated \$67.3 billion, a 534 percent increase since 1987, compared to only 120 percent increase for all business. So you can see the relationship. We are the new entrepreneurs. Revenue earned by Latinas will show direct results in the development of Hispanic communities in the United States. They employ women who need a hand. This increased revenue in the hands of Hispanic mothers can and will improve the quality of child care and education provided to our country's most vulnerable population.

The potential of Latina-owned businesses, by women, must be embraced and expanded to our international mar-

kets. I will tell you why. Women work harder and they work smarter, and we are inclusive, and we show our capability because we will continue to make it work. It is inherent in who we are and what we are about. To be able to include and be able to find a way to generate more business is part of what we as women are all about.

Success of Hispanic American businesses will also lead to an increase in home ownership rate. Many people do not realize that there is a nexus. The number of Latinos who own homes just in Southern California alone has surged 51.4 percent in the last decade. Much of this growth is due to the success of Latino business.

Hispanic Americans have a great love for the United States and a conviction to make the United States their home. Many times, two whole families will pool their resources to purchase a home, unlike most other non-Latino buyers. Yet while these hardworking Latinos, these ones who are pooling their money and struggling to get credit, are trying to find a way to get credit to buy their home, the difference between the home ownership rate of Latinos and other groups still remains 25 percent points different.

Considering all the contributions the Latinos have made and are continuing to make in this country, we have earned access to these loans. Our goals and dreams are the same as all Americans, to share in the American dream, a home of our own, educational opportunities for our children and our grandchildren, and a chance to prosper, and, of course, to gain respect.

Congratulations, America. You have opened the door for many. Those many who came, among them Hispanics, have contributed to your greatness, to your world leadership.

God bless America.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman. I want to thank her for her leadership.

As members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, I want you, Mr. Speaker, to know that we are not satisfied with having 18 Members. We are working aggressively to expand our caucus. I want to thank the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. NAPOLITANO) and our next speaker for their tireless efforts to identify great Latino candidates that can join our caucus, we hope, in the next election.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA), who, himself a veteran, tonight wants to discuss the contributions of Hispanics to the Armed Services. He is an individual that as a veteran knows, understands, and appreciates the challenge that our men and women in uniform are currently facing in Afghanistan and other parts of the world.

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to recognize the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES) for creating

this opportunity to acknowledge the contributions of Hispanics to this great Nation in the area of education, the area of business, the area of media, the area of veterans, the area of civil rights, individuals like Cesar Chavez and Delores Huerta of the United Farm Workers, who fought for equality and justice for all. I want to thank our Chair for taking the lead in having this.

There are many individuals whose names will not even come out right now, but it is important for us to look at the contributions that Hispanics have made to this great Nation, from the time that we were here to the time that we will exist, and as we look at the growth in the population, we will continue to contribute to this great country, because we believe in this country, we live in this country, we are proud of this country.

Last month, the sanity of our Nation was violated on our own soil. Our Hispanic sons and daughters are amongst the victims of this monstrous act of terrorism. With their patriotic hearts, our Hispanic sons and daughters are now rising to our Nation's defense.

I state that our Hispanic sons and daughters are now rising to our national Hispanic defense. The Hispanic community understands freedom is not free, that freedom does not come without a price.

Historically, as a community, we have militarily invested our hearts and soul in securing the peace for our abuelas, for our hijas, for our families. If asked, more than 85,000 Hispanics currently in active military duty will once again step up to the plate for our country; and I state step up once again to the plate for our country along with many other men and women serving our country.

It is fitting, therefore, that we use this Hispanic Heritage Month to commemorate the military contributions of our courageous Hispanic community, for our culture is rich in its heritage, traditions and customs. We are proud people, willing to serve this great country.

From the American Revolution to today's voluntary service, over 1 million Hispanic veterans have served our country with honor and courage. Hispanic Americans answered the call of duty every time during the wars throughout the Nation's history.

As many as 500,000 Hispanics fought for the United States in World War II. Thirty-eight, and I state, 38 have received the Congressional Medal of Honor, the highest award of valor. One individual from my area, Joseph Rodriguez, a sergeant from San Bernardino, received such a valor and high award and prestige. We were the second largest American minority in Vietnam, with over 19 percent of our numbers killed and wounded.

As we move forward in our latest defense of freedom, freedom from terrorism, we will fight, and I state, we will fight to recapture the American

peace. Mothers and fathers across the Nation will experience sleepless nights, worried about the possibility of a draft, worried about the possibility that their hijos will once again be called to duty. I know, because my mother was worried during the time that I served during the Vietnam era war. When I had to serve, every night she had a candle that she lit, she put up, and prayed every night that I would return home. And, yes, I did return home.

We must not be afraid to step forward, to let our hijos step forward to make that choice, for if we are, we will have allowed them to win. We must have the courage to pay the price for our precious freedom.

Through our military contributions we have seen and we will see notable reflections of the Hispanic commitment to the family, respect for others, and love of this country, all virtues transcending ethnicity, all virtues reflecting the American spirit.

The Hispanic military community will step forward again with selflessness and bravery in response to our national call. We must be willing to step forward with them. As the first chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus' Veterans Task Force, I am working to secure a voice for Hispanic veterans in Congress, a voice for recognizing, a voice for understanding.

Let us today acknowledge and give thanks to the Hispanic military community that will preserve the peace, so that future generations of Hispanics will be able to freely contribute to our Nation's economic, artistic, legal, and political communities, as more than 30 million Hispanic Americans do every day.

This is in essence a Hispanic heritage. This is what it is to be an American. We are all proud Americans. We love to serve our country.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. BACA) for his role, his very active role in our caucus.

Next, Mr. Speaker, we have got the newest member of our Caucus. But when people talk about a real dynamo, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) comes to my mind. Although she is the newest member of our Caucus, she has engaged herself in many areas that are important to our community, like education, labor, technology, the digital divide, all of those things that are important that we address in this People's House.

□ 2045

So with that, I yield to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS).

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and honored to be here also to join with my colleagues, colleagues that are not here this evening with us, but the millions of people who are watching us, and understanding that today is a very significant time for us. We are commemorating Hispanic Heritage Month; but we also, as Members of Congress, just voted out of this

House today to authorize the printing of a pamphlet to honor Hispanic Americans who serve in this Congress and who have served in this Congress. Let us not forget that all of us from across this country have made great, great contributions and strides to this government.

I am proud to be one of the newest Members and one of the few Latinos to serve in the House of Representatives. I am one of six, and I am proud to say that the district that I represent is made up largely of Hispanic Americans who vote, who participate in our government, and who serve us in our government through different segments, whether it be as public servants, whether it be in the military, or whether it be here before our colleagues as Members of Congress. I am proud to be a part of my community, most of which I want to talk about education, because education is really where it counts for many of us.

Without educational opportunities, I know I would not be here standing as a congressional member before my colleagues here today. Part of those important aspects of education came to me in the form of government programs, Federal-sponsored programs, the Pell grant program, financial aid programs, that helped to provide incentives for families like mine who could not afford to send their children to college. Without those kinds of support, I know that many Latinos, many like myself, would not be able to have the kind of professional careers that we now lead. So I want to underscore how important it is to continue funding of education; and especially because now, as we find ourselves in a situation where many people are now out of work or having to work two or three jobs trying to make ends meet, it becomes even more difficult for them to obtain assistance to continue their career, whether it be at a university or at a community college.

I want to mention that one of my first opportunities to serve in public office was as the first Latino elected to the Rio Hondo Community College Board, which is known by the Federal Government and recognized as a Hispanic-serving institution. What that means is that 25 percent of the student population there, the undergraduates enrolled, have to be of Hispanic descent. Well, Rio Hondo Community College is far beyond that; it is about 50 to 60 percent. I am proud to say that that is one of the institutions that has just been recognized for sending and graduating more Latinos to go on, after receiving their 2-year degree there, to go on to a 4-year institution. So I am proud to have been a part of the successes that that college now realizes, and I am happy that this government now supports them through Federal funding through the Hispanic-serving institution accounts.

There are over 203 of these Hispanic-serving institutions nationwide, and in California we represent 28 percent of



those 57 Hispanic-serving institutions, to be more exact. In my congressional district we have several, some of which I have mentioned: Rio Hondo Community College, East Los Angeles College, California State University Long Beach, and Los Angeles. Also, two districts in my congressional district, Los Angeles Unified School District and El Monte Union School District, have some of the highest concentrations of Latino students in the United States. Today, Latino children are the largest group of minority children in our country.

Despite our growing numbers, Latinos remain the most educationally disadvantaged amongst our public school students. The dropout rate is atrocious for Latinos. It is about 20 percent nationally, three times the rate of that of African American or Anglo students. Mr. Speaker, 1.3 million Latinos drop out of high school each year. This is atrocious, and only about 55 percent of Hispanics 25 years and older have completed a high school diploma, compared to 84 percent of Anglos and 76 percent of African Americans. Also, only 11 percent of Latinos have obtained a bachelor's degree or more, compared to other groups.

Yes, the challenges we face as Latinos are daunting; but they are not insurmountable. Believe me, we are making educational gains. Latinos currently represent about 14.5 percent of the total traditional college-age population; and we hope that in the year 2025 that we will represent well over 22 percent of that population. Between 1976 and 1996, the number of Latinos enrolled in undergraduate education actually increased by 202 percent. Although our enrollment numbers may be low, we are on the rise. More and more of us are working to obtain higher education. Increasingly, Latino students are more likely to be forced to work part-time, as I said earlier, having to make ends meet just to acquire that ability to go on to college.

Therefore, I will, as my colleagues here before us, support funding such as the 21st Century Higher Education Act, which would allow for more students of Hispanic backgrounds to have access to quality higher education. This would mean an allocation for more money and programs such as the GEAR UP program, which helps junior high students become college-ready; and it would increase funding for the TRIO programs like Upward Bound and Talent Search, which help Latinos prepare for college. I continue to support these programs myself and know that as the old saying goes: "La educacion es la clave para un futuro mejor." That is to say our future lies in education.

I support legislation that will help working men and women of our country also achieve the American dream. The Hispanic labor force is growing quickly. We comprise about 12.7 percent of the total labor force. This is an increase of 10.4 percent since 1998. Hispanic women are one of the fastest

growing groups of women in the United States. Their total employment increased by 65 percent over the last 10 years. Hispanics are more likely than any other minority group to be heavily concentrated in the service occupations and almost twice as likely to be employed as operators and laborers.

The majority of Hispanic women in the workforce are employed in the technical, sales, and administrative support and service jobs. This means that an increase in the minimum wage is especially critical to Latinos overall, but particularly Latinas. Our Nation's workers deserve a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, and our national minimum wage simply does not represent a fair day's pay. In fact, the national minimum wage is not even enough to lift a family of three above the poverty level, which is \$13,290 annually. A full-time year-round worker who supports a family of three would have to earn \$6.39 an hour just to reach the poverty level, far above what we currently offer now at the Federal level, which is \$5.15 per hour.

I have no doubt that as Latinos working together we can make an increase in the minimum wage a reality. I hope that we can see that before we end our session this year. Because we can work together as a community, I know there is no end to the kinds of achievement and goals that we can obtain.

Mr. Speaker, I salute my fellow Latinos during Hispanic Heritage Month, and I want to also recite to them this: "Recuerden que en la unidad esta la fuerza," or remember that the power rests in unity.

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her comments and for her leadership in many different areas of our caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity this evening to let this country know of the great contributions of Hispanics and Latinos across the country.

I want to close, Mr. Speaker, by relaying a story that actually happened to one of my daughters. They were talking about identifying a hero; and in her class one identified a great inventor as their special hero, another one identified a great athlete, another one a great leader, another one a great doctor. When it came to a classmate of hers, a Hispanic, the individual, the little boy said, it is my dad, because every day he gets up and he goes to work, whether he is feeling good or he is feeling ill. When the car breaks down, he fixes it. He gives us everything that we need.

Latinos are like that. Every day across this country people get up and go to work and do the things that are important for this great country of ours. They possess great patriotism, as we have heard this evening, great dedication, great concern for the things that are important to all of us as Americans.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that I want to express my appreciation for the oppor-

tunity to share the Hispanic contributions with this great country in this great people's House.

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, while the past weeks have broken our hearts and steeled our spines, it is still important to take the time to celebrate our unique heritage as Hispanics. At the same time, we all appreciate that now, more than ever, Americans are one people. Since the attack, we have all come together. Americans of all sorts died together, we cried together . . . and we will fight together.

Hispanic Heritage Month, and the war in which we are currently engaged, serves to remind us of the extraordinary role Hispanics have played in the history and the defense of our Nation. Today, it is appropriate to begin in the present day and grieve for the Americans who died in hijacked planes, at the Pentagon and in New York City—a great many of whom were Hispanics from around the Americas.

The rescue workers, a number of which are also Hispanic, have labored 24 hours a day since the attack to find victims. We have never lived through a tragedy of similar nature, but already Americans have shown the world we are one nation and one people, now stirred to great anger.

Today we want to honor our forefathers who played a large part in making—and then keeping—the United States free and democratic. For as long as there has been a United States, Hispanics have played major roles in building our country and defending it.

From the American Revolution that freed the United States from England—to the Persian Gulf war and today's operation against terrorism—Hispanics proudly and bravely served the United States. When the colonies on the east coast of what is now the United States rebelled against England, Hispanics played a pivotal role.

As Governor of the Louisiana Territory, General Benardo de Gálvez sent money, gunpowder, rifles, and other supplies to General George Washington to aid in the revolution. He later served gallantly in the War for Independence by capturing both Mobile and Pensacola—at a pivotal point in the war.

Captain Jorge Farragut came to the United States to seek his fortune by fighting the British—first in the Revolution, then in the War of 1812—as part of the U.S. Navy. Hispanics also raised special collections and taxes to aid the fight for independence. After the Revolution was won, Mexican pesos aided in the construction of St. Peter's Church in New York City to celebrate the end of the war.

As in the Revolution, Hispanics served proudly in each war and conflict in which the United States participated. In the course of that service, 38 Hispanics have been awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, our country's highest award for military bravery and service.

In the Civil War, David Glasgow Farragut, son of Jorge Farragut, won fame as a Union hero by blockading Southern ports, destroying Rebel ships anchored in New Orleans, and by capturing Mobile for the Union. His contributions prompted Congress to create the title of rear admiral to reward him as the first man to ever hold that rank. Farragut was commissioned vice admiral in 1864, then admiral in 1866.

Federico Fernández Cavada, a Lieutenant Colonel for the Union Army, fought bravely at Gettysburg. Rafael Chacón also served with

the Union Army, and attained the rank of major. Santos Benavides—originally from Laredo—fought for the Confederacy. His rank of colonel was the highest of any Mexican-American Army officer in the Civil War.

Major Manuel Antonio Chavez forced the Confederate Army to retreat down the Rio Grande, preventing the rebels from carrying out their plans to seize the gold mines of New Mexico and California. Lieutenant Colonel José Francisco Chaves of the Union Army assisted in recapturing Albuquerque and Santa Fe.

One of the most interesting soldiers in the Confederacy was Loretta Janet Velázquez, who fought disguised as a man. Upon discovery and discharge, she continued her service as a Confederate spy.

I wanted to concentrate mostly on those who served in the U.S. military prior to this century, because not near enough has been said about them throughout the course of history. Part of the purpose of having Hispanic Heritage Month is to commemorate those Hispanics who have gone before us—people who are not often included in the history books.

In 1973, Lieutenant Colonel Mercedes Cubria retired from the Army—she was the first Hispanic woman to achieve that rank. Hispanics served bravely for the cause of freedom and democracy in World War I, World War II, Korea, and Vietnam.

More than 400,000 Hispanics served the United States during World War II and about 25,000 Hispanics served in the Persian Gulf war.

In the years to come, when the military service of Hispanics is viewed through the prism of history, there are certainly a number of young Hispanics whose service to this Nation in this new war will distinguish themselves among great U.S. warriors in the 21st century.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Hispanic Heritage Month to celebrate the contributions Latinos have made and continue to make to our richly diverse national culture.

From agriculture to commerce, from the arts to sports, from government to medicine, Latinos are a significant part of everyday life in the United States.

Latinos contribute to the vitality of our Nation's economy through traditional work in the field of agriculture, to jobs in the manufacturing arena, to service in Federal, State, and local governments. Latinos are leaders in our labor unions, and in government, and are among America's most successful entrepreneurs and business leaders.

One clear example of the economic contributions of Latinos to America is illustrated by the Census Bureau's most recent report, which found that Latinos own the largest share of minority-owned businesses in the country—1.2 million to be exact.

As some of our Nation's most ardent patriots, Latinos have served proudly and with distinction in every major U.S. military conflict and in all branches of our armed services. One of the greatest sources of pride among the Latino community is the 39 Medals of Honor awarded to Latinos in recognition of their valor. They are the largest single ethnic group, in proportion to the number of who served, to earn this prestigious award.

Latinos have a long history of leadership in support of the rights of the oppressed: supporting civil rights leaders, to helping influence

policies that seek to ensure fair and equal treatment for all persons in our Nation. They have been leaders in extending the Voting Rights Act to areas where Latinos and others have historically been discouraged from voting as a result of discriminatory practices. During the latter half of the 20th century, Latinos joined other Americans in advocating for the desegregation of our nation's schools; today Latinos are fighting for our Nation's children to receive a quality education.

Over the years, Latinos have served their country in the halls of local State and Federal Government. For example, Florida sent the first Latino to Congress in 1822, by electing Joseph Marion. In my home State of California, Romualdo Pacheco served as the first native-born Governor in 1875. Currently, Latinos hold over 5,000 elected positions nationwide.

In closing, it is important to note the tremendous contributions Latino women have made to our country. Contributions like that of Luisa Capetillo and Lucia Gonzalez Parson who fought with Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and other suffragettes to secure a woman's right to vote; and contributions like that of Dolores Huerta who was instrumental in helping Cesar Chavez organize migrant farm workers in California in the 1960s; Dolores is still a leader in the United Farm Workers of America in California. Let's not forget the contributions of Ellen Ochoa who became the first Latina astronaut in 1990; and Antonia Novello our Nation's first female Latina Surgeon General. Also, let us not forget the countless other Latinas, who with women of all races, are the silent heroines working every day to keep families centered and strong in their roles as, wife, caregiver, provider, mother, and grandmothers.

I am proud of the diversity of the 33rd District of California, and I am proud to represent one of the largest concentrations of Latinos in the entire country. Encompassing downtown Los Angeles and a number of municipalities in southeast Los Angeles County, my district is representative of the wealth of diversity within the Latino community. My constituents' roots stem from all over Latin America and the Caribbean, including Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, and Cuba. Coupled with the other wonderful races and groups I represent, this wonderful kaleidoscope of cultures contributes to making California the most diverse State in the union an integral component of our great country.

During Hispanic Heritage Month, we proudly recognize Latinos for their contributions to this great country; not only for the contributions of today, but also for those accomplished throughout American history. Now and long ago, Latinos have taken their place among the leadership in family, business, politics, education, sports, science, and the arts. As a result, our Latino heritage is a thread interwoven into the fabric of a greater America.

#### STRATEGIES FOR AMERICA'S RECOVERY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHROCK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, Tuesday, September 11, is forever seared into our

minds. We will never forget the images of planes flying into tall buildings and exploding, people choosing to jump off buildings rather than burn to death, buildings collapsing on rescuers, clouds of vaporized concrete, steel, glass, rolling down the streets like volcanic eruptions; the Stars and Stripes framed by the flaming crater that was the pyre of 125 soldiers and civilians at the Pentagon. Our hearts go out to the victims and their families.

Mr. Speaker, we watched those images and they did not at first seem real. The spectacle almost disguised the human toll. At first, the magnitude of the tragedy made it hard for most Americans to grasp. But every day, the newspapers now put faces on the victims and their families. The shock has worn off; and we are left with grief, the deepest grief. We read those obituaries and we find ourselves tearing up. I do not know about my colleagues, but I can only read a few of those obituaries each day before I must stop.

We have learned the stories of the brave passengers on United Flight 93 who bid their loved ones farewell, pledging that they would go down fighting. Their plane crashed, but those Americans saved many lives in Washington, perhaps even our own. We are humbled by their courage and sacrifice, ordinary Americans who in 45 minutes became heroes. We remember the final words, the final recorded cell phone calls of the men and women hopelessly trapped above the fiery inferno of the World Trade Center, messages of love to their families.

In Corinthians the Bible teaches: "So we do not lose heart, even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is renewing, for we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens."

Mr. Speaker, each of us will carry our own memories of 9-11. I personally will never forget the sense of unity as 170 bipartisan Members of Congress, not Republicans or Democrats, but Americans, stood on the front steps of this Capitol in the lengthening evening shadows of that Tuesday to say a prayer for our country and its victims.

□ 2100

Then we sang "America the Beautiful." Our message then and today and tomorrow is that this is one Republic, United We Stand. Terrorists can challenge this Nation's spirit, but they cannot break it. In righteousness we are hunting down, even as I speak, to the end of the Earth if necessary, the assassins of our brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, and children.

We will do what is necessary to win this war that has been declared on us. The victims deserve justice and our people deserve security. We are meting out justice to those terrorists, and we do distinguish between terrorists and those who harbor them and the rest of the Muslim world.