

out and borrow money. And you know what it is backed by? It is backed by people's faith and confidence in our economy and our willingness to pay those debts by taxing the American people someday. And if we allow that debt to keep growing and growing and growing, that interest to keep growing and growing and growing, there is going to come a point when the world is going to look at our economy and says, you all look an awful like an Argentina economy, and I do not believe we want to loan you any more money to finance that \$5 trillion national debt. And I believe if we do, we are going to have to get a little more interest rates because we look at the economy much like those investors did when they were borrowing money a few years ago on those junk bonds, and junks bonds of course require very high interest rates for anybody that wants to buy.

So if we undermine the economy of this country, in the long term it would destroy our economic security, our national security and our prosperity. That is what this debate tonight is all about.

I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) for his leadership. I commend the Blue Dogs for their willingness to come to the floor tonight and talk about this critical national issue.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman tonight for his leadership on this issue. The gentleman also very successfully lead the House just a couple weeks ago successfully to gather the signatures required to discharge campaign finance reform which successfully passed the House. We thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. TURNER) very much for his contributions both then and now.

Madam Speaker, I would like to introduce a fellow Californian, the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON), who I had the privilege of serving with in the California State Senate. The gentleman has worked hard for the people of California and our Nation and is recognized for his bipartisan approach for the important issues facing our Congress, especially the debt limit. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) for his leadership tonight in this effort to bring awareness to what I believe is a very, very important issue for all of the American people.

Madam Speaker, we have come to a very critical point in our congressional work. We can create a long-term physical plan that will benefit this and future generations or we can send our government down the road of excessive borrowing and send the bill to the next generation of Americans. I believe this would be the wrong approach.

As we have heard many times tonight, just a year ago the administration predicted Congress would be able to operate under the Federal debt limit

for the next 7 years. Now we are being asked for a \$750 billion increase in the Federal debt limit. The Treasury Department predicts this increase will cover government needs until 2005. So we went from being able to stay under the Federal debt limit in 9 years to being forced to raise the limit by \$750 billion just so government can continue to operate for another 3 years.

We are in danger of opening the flood gates of fiscal irresponsibility by increasing the Federal debt limit without having a plan in place to balance the budget and to pay our bills. Funding our national priorities such as homeland security and our efforts against terrorism must be done. However, to increase the Federal debt limit without having any mechanism of fiscal restraint will likely lead us down the path of deficits resulting from additional spending or additional tax cuts.

In the span of 1 year, the Office of Management and Budget has reduced its 10-year budget surplus projections by \$5 trillion. When investors around the world look to Washington to see the creation of huge budget deficits, they will inevitably push interest rates higher. When interest rates go up, the American consumer suffers. A homeowner in our country who holds \$100,000 mortgage debt would save a total of \$50,000 over the life of a 30-year mortgage if the mortgage rate was just 2 percentage points lower. American consumers hold about \$6.5 trillion in mortgage debt, so each percentage point of increase in their mortgage rate means an extra \$250 billion in mortgage costs to Americans.

In addition, local schools and local hospitals will be forced to pay higher interest costs as they issue bonds to raise the necessary funds they need to continue to educate our kids and care for sick Americans and injured Americans.

Throughout the 1990's, the Federal Government maintained fiscal discipline; and the pay off to the American consumer was remarkable. Let us not throw these gains away. Instead, let us do what may be tough but obviously what is right. Let us put in place a mechanism for fiscal responsibility and fiscal constraint. Let us not allow this budget or this credit limit to increase and put future American generations in fiscal jeopardy.

Madam Speaker, we should fund our war on terrorism and our efforts on homeland security, and we must save Social Security and Medicare from insolvency by adopting a more fiscally responsible approach to budget priorities. Now is the time to make the tough choices to ensure future generations are not saddled with trillions of dollars of debt and stuck with a bankrupt retirement program. I thank the Blue Dogs for their effort in this regard.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMPSON) for his leadership.

Madam Speaker, in closing I want to thank the Blue Dog Democrats who

have joined me here tonight in this discussion of raising the national debt limit and its implications for our Federal fiscal policy. I look forward to the opportunity to debate this issue in the days ahead as we continue to work to balance the budget and pay down our debt and protect the Social Security Trust Fund for the future.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1542, INTERNET FREEDOM AND BROADBAND DEPLOYMENT ACT OF 2001

Mr. LINDER (during Special Order of Mr. SCHIFF), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 107-361) on the resolution (H. Res. 350) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1542) to deregulate the Internet and high speed data services, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

IMMIGRATION INTO THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CAPITO). 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, I come before the body tonight to talk about an issue that has often times been in the forefront in my thinking and a concern about the direction of the Nation; and that, of course, is immigration and the effect of massive immigration on our country.

Madam Speaker, I and my wife and several other members of the Congress of the House of Representatives just returned from a trip to Turkey, and it was a very interesting, very fascinating trip. And as we got back into the United States and were coming through customs, the young lady who was the customs official that was stamping our passport and checking to see what we have and that sort of thing at JFK looked up at me and said, I think I have seen you some place before, maybe on C-SPAN. And I said, Well, perhaps because I often am doing exactly what I am doing here tonight. I have spoken often on the issue of immigration. And she just had immediately got this sort of dejected look on her face and said, What a mess. What a mess. And she said it in a way that says it all.

Here is an official charged with the responsibility of implementing part of our immigration laws; and she, as well as so many other of her colleagues working in that area, recognize that it is in fact a mess.

Now, I have often come before this body and stood at this particular microphone and talked about the implications, well, more importantly the incredible situation we face with an organization, the INS, that is dysfunctional, to say the least. We have a situation where we have literally millions

of people coming across our borders every single year that cannot be accounted for, millions of people who actually end up staying here beyond the time that they were allowed to come in under visas. And many people, of course, coming across the border every single year without any sort of visa or permission from this government to do.

There are many implications as a result of having this kind of situation, a country that is completely unable to defend its own borders. That is the situation that we face tonight. And I have talked on many occasions about the implications of that situation, the economic implications in this country, the incredible costs that we incur.

In a recent article in the Denver Post, a columnist by the name of Al Knight identified the costs to just the city and county of Denver for the purpose of providing services for immigrants, both legal and illegal, who come into the city in order to have their children, have a baby. And then Medicaid picks up the cost of it for the most part, in fact, 100 percent of it. And how much then it ends up costing every citizen just for that one little chunk of the action. And it goes on, of course, schools, roads, housing, welfare, enormous economic costs, infrastructural costs for a Nation that cannot defend its own borders.

There are political ramifications. There are cultural ramifications. And there are, of course, even security, national security issues that are all too evident for us here tonight as a result of the September 11 events. And we have talked about these things, and I try to bring them to the attention of my colleagues because, of course, I believe that they are worthy of that attention, those issues.

Tonight I am going to focus just on a little bit of a different side of this because as I said I just came back from a country that is a fascinating place, and it is in a part of the world that is experiencing enormous difficulties. Of course, that has probably been the case for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. And I have been, therefore, thinking about this issue that Huntington calls the "clash of civilizations" because we were there where we saw civilizations clashing. And Mr. Huntington in his book, "Clash of Civilizations," points out that there are today no real ideologies clashing. There are really not nations fighting nations so much as there are civilizations clashing with each other. And this does have relevance to the issue of immigration and certain other aspects of our national policy.

□ 2130

So I am going to focus on that for just some time tonight because I do think again that is a side of this immigration issue that has not really been discussed to the extent that it is warranted.

Madam Speaker, I wonder whether or not we have given enough thought to

some of the philosophical questions that develop as a result of massive immigration into this country and combining massive immigration with another phenomenon in America that I will call radical multiculturalism.

Another great book, while I am speaking of that, is a book called the *Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society*, by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. He speaks to this problem, and he says what happens when people of different ethnic origins, speaking different languages and professing different religions, settle on the same geographical locality, live under the same political sovereignty, unless a common purpose binds them together, tribal antagonisms will drive them apart.

In the century darkly ahead, civilization faces a critical question, he says. What is it that holds a nation together? And that is what I am going to address here for just a little bit this evening.

He goes on to say, no one in the 19th century thought more carefully about representative government than John Stewart Mill. The two elements that defined a nation, as Mill saw it, were the desire on the part of the inhabitants to be governed together and the common sympathy instilled by shared history, values and language.

Free institutions, he wrote, are next to impossible in a country made up of different nationalities. Among the people without fellow feeling, especially if they read and speak different languages, united public opinion, necessary for the working of representative government, cannot exist.

It is in general a necessary condition of free institutions that the boundaries of government should coincide in the main with those of nationalities.

Of course, that is happening less and less in this world. It is happening less and less in the United States.

One can say and be accurate I think to suggest that America has for a long time shown itself to be something in opposition to this definition that Mr. Mill has given us of a cohesive country. After all, we are a Nation that was born out of many ethnic origins, people from a variety of different countries, of course, coming here to create what we now call the United States of America; and many of them spoke different languages and had different values and different religions and that sort of thing, but they came together in this country and created a new experiment, new experiment in the way we govern ourselves. We call it a republic.

So how could it be then that the possibility or the problem of massive immigration could possibly in the United States, which as I say has a history of immigration, of course, people coming from all over the world and having formed a very prosperous and workable country, how could it be that we then look at the possibility that that might not be the future for the United States?

Let me suggest, Madam Speaker, that there are some major and significant differences between massive immigration today in the United States and the immigration that brought this country into an existence, its existence.

For the most part, it is my belief, it is my understanding of history, of our history especially, that it indeed is a country to which many people came from different places but came with a common purpose for the most part. They came here with the idea that they were in fact joining something new, participating in a new experiment in government, seeking a new life and seeking, most importantly, to break the ties to the old, and this is a very important distinction that I think we have to address. And when they came, the way that the culture existed and, up until just recently anyway, all the forces internally in the United States, the cultural and political forces, were driving people into an amalgamation, if you will, a homogeneity, the melting pot. That is where it comes from, where people came from a lot of places but became one. *E pluribus unum*.

That amazing sort of phenomenon created this incredibly wonderful country, and it held us together through a revolution and civil war, World War I, World War II, Depression, all of the other things that provided a threat to the national existence. It held us together.

Something is happening that I think we have to pay attention to. Today and for the last actually I think probably almost 40 years, we have seen a difference in the kind of immigration and the kind of people who are coming to the United States, the kind of connections they have to the countries from which they came and their desire to maintain them, their desire to maintain another language, different customs, different habits and even, even a desire to maintain some sort of political affinity to the country from which they came.

This I suggest, Madam Speaker, is a new thing with which we must deal, a new phenomenon, and we could deal with it still in this country, this massive country if we were talking about immigration at the numbers that were even high at the turn of the century, couple hundred thousand people a year at the turn of the late 1800s, early 1900s. That was it. That was the highest we ever got 220 some thousand people coming to the United States. We could handle that. But we are, of course, far above that today.

When we combine the massive numbers of people coming into the United States with this different philosophical background and difference in terms of what they are looking for, what they want to be when they get here and add to the mix this multiculturalism, this concept, this idea taught in the schools, the idea promulgated by the media, the idea promulgated certainly by what some people have termed the

elite in our society, this idea being that all cultures are the same, that no nation state is really any different than any other nation state, that there is nothing unique about the United States, that we should not look to our past because they are nothing really, just a bunch of dead white males who made up our history, we should eschew that, we should move away from that, we should condemn that, we should disconnect ourselves from that history and embrace this multicultural concept.

I would suggest that these two phenomena, these two things, this massive immigration with people coming with a different purpose in mind and combined with this multiculturalism, I would say radical multiculturalism, this is concocting a deadly mixture for the United States.

This manifests itself in a variety of ways, and there are some very interesting statistics which point this out, what is happening to us. We have allowed for many, many years, we have allowed people to live in the United States while claiming citizenship in another country. Relatively few people have ever done that in our Nation's history frankly, but recently we have noticed a significant increase.

There are now estimates of six, seven or eight million people in the United States who are claiming dual citizenship, and that is really probably a very conservative estimate. Because between 1961 and 1997, 22 million legal immigrants, that is just legal, came to this country. Seventy-five percent of them came from countries that allowed dual citizenship; and many millions, as I say, now claim that.

Interestingly, a couple of years ago Mexico changed its laws and allowed its citizens immigrating from Mexico to retain their citizenship. They have even gone farther than that, and they are now encouraging Mexicans in the United States to vote in both the United States and in elections in Mexico.

We were recently in Mexico. I will never forget sitting at a luncheon and sitting next to a gentleman by the name of Eddie Levy. Eddie Levy, his name tag in front of us there. When we went around, introduced ourselves, Mr. Levy introduced himself as a member of the Mexican Congress. And indeed he was. He was a citizen of Los Angeles, but he is also a member of the Mexican Congress.

There are cities in southern Texas where the mayor of the city is a Mexican national. There is a city that has actually said that none of its documents will be written in English anymore, will all be in Spanish. It has actually said that nobody employed by the city can enforce any immigration laws, any American immigration laws. This is a city inside the United States.

The President of Mexico recently, he has something he calls the Vision 20/20 plan for homogenous Americas. He is unabashedly staking Mexico's future

and fortunes on greener pastures in the north. This is from a Gwinnett News Service article, February 21. He delights in describing a borderless region, symbiotic in its relations, similar in principle to the European Economic Union where jobs and people and the Euro cross most borders as easily as the wind.

This is the President of Mexico. When we think of 2025, year 2025, there is not going to be a border, Mr. Fox has said. Soon there will be free movement of people, just like the free movement of goods.

We were in Mexico, as I say, not too long ago. We met with a representative of the Mexican government who is a newly appointed cabinet minister there for a newly created cabinet in the Mexican government. His name is Juan Hernandez, and Mr. Hernandez's title translates something like minister in charge of Mexicans living outside of Mexico.

It is a very interesting title, of course, and he was also unabashed in what he described as the future he saw. It is one in which essentially millions of Mexican citizens will be coming to the United States, legally and illegally. He sees really no difference. Because, as he told me, really there are not two countries here, he said. We are just talking a region. This is a member of the Mexican government.

So there is a blending, that is for sure, there is a blending of culture. There is a blending, and the border is in many respects almost eliminated. It is gone, for all intents and purposes.

There can be a legitimate debate, as I have said often, as to whether or not we should abolish the border between the United States and Mexico, between the United States and Canada and form this sort of European Union model that Mr. Fox wants and that many Members of this Congress want, maybe even members of our administration want. We can debate this point. A bill could arise for that purpose. We could have a national debate as to whether or not we want to eliminate the borders.

□ 2145

I would vote "no." I believe that there is a purpose served by them, borders, that is; and they go beyond just the need for our own immediate security. They go into this bigger issue that I am talking about in terms of what makes a nation; what, in fact, holds a nation together. But, nonetheless, it is a legitimate topic. We can debate it, if that is where we are going.

The problem I have, Madam Speaker, is that that is where we are going; but it is without the debate. We will not hear on the floor of this House, we will not hear in any committee of this Congress a discussion as to the efficacy of doing something like eliminating our borders. We will talk about the need to revamp the INS and all that, and I am all for it; but I really do think that the whole battle over immigration is really a battle as to whether or not we should have borders.

And the people who are the ultimate sort of multiculturalists, the people who do not see a reason to attach any significance to what we describe as the United States of America, its uniqueness and the validity of our civilization, of Western Civilization, essentially, in this clash of civilizations that we now face in the world, the people who push that concept will push for the elimination of our borders. And they are aided in that if they cannot get it via a bill through this Congress, signed by the President, then they will get it as a result of changing who we are and what we are in the United States.

As I say, it is not just massive immigration that is the problem. It is massive immigration connected with this multiculturalism that infects our system, our culture. It is the kind of thing that says that schoolchildren cannot say the Pledge any more; it is the kind of thing that will not allow flags to be flown in our schools and in public institutions. Even after the outpouring of patriotic fervor after September 11, there were places throughout the United States that disallowed the flying of the flag because they said it may in fact anger people; it may be an affront to somebody; that it may make them uncomfortable. The flying of the flag may make them uncomfortable.

No, Madam Speaker, the elimination of any sort of recognition of uniqueness of America from our public schools under this cloak of multiculturalism, I guess I will call it, has resulted in a situation where we have at least a generation, maybe two, who are incredibly illiterate when it comes to American history and the American ideal.

I am a teacher by background. I taught for 8 years in Jefferson County, Colorado. I taught civics, as a matter of fact. And I can attest to something that I think is pretty much common sense, but it is a fact that children are not born with an appreciation, an innate appreciation of the Declaration of Independence or the Bill of Rights, who we are as a Nation. They do not understand that innately. They have to be taught. It has to be something that is appreciated in their homes and reinforced in the school, the same way that most children do not come to school with an appreciation of great art or great literature or great music. We have to teach them that. They do not come to it naturally.

The same thing happens with teaching them about America and about the uniqueness of this country and about what it means to be an American, how it separates us from the rest of the world. But even saying that today in a public school could get someone in trouble. Today, if a teacher in a public school in this land actually said that there is something unique about America, it separates us from the rest of the world and it is better, they would be in trouble. There are politicians that may be in trouble for saying it. There are certainly people in the media who would rail against such a concept. I see aspects of this all the time.

I think there are major implications to issues like drawing lines, congressional lines, just for certain ethnic groups, and even caucuses here in the Congress of the United States, where Black, Hispanic and others are based on ethnicity. I always wonder about how that helps us come together as a Nation; how does this help us actually define ourselves as a Nation, the common set of ideals, of values, of languages?

Now, I am Italian. I am 100 percent Italian. I am a recent arrival, as a matter of fact, by heritage. My grandparents came to the United States in the late 1800s and early 1900s, along with the wave of immigration all over the world. As I say, both sides came from Italy, so I am relatively new, if you want to think of it that way. I cannot trace my heritage back to the Mayflower. So I am a relatively new American, if you want to think of it that way. Yet I must say, Madam Speaker, that in growing up, all the textbooks I was given in school, all the things that I was told in my home, all of the influences of my life, and all of the references to my history, our history, if you want to say it that way, was all American history.

I grew up thinking of Jefferson and Madison and Adams, Patrick Henry, Benjamin Franklin. These were the heroes of my history. That is what I was taught, both at home and in school. There was never any idea that we were somehow still tied politically or linguistically to Italy. As a matter of fact, and perhaps even unfortunately, Italian was not allowed to be spoken in my grandparents' home. It was an indication of their desire to separate themselves from the nation of their birth and to come here and start anew.

That, as I say, is what I think has changed. I believe our schools do not teach that. I believe that we are witnessing this significant shift in culture, and I think it is something worthy of us to discuss. Massive immigration, combined with radical multiculturalism spells disaster, as far as I am concerned, Madam Speaker. As I say, I have often come to the floor to talk about the other implications of immigration, but tonight I just wanted to address this topic for a short period of time because I do think it is worthy of note.

Perhaps it is because I just came back from overseas where I could see the effects of this clash of civilizations; that everywhere we look around the world, as a matter of fact, we can see tribalism breaking up nation states, and that is the new world in which we live. It is happening all over. Countries are facing this kind of problem, and I worry about our own future. And I think that in order for us to sustain ourselves, in order for the United States to sustain itself and be the leader of Western Civilization, that we have to have a cohesion, we have to have a homogenous society.

Now, I am not suggesting for a moment that anybody has to ignore their

background. Certainly I do not. Certainly I appreciate my own, and I appreciate anybody else's desire to revel in their own cultural background and heritage. That is not the issue at all. It is the issue of whether or not we disconnect, though, politically, from what we were to who we are today. And I worry that that is not happening.

There are certainly indications that something very, very different is occurring in America today as a result of massive immigration into the United States. Uncontrolled immigration. We can, in fact, still have immigration. We do not have to slam any doors shut. We simply have to reduce the number; and we have to, on the other side of the coin, begin to once again focus on what it means to be an American in our public schools, in our institutions, in our leaders.

I think the President of the United States and all people entrusted with the responsibility of leadership in America should focus on that and talk about it. It is imperative now, I think, as we enter into this new world, this clash of civilizations that I mentioned. It is imperative that we identify for the world at large and for our own citizens exactly who we are and why there is the struggle against the evil that we have identified as the terrorists in the world. It is in a way a clash of civilizations, certainly; and it is important for Americans to understand who we are, where we came from, and where we are going.

We need a cohesive society. We need a language in which we can all communicate. Even that, of course, as you know, is being challenged continually. Bilingual education, as an example, is where children are placed in classes and taught in a language other than English for the purpose, they say, of increasing their educational attainment levels. But even when it is shown over and over again that there is no actual increase in educational attainment levels, people still push bilingual education. So you have to ask yourself why. What is the purpose? If it is not to actually help a child accomplish something, accomplish a better education, obtain a better education, then why are we doing it? It is, I suggest, Madam Speaker, as a result of this radical multiculturalism; the idea that we do not want people to disconnect from that other culture, wherever they came from and what they were, and connect to a new one. We want to foster this Balkanizing sort of phenomenon that we are experiencing in the United States. All very dangerous stuff.

POVERTY IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CAPITO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I have listened to much of the discussion this evening, and I have de-

cided that I am going to talk about something that I do not think we talk about nearly enough, and I am sure that we do not do nearly enough about it, and that is the whole issue of poverty and what it does to millions of people in our Nation and what it does to millions of people throughout the world.

Madam Speaker, the stubborn persistence of poverty in America is one of the most inexplicable features of our national life. America, that is our country, in the 21st century is the wealthiest Nation in the history of the world. We have the resources to provide for all of our citizens, and certainly we have the resources to end hunger, homelessness, and to offer quality health care and education to all of our people. Yet, in our great national paradox, we have not chosen to do so.

The gap between the few ultra-wealthy and the overwhelming majority of working people, that gap, which was once quite small, has grown and is now wider than at any time since the Great Depression.

□ 2200

It has, in the judgment of many, become so large that it undermines our sense of a Nation of equals. Poverty and income inequality present a real challenge to our notion of America as a Nation that promotes equality and that is seriously moving in that direction.

In 1997, the top 1 percent of the U.S. population, that is, 2.6 million people, had as much after-tax income as the 100 million Americans with the lowest income.

At the same time, household debt reached historic highs. The total value of all forms of outstanding household debt was greater than the total disposable income of all households.

The wealthiest 1 percent reduced their share of the debt by 27 percent, while the middle 20 percent of households increased their share of the debt by 38.8 percent.

There was no progress in reducing poverty between 1995 and 1999 despite an increasing economy. More than 1.4 million Americans are classified as food insecure, including the crudest feature of poverty, the concentration of children among the poor.

Madam Speaker, 45 percent of children in poor families are considered food insecure.

Reductions in poverty as a result of economic growth were entirely offset by increased poverty due to cuts in government safety net programs. The poor in the United States are less likely than the poor in other countries to leave poverty. On average, 28.6 percent of the United States poor are able to escape their economic situation, while in Sweden the rate is 36 percent. In Germany, the rate is 37 percent; in Canada, the rate is 42 percent; and in the Netherlands the rate is 44 percent.

Counting the poor has become a cynical art. Measures of poverty have