

We cannot deny that immigrant labor is vital to our economy. As leaders of this Nation, we also have a moral obligation to those within our borders. Undocumented immigrants have suffered sufficient hardship to arrive here and are forced to lead secret lives to put food on the tables. This cannot continue. As Cardinal Archbishop Mahoney eloquently states in his piece, providing humanitarian assistance to those most in need, such as undocumented immigrants should not be a crime, as is stipulated in H.R. 4437. This bill so vaguely proposes punishing those who offer aid to undocumented immigrants, that it would penalize acts of mercy such as offering a meal or administering first aid. I admire Cardinal Archbishop Mahoney's stand for instructing priests not to follow the proposed law. I can only hope similar conviction will be found in Members of Congress as they oppose such legislation.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in agreeing that the only way to right the wrong endured by undocumented immigrants is to take them out of the shadows and offer them a way to achieve citizenship. As Melloan states, this is the "only practical solution."

[From the Wall Street Journal, Mar. 21, 2006]

EXAM WEEK FOR THE GOP CONGRESS

(By George Melloan)

Immigration reform is on the Senate agenda this week. The issue has been festering for years and probably will still be when Congress takes its Easter break, once again demonstrating the weakness of Republican congressional leadership.

It hardly needs saying the U.S. immigration policy is a mess. An estimated 11 million undocumented immigrants are among the 300 million souls who inhabit the Nation. Most fill jobs U.S. citizens disdain. It would be hard to run U.S. hotels and restaurants without the maids and busboys who have made their way from places like Quito and San Salvador.

Yet their presence annoys what Weekly Standard editor Fred Barnes aptly calls "paleocons," conservatives of the Pat Buchanan stripe who go hysterical over these brown-skinned, Spanish-speaking toilers. Vigilantism has broken out on the Mexican border, with macho guys packing six-guns searching for wetbacks. More seriously, the hysteria has infected Congress, resulting in House passage in December of a bill that would, along with other drastic measures, authorize the construction of a 700-mile Berlin Wall on the Mexican border.

One guy who really loves that wall is a Yankee-baiting Mexican leftist named Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador. The highly visible testimony to gringo abhorrence of Mexicans is feeding his campaign for the July 2 Mexican presidential election. If he makes it, the U.S. will have only a few friends left in Latin American capitals. The aging, tottering Fidel Castro will have finally achieved his life's ambition of turning the Spanish-speaking world against America.

Illegal immigrants are indeed a problem, although also the principal victims of their illegal status. Because they don't have documents they can be easily exploited in ways offensive to the American sense of justice and fair play. The industry that has developed for sneaking them into the country is used for other purposes, such as smuggling drugs. A few, partly because of attachments to the smugglers, turn to crime in places like Los Angeles and Albuquerque.

The inability of the U.S. to devise a sensible set of immigration policies has broader repercussions beyond Latin America.

Microsoft's Bill Gates complains that the U.S. is shutting out foreigners with needed skills. Colleges and universities say that Immigration and Naturalization Service bureaucracy complicates the admission of students, limiting the ability of the U.S. to earn foreign currency and international goodwill by offering the world's youth first-class educational opportunities. Employers protest at criminal penalties if they fail to detect document forgeries and thus don't fulfill their "duties" as surrogate law enforcers.

If Congress had been living up to its responsibilities, these problems would have been addressed long ago. The first requirement is for members to accept the fact that unfilled jobs in a booming economy are going to attract individuals seeking better lives. That's a normal and powerful drive in homo sapiens. Spending taxpayer billions on a hideous wall and more cops might reduce the flow, but it won't stop it or deal with the issue of what to do about those already in the country.

Lawmakers of course have a natural predilection toward exercising police power. Large construction projects appeal as well, especially in a Congress that seems mainly focused on finding ways to pass out federal dollars to key constituencies. But it should be evident by now that those kinds of approaches are limited in coping with honest human instincts.

The equation is simple: The U.S. needs labor; immigrants supply labor. So the solution is to find ways to bring the two together in some legal, orderly way. President Bush understands this, which is why he has proposed the restoration of a guest-worker program. But for some reason—perhaps because the president's staff is not sufficiently skillful or vigorous enough in pressing his case—the Republican leaders in Congress seem deaf to the wishes of their own president.

The second part of the equation, what to do about existing illegals, is a bit more difficult, politically at least. The first bit of advice worth taking: Stop treating it as a police problem. Nearly all of the illegals sneaked into the U.S. for nothing more heinous than to offer their honest labor. They violated U.S. immigration laws but they aren't criminals in the sense of posing a threat to persons and property. If approached seriously and with sufficient goodwill, it should not be beyond the mind of man to find ways to make them legal.

In other words, they need to be given amnesty. The paleocons immediately object that doing so would reward them for breaking the law. How about changing the phrasing a little bit? Let's say they are to get amnesty in recognition of the fact that they already have suffered sufficient hardship in getting into the U.S. and living secret lives. Various other schemes that have been mentioned, such as sending them home to wait in a queue, have one fatal defect: They won't convince illegals that it is safe to come out of hiding.

Offering to give illegals green cards and wipe the slate clean is the only practical solution. If they come forward, they can stay on their jobs and travel back and forth to their homes legally. Some who have been trapped in the U.S. by their inability to travel freely will choose to go home permanently. There will be less incentive to sneak in family members, since it will be possible to visit relatives or send remittances. Restoring something like the old bracero program for temporary farm workers would further regularize the flow of labor.

Let's admit that Beltway politics has gone crazy. Aside from the paleocons, there are the labor unions and their "liberal" friends. Most unions long ago gave up representing working people in favor of representing

themselves, which is no doubt why they are losing membership. It is hard to think of a class of workers more in need of union support than poor Latinos with no legal rights. But politics are what Congress is paid to manage. It's too bad this Congress is making such a hash of it.

THE CRIMES OF BUREAUCRATIC ETHNIC CLEANSING

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, on April 1, 2006 there will be a march with world significance in the battered city of New Orleans. Thousands of marchers from all over the Nation will assemble to force a laser beam of conscience to focus on the horror of ethnic cleansing now underway in that region. While it is true that Hurricane Katrina was an act of God and the collapse of the levees was an accident resulting from years of Federal underfunding, incompetence and local corruption, some have charged, and I agree, that the present blunders and stagnation in the recovery and rebuilding operation is the result of an "ethnic cleansing mindset." The plot you will find nowhere on paper or in any set of email messages; however, there is an understanding within a powerful "government-real estate complex" that African Americans who have been displaced by the ravages of Katrina should not be encouraged to return. This unwritten plot begins in the White House where chief political strategists have pinpointed the obvious fact that without the Black voters of New Orleans, Louisiana will become a permanent Republican "red" state.

The April 1st march is designed to confront this bold ethnic cleansing by planned neglect and abandonment. The march will also dramatically highlight the overarching racist mindset that nurtures the ethnic cleansing process. On several different occasions, during the early flooding in New Orleans armed law enforcement officers blocked the paths of fleeing Black evacuees and forced them back toward the murderous flood waters.

Waving and firing their shotguns uniformed officers of the law blocked evacuees attempting to escape the floods by crossing the Crescent City Connection Bridge. High-level elected officials later condoned this behavior by their police. These inhumane, unspeakable actions combined with the present planned ineptitude related to the rebuilding of the 9th ward and the refusal of support for evacuees who wish to return, have generated numerous angry voices, especially among the youth, in New Orleans and across the Nation. In the language of RAP poems, I have tried to translate and convey the message of three of these angry voices:

ANGRY VOICE ONE: NAZIS ON THE BRIDGES

Armed Nazis
On steel bridges
Blocked paths to
The highest driest ridges.
Each uniformed gangster
Had an official gun
Black fathers forced
To watch their
Flood soaked children run.
They drew a hard line
Between Black and White blood—

They drove the mothers
Back into the flood.
Nazi viruses
Never die
They don't even fade away,
When times are dry
They hide in bunkers
Hunkered down for a stormy day.
On the bridges
Satan in command
Devils rules the land
On the bridges
Judgment day
Blacks get back
Stay out of the way
Die out of sight
The waters will cover you
In the endless wet night.
Run to requisition
The tightest Nuremberg nopeses
These Katrina crimes
Are war criminal abuses.

ANGRY VOICE TWO: THEY ARE COMING FOR
OUR HOMES

Wake up Black people
They're coming for our homes!
Monster Katrina
Has many national clones.
Wake up Black people
With confusion and neglect
They now wash us away
They hijack our property
For a tourist development day,
Donald Trump and Disney Ducks
Will have their powerful say;
People chocolate people
Your're not welcomed to stay
Our schools churches graveyards
Have all been hauled away.
Wake up Black people
They're coming for our homes!
Monster Katrina
Has many national clones.
Urban blight declassified
Diversity agenda mystified
Inner cities reoccupied
Suburban flight
Has suddenly died
City planners cried
Eminent domain
Brings savage pain
Ethnic cleansing
Income rinsing
Brokers bulldoze us out
Urban surfs
Have no financial clout
Wake up Black people!
Weak tribes will rot
Extinct among the stones
Monster Katrina
Has many national clones.
Wake up Black people!
They're coming for our homes.

ANGRY VOICE THREE: BLACKS NEED MORE
GUNS

Now hear this!
Soldiers in Iraq
Come home now
To kill racist snakes
Crawling on our backs
More guns are needed by Blacks.
To fight our way
Across blocked bridges
Blacks need more guns!
Never again
Will they drive us
Weeping back into the flood,
Next time before we drown
We'll spill lots of blood.
Blacks need more guns!
They halted all Blacks
Who came their way
They hoarded the flood
For their next rainy day.
To get gestapos off our back
Black soldiers in Iraq
Come home now

Blacks need more guns!
Soldiers come home
Storm the bridges
Nazis fire down
From high dry ridges.
No well regulated
Militias from the slums
Are here to march against
Official heartless bums.
Desperate Blacks are mandated
Now to bear arms
Shed the luxury
Of non-violent charms.
The NRA
Can save our day
The second amendment
Is the great American way.
Blacks need more guns!
It's us oh Lord
Black victims
Standing in the need of prayer.
If not the NRA Lord
Tell us who else is there?
The NRA
Is our salvation
Whom shall we fear?
When the next flood rises
On television
You will not be entertained
by even one tiny tear.
The second amendment
Is our road to rescue
Whom shall we fear?
Blacks need more guns!

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JEFF FORTENBERRY

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Chairman, on Thursday, March 16, 2006, I was inadvertently detained and thus missed rollcall vote No. 46. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 185th anniversary of Greek independence and to pay tribute to the contributions of Greek Americans to the American melting pot.

In 1821, an underground rebellion began by Greeks who had been living for generations under occupied rule by the Ottoman Turks for over 400 years. The War for Independence ended roughly 7 years later, when Greece achieved its liberation with the Treaty of Andrianople. Only then, were Greek citizens able to fully celebrate their culture, their religion, and their democratic heritage.

And, it was that rich philosophical history on which our Founding Fathers drew inspiration. When drafting our Constitution over 200 years ago, many ideas came from the world's first democracy in Ancient Greece.

Greece has long been one of the United States' closest allies. Fighting alongside America in every war of the 20th Century, Greece continues to offer strong support with the current War on Terrorism.

With over 3 million Greek Americans living in the U.S. today, Greek culture still plays an

important role in communities all across the Nation. Public service organizations, like AHEPA's Chapter 453 in Wyckoff, New Jersey, are committed to being positive participants in our society. And, it has been an honor to work with them over the past several months.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Americans to recognize Greek Independence Day and the valuable contributions that so many Greeks and Greek Americans have made to our country.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS
OF REP. SHERWOOD L. BOEHLERT

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 28, 2006

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the contributions of my friend and colleague, Congressman SHERWOOD (SHERRY) BOEHLERT. After 24 years in Congress, Congressman BOEHLERT who has served this House with dignity and a great deal of integrity has decided that "it's time."

First elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1982, Congressman BOEHLERT represents the 24th District of New York, and he does so with steadfast leadership, commitment, and simply put, a love for the job.

As he rose in seniority and became chairman of the House Science Committee in 2001, BOEHLERT worked to further economic development for his district and the State of New York, as well as to push for an environmental agenda that would benefit not only his constituents, but the nation as a whole.

While we are losing one of the most dynamic and passionate Members of this great body, the good people of central New York, are losing a man who fought and worked tirelessly on their behalf. From his efforts to secure money for transportation projects to supporting the agenda of the National Science Foundation, SHERRY BOEHLERT was going to do what it took and what was best for those who elected him into office.

It has been a privilege to serve with my friend in the House and to work side by side with him on matters concerning the New York State Congressional Delegation.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, an article by E.J. Dionne, Jr. which speaks to the retirement of our much-respected and admired Member, SHERRY BOEHLERT.

[From the Washington Post, Mar. 21, 2006]

THE GOP'S SHRINKING MIDDLE

(By E. J. Dionne Jr.)

Members of Congress retire all the time, but some retirements are leading indicators of the direction of our politics. Rep. Sherwood Boehlert's announcement last week to call it quits matters, and in a depressing way.

The affable 69-year-old New York Republican is one of the last of a breed: a liberal Republican, though he calls himself a "moderate" and has the record to prove it. Boehlert's departure does not leave the House bereft of liberal Republicans—Rep. Jim Leach of Iowa is more liberal than Boehlert. But Leach, alas, is an outlier. The spotted owl is in good shape compared with liberal Republicans.