

that steady force that was always at our side as we worked for 17 years to move that piece of legislation from dropping it here in the hopper all the way to dedication just a few years ago here on the Nation's Mall.

His staff, Matt Fleming, Gloria Royce, so many people who served on that committee, knew that they had worked with a very great man, a man who always carried himself with great humility and great humor.

He was one of the founders of the Prayer Breakfast, the Bipartisan Prayer Breakfast here that meets every Thursday morning, and he offered the "sick and wounded report." He took an interest in every Member here, and he would know about their families and he would report to us on what was happening, and he built such a bond between people on both sides of the aisle.

I look at a certain Member whose voting record is different than mine, and I will say, how did I meet that person? My gosh, I met that person at the Prayer Breakfast with Sonny Montgomery.

He would go to the national meetings of the VFW or when the young winners would be selected from the Voice of Democracy awards at the VFW or through the American Legion and would receive standing ovations by thousands and thousands and thousands of people.

He was a two star general himself, having served in World War II, in Korea and then, of course, in the Guard, and he became a champion of the Guard and Reserve at a time when so many Americans were not really paying attention. He improved the facilities, he improved their opportunities.

So today, Mr. Speaker, in ending my remarks, I just want to say it was truly a deep, deep privilege to serve with Congressman and General Sonny G.V. Montgomery of Meridian, Mississippi. It is obvious the people of his district love him and appreciate him, and so does America. God bless him and God bless America.

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

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

THE BALTIC COUNTRIES' ENTRANCE INTO THE U.S. VISA WAIVER PROGRAM

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Illinois is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to speak in opposition to the per-

ceived exclusions of the countries of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania from an amendment offered by the Senate in the immigration bill yesterday.

While I approve of this amendment to allow for a 2-year trial expansion of the Visa Waiver Program, I disagree with the requirements that are placed upon countries that would want to participate. This program enables nationals of certain countries to travel to the United States for tourism or business for stays of 90 days or less without obtaining a visa.

According to the language of Senate Amendment 4000, a country must provide "material support," which means that current provision of the equivalent of but not less than of a battalion, which consists of between 300 to 1,000 military personnel, to Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom to provide training, logistical or tactical support or military presence.

I feel that it is ineffective to place a number requirement on these smaller countries in the region. All the Baltic countries have been steadfast in support of allies of the United States since they gained their independence following the fall of the Soviet Union and have continued to be supportive in the ongoing war on terror.

While these countries are short of this amendment's required troop number, it seems to me that the best way to evaluate a country's eligibility for the Visa Waiver Program is to determine whether the country is a good ally and friend of the United States, not put a number on their commitment.

All these former Soviet satellite countries are continuing to actively work to implement the highest of technology with their border security, including biometric passports far ahead of some of their western European neighbors.

Currently, several of the 27 countries already in the Visa Waiver Program have committed zero troops to either mission. Why should such a requirement be placed on those countries that have already made a sacrifice, when others are rewarded for their non-participation?

Furthermore, small countries like Lithuania, with a population of 3.5 million, Latvia, with 2.8 million, or Estonia, with 1.3 million, clearly do not have as large a military as a country like Poland, which has over 38 million citizens, 30 million more than all three Baltic States combined. I feel that this is irresponsible to belittle the commitment and sacrifice to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom by not allowing them into the Visa Waiver Program with the specifics of this amendment.

Maybe if you combine the total deployment of the Baltic countries and add them up, which is as of my count today, 287 troops deployed, that is very close to the 300 minimum number. But, remember that these three countries combined still are 30 million people less than a country like Poland.

Also each of the Baltic States have troops participating in out-of-area NATO missions. One of the provisional reconstruction teams in Afghanistan is led by Lithuanian troops. Do these soldiers operating within the North American Treaty Organization not count toward their troop commitment in the language of this amendment? These are important questions that need to be addressed.

As Cochairman of the House Baltic Caucus, I understand the concerns that the Baltic countries have with this amendment, and I urge the conferees of the immigration bill to keep their concerns in mind as we work through the differences between both the Senate and the House.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING THE LIFE OF DANIEL WULTZ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more painful than a senseless death, particularly when a child's life is cut short.

As parents, we do everything we can to protect them. We keep them in car seats protected by seat belts and air bags. We watch what they eat and lock cabinets and plug outlets. We put safety knobs on exterior doors and put gates up at the top of the stairs and around swimming pools. We give them curfews and cell phones so we know where they are and when they'll be home. We teach them right from wrong and we impart our values.

And when they are older, we have no other choice but to hope for the best. We hope that all of the cajoling and caring, crying and cradling, helped them become the best grownups, parents, citizens, professionals, but most of all, we want to help our children to be the best people that they can become.

After all of that planning, preparing, protecting and sometimes panicking, most of us are blessed with the fact that our children do become adults.

So much of our children's lives are beyond our control, including their safety, yet we do everything within our power to protect them.

But what parent in God's name would expect their child to be killed in a terrorist attack? Blown up by a suicide bomber at an outdoor cafe? How does one guard against that? What product is made to shield them from explosives strapped to the body of a madman determined to destroy an entire people? How do we teach our children that

some parents raise their children with this hatred embedded inside their heart?

How, if we want to raise our children as tolerant, understanding, open-minded individuals, do we teach them to look out for certain people who may want to do them harm, without painting an entire people with the same broad brush? Naturally, we teach them that they should be cautious about strangers in general, wary of people who act in a certain way.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this question today because the other day, Tuesday afternoon, I attended the funeral of a young boy, just 16 years old. He was a constituent of mine who lived in the same town where my family and I live.

When I got home, I explained to my two older children where I had been. As inquisitive little ones, they asked how the boy died. And I can still taste the bile in my mouth, Mr. Speaker, when I had to explain that this young boy in our hometown was killed by a bomb that blew up near where he was sitting in a cafe in Israel. I had to explain to my twin 7-year-olds that there are some people in the world who have so much hate in their hearts and who don't believe that the Jewish people should have our homeland, Israel, that they will do anything, including bombing innocent people to try to destroy us.

Mr. Speaker, I could not bring myself to explain that the bombs were strapped to the bomber's body as they were detonated. Thankfully, that was beyond their comprehension, because it was beyond my ability to explain to their young, innocent minds.

Daniel Wultz was sitting at an outdoor cafe with his father in Tel Aviv during Passover. A suicide bomber detonated a bomb strapped to his body, which injured Daniel's father and critically injured Daniel. Daniel lost his leg in the explosion, and, despite severe injuries, emerged from a comatose state and went through several surgeries with many more in front of him. He lived for a month, but succumbed to his injuries on May 14th.

Daniel Wultz was eulogized by his family and friends on Tuesday. He was described as a beautiful young man with a big heart, someone who always did the right thing, who stood up for others, and had a big, beautiful smile. I listened to his Rabbi, Rabbi Yisroel Spalter, talk about officiating at Daniel's Bar Mitzvah. I listened to how proud Daniel was of that accomplishment and how his Judaism had become so much more important to him recently.

I listened to Daniel's best friend and aunts talk about what a righteous person Daniel was, describing how he was always there for his friends and how he taught younger kids basketball and waited with them when their parents were late.

I listened to Daniel's sister talk about how painful it was to lose her beloved brother and how badly they all

wanted him to remain with the family and the struggle they were going through with God, who obviously needed him more.

But the most difficult was listening to Daniel's father's angst-ridden voice, wishing that he could have protected his one and only son, and describing that he knew his son's beautiful body ultimately protected him.

Mr. Speaker, as a Jew, as a Member of Congress, as an American, but, more than anything, as a mother, I rise this evening to honor the memory of Daniel Wultz and to ask my colleagues to join me in condemning in the strongest possible way the ongoing cowardly terrorist attacks perpetrated against innocent victims in Israel and throughout the world.

As Golda Meir once said, "Peace will come when the Arabs love their children more than they hate us."

Hate is a weapon from which there is no safe haven.

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

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

□ 2300

PROGRESS IN IRAQ

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

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, before the gentlelady leaves, I want to thank her for I think just a very moving and important message about what Israelis are faced with. I just thank her for that message.

Mr. Speaker, I would like specifically to talk about Iraq and to say that in the 12 visits I have had to Iraq, when I ask Iraqis what their biggest fear is, it almost always is this: "That you will leave us." Then they might say, "That you will leave us before we can grab hold of democracy."

Well, I have to say, frankly, that is one of my biggest fears. I am not afraid that we will see the war in Iraq lost in Iraq. I am most fearful that we will see the war in Iraq lost here at home.

It would seem a little surprising to say that I have seen significant progress in Iraq, because people see the way we were in April 2003 and they think it was so exciting, and they compare it to April 2003. But, unfortunately, after April 2003 there was a significant decline in what took place in Iraq.

First we allowed the looting. And to Iraqis, they would ask me when I would go there, why did you allow people to trash our country? These were not all Iraqis who were doing it. These were people who were looting. And Americans were just standing by and allowed this to happen. And they believed,

frankly, that we wanted it to happen, because they believed that we could have prevented it had we wanted to.

And then we proceeded to disband their army, their border patrol and their police and leave 24 million Iraqis totally and completely defenseless in a country the size of California.

And then what did we do? We said to 150,000 coalition forces, primarily Americans, some Brits, that you had to be the police, the border patrol and the army in a country the size of California with 24 million people.

That was basically an impossible task. And so what I saw happen in April 2003 is that things just kept getting worse. They were worse in December 2003. And even worse by April 2004. But then, at that point, we had started to reverse the slide. We reversed it by beginning to train their police, their border patrol and their army.

And we began to see a change when we transferred power in June of 2004. And Iraqis started to take ownership. And so when I kept going back every 3 to 4 months, I kept seeing progress. And then by 2005, I was there for the elections when they took place in January of 2005. It is just historic and moving, every time I think about it. Iraqis came out and voted. The Sunnis did not, but the Shias and the Kurds did.

They formed a government, and they created a constitutional convention and invited Sunnis in. They did not participate in the voting, so they were not represented, but they were invited in. And they created a constitution. They voted on that constitution by October.

And I was told by the UN that it would be one of the fairest elections with the best participation, put our elections to shame, and frankly it did. Mubarak of Egypt, the president, said they would not accept their constitution. 79 percent ratified it. It was extraordinary.

And now they had this constitution and a third election in just 11 months. And 76 percent of 100 percent of the eligible voters voted. Now if you get 65 percent voting in our country, that is 65 percent of the two-thirds that bother to register. So it was an amazing event.

They chose a government. But Jafari, the prime minister who was selected by the Shias was not liked by the Sunnis and the Kurds, and the minority said no to the majority, and the majority said we rule. And the minority side minority rights. And they went back and forth, and for 3 months we had this standoff.

The minority was able to demonstrate minority rights, and the majority was able to say we accept your minority rights. That is maturity taking place.

Now you have a new prime minister, and this new prime minister is reaching out to Sunnis, Shias and Kurds. When I ask a Kurd if they are a Kurd or a Shia, or Shia if they are Shia or Sunni, they will say, I am a Sunni, but