

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3056, TAX COLLECTION RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-368) on the resolution (H. Res. 719) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3056) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to repeal the authority of the Internal Revenue Service to use private debt collection companies, to delay implementation of withholding taxes on government contractors, to revise the tax rules on expatriation, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2895, NATIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST FUND ACT OF 2007

Ms. SLAUGHTER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 110-369) on the resolution (H. Res. 720) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2895) to establish the National Affordable Housing Trust Fund in the Treasury of the United States to provide for the construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of decent, safe, and affordable housing for low-income families, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

JASON NORLING

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, last Monday, 38-year old Deputy Constable Jason Norling was killed while writing a traffic ticket in Houston, Texas. Norling, a motorcycle officer, was ticketing a speeder when another vehicle swerved off the shoulder and hit Norling, killing him.

Norling was a former chef and artist and previously worked for the Hempstead, Texas Police Department before becoming a member of the Precinct 5 Constables Unit. Norling's mother said, "God's purpose for Jason was to be in law enforcement."

Norling was married, and when he was hit by a driver who, ironically, had just been involved in another accident when his vehicle was rear-ended.

And so as the bagpipes played Amazing Grace at the Spring Baptist Church last week, they mourned the loss of another peace officer who wore the badge to protect and serve.

And by the way, Mr. Speaker, the driver who swerved and hit Officer Norling was apparently distracted because he was talking on his cell phone.

Our prayers are with the Norling family and his fellow Texas lawmen.

And that's just the way it is.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

(Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the House Committee on Foreign Affairs will consider H. Res. 106, affirming the United States' record on the Armenian genocide. I will ask my colleagues on the committee to carefully consider this resolution and the vast body of evidence that supports its conclusion.

The allied powers of the First World War early on recognized that the Turkish Government at that time was committing crimes against humanity by perpetrating the organized slaughter of Armenians. The U.S. Congress of that time affirmed these crimes in hearings and resolutions. Though the chief organizers of this crime were convicted of the massacres by the Turkish military courts, they never were made to pay any penalty.

We fully recognize now the friendship of our allies in Turkey, but it cannot change the past. I hope that there can be some reconciliation between Turkey and Armenia and that a proper acknowledgment of the crimes of the past can allow them to move forward into the future of peace and mutual understanding.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

JOSE MEDELLIN

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, I come tonight to talk to you, the House, about the murder of two girls. In 1993, two teenage girls were walking home, making sure they got there in time for the curfew. Their names were Jennifer Ertman and Elizabeth Pena.

As they were headed home, they took a shortcut through the woods, and that mistake cost them their lives. They came in contact with a person by the name of Jose Medellin, who was the gang leader of a group called the Black and Whites. He, along with his fellow gangsters, kidnapped these two girls and brutalized them, sexually assaulted them, tortured them, and then, when they were through having their

way after gang raping them, they murdered them, these two teenage girls, Jennifer Ertman, Elizabeth Pena.

The Houston Police Department finally caught up with Jose Medellin and his gangsters. They were all tried lawfully in Texas courts. Jose Medellin received the death penalty, along with one other individual who's already been executed. A third individual's on death row waiting to be executed, and two more are serving life sentences in Texas penitentiaries.

Jose Medellin, when he was captured, he had in his possession, Mr. Speaker, a watch. It was a Mickey Mouse watch that Jennifer Ertman wore. And he was proud to carry this token of his murder. He bragged about the murder. He confessed to the murder, and a jury of 12 Texans convicted him and gave him the death penalty, which he earned and which he deserved.

His case was appealed. It worked its way all the way to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court upheld the conviction based upon a complaint about the confession.

But during all of this process, 10 years after the conviction, in 2003, the Mexican Government filed a lawsuit against the United States in the World Court. You see, Medellin was illegally in the United States from Mexico. And the Mexican Government claimed that he should have been told by the arresting police officers that he had the right to talk to the Mexican Consulate.

Now, the Houston police officers didn't tell him he had the right. They certainly wouldn't have prevented him from having permission to talk to the Mexican Consulate, and he never, at the trial, objected to not being able to talk to the Mexican Consulate. He waited some 10 years until he got to the World Court before his government complained.

The World Court ruled in favor of Mexico, and here's where all of the irony begins. After the World Court ruled that the Texas court, or the Texas peace officers should have told him that he had the right to talk to the Mexican Consulate, the President of the United States intervened in this case and told the Texas courts they ought to review this matter; they ought to uphold the ruling of the World Court. And last year, the Texas courts, in all due respect to the administration, told the President he didn't have any authority to tell Texas courts what to do about anything, and they upheld this conviction and ordered him to be executed, this defendant.

Tomorrow the Supreme Court of the United States is going to hear this case. They're going to hear this case and have to decide this issue. Does the World Court, when it issues an opinion about a trial that takes place in the State of Texas, or any other State, have authority to tell a court of law in this country that they must overturn a conviction or not?

This is a big deal, Mr. Speaker, because, you see, Texas courts, like most

courts in the United States, all courts in the United States, are beholden to the United States Constitution as the supreme law of the land. The supreme law of the land is not the World Court in the Hague. So that's the first decision the Supreme Court's going to have to make; whether or not this is a lawful order by the World Court or whether the Constitution is to be held supreme.

Second, they're going to have to decide, does the President of the United States have the authority to order any court to review any case?

I hope they rule that he does not because as Ted Cruz said, the lawyer representing the State of Texas tomorrow in this death penalty case, it is not the providence of the President to say what the law is or is not. If this President's assertion of authority is upheld in this case, it opens the door for enormous mischief from Presidents of either party. What might these Presidents be inclined to do if they had the power to flick State laws off the books?

It's a big deal. Separation of powers. The judicial branch is independent of the administration, of the executive branch. The executive branch has no authority over the judicial branch.

And the third issue, and most importantly, is should this case be reversed because the defendant, according to the World Court, should have had the ability to talk to his consulate or not?

Texas courts, and even Federal courts have found that he gave up that right if he had a right by not ever objecting at the trial.

Meanwhile, this defendant has been on death row longer than these two girls were alive. Justice must be provided for the victims of this crime, and this horrible case should be upheld by the Supreme Court.

And that's just the way it is.

WATER CRISIS IN IRAQ

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

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, after the administration promised to bring liberation to the people of Iraq, they have, instead, brought insecurity and despair.

Every day a new report emerges about the horrible living conditions in Iraq. One of the latest stories comes from Missan, a predominantly Shia province south of Baghdad.

Human rights groups and media reports show that there is a shortage of safe drinking water, and that very shortage may pose a serious health risk. Eight agencies have found that there is a shortage of chemicals for water purification and that many people have been forced to take water directly from the polluted Tigris River.

The provincial capital, Amarah, hasn't been able to treat its water supply since early September because they lack the treatment chemicals.

This problem, Mr. Speaker, is further complicated by the large number of internally displaced people arriving each and every day. And according to media reports, thousands of refugees have arrived from the central and northern provinces since February 2006, which puts unmitigated pressure on the already strained water system.

And according to a U.N. Refugee Agency report, the available water supply only met 60 percent of the needs 1 year ago. It also stated, "Rural areas rely on drinking water directly from the marshes, water that is highly saline, untreated and often contaminated."

Recent studies found that only 5 percent of the houses in the province have running water. 60 percent use water pumps, and the rest rely on river water. Is there any wonder why the number of cholera cases are on the rise?

But the news reports only say so much. Listen to the local sanitation officials: "Mains water has not been purified since early September as the chemicals aren't available, and the only truck carrying the material was stolen.

"Families fear cholera will spread to their cities and towns. In Amarah, cases of diarrhea have increased by 30 percent compared to 2 months ago.

There hasn't been a proper sanitation system in Missan since before the invasion of 2003. Many districts have poor sanitation facilities, and one can smell the stench of open sewers kilometers away. In some areas of the province, supposedly drinkable water is being mixed with sewage effluent and families have no option but to drink unsafe water.

Mr. Speaker, we are spending \$2 billion a week in Iraq, and we cannot provide for the most basic needs like safe drinking water. This makes one wonder if the funds are being misdirected, and it makes us wonder if our administration just can't show any leadership on humanitarian projects. It is simply disgraceful.

We should help the Iraqi people by giving them back their country, and then we should work with our international partners to help the Iraqis rebuild their physical and economic infrastructure. And we should ensure that the Iraqi people have all they need to survive: clean water, food, electricity, schools, jobs, and a secure future.

These life and death problems are not going to be solved at the point of a gun. Putting our brave men and women in uniform on the front lines of a civil war isn't helping.

I urge my colleagues to join together to support proposals that bring our troops and military contractors home and rededicate ourselves to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Iraq.

It is past time for responsible foreign policy. It is time to bring our troops home now.

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

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

THE ECONOMY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the last few days have brought terrific news for American workers and taxpayers. Today, the markets closed at new record highs. The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed at 14,164; the S&P at 1,565.

Last week the Bureau of Labor Statistics released new jobs figures: 110,000 jobs created in September. September 2007, is the 49th consecutive month of job growth, setting a new record for the longest uninterrupted expansion of the U.S. labor market. Since August 2003, our economy has created more than 8.1 million jobs, and the unemployment rate remains low at 4.7 percent.

We also learned last week that the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said the Federal deficit came in at \$161 billion for the just-completed fiscal year, down significantly from last year's deficit of \$248 billion.

The Wall Street Journal editorial board noted today that "since 2004 deficit spending has tumbled by \$251 billion, which is one of the most rapid 3-year declines in U.S. history. The deficit as a share of the economy is down to 1.2 percent or about half the average of the last 50 years." A deficit at 1.2 percent share of the economy. In the words of the Associated Press, "The fiscal picture is the best it's been since 2001."

Taken together, this shows the American economy remains strong, a strength derived from the hard work of the American people and Republican pro-growth, low-tax policies.

But as sure as the sun is going to rise in the morning and set in the evening, House Democrats are going to do their best to jeopardize our economic growth through higher taxes and spending increases. The Wall Street Journal warned this morning that the Democrat "Congress is already gearing up to splurge again, with its \$35 billion expansion in the children's health program, a \$286 billion 5-year farm bill, \$23 billion in water projects, and \$22 billion more in non-defense discretionary spending. Combine this blowout with slowing revenue growth due to the housing recession, and the deficit may not fall again in 2008. This is all the more reason for President Bush to finally use his veto pen on spending bills."