

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

THE ASIAN PACIFIC COMMUNITY AND THE IRAQ WAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Let me take this opportunity, before I address the question our soldiers in Iraq, to thank Mr. HONDA for convening this special order on the Asian Pacific community of this Nation and to thank him for his leadership of the Asian Pacific Caucus, of which I am a member and to acknowledge the Asian Pacific community in Houston, Texas, a thriving community so diverse and so respected.

I am reminded of the unity that was exhibited as Katrina survivors who were Asian Pacific Islanders came into Houston. Both Mr. HONDA and myself worked on the issue of language and representation and resources, and the Asian Pacific community in Houston was so united and so supportive so that these new visitors, these strangers in a different land, would feel welcome.

Let me also acknowledge that I have the privilege of representing not only a very strong Vietnamese business community, but also the original Chinatown in Houston. So my hat goes off and salutes the outstanding leaders in that community, scientists, educators, businesspersons, public servants, and, as well, I thank them for the wonderful service that they give and the opportunity to work together with them. This is an outstanding tribute to be able to honor the Asian Pacific Islander community in the month of May.

Let me also acknowledge that the Vietnamese community will have its first cultural event gala where it honors heroes and public servants from around the Nation.

I would hope that as we look to the greatness of America, we will find it in our hearts to be able to address the question of the tragedy in Iraq. It is a tragedy that continues to grow. Every time you turn the corner, turn the news on or read a newspaper article, it is disintegrating and deteriorating.

Today in the newspaper it says an Army general predicts a rise in casualties. So at the back of the surge the President says will have solved the conflict in Iraq, we will see, tragically in the words of Major General Rick Lynch, who is working with the 3rd Infantry Division, "Casualties will climb as American troops dig into enemy territory as part of the stepped-up military operation ordered by President Bush in January."

His sentence does not say how we will resolve the conflict. It doesn't say that it results in any positive end. It doesn't say that we will be victorious

in that effort, it says that the lives of Americans will be lost. We, as Americans, believe that when we go to war, the Nation goes to war. Therefore, it is important to have a mission to have a conclusion to that mission.

Compounded to that issue, we show that attacks killed eight U.S. troops. They kill them because they are being killed by IEDs. They kill them because there is no mission, there is no policy, there is no political policy. There is no end, there is no beginning.

So I ask the President to sit down with this Congress and be able to resolve this by, one, leaving in the language that says, we will redeploy the troops by July, 2007, or, at the latest, October, 2007, have a rational policy for exiting from the conflict that is causing the mounting lives that are lost.

In addition, lives are being lost in Afghanistan of a civilian population, lives of the civilian Iraqis are being lost, and there is no response from this administration.

While there they are wining and dining, I would simply ask in addition to that responsibility, let us find a conclusion to the war in Iraq by reconciliation and compromise between the executive and, of course, the Congress. We cannot tolerate any more headlines like this, mothers and fathers, husbands and wives are asking why, when there is no end. The soldiers are our heroes. They have done their job. We have said this over and over.

I commend to this body H.R. 930, my legislation, Military Success in Iraq and Diplomatic Surge for National and Political Reconciliation in Iraq Act of 2007. Declare a military victory, our soldiers have been victorious. Let them come home to yellow ribbons and celebrations and their families, have them prepared, stronger, increased, a stronger military, with the right kind of equipment.

Let the generals logically plan how they will redeploy, possibly to the Kuwait borders and to the other borders, but let them come home. We are not trying to dictate to the generals how to redeploy, what the logistics would be, but we are only saying that the policy is a failed policy, and our soldiers must come home. No more headlines, Army general predicts rise in U.S. casualties, no more headlines eight troops dead and continuing to die with no solution and no end.

I ask my colleagues to review H.R. 930 and ask the President and this Congress to find a way that we can work together.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, this month is Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. This is a national celebration

which continues to highlight and bring awareness to the many contributions of the Asian Pacific Americans who have made this country their home.

I want to thank Mr. HONDA, who will be leading a special order in just a few minutes, with respect to all the accomplishments of the Asian Pacific Americans in the United States.

I am fortunate to represent one of the largest Asian Pacific populations in Orange County, California. It's full of Japanese, Korean, Hmong, Cambodians, Laotians, Chinese, Hawaiian Pacific Islanders and, of course, the largest Vietnamese population outside the world resides in Orange County, California. Representing that community I see firsthand the rich culture and the contributions and all of these communities bring to my hometown of Anaheim and Orange County.

More than 30 years ago, with when the Vietnamese arrived, my district was full of orange groves. They took these orange groves, some of the dilapidated commercial centers, and they made these block-long business districts that generate today, multibillion dollars for our local economy.

While being an integrated part of the American social fabric is important, these communities also bring with them a rich awareness of what is going on around the world, in particular, what happens in their homeland.

I enjoy an open dialogue, for example, with the Vietnamese American community, especially about the continuing situation in Vietnam, where human rights and religious freedoms, remain a distant dream for the peoples of that country.

Now is the time to remember and to celebrate the successes and the contributions that Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders bring to the diversity of America.

Although it is important to recognize the achievements made by this community, Asian Pacific American Heritage Month must also provide a forum to focus on the problems that face these communities, such as affordable housing, racial profiling, and language barriers.

In particular, the health care issues that are so important, so many health care issues that happened in this particular community like hepatitis C, diabetes, and some of the other larger issues which affect us all.

One of the problems facing the APAC community is the perception that all the members of their communities are thriving. If you are Asian or Pacific Islander, you must be going to the Berkeleys of the world, you must be doctors, you must be thriving, you must be engineers, you must be great business people. But the reality is that there are large populations, API populations who still have low access to real quality education and they face tremendous language barriers. The API community has come a long way, sacrificing for our country and contributing to our growth and prosperity, and I

look forward to continuing that relationship with the Asian Pacific Islander community to celebrate its contributions and to overcome the ongoing challenges that these communities face.

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ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, this month marks a special opportunity to pay tribute to the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islander Americans. In our community, we have a great opportunity to recognize this dynamic force of creativity in our Nation, and I welcome the opportunity to do so and I thank my colleague MIKE HONDA for hosting this special order tonight.

An estimated 180,000 Asian Pacific Islanders representing a diverse community of backgrounds and cultures and experiences make their homes in Minnesota, with an estimated 32,000 in the Fifth Congressional District alone. Minnesota serves as home to one of the Nation's largest Hmong population, estimated at nearly 80,000. In Minnesota, we boast 2 members of our State legislators who have Hmong American heritage, Senator Mee Moua and Representative Cy Thao. The Hmong American story in Minnesota is quintessentially Minnesotan and we are proud of our Hmong community.

The Hmong story is quintessentially an immigrant story as well, a story coming from their land to a new one to make success here in America, overcoming the many difficulties, struggling, persevering, while retaining love for their land of origin, finding tremendous love and loyalty in their new home as well.

The Asian American and Pacific Islanders make a valuable contribution to every aspect of American life and Minnesota life, from business, education, to arts to military. We will always remember Qixing Lee, a young man who graduated from North High School of Hmong American heritage who lost his life in this conflict in Iraq. Their contributions and unique additions to our life have enhanced the moral fabric and character of our State and our great country.

As we celebrate the many contributions of the Asian American-Pacific Islander community, let us not lose sight of the cornerstone of their contributions and to the very foundation of this country, immigration. Immigration has played a vital role in the entire making of America, whether the immigrants are from Europe, Africa, whether they are from Asia, or Latin and Central America. But immigration no doubt has played a vital role in the cre-

ation and success of our country, and must be looked at as a vital American strength as we look forward in this 110th Congress.

As the Democratic-led House leads the way on immigration reform, I believe that we must look at comprehensive reform, not shock radio sound bites. Reform that fully recognizes the contribution of immigrants have made and continue to make to our Nation is as equally important as security on the border. Fair comprehensive immigration policy must work to protect and unite families. Right now, an estimated 1.5 million Asian and Pacific Islanders face an immigration backlog that has forced many families to live separated from their loved one for years. This is a shame and must end.

As we celebrate the contributions of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to our Nation, let us use this occasion to take our great country in a new direction and to higher heights, and to meet the challenges facing all Americans, including Asian American and Pacific Islanders. As we have in the first 100 days, let us take further steps to change the way we do business in Washington and defend our country, grow our economy, care for all children and families, protect our planet, and restore accountability. Together, we can make the American dream a reality for all Americans.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my good friend and colleague and neighbor, Congressman Mike Honda, first for his leadership on so many issues, and, secondly, for organizing a special order tonight to celebrate the contributions of Asian Pacific Americans, but also to celebrate Asian Pacific American Heritage Month.

We have the pleasure of representing the California Bay Area together. It is really an honor and a magnificent challenge and an exciting part of my district to bring all of our diverse communities together, to support many, many issues as minority communities. So the Asian Pacific American community is one of those communities that is incredibly diverse in my district and also in our Nation, but also plays an increasingly important role in the development of our Nation. With over 14 million people and 24 ethnic groups, they encompass vast histories and rich cultures.

In many ways, the APA community is seen as a model minority community, but the truth is the very same challenges, like access to health care and education, that other communities face are also obstacles to be overcome by Asian Pacific Americans. For example, nearly 2.4 million Asian American

and Pacific Islanders are without health insurance, and about 13 percent of Asian Pacific American children are uninsured. Diseases such as diabetes are on the rise and one of the leading causes of mortality among Asian Pacific Americans.

Congressman HONDA and I also co-chair the Congressional Out-of-Poverty Caucus, along with our colleagues Congressman JOE BACA, Congressman G.K. BUTTERFIELD, and Congressman JOHN CONYERS. We all are working to raise awareness of all of these challenges and are working on a plan to eradicate poverty in our country.

As with many minority communities, education plays a key role in ensuring that the next generation of APAs are able to break free from the cycle of poverty. That is why I am a cosponsor of H.R. 629, introduced by a colleague from Oregon, Congressman DAVID WU. This legislation would create institutions of higher education modeled after the historically black colleges and universities and our Hispanic serving institutions. This would establish a university for the Asian Pacific American community.

Back at home in the Ninth Congressional District of California, my constituents and organizations based in my district are really making an impact in many of these fields. An organization that I am very proud to represent is Asian Health Services. This agency has served thousands of people who cannot afford basic services such as health care and mental health services. Our Asian community is so diverse that Asian Health Services has translators that speak nine different languages. When it comes to health care justice, this agency advocates for those with no voice by working with elected officials to create policies that meet the essential mental health and health care needs.

I also want to mention the Asian Pacific Environmental Networks. This agency is a powerful grassroots organization and has done incredible work to provide housing for the waitresses and the security guards and the janitors that keep our community working. They have negotiated with developers to set aside 465 units of housing for low and extremely low income individuals. To further aid this community, the network has negotiated 300 entry-level construction career path placements, allowing constituents to gather the tools that they need for success.

This is truly an important time to reflect upon the accomplishments and the achievements of the APA community. The United States is strong because of its diversity and its immigrants. I am proud to be a member of the Asian Pacific American Caucus and our Tri-Caucus which reflects the beauty and diversity of our country. Let us rededicate ourselves tonight to eradicate the disparities and the discrimination against the Asian Pacific American community and to celebrate the great contributions.