

WHERE IS THE LEADERSHIP?

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I note as I come to the well here that it's now 2:49 p.m. on a Thursday afternoon, a time when across this Nation the folks who worked the day shift are getting ready to complete their work; the folks who are working the afternoon or evening shift are getting ready to head off to work or on their way to work; and the folks who work the midnight shift across the Nation are probably just rubbing their eyes as they wake up and begin their day or bedding down as they begin their rest before they get back at it again this evening.

Where is the House of Representatives? Well, Madam Speaker, you look around the House of Representatives and they've gone home. They've all gone home. Now, why is that important? Well it's important, Madam Speaker, because I think it demonstrates another day demonstrating the crisis of leadership that we have in this House of Representatives.

Madam Speaker, I come to the well today at this time to document that we are now 62 days into a unilateral disarmament of the United States of America as it relates to folks who want to do us harm all across this world, 62 days in which we have not had in place the Protect America Act, 62 days in which we have not had in place the appropriate rules and protections for communication companies to allow our United States Government to listen and intercept electronic communication between a foreign individual in a foreign land who wishes to do America harm and another foreign individual in a foreign land who wishes to do us harm.

Did you get that, Madam Speaker? Non-U.S. citizen, not on U.S. soil, talking or communicating through electronic communication to another non-U.S. citizen, not on U.S. soil, about how to injure Americans either on the battlefield or here in our homeland.

It's called the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act. The bill was the Protect America Act. Sixty-two days ago, the leadership in this House of Representatives allowed that to expire. And why? For some reason, they believed that lawyers ought to be able to represent that foreign individual in a foreign land who want to do us harm with the same protections that you and I enjoy as American citizens.

Madam Speaker, when I go home to the Sixth District of Georgia and I tell people about this, they shake their head and say, what on earth is going on? Where is the leadership? And I agree. Where is the leadership?

Madam Speaker, there is a crisis of leadership in this House of Representatives, whether it is on the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, or the Protect America Act, to allow our intel-

ligence community the tools that they need to keep us protected. Whether it's on not doing anything positive about the price of gasoline all across this Nation, the only thing this House has done, this leadership has done is to increase the cost of domestic production of oil by increasing taxes. And who pays those ultimately? You got it, Madam Speaker. Americans.

Whether it is allowing the free and fair trade agreement with Colombia to not come to the floor, to change the rules so that it can't come to the floor so that we kick in the teeth the only real friend that we have in South America, one of the few friends we have in South America, a democratically elected government; or whether it is, again, not allowing our intelligence community to listen to a terrorist on foreign soil, talking to another terrorist on foreign soil so that we know what the bad guys are going to do before they do it.

Madam Speaker, that's a crisis of leadership.

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

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

REMARKING ON THE POPE'S VISIT AND ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. TANCREDO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to also welcome Pope Benedict XVI to the United States and to Washington, D.C., and congratulate him for delivering an important message on the role that faith plays in the lives of every believer.

Over the years, the Vatican has been a strong voice for religious freedom, for human rights, and was an invaluable partner in defeating Communism during the Cold War. The Catholic Church has long been a source of charity and benevolence helping some of the world's most vulnerable people in some of the world's most dangerous places.

However, as President Bush welcomes Benedict XVI to Washington this week, Americans might be surprised to know that the Pope isn't here just to minister to his flock. He's here to lobby for amnesty for illegal aliens. According to news reports, the Pope met with President Bush yesterday to add his voice to the open border lobby by encouraging the President to give the 20 to 30 million illegal aliens in this country a free pass to stay here.

Now, I'm not taking issue with the Pope's moral authority. I respect his views on the threats of Islam, the sanctity of human life. But I don't think

it's in his job description to engage in American political activities.

Worse yet, the Pope chided America, insinuating that immigrants are subject to "violence" and prevented from leading "dignified lives." Madam Speaker, I would like to know what part of our American lax immigration policy is "violent." I fail to see how accepting more refugees than any other Nation while providing free health care, free education, free housing and free social service benefits to millions of illegal aliens in this country is in any way degrading to them or undignified.

I would like to remind the Pope that America has long been dedicated to the principle of the rule of law, and there is absolutely nothing inhumane about American immigration statutes or the robust but civilized enforcement of it.

But perhaps the Pontiff has made these comments with a motive more broad than simply spreading the gospel. It's no secret that the Catholic Church has been having difficulty maintaining its membership levels and a growing number of religions are competing for parishioners.

Indeed, the Wall Street Journal recently reported that the "Catholic Church has long been losing members and as much as a third of the native-born Catholic population is diminished. Meanwhile it has gained members among foreign-born (mostly Hispanic) residents."

Madam Speaker, it's possible and unfortunate that the Pope's immigration comments may have had as much to do with spreading the gospel as it does recruiting new members to the Church.

I regret that the Pope used some of his time with the President to engage in faith-based marketing trying to attract new parishioners instead of preaching amnesty for illegal aliens to try and enlarge the size of the global Catholic congregation. I would urge the Pope to subscribe to the wisdom of one of his cardinals, Cardinal Biffi. A few years ago, the cardinal told The Times of London, "Countries can choose to let in whoever they want. There is no such thing as a right of invasion."

Madam Speaker, the United States already has a legal immigration system unparalleled in its generosity. In the meantime, we assist illegal aliens, and those affected by them, by reimbursing hospitals for costly illegal emergency room hospital visits, providing free public education to illegal alien children. I would challenge the Pope to name any other country on Earth that demonstrates this kind of compassion on such a large scale.

I hope, Madam Speaker, that the American people will welcome the Pope with open hearts and open arms but that they will reject his demand to replace our efforts to achieve genuine border security with a faith-based immigration system.