

live there, and I have also talked to the chamber of commerce types who say, Oh, there is no problem here in our border towns. There is no violence or drugs. We don't have a problem with infiltration from drug cartels and criminals coming into our cities. Of course they say those things, in my opinion, because they want that open border for that travel back and forth between Mexico and the United States because of money, because of commerce, because of that greed that so many people have; and they deny the fact that the border needs to be secure.

We live in denial sometimes that there is a border war that is existing. It is a violent border war. It is a border war between drug cartels and criminals, and many of those people don't just stay on the Mexican side.

When Sheriff Rick Flores was here in Congress and testified before Congress, he is the sheriff in Webb County, Texas, he said we are naive to believe that the border problem only will be on the Mexican side. He is the sheriff in Laredo. Across the river is Nuevo Laredo. That is basically a ghost town now controlled by the drug cartels; and those criminals, they will come to the American side as well.

Sigi Gonzales, the sheriff in Zapata County, he told me that the drug cartels and the criminals, they have better equipment, they have more equipment, they have better money, and they have more people involved in doing what they want to do than we have in protecting the dignity of the United States.

And to illustrate how violent it is on the border, Mr. Speaker, I want to read you one more portion of this report: There currently exists a U.S. Department of State travel alert for Mexico. Fort Bliss officials announced Saturday that travel to Juarez has been declared off limits for U.S. military.

In other words, Fort Bliss, the United States Army, they can go to Iraq, they can go to Afghanistan, but they can't go to Juarez right across the river because it is too dangerous.

Mr. Speaker, there is a border war taking place on the southern border. All is not quiet on the southern border, and we need to understand that this is a tremendous problem and our government needs to get into action and protect Americans from this invasion.

And that's just the way it is.

BORDER TRAVEL ADVISORY

SUMMARY

Due to the rising level of violence in Mexico—which is attributed to drug cartels, violent criminal organizations, and increased presence of military personnel in some Mexican border communities—it is recommended that persons be discouraged from traveling to Mexican border towns, particularly those that have recently been scenes of gang-related violent activity. These communities include Nuevo Laredo, Matamoros, Reynosa, Rio Bravo, Miguel Aleman, and Ciudad Juárez. The increased levels of violence in recent weeks and potential for additional violence suggest that an advisory against traveling to these communities is warranted.

DETAILS

On November 30, 2007, gunmen opened fire on the former mayor of Rio Bravo—who was a two-term representative and one-time senator—and his entourage as they left a restaurant in Rio Bravo. The former mayor was killed along with two other politicians and two federal agents. The Los Zetas, an organized cell of the Gulf Cartel, had previously threatened the former mayor's life and attempted a prior assassination, prompting the government to assign bodyguards. In response to the assassination, the Mexican government immediately mobilized approximately 500 soldiers, federal police, and support personnel in order to conduct counterdrug operations in the state of Tamaulipas. The focus of the operation was on the cities of Matamoros, Rio Bravo, and Miguel Aleman, just south of Roma, Texas, and Reynosa, Mexico.

On Monday, January 7, 2008, members of the Mexico Federal Preventive Police (PFP) were patrolling Colonia Cuauhtémoc in Rio Bravo when they observed a 2005 Chevrolet Suburban occupied by heavily armed men. The officers attempted a traffic stop that resulted in shots being fired at the officers from the Suburban. A gun battle ensued, and additional officers and a contingent of the Mexican army responded. Three gunmen were killed and ten others were arrested, including three U.S. citizens, one of whom was from Texas.

On January 23, 2008, local police in the border cities of Nuevo Laredo, Matamoros, and Reynosa, Mexico, were relieved of their duties as army troops disarmed the officers and searched for evidence that might show links to drug traffickers. Eleven men were arrested by federal police in Nuevo Laredo, including four police officers, who were said to be operatives for the Gulf Cartel.

President Calderon has sent approximately 6,000 military troops and federal police to areas that extend from Matamoros—which is across the border from Brownsville, Texas—westward to Miguel Aleman, which is across the border from Roma, Texas. Mexican military and federal police personnel have also been sent to the city of Juárez. A similar operation was conducted last year in Tijuana when violence erupted there, with more than 3,500 soldiers and federal officers sent to the city.

Over the past weekend, a total of five people were either shot or beaten to death in separate incidents in Juárez. This comes on the heels of approximately 30 persons in Juárez being murdered since the beginning of the year, including 17 law enforcement personnel, as well as the recent attempted assassination of a Chihuahua State Police Commander Fernando Lozano Sandoval. Commander Sandoval is currently hospitalized in El Paso's Thomason Hospital under tight security. An alleged "hit list" of Mexican law enforcement was also discovered near Chihuahua state offices over the weekend.

There currently exists a U.S. Department of State travel alert for Mexico with a date to expire of April 15, 2008. Fort Bliss officials also announced Saturday that travel to Juárez has been declared off-limits for U.S. military personnel.

In addition to the travel advisory, law enforcement officials should be aware of the possibility that violent criminals and cartel members may seek to enter Texas in an attempt to escape Mexican military and law enforcement operations. As some persons seek refuge in Texas, their enemies may plan to conduct raids or hits on them here. The most significant violent criminals in the region are members of the Gulf Cartel or their violent enforcers, Los Zetas.

ANALYST'S COMMENTS

With the increased military and police presence in Mexican border towns, and the recent violence associated with shootouts between Mexican military and drug cartels, it is advised that Texas residents avoid traveling to Mexican border communities, particularly those that have recently been scenes of violent gang-related activity. In addition, there exists a possibility that Los Zetas and Cartel members may cross the border into Texas. Tactical operations, such as increased police patrols, should be initiated in high-profile and high-visibility areas—such as points of entry and between points of entry—to discourage cross-border incursions. If any contact is made with suspected Los Zetas or cartel members, an INT-7 form should be completed and forwarded to the Texas Intelligence Center.

Law enforcement officials are encouraged to remain vigilant and report any suspicious incidents to the Texas Intelligence Center.

WHERE'S W?

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, last night this House was host to the President for his final State of the Union address. Like all past Presidential speeches in this Chamber, it was historic. But this time it may have been historic because of what it did not achieve and what it left unfinished.

Forget all of the unfulfilled commitments on education, health care, environmental conservation, employment, energy efficiency, worker protections and immigration. Let's just look at the record on foreign policy. The state of that union? Dismal.

Upon taking office in 2001, this administration promised a new kind of international engagement, one based on partnerships and regional alliances.

We didn't exactly get what we bargained for, unfortunately. And the recent administration tour through the Middle East just about summed it up.

Remember those children's books, "Where's Waldo?" We had a case of "Where's W?" Let's start our tour in Israel and the Palestinian-controlled lands.

After nearly two terms of ignoring the real crisis in the region, the administration tried to make a last-ditch effort at a peace agreement: first by hosting a summit, one that wasn't expected to achieve anything, and then by a visit to the region. No ideals were outlined, no real road map was sketched out. To be generous, it was a half-hearted effort. It greatly saddens me, Mr. Speaker, that such an important opportunity was squandered. The Israeli and Palestinian people deserve more. They deserve a chance to at least hope for peace.

Next stop on the Where's W? trip, Kuwait and Bahrain. In Bahrain, the political opposition faces arrest, torturers are granted immunity, and a woman must go before family, not civil courts, family to fight back against violence and abuse.

In Kuwait, the world saw how Kuwaiti justice is carried out when al-Azmi was hanged inside the Interior Ministry complex in Kuwait City on December 21.

Next stop, the United Arab Emirates. This is the land where noncitizens are a subclass of people. They have very few rights. They face huge obstacles and discrimination.

Oh, and another thing, women can't pass on citizenship to their children unless their husband is a citizen. What does that mean? It often means insurmountable barriers to education and employment.

Now we are on the home stretch. Where in the world is W?

□ 1915

Saudi Arabia. The country with the choke hold on international energy markets, the homeland of the majority of the 9/11 terrorists, the land where women cannot legally drive a car yet. Sure, there is a proposal on the table to give women this right, but I wouldn't hold my breath.

How did the United States President clearly demand the rights of all Saudi people? By walking hand in hand with members of the Saudi royal family. That sounds like a strange negotiating tactic to me.

And the final stop on this regional tour, Egypt. Let's just look at what Amnesty International has to say about Egypt. We have longstanding concerns on systematic torture, deaths of prisoners in custody, unfair trials, arrests of prisoners of conscience for their political and religious beliefs or for their sexual orientation, wide use of administrative detention and long-term detention without trial, and use of the death penalty.

This, Mr. Speaker, was a tour of wasted opportunity and flagrant disregard for the most basic human rights.

So what will the President's legacy be in the Middle East? What is the state of that union? Not good. Not good at all.

We have a seemingly endless occupation of Iraq destabilizing the region. Osama bin Laden is still missing. We have the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Opportunity after opportunity for regional stability has been squandered and our standing in the region is embarrassingly low. But know this: This Congress will continue to demand an end to the occupation of Iraq and a return to sensible and sustainable policies in the Middle East. We will not stand by while the clock runs out on this administration.

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

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

CONGRATULATING THE RICHLAND SPRINGS COYOTES SIX-MAN FOOTBALL TEAM ON THEIR STATE AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the students and families of the Richland Springs Coyote football team for winning the 2007 Texas Division I Six-Man Football Championship and the Six-Man Illustrated National Championship poll.

Six-man football has been a part of Texas history for almost 70 years, and today there are over 160 public and private schools fielding teams. For many small towns in Texas' 11th Congressional District, six-man football is simply a way of life. It is no different in Richland Springs, where the Coyotes carry on the best traditions of Texas football every fall weekend.

Before a crowd of 5,000 cheering fans in San Angelo's Bobcat Stadium, the Coyotes played the Rule Bobcats in a rematch of last year's championship. It was an exciting game that was close through the first three quarters, but in the end the Coyotes simply outran the Bobcats and won the game 98-54. Throughout their 2007 campaign, the Coyotes went a perfect 14-0 and outscored their opponents 1,015-225.

This victory secured the Coyotes their third State championship in 4 years and cemented their reputation as the Nation's best six-man football team. With this national championship, they become only one of two teams to have earned three national championships. During this run, the Coyotes have gone an unbelievable 56-1.

As I look ahead to next summer, the Coyotes will lose five seniors. I wish the 29 returning students the best of luck in continuing the outstanding success that the Richland Springs six-man football team has achieved.

I'd like to commend Coach Burkhart, Coach Ethridge, Coach Dodson and Coach Rogers for their hard work in preparing, training, and coaching their teams to the championship.

Finally, I'd like to extend my personal congratulations to Mark Williams, Hustin Burkhart, Stephen Fowler, Neil McMillan, Shelby Smith, Joe Tomlinson, Nigel Bates, Mitchell Jacobson, Andrew Fowler, Tyler Etheridge, Riche Daniels, Brennen McGinty, Elbert Thomas, Khalid Khatib, Patrick Couch, Randy Couch, Daniel Barrett, Tommy Hollon, Abraham Ahumada, Branch Vancourt, Stephen Thornhill, Franky Soto, C.J. Finke, Dean King, David Greenwood, and Ryan Soto for winning both of their 2007 championships. These young men have proven themselves to be good sportsmen, able competitors and fine athletes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

SOVEREIGN WEALTH FUNDS

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, the recent shocks to the global economy and U.S. financial institutions have revealed a major new source of investment in the U.S. economy called Sovereign Wealth Funds. These funds are the surplus savings of our trading competitors from foreign countries and have been key in bailing out major U.S. corporations like CitiGroup, Merrill Lynch, Blackstone, and so many others that have made terrible decisions and played with the people's money to abandon. Three billion dollars was invested by the Chinese, for example, just in the Blackstone Group.

Put into perspective, the Chinese Government, and I underline "government," is projected to have more than \$3 trillion by 2010 that can be used to buy our stocks, bonds, real estate, and entire corporations. They're just getting started. Put into context, the Government of China will soon have enough investment monies to buy 51 percent; that is absolute control of more than 40 percent of all the U.S.-based corporations whose stock is listed on the New York Stock Exchange. Think about that. The Government of China literally could buy half of all the stock listed on the New York Stock Exchange. And that's only China.

Many people in this Nation and in this Congress would strongly oppose having the United States Government buy control of two out of every five companies listed there. It would be called socialism. But how will we react if the Chinese Government buys those same companies, which is, my friends, underway?

Already we see China, Kuwait, Norway, and other nations buying major stakes in our banks and in investment houses, institutions that exert enormous political and economic influence in our Nation and world. Can we trust that those investments are purely for economic returns?

Secretary of the Treasury Paulson has repeatedly stated that this administration has no interest in knowing the details of such investments by sovereign wealth funds. The present panic in our banks and financial institutions to secure capital to offset their mortgage and credit card debacles may induce the heads of those corporations to take bailouts on virtually any terms. But we must be wiser. A head-in-the-sand ostrich policy by the United States Government is simply not acceptable. Indeed, it is reckless, and it threatens national security.