

Poor and minority kids are not a media opportunity. These are real children who deserve an equal shot at a bright future.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MRS.
ADELFA CALLEJO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Mrs. Adelfa Callejo, a well-respected civil rights leader and attorney in Texas.

Mrs. Callejo was 90 years old when she passed last week. She developed into her role as an advocate for justice at an early age. As the oldest daughter of a father who did not speak English, Mrs. Callejo often had to serve as an intermediary in the defense of her family against intimidation from Federal immigration agents or unfair treatment in schools targeted at Mexican American immigrants.

As the first Hispanic woman to graduate from law school at Southern Methodist University, her background and education have not gone unnoticed. Mrs. Callejo emerged as a prominent civil rights attorney in Texas, battling questionable city council redistricting in the late 1980s, and staunchly opposing illegal immigration policies in Farmers Branch, among other prominent legal battles, that have helped to shape our State.

Mrs. Callejo was known best for her forceful advocacy and fiery personality. She overcame tremendous adversity as a female and as a Hispanic, although nothing would deter her from becoming a powerful financial and social force in Texas.

She once said: Only through education will we make the world a better place than we found it. She lived true to these words and worked with the Dallas Independent School District to ensure a better education was offered to a more diverse range of students; and for that, she was honored by a school being named for her in the Dallas Independent School District.

Mr. Speaker, Mrs. Callejo was an inspirational character who offered her talent and her resources to those who were less fortunate. While she had an incredible presence in Dallas, her reputation as “the Godmother” extended far beyond the city limits.

While her passing comes as a great loss to many, we may continue to look to her life for an inspiration. I am proud to call her my friend and supporter.

Mr. Speaker, we have lost a warrior.

GUN VIOLENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. KELLY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, a gunman walked into a

mall in Columbia, Maryland, and opened fire, killing two people before taking his own life. Prior to the mall shooting, we saw six school shootings take place nationwide in just 10 days.

Countless other Americans are terrorized each day on streets that have become shooting galleries where kids aren't safe to walk to school or go to the corner store or sit on their front porches. And yet we do nothing.

Time and time again, despite the headlines and the bloodshed and the pleas from the parents of the victims to act, Congress has failed to pass commonsense gun reforms that would save thousands of American lives, including background checks, which are supported by 90 percent of Americans.

□ 1045

Somehow, in the years between Columbine and Newtown, we have developed a collective indifference to the killings. After each shooting, we are in disbelief; but then we shrug and move on, dismissing the mass shootings as isolated incidents and ignoring the everyday shootings altogether.

Sadly, a callus has formed where our compassion should be. Or is it that the gun lobby's agenda has taken the place of our country's conscience?

I am at a loss because I truly do not understand how we can continue to ignore the public health epidemic that is gun violence in America. What will it take? How many more must die? How many parents must weep before we do the right thing?

Make no mistake, gun violence is robbing us of a generation. It is a slow-motion plague that is killing our kids one day at a time.

In the Chicagoland area, gun violence has claimed some of our best and our brightest, like 15-year-old Hadiya Pendleton, who was shot and killed a year ago this week while standing in a park with friends. You may remember, she was killed a week after performing for President Obama's inauguration.

She was certainly one of my district's shining stars. But she was, by far, not the only one. There were many Hadiyas, young people with promise and potential who were felled by gun violence. They had family and friends who loved them, communities who mourned them, and they are:

Eva Casara, 17; Tyrone Lawson, 17; Maurice Knowles, 16; Darnell Williams, 17; Abdullah Trull, 16; Leonard Anderson, 17; Jaleel Pearson, 18; Malcolm Whitney, 16; Fearro Denard, 18; Tyshon Anderson, 18; Tyrone Hart, 18; Ashaya Miller, 15; Equiel Velasquez, 17; Christopher Lattin, Jr., 15; Rey Donantas, 14; Victor Vegas, 15; Tyrone Lawson, 17; Antonio Fenner, 16; Frances Colon, 18; Jorge Valdez-Benitez, 18; Oscar Marquez, 17; Jonyla Watkins, 6 months; Arrell Monegan, 16; Victor Damian, 15; Clifton Barney, 17; Miguel Delaluz, 17; Leetema Daniels, 17; Fearro Denard, 18; Patrick Sykes, 15; Dionte Maxwell, 18; Miguel Villegas, 15; April McDaniel, 18; Fernando Mondragon, 18; Kevin Rivera,

16; Ricardo Herrera, 17; and Alexander Lagunas, 18.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here in honor of their memories, asking my colleagues to get serious about gun reform and to pass legislation to help them stem the tide of shootings in this country. I hope one day never to have to add another name to that list.

RECOGNIZING BART OFFICER
TOMMY SMITH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. SWALWELL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SWALWELL of California. Mr. Speaker, there is no person more worthy of respect and tribute than he or she who lays down their own life while working to protect others. Today it is with great sadness that I wish to honor Bay Area Rapid Transit Sergeant Thomas Smith, whose end of watch came too early when he was tragically killed on January 21 of this year.

Sergeant Smith, known as Tommy to his family and friends, is from a law enforcement family that knows all too well the daily risks of wearing a badge and serving the community as a police officer. Sergeant Smith's wife, Kellie, also works as a police officer, as do his two brothers, Ed and Pat, and also his brother-in-law Todd. So aware were Sergeant Smith and his family of the personal danger they faced in their jobs that they had a rule of what they would say to each other whenever they would leave each other's company: Never say good-bye. You only tell each other, “Be safe.”

But Sergeant Smith is not a hero because of how he died; he is a hero because of how he lived. On the job, Sergeant Smith worked honorably every day—not just the day that we lost him—to protect our community.

Sergeant Smith cared most about his family, and nothing else was even a close second, as his own lieutenant described earlier last week. Sergeant Smith took every opportunity to spend time with whom he called his “girls”—his wife, Kellie, and their 6-year-old daughter, Summer.

May we always remember Sergeant Smith and how he lived so honorably for us. And may Sergeant Smith now watch over us from above, as he always did on Earth, to make sure that all of us can be safe.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 50 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

The people's House prepares to welcome the President of the United States this day, as well as the other governmental, judicial, and military leadership of our Nation. The world watches as America's great experiment in civilian self-government is in high relief.

May all who populate these hallways this day be possessed of goodwill and a shared commitment to guarantee the freedoms and responsibilities inspired by the soaring rhetoric and subsequent actions of our American ancestors.

May all that is said and done in this Chamber today redound to the benefit of our Nation and glory of Your holy name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HIGGINS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 75. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1901. An act to authorize the President to extend the term of the nuclear energy agreement with the Republic of Korea until March 19, 2016.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

THIS IS AMERICA, NOT BURGER KING

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the State of the Union is tonight, but the President has already said that he would ignore Congress if he doesn't have his way. He is going to rule by pen and phone: the pen to write down laws and executive orders, bypassing Congress; the phone to call lower-level operatives I suppose, like the EPA, the IRS, NSA, and impose new rules and, thus, again, bypassing Congress.

Mr. Speaker, nowhere in the Constitution is the phrase "executive order." It is not in this Constitution. This is not an imperial kingdom where the ruler makes his own rules as he goes along.

We all learned in ninth-grade civics that Congress makes the law, and the President can approve or disapprove it. It is in the Constitution.

Rather than rule by pen and phone, the President should be bound by the law and rule by the Constitution and by his oath, but the Constitution seems to be a mere suggestion to this administration.

Madam Speaker, this is America; it is not Burger King. The President cannot always have it his way.

And that's just the way it is.

THE SO-CALLED NO TAXPAYER FUNDING FOR ABORTION ACT

(Ms. CHU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CHU. Madam Speaker, H.R. 7, the so-called No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act, is as deceitful as it is dangerous. We already ensure that tax dollars don't fund abortions and have ever since the Hyde Amendment was introduced in 1976.

This new effort is an attempt to create restrictions far beyond the scope of current law, interfering with how women use their own private dollars, on their own private insurance, for health coverage.

This is just the latest Republican assault in their ongoing war on women. It is why I felt it was so important to

introduce the Women's Health Protection Act. My bill would put a stop to the unprecedented attack on abortion we have seen at the State level over the last few years. It would ensure that every woman has access to the medical care she is entitled to.

Decisions about pregnancies are deeply personal and difficult, and they belong to the woman and the doctor she trusts, period.

THE STATE OF OUR NATION'S FOREIGN POLICY

(Mr. HOLDING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOLDING. Madam Speaker, when the President delivers his State of the Union address tonight, it will be important to note what he won't say about the state of our Nation's foreign policy. This is because, on President Obama's watch, America has been notably absent from the world stage.

His foreign policy has taken America away from a role of global leadership to a shuffled retreat. Madam Speaker, successful foreign policy is defined by your friends trusting you and your enemies fearing you. Chances are the President will only touch momentarily on the Iranian nuclear deal tonight and for good reason. It has gathered strong bipartisan opposition, and the regime in Tehran has flaunted the deal as a legitimization of their shadowy nuclear program.

Madam Speaker, those who seek freedom and democracy look now more than ever to America for leadership. Chances are you won't hear much about that from the President tonight.

ROBERT MOSES PARKWAY FUNDING

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Madam Speaker, today the New York Power Authority took an important step toward righting a historic wrong by providing funding to remove the Robert Moses Parkway in Niagara Falls. Niagara Falls is a national treasure, drawing millions of visitors each year.

However, with the construction of the Robert Moses Parkway in the 1960s, the New York Power Authority created both economic and physical barriers to Niagara Falls in arguably the greatest waterfront in the world.

For Niagara Falls, it is not about tearing something down; it is about building something up. Removal of the parkway is a critical step in giving this city the waterfront it deserves and unleashing the limitless economic potential that comes with it.

The New York Power Authority did the right thing, and the future of Niagara Falls will be better because of it.