

intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare. That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

□ 1315

Mr. ROTHFUS. Thank you, Congressman PERRY.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their help in reviewing and reading the words of the Declaration of Independence, the words that birthed our Nation.

As families gather next week to celebrate our Nation's birthday, let us not forget these words, and let us not forget those who gave all for freedom, those in our military, especially those who are deployed today in harm's way.

May God bless and protect them, and may God bless and protect the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

IMMIGRATION CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PERRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to direct attention to a robocall that was made on behalf of one of our Republican colleagues down the hall. I really hope that he had nothing to do with it because it was dishonest, reprehensible, played the race card, and attempted to divide people, and, in fact, apparently was conspiring to try to get people who were going to vote for the Democrat in November to vote for the Republican in the Republican primary runoff, which, under their State's law, is not lawful—not legal.

I certainly hope Senator COCHRAN had nothing to do with it, but it sounds like it helped him win his election. This is exactly the kind of thing that people in the House or the Senate should not be involved in, trying to mislead individual voters, trying to trick them into voting for themselves—because one thing is absolutely clear: if it requires trickery, deception, dishonesty, manipulation—unfair manipulation of people in another party to violate the law and vote for a particular candidate, then, very clearly, that candidate is not worthy of being elected to anything.

This past weekend, I was down on our border between the United States and Mexico along the Rio Grande Valley and along the Rio Grande River itself.

I had the impression, from the way some stories were written and some talk was going, that we actually had a situation on our border where people would come rushing across the Rio Grande River—even if there were law enforcement officers, Border Patrol officers—that it didn't matter. People were just rushing across, so anxious to get here.

Having spent the weekend on the border, what I learned was that, yes, people are very anxious to come into this country, but the coyotes that are bringing them—from what we learned apparently—paid by drug cartels to bring people across, those coyotes don't want to bring people across if they are going to get caught because one thing our Border Patrol and the Texas Department of Public Safety does very well is, if they catch a coyote transporting people illegally across our border, for example, in a raft—which is apparently the most frequently used method of getting larger numbers of people across—then they take the raft, and they destroy it—normally right there in front of the coyote—and help destroy his current illegal business.

The coyotes don't want to lose their rafts, their Jet Skis, or whatever they are using to get people illegally across the border, so they wait, even into the wee hours of the morning, which I was there to see firsthand. They don't want to be caught. They will wait until they feel like they have got time to get across and get back.

I have also heard plenty of times, from friends across the aisle, from people outside of Congress, who continue to say the same thing—and I know they don't mean to be dishonest, they are very honest people—but they keep saying they are trying to get away from the horrible murders, rapes, and terrible situations in their home countries.

The thing is, if you look at the crime rates in those countries from which they come—in Central America, for example—you don't see a tremendous dramatic rise in the amount of crime. There is not a dramatic increase in areas where so many of these people are coming from, to come illegally into the United States.

So the question keeps arising: Well, then if the murder rate is deplorable or horrible as the situation is, if the violence has not dramatically increased, then why has there been such a dramatic increase in the number of people coming across our border illegally?

The answer that this administration apparently refuses to acknowledge is that it is not because of a dramatic increase in violence in Central or South America, it is because the word has gone out in Central and South America that, if you can get to America, you will not be sent back.

In the wee hours Sunday night, Monday morning, there was one group of adult women—three adult women, some small children. These were very honest people. They spoke Spanish. They didn't speak any English.

Some say: well, I bet they are coming from Mexico, and they are being coached to say they are from El Salvador, Guatemala, South America, or other places.

These kids could not have been coached at their age to say what they did. They are very honest people.

When asked why did they come, the immediate answer was: well, we wanted these little children to get a good education.

Well, most everybody in the world—there are 6 to 7 billion people in the world—most want their children to get good educations; yet, if we have an influx of even 1 billion people into the United States, our country as we knew it will be gone.

It will no longer be a country where there is a rule of law, where capital investment feels safe, because you can't maintain a country unless you have the rule of law enforced. You can't just magically, one day, say: okay, now, today, we start enforcing the law as it is.

It doesn't work that way. If you have raised a generation or immigrated in a generation who believes that you just ignore the law when it is inconvenient, then you are not, all of a sudden, going to have a country that follows the law and attempts to enforce it across the board. It doesn't happen.

I have been told before that, gee, there may be a billion, billion and a half people in the world that would love to come to America. Well, when you have just over 300 million people in America and you are increasing the numbers here by giving out over a million visas a year—more than any other country in the world, even though you have India or China with several times more people than we have in America, nobody is giving out more visas than we are.

Even though you have a country like Mexico that condemns the United States for our treatment of people coming in even illegally—and even those legally—what they don't bother to notice in their massive hypocrisy is the way they treat people that legally or illegally come into Mexico.

If we began treating Mexican nationals coming in illegally into the United States the way Mexico treats American citizens, they would be screaming, going crazy every day; but it is because we are a more fair nation than Mexico is.

Of course, it doesn't really help Mexico when we have an administration, as this one, and a Justice Department, as the one run by Attorney General Eric Holder, which not only has an effort to get 2,000 or so weapons—guns—into the hands of criminals in Mexico with drug cartels, but then also engages in covering up evidence of exactly what happened during that horrible, horrible project by the Justice Department that actually put a couple thousand guns or so in the hands of criminals, resulting in deaths that would not have occurred otherwise, and yet, still, they cover it up.

Clearly, it is not, under Attorney General Eric Holder, a Department of Justice. It has become a department of, number one, injustice; and a department of, number two, just us.

Oh, sure, as long as the Internal Revenue Service is only going after conservative groups or Christian groups or religious groups, that is fine. As long as it is only going after groups that vote Republican, that is fine. It is okay.

Oh, and you want to try to catch us? Well, our hard drives crash, and our emails disappear, and, gee, we have no idea where they went. Why? Because we are in a country where the Department of Justice becomes a department of injustice and a department of just us, where as long as you support "just us," you are good. Violate the law, it is fine; we will make sure you are not prosecuted—but it is perfectly fine to go after people who vote Republican, perfectly fine to go after groups that may not support the President's position on things.

Now, right down the hall, in the Senate of the United States, we actually have United States Senators who are wanting to destroy First Amendment freedom of speech rights.

There are United States Senators, all from the Democratic Party, those that are pushing this, that are actually pushing an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that will allow Congress to take away people's right to make speeches.

It is incredible that they don't even realize that, if the amendment to the Constitution—a bridge to take away freedom of speech rights, if it were to become part of the Constitution, and the American people got so mad at those Democrats pushing it that they gave the Republicans the majority in the House and the Senate and even gave them a veto-proof number, then you could actually have Republicans saying Hillary Clinton can't publish her book anymore.

I was just talking about this with my good friend, Senator TED CRUZ, and he was talking about some of the language that is being pushed in the Senate.

□ 1330

Senator CRUZ made the point that if this gets passed, you could have Congress—if there were enough Republicans in there—say that Hillary Clinton's book is illegal, it is contraband, and she can't do it anymore.

NBC and "Saturday Night Live" like to do satire about political officials, and some of them are pretty funny. But, actually, under the amendment that we have United States Senators of the Democratic Party pushing, Congress could actually tell NBC, the National Broadcasting Company, that they can't do political satire anymore.

Why would senators who like our Constitution think it was a good idea to take away free speech rights? I think they don't mean harm. They don't mean to harm our Republic.

It is because we have now gotten into an environment here in Washington, D.C., where the IRS can go after people they disagree with politically. And heaven help some candidate or some Republican that stands up and says, We have got to eliminate the IRS, because you can pretty well count on them coming right after him or her. If you say those kind of things, the IRS is about self-preservation. They will come after you if you say negative things about them. Because, like the Justice Department, it is "just us."

We have got to protect ourselves.

So it is serious business. The environment is such here in Washington where some Democratic Senators have actually come to the idea that it would really be nice if we take away freedom of speech rights and give Congress the ability to say, You can't publish that book. You can't do that political satire on TV. No, you can't do that film because we don't like it.

These are people that are supposed to be enlightened and be against censorship, and yet they are pushing an amendment that will allow Congress to basically go back to Orwellian ideas or all of those that have been written about in history when Big Brother gets so big, have book burnings. It seemed like that happened in the 1930s and 1940s.

It has become dangerous here in Washington, where you have educated people that haven't thought through their constitutional amendment they have signed onto enough to realize just how dangerous it is to the idea of a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

They have bought in to a Justice Department that is "just us," a Senate that is "just us," an administration that says, Hey, if Congress doesn't do what we want them to, forget Congress. I will write my own laws and we will just ignore Congress.

That is a dangerous concept if we are going to continue what the Founders referred to as "this little experiment in democracy." It is a dangerous time.

And then we have questions that were asked by PETE KING of Secretary Johnson about what is going on at the border. He is asking:

If you're a parent in Central America, in effect, this can look like a free pass because you're making the situation more humanitarian, you're making more facilities available, as Mr. Fugate said, you're providing foster families, all of which is understandable. That's our obligation as human beings.

But on the other hand, if you're a family in Guatemala or El Salvador, this, in a way, is a free pass.

Well, Secretary Johnson ends up saying:

Well, a couple of things. First, I'm convinced that the principle reason these kids—from everything I've heard, everything I've seen, and from my own conversation with these kids, the principle reason they're leaving is the push factor from the country they're leaving.

This is Secretary Johnson with Homeland Security saying this.

He says:

The conditions in Honduras, for example, are horrible. It's the murder capital of the world. There is this disinformation out there that this is permisos. That's what we're hearing. Permisos, free pass, like you get a piece of paper that says, Welcome to the United States. You're free.

"That's not the case. When you're apprehended at the border"—he says "irregardless of age." My late mother, an English teacher, would have jumped on that and pointed out for Secretary Johnson that irregardless is not an appropriate word. It is either regardless or it is not.

Anyway, our Secretary didn't have an English teacher for a mother. It is a common mistake.

He says:

Irregardless of age, you're a priority for removal. So they're given a notice to appear in a deportation proceeding.

The way the law works, the 2008 law, we are required to give that child to HHS, and HHS is required to act in the best interest of the child, which most often means placing that child with a parent who is here in the United States. But there is a pending deportation proceeding against that child.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, parenthetically, he references the 2008 law which requires the Department of Homeland Security to give the child or children to Health and Human Services.

We were in a hearing yesterday where I was told I was wrong about that. I was just quoting Secretary Johnson in my comments, as well as other people in this administration, who said, Look, we don't have a choice because the law from 2008 requires us to immediately provide the children to HHS.

Anyway, Mr. KING comes back and says:

But if I were a parent in Guatemala, wouldn't I see that as being a free pass? I mean a child, a 5-year-old child getting an order to show up in immigration court, you know, are you going to actually deport that child?

To me, it's a free pass, from their perspective.

Then, these astounding words from Secretary Johnson. He says:

Congressman, I don't see it as a free pass, particularly given the danger of migrating over a thousand miles through Mexico into the United States, especially now in the months of July and August that we're facing. A lot of these kids stow away on top of freight trains, which is exceedingly dangerous.

I spoke to one kid who was about 12 or 13 who spent days climbing on top of a freight train, a box car, and these kids sometimes they fall off because they fall asleep. They can't hold on any longer. It is exceedingly dangerous.

Well, Secretary Johnson is saying that because it is dangerous to come through Mexico, then it is not a free pass that he is handing out to people when they get to America.

Having been on the border in the wee hours, let me tell you, to those little children, to the adults bringing them, it is a free pass. That is why they came. And this is open territory. Anybody can be standing there. Because

once these the coyotes get them across the river, then they go looking for somebody to turn themselves in to.

I was there when there were different groups being processed out there in the open air; daytime, nighttime. So they are asking them questions, as their job requires, such as, Where are you from? You have got to get their names. They don't have any identification on them. They are strictly taking their names as they give it to them.

One adult woman who had a couple of little girls with her said, Well, I'm not the mother, but I'm the cousin of the mother. Well, where's the mother? She's got a good job in Miami.

She came in illegally some time back and she has been working in Miami. So since they can now come and stay here, this was the time to start bringing the kids in.

The other two women were mothers of the other children there and they were explaining that the fathers of those children were working. They had good jobs in North Carolina. And since all they had to do was get into the United States and Homeland Security or Health and Human Services would transport them—our government is now becoming human traffickers—they have become the human traffickers and take them to North Carolina, where the fathers have good jobs working illegally over there. But, again, since they saw it as a free pass, then this is the time to try to hurry into the United States.

What was particularly telling, Mr. Speaker—I don't have it with me here on the floor today—is that there was a request, a solicitation from the Obama administration back at the end of January that actually says that we anticipate in the next short months that we may have 65,000 children come across our border.

Now why would they think that? Because there were only a fraction of that many the year before, and then a fraction of that many the year before that. So why would they think all of a sudden there are going to be over 60,000 children coming in in the months ahead?

Well, they knew. The word is out in Central America and South America that if you just get to this country, the Obama administration is giving you a free pass.

The women in the last group that the Border Patrol were talking to out there after they had turned themselves in, they had not heard the word "permisos," but they knew they got a free pass. They knew they got to stay. And they said, We're here because we want these children to get a good education.

And since we know they can stay—in effect, that is what they are saying—now is the time they come and get a good education.

Well, we want everybody to get a good education. Unfortunately, if we in this country take tax dollars from Americans who are working and tried

to pay for the education of every single child in the entire world—which I would love to do—but if we do that, it bankrupts this country and no child gets any kind of education.

It is a dangerous time. It is a dangerous situation for these children to be coming across our border. In those areas the bush is thick, the river is swift. It is deep there where so many of them were crossing.

And yet because this administration has the word out and it is being sent out by drug cartels—being advertised, is what we keep hearing—the drug cartels have the best of all business worlds. They actually will charge \$5,000. One lady got a real deal. She got two kids and herself for \$5,000. For others, it is generally \$5,000 a person. For some, it is \$8,000.

The drug cartels charge people to bring them up across Mexico into United States. And if they find an attractive girl, they may pull her off into sex slavery and make money off of her. Having three daughters myself, that idea is just abominable.

Then, because of the masses of people that are coming across in greater and greater numbers, we have Border Patrol and ICE that are pulled away from their regular jobs. They are not out there looking for the drugs.

So you have got drug cartels making money by charging people to bring them into America, and then that causes a problem for us to enforce our border against drugs, and they can get more drugs in.

There is a war against the United States being staged by the drug cartels, and this administration better wake up and better start doing its job. I know my friends here on the Republican side, if the administration will start enforcing the law and enforcing our border and protecting us from the massive amount of drugs that are coming in, and enforce the border, we will get an immigration reform bill done so fast, people will be amazed how quickly we get it done.

□ 1345

There is no sense at all doing an immigration reform bill right now when the President is ignoring the enforcement of the law the way it is. The President needs to enforce the law as it is. Once he does that, then we can talk about amending it.

In the meantime, very quickly here, I had a quote from the President on June 11. He was saying:

I mean, the truth of the matter is, that for all the challenges we face and for all the problems we have, if you had to choose a moment to be born in human history, not knowing what your position was going to be or who you were going to be, you would choose this time. The world is less violent than it has ever been. It is healthier than it has ever been. It is more tolerant than it has ever been. It is better than it has ever been. It is more educated than it has ever been.

Then I thought about this cartoon, Mr. Speaker, and I will finish with this. In effect, we borrowed the cartoon

here, but it is like the President has gone off a cliff, and all of the way down, he is able to say, "We are doing all right so far."

The day is coming when the country will not do all right—when there will be a crash—because we failed to recognize the dangers on the way down.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

HOWARD BAKER, A LIFE WELL LIVED

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I have unfortunate news. We have lost a great American and a great Tennessean, Senator Howard Baker, Jr.

Senator Baker passed away today. Howard Baker served this country well, and he served it in a fashion that was worthy of admiration from both parties and all people because he was an American first, a Tennessean second, and a Republican third.

He served three terms in the United States Senate. He served as majority leader and minority leader. He served as the United States Ambassador to Japan, and he served as Chief of Staff to President Ronald Reagan. He was a private practicing attorney as well, at the firm Baker Donelson, which was a firm his grandfather started, and he practiced law at one time with his father, who served in this House as a United States Representative from Tennessee.

Howard Baker had been recognized since his retirement from the Senate on many occasions. He received the Presidential Medal of Freedom and had received other awards.

His was a life well lived and a life to be demonstrated to others as a role for legislators to work with both sides of the aisle and to work for America first. A life well lived, Howard Baker.

QUALITY HEALTH CARE FOR OUR VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT) for 30 minutes.

Mr. AUSTIN SCOTT of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I certainly don't intend to take that much time, but in a few short minutes, we are going to break for the July Fourth recess, and I just wanted to come forward on behalf of the veterans of the United States and make the commitment to them that the House and the Senate are going to continue to work to resolve the issues that we have heard so much about.

I would like to share, if I could, before we go, two stories from veterans of their wait times and neglect that my office has worked to try to help resolve.

I am hopeful, when we come back, we are able to get to a resolution for these