

statement claiming responsibility for two suicide attacks in Baghdad on Saturday, and said that one had been carried out by a German citizen, and the other by a Syrian.

The gathering on Sunday at St. George Chaldean Church, built in 1964 and situated in a Shiite Muslim neighborhood, was as much about Iraqi solidarity as it was a gesture of condemnation for the persecution of Christians. In many ways Iraq's struggle today is the same as it has been since the country was founded nearly a century ago, at the end of World War I: how to establish a national identity larger than a particular faith or ethnicity.

In the pews Muslims and Christians alike held signs that read, "I'm Iraqi. I'm Christian." Muhammad Aga, who organized the event over Facebook, spoke, and listed Iraq's many narrower identities: Christians, Arabs, Kurds, Shabaks, Turkmen, Yazidis, Sunnis and Shiites. "All of those people who carry Iraqi identity," he said.

The church's patriarch, Louis Raphael Sako, said, "I carry every Iraqi in my heart."

After the service, two men, cousins in their 60s, stood in the church courtyard. They grew up in Mosul, and moved to Baghdad as teenagers. They have witnessed much of Iraq's traumatic history of coups, revolutions, wars and sectarian cleansing, and have stayed the whole time.

"You have to be angry," said Faiz Faraj, 65, a retired teacher. "You must cry."

But, he said, "Iraqis have suffered for a long time, but this will pass."

His 9-year-old granddaughter, Lana Fanar, recited at the service a poem written by a well-known Iraqi poet in 2006, as Iraq was in the grip of sectarian killings. Its words could be spoken of any of Iraq's previous traumas, or today:

"I cry for my country. I cry for Baghdad. I cry for the history and the glory days. I cry for the artists, for the water, for the trees. I cry for my religion. I cry for my beliefs."

[From the Wall Street Journal, July 21, 2014]

THE CHRISTIAN PURGE FROM MOSUL

THE ISLAMIST ATTACKS ON NON-MUSLIMS ARE A PROBLEM FOR ISLAM

Imagine if a fundamentalist Christian sect captured the French city of Lyon and began a systematic purge of Muslims. Their mosques were destroyed, their crescents defaced, the Koran burned and then all Muslims forced to flee or face execution. Such an event would be unthinkable today, and if it did occur Pope Francis and all other Christian leaders would denounce it and support efforts by governments to stop it.

Yet that is essentially what is happening in reverse now in Mosul, as the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham drives all signs of Christianity from the ancient city. Christians have lived in Mosul for nearly 2,000 years, but today they are reliving the Muslim religious wars of the Middle Ages.

They have been given a choice either to convert to Islam or flee. They were warned before a weekend deadline that if they remained and didn't convert, they would be killed. Thousands—often entire families—have had to leave the city with nothing more than their clothes as militants robbed them of money or jewelry. Crosses have been destroyed across the city.

That such violent bigotry in the name of religion can exist in the 21st century is hard for many in the Christian world to believe, but that is part of the West's problem. Jews know all too well that anti-Semitism can inspire murderous behavior. But Christians or post-Christian secularists who are content in their modern prosperity often prefer to turn their heads or blame all religions as equally intolerant.

Today's religious extremism is almost entirely Islamic. While ISIS's purge may be the most brutal, Islamists in Egypt have driven thousands of Coptic Christians from homes they've occupied for centuries. The same is true across the Muslim parts of Africa. This does not mean that all Muslims are extremists, but it does mean that all Muslims have an obligation to denounce and resist the extremists who murder or subjugate in the name of Allah. Too few imams living in the tolerant West will speak up against it.

As for the post-Christian West, most elites may now be nonbelievers. But a culture that fails to protect believers may eventually find that it lacks the self-belief to protect itself.

Mr. WOLF. With the exception of Israel, the Bible contains more references to the cities, regions, and nations of ancient Iraq than any other country. The patriarch Abraham came from a city in Iraq called Ur. Isaac's bride, Rebekah, came from northwest Iraq. Jacob spent 20 years in Iraq, and his sons—the 12 tribes of Israel—were born in northwest Iraq. A remarkable spiritual revival as told in the Book of Jonah occurred in Nineveh. The events of the Book of Esther took place in Iraq, as did the account of Daniel in the Lions' Den.

Monday's New York Times' piece also quotes a Muslim woman at a prayer service on Sunday at a church in Baghdad, whispering to a Christian woman sitting in the pew next to her: "You are the true original people here. We are so sorry for what has been done to you in the name of Islam."

On June 16, for the first time in 1,600 years, there was no mass said in Mosul.

Pope Francis on Sunday expressed concern about what was unfolding in Mosul and in other parts of the Middle East, noting that these communities since the beginning of Christianity have "coexisted there alongside their fellow citizens, making a significant contribution to the good of society. Today, they are persecuted," the Pope said. "Our brothers are persecuted. They are cast out. They are forced to leave their homes without having the chance to take anything with them."

The United Nations released a statement attributed to Ban Ki-moon that, in part, said: "The Secretary General reiterates that any systematic attack on the civilian population or segments of the civilian population because of their ethnic background, religious beliefs or faith may constitute a crime against humanity, for which those responsible must be held accountable."

Where is the Obama administration?

In June, 55 Members of Congress—Republicans and Democrats—urged the Obama administration to actively engage with the Iraqi central government and the Kurdistan Regional Government to prioritize additional security support for especially vulnerable populations, notably Iraq's ancient Christian community, and provide emergency humanitarian assistance to these communities.

□ 1215

I want to read the last lines of our letter: "Absent immediate action, we

will most certainly witness the annihilation of an ancient faith community from the lands they have inhabited for centuries."

It is happening, Mr. Speaker. They are almost all gone, just as we predicted.

The Obama administration has to make protecting this ancient community a priority. It needs to encourage the Kurds to do what they can to protect those fleeing ISIS and provide safe refuge.

It needs to ensure that, of the resources going to the region, a portion be guaranteed to help the Christian community. It needs to have the same courage as President Bush and former Secretary of State Colin Powell when they said genocide was taking place in Darfur.

The United Nations has a role too. It should immediately initiate proceedings in the International Criminal Court against ISIS for crimes against humanity.

The time to act is now.

IMMIGRATION TAKES AMERICAN JOBS

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

Mr. BROOKS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, the June jobs report says America's unemployment rate dropped to 6.1 percent. While 1,115,000 new part-time jobs were created, a staggering, 827,000 full-time jobs were lost, and America's labor participation rate remained at 62.8 percent, the worst since President Carter.

A recent Center for Immigration Studies report, based on data from the Census Bureau and Homeland Security and Labor Departments, offers a startling and sobering insight concerning people in the 16–65 age bracket, so startling that I instructed my staff to double-check the report's data, and it checked out as factually accurate.

First, the report determined the American economy created 5.6 million new jobs in the 16–65 age bracket over the past 14 years.

Second, "the total number of working-age immigrants (legal and illegal) holding a job increased 5.7 million from 2000 to 2014, while declining 127,000 for American-born citizens."

Over the past 14 years, although the American economy created 5.6 million net new jobs in the 16–65 age bracket, American-born citizens lost 127,000 jobs. All job gains, and more, went to immigrants.

Third, even though the American economy created 5.6 million net new jobs over the past 14 years, population growth and job losses caused 17 million more American citizens to not be working in 2014 than in 2000.

Fourth, and contrary to what amnesty proponents and their media allies would have you believe, "Immigrants have made gains across the labor market, including lower-skilled jobs such

as maintenance, construction, and food services; middle-skilled jobs like office support and health care support; and higher-skilled jobs, including management, computers, and health care practitioners."

Immigrants swept the jobs field and had jobs gains in virtually every segment of the American economy. The argument that immigrants only do jobs Americans won't do is not supported by the facts.

Immigrants gained jobs while Americans lost jobs in each of the following high paying industries: architecture and engineering; transportation and material moving; installation, maintenance, and repair; sales; construction and excavation; office and administrative support.

Fifth, Americans of all major races lost ground. Black Americans lost, Hispanic Americans lost, White Americans lost. The percentage of working Black American-born citizens dropped 9.2 percentage points. The percentage of working Hispanic Americans dropped 7.7 percentage points, and the percentage of working White Americans dropped 6.1 percentage points.

Sixth, America's immigration policies over the past 14 years have been both a war on women and a war on men. The percentage of working female American-born citizens dropped 5.5 percentage points, while male American-born citizens did even worse, dropping 9.1 percentage points.

Mr. Speaker, I have two comments on the Center for Immigration Studies report. First, lawful immigrants have done well. Everyone would do well to learn from lawful immigrants' work and study habits.

Second, President Obama must start vigorously enforcing America's immigration laws. A Pew Hispanic Center study determined that illegal aliens hold roughly 8 million jobs in America. That is 8 million job opportunities illegally taken from Americans, thereby suppressing wages, causing unemployment, and creating income inequality among far too many struggling American families.

Mr. Speaker, I can't speak for anyone else but me, but as for me, Mo BROOKS, the Congressman from Alabama's Fifth Congressional District, I will fight for the economic interests of American citizens as Washington works its way through the immigration debate.

VETERANS' CLINICS IN THE THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

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

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to urge House and Senate conferees to send bipartisan veterans' legislation to the President's desk before we break for August. This legislation would authorize new community-based outpatient clinics for Lake Charles, Lafayette, and others around the country.

Our veterans have waited long enough. They have waited since 2008, and they have been blocked because of bureaucratic roadblocks. This is unacceptable. And now we are even closer to honoring this promise, because the House and Senate have passed legislation.

It is time to act on behalf of our veterans who have served this country. If Congress fails to act, we will continue forcing veterans to drive hours to Houston or Alexandria, Louisiana, for specialty care or even primary care or, even worse, they will be forced to go without care.

This is just unacceptable, and I will not stand until we get this legislation done. That is not the standard of care and accessibility these men and women deserve.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman JEFF MILLER for his strong leadership on this issue. He has fought beside me and others to get these clinics.

I urge conferees to work together. Put veterans' medical care ahead of election-year politics, and let's get this done.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 22 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PETRI) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. They face difficult decisions in difficult times, with many forces and interests demanding their attention.

Give them generosity to enter into their work. May they serve You in the work they do as You deserve; give of themselves and not count the cost; fight for what is best for our Nation and not count the political wounds; toil until their work is done and not seek to rest; and labor without seeking any reward, other than knowing that they are doing Your will and serving the people of this great Nation.

Bless them, O God, and be with them and with us all this day and every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. COSTA 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.

SUPPORTING ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO SELF DEFENSE

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

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, each of us, as Americans, has a God-given right to defend ourselves. Those rights should apply to all people everywhere, including Israel.

I visited Israel last year and saw, firsthand, the life-and-death reality ordinary Israelis face every day. Prime Minister Netanyahu impressed upon us the very real possibility that Israel could cease to exist if it failed to respond forcefully to violence and threats from those that seek its destruction.

That is why I rise today to share my support for Israel's efforts to defend itself from the existential threat it faces from Hamas. History has shown that Israel has been America's most steadfast ally in a very dangerous part of the world.

Let's pray for peace and for the innocent lives lost on both sides of this conflict. But let's never waver from supporting our friend and ally, Israel, in its fight for freedom.

HONORING THE LIFE OF ELI SETENCICH

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to pay tribute to the life of Eli Setencich, a captain in the American Army Air Corps during World War II, a journalist, and a friend to so many of us.

Eli was an unsung American hero, a veteran of America's Greatest Generation. Eli hardly ever discussed, nor did he brag about, his World War II experiences, like many of those who served at that time.

However, he flew 142 combat missions in P-49s during the war. Eli's amazing courage and heroism was recognized with two Distinguished Flying Cross awards.

When the war ended, like most American veterans of that era, Eli returned