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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LAMALFA).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 12, 2016.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DOUG LAMALFA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2016, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

VOTING RIGHTS ACTIVIST SHEYANN WEBB-CHRISTBURG JOINS CONGRESSWOMAN SEWELL AT PRESIDENT OBAMA'S FINAL STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS

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

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, today I rise on Restoration Tuesday to honor my guest to tonight's State of the Union Address. Ms. Sheyann Webb-Christburg of Montgomery, Alabama, will be joining me as my special guest to President Obama's final State of the Union Address.

Sheyann was 8 years old and was one of the youngest foot soldiers who marched from Selma to Montgomery. I believe that Sheyann is the embodiment of the struggle for voting rights equality in Alabama and in America.

On this Restoration Tuesday, it is my sincere hope that her presence will remind us of the modern-day fight for ensuring that every American citizen has access to the ballot box.

At an early age, Sheyann recognized that America had failed to live up to its own promise by depriving African Americans of their sacred right to vote. Sheyann's bravery reminded those around her that they are fighting for the next generation—her generation—as fervently as they were fighting for their own. Her courage also made it possible for me to represent our hometown of Selma in Congress.

On a personal level, I am thankful to call Sheyann my friend and mentor. She was my childhood babysitter, so I literally grew up in her shadow.

Her presence at President Obama's final State of the Union should once again remind us of the gravity of our responsibility to protect the vote for all Americans. Since the civil rights era ended, there are now modern-day barriers to voting. Since the Supreme Court struck down section 4 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 in 2013, my office has made restoring this critically important section one of our top priorities.

For the past 3 years, my State of the Union guest has represented a different aspect of the voting rights movement:

In 2014, my guest to the State of the Union was Selma's mayor, George Evans. As mayor of the birthplace of the Voting Rights Act, he represented the dynamic role Selma and her leaders have played in the fight for voter equality.

In 2015, I invited the 104-year-old Amelia Boynton Robinson as my guest to the State of the Union. As the ma-

triarch of the voting rights movement, Amelia challenged an unfair and unjust system that kept African Americans from exercising their constitutionally protected right to vote. I will always cherish the time we spent together when she honored me as my special guest.

I think it is befitting that since last year my special guest was the oldest living foot soldier, that my guest this year would be the youngest living foot soldier—Sheyann Webb.

All of these individuals have paved the way for me to accomplish all that I have today, and I am forever grateful. Their legacy should inspire us not to take for granted the very sacred vote, and that is the right to vote. Their sacrifices remind us that there is much more work to be done, and my hope is that this Chamber will take on the challenge of doing that work.

We should try to restore the Voting Rights Act of 1965. I think that our work begins even today. I hope that Sheyann Webb, as my special guest to the State of the Union, will remind all of us that it is really important that we protect the sacred right to vote.

DANGERS OF PRESIDENT OBAMA'S RECKLESS REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to shed more light on President Obama's reckless refugee resettlement agenda and the danger that it poses to Americans.

In my office, we are getting many calls about this as you hear about the new plans that he has and also as our constituents watch the news of what is happening in Germany and what is happening in other communities. Let me cite just a couple of examples.

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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Last week, according to The Wall Street Journal and numerous media outlets, two refugees from Iraq were arrested for making false statements involving terrorism. These arrests took place one in California and one in Texas.

In the California arrest, one refugee came to the U.S. in 2012 and subsequently traveled to Syria in November 2013. He bragged in social media posts about fighting alongside terrorist groups such as Ansar al-Islam. This refugee returned to the U.S. a few months later. When interviewed by the FBI in October 2014, he denied being a part of any extremist group and denied providing materiel support to terrorists.

What we found in Texas is this. The refugee was charged on three counts: attempting to provide materiel support to the Islamic State, procuring citizenship or naturalization unlawfully, and making false statements.

This is precisely why President Obama's plan to admit thousands of additional Syrian refugees into the country at a time of heightened jihadist threats and the San Bernardino massacre is beyond reckless and is dangerous to our communities.

There is no way to vet the refugees that are coming from Syria and Iraq and verify that they are the person represented on the documents that they carry. Are the documents false, or is the person who they say they are or someone else? It proves what many have been saying for months about Islamic extremists: they can and will exploit the refugee program.

These arrests showcase what is so painfully obvious to the American people: the President's agenda is endangering our national security, and it is costing our hardworking taxpayers millions of dollars.

Let me ask you a few questions:

Do you feel more or less safe than you did 8 years ago?

Do you fear the attack of terrorism in your community?

Do you question your safety when you go to a public event?

How does the President's foreign policy and our national security affect where you work and where you live?

How can the administration be so naive?

How can the administration continue to put partisan politics over the safety of the American people?

How can the administration continually refuse to name our enemy?

Yes, we are at war with radical Islamic extremism. We must confront the danger of radical extremism and check the President's irresponsible resettlement agenda.

I want to mention H.R. 4218. It is legislation that I drafted and introduced with Representatives BARLETTA, DESJARLAIS, and LAMAR SMITH. Under the bill, no funding would be made available for refugee resettlement operations until four conditions are met:

Number one, Congress passes a joint resolution approving of the President's refugee resettlement plan;

Number two, CBO provides a report to Congress scoring the long-term cost of the program;

Number three, DHS submits a report identifying all terrorists and criminal activity connected to refugees since 2001;

And number four, the President submits a report to Congress on the prior year's cost of admitting refugees and proposes offset spending cuts to pay for the resettlement program.

We must halt the President's refugee resettlement operations. It is simply too dangerous, and we cannot afford the risk to our Nation's security.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING MONTH

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

Ms. BASS. Mr. Speaker, January is Human Trafficking Month, and I rise today to continue to be a voice for the countless victims of human trafficking in the United States.

If we, as Members of Congress, want to truly address the sex trafficking epidemic, we must face the facts. We must acknowledge and address the direct link between children in the foster care system and children who become victims of sex trafficking. For far too many children, the foster care system is an unwitting gateway to sex trafficking. This is a nationwide issue that requires a Federal response.

In 2010, 59 percent of the children arrested on prostitution-related charges in L.A. County were in the foster care system. A 2007 report from the U.S. Department of Justice found that 85 percent of identified child sex trafficking victims in New York State also had contact with the child welfare system. Further, according to the FBI, an estimated 70 percent of child sex trafficking victims in Florida had histories with the child welfare system.

Children in the foster care system are our children. When they fall victim to trafficking, it means that all of us have failed. To help all victims of trafficking, including foster youth, we must change our mindset on how we address this horrific crime.

A child who cannot consent to sex should never be called a prostitute. The men who prey on them are not johns; they are child molesters.

“T” Ortiz Walker Pettigrew is a former foster care youth who became a sex trafficking victim. When she was 15 and still in foster care, “T,” as she is called, was arrested for prostitution. While serving time in juvenile hall, she discovered that more than half of the girls serving with her were also charged with solicitation and, like her, forced to sell themselves.

She described her treatment in juvenile hall as how you would treat a dog in a kennel. She was put in a box and kept waiting. She was treated like a criminal and did not receive any counseling or support services. Because she was punished and not helped, she was

arrested again when she was 16 years old, and she spent her 17th birthday in juvenile hall.

I am grateful that she found the strength and support to escape from her pimp. She now uses her voice to advocate for sex trafficking victims and to urge policymakers at all levels of government to do our jobs to prevent young girls from becoming sex trafficking victims.

Because of actions from women like “T,” local officials in Los Angeles have changed their approach to addressing this issue. They haven't realized that arresting the victims won't solve the problem.

Last year, L.A. County Sheriff Jim McDonell announced that his department will immediately stop arresting children on prostitution charges. This announcement was coupled by the L.A. County Board of Supervisors adopting a countywide effort to ensure that child victims of sex trafficking are truly treated as victims and receive the support services they need instead of punishment.

Last year, this Congress came together as Democrats and Republicans to pass comprehensive human trafficking legislation, but our work does not end when the bill is signed. We must also use our positions to urge local officials in our districts to follow the best practices used around the country.

To truly make a difference this Human Trafficking Awareness Month, I urge all Members to reach out to their local sheriffs and local elected officials and urge them to learn from Los Angeles and begin treating sex trafficking victims as victims. Although the legislation is a great step forward, we should also use the power of our voices and our positions to ensure that more girls get the help they need instead of being treated as criminals.

CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, as we get further away from December 17, 2014, the date that President Obama announced his change in U.S. policy toward Cuba, it has become apparent that there could be no abusive or provocative act committed by the tyrannical Castro regime that the Obama administration is not willing to overlook or willing to excuse.

Even after the Cuban regime was caught red-handed shipping surface-to-air missiles, two MiG aircraft, and tons of Cuban-made weapons and munitions to North Korea in violation of several U.N. Security Council resolutions, it could not stop President Obama's desire to placate the Castros.

This and the most recent revelation that the United States Government found out in June of 2014 that Cuba managed to come into possession of a