

Coach was known for his brilliant coaching and humility. He was always proud to talk about his players' accomplishments more than his own.

Jim Hlafka's unwavering dedication to the game of basketball and his leadership will never be forgotten throughout the Bunker Hill community. May his leadership, passion, and wisdom live on for generations of athletes to come.

CONGRATULATING RENSSELAER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the incredible students and faculty from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute for their stellar first-place ranking in the 2023 National Cyber League competition.

The National Cyber League is a cybersecurity skills competition that reinforces learning, encourages collaboration, and develops students' necessary skills for future careers within the cybersecurity field.

The students at RPI, coached by Dr. Brian Callahan, placed first in the Nation out of a pool of more than 8,500 students and more than 500 colleges and universities around our great country.

Their achievement is truly remarkable, and I offer my hearty congratulations to these students and my thanks to the dedicated coaches and professors whose support and encouragement enabled this terrific success.

I congratulate Team RPI, and I appreciate the great work they have done.

SUPPORTING STRIKES ON HOUTH REBELS INSIDE YEMEN

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

Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the strikes on the Houthi rebels inside Yemen.

Last night, the U.S. and coalition partners conducted strikes against numerous targets in Yemen used by Houthi rebels to endanger U.S. and international shipping vessels.

For months, Iranian-backed fighters have attempted to disrupt global commerce and wreak havoc in the Red Sea. These unprovoked attacks not only risk the lives of our servicemembers and innocent civilians; they threaten to disrupt the international economy.

When the circumstances demand it, we must rise to the occasion and act.

As a member of the House Committee on Armed Services, I will always support swift action to defend our national security interests.

SALUTING THE LATE CAROLYN MIDDLETON HALL

(Ms. JACKSON LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, with sadness but yet with the joy of her life, I rise today to salute Carolyn Middleton Hall, who passed away in December 2023.

Carolyn Middleton Hall was married to our beloved Anthony Hall, a pilot, a great civic leader, a former member of the Houston City Council, and a champion of opportunity and equality for our community. She is the mother of Anthony and Ursula, two successful young people who are also contributing to this community.

I rise to salute the late Carol Middleton Hall for all she has done to make Houston a better place for all of us to live. She was a great educator and a lover of improving the lives of young people. She came from a political family. She spent her life with her father and uncle fighting for workers' rights and making sure that unions were strong in our community.

As her husband ascended to public life, being one of the pioneers as an African American serving in Houston, Carolyn was right there. You can always say that she was his best advocate for getting votes, with her smiling face, her willingness for service, and her unselfishness. Carolyn was right there helping to generate votes for her daughter, who is now serving as a judge.

She was also generating friends. You could not help but be a friend to Carolyn Middleton Hall.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to remember her and be reminded by our moment of silence that we will take as I conclude in order to honor an American whose name you may not know at every dinner table, but you should know of her kindness, her love, her belief in America, and her championing of the civic system of government, voting, and equality.

I champion and honor the late Carolyn Middleton Hall. May she rest in peace, and may she rest in power. I thank my dear sister, a Link and an AKA.

□ 1115

FORT MOSE GROUNDBREAKING PROJECT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. RUTHERFORD) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and celebrate Fort Mose Historic State Park in beautiful St. Augustine, Florida.

Fort Mose, a national historic landmark, is the site of the first legally sanctioned free Black settlement in the United States.

In the 1600s, enslaved people in the British Carolinas made their way south to freedom in St. Augustine, which at that time was under Spanish rule.

Next week, the park, along with the Florida State Parks Foundation and community partners will break ground on a full-scale reconstruction of the original fort that once stood there.

You can see the updated renderings of the fort here beside me. It is really going to be an amazing site.

This project is the realization of decades of dreams, dedication, and hard work from hundreds of individuals who share a love for the Fort Mose history and rich, rich story.

Thanks to the partnership of the Florida State Parks Foundation, the Fort Mose Historical Society, and Florida State Parks, the fort will be completed this winter, and it is expected to draw visitors from around the world to northeast Florida.

The reconstructed Fort Mose will have lasting impacts for St. Johns County, our State, and our Nation for generations to come.

So congratulations from Florida's Fifth Congressional District, to, again, the Fort Mose Historic State Park, and to all who have been involved in bringing this amazing story to life.

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

VISIT TO THE TEXAS SOUTHERN BORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 9, 2023, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, it is our first week back from what I guess we refer to as Christmas or winter break, and at least 60 of us Republicans spent a couple days down at the Texas border to analyze one more thing, the complete disaster that we have going on with regard to what I will refer to as illegal immigration.

I will summarize one more time for the American public and for my colleagues what we find when we go down there.

First of all, it is apparent, in December of 2023, we will one more time hit an all-time high in the number of people who are let into our country. We are going to clear 300,000.

I remind the body that, as recently as 3 years ago, that number, the monthly number, may have been 5,000 or 10,000. So we have gone up by a factor of 30 times as many people crossing the border.

Sometimes comments out there made by the President imply that it is going to be very, very difficult to find a way to prevent 300,000 people from crossing the border every month. I remind the American public, without Congress doing anything, the prior administration had that number under 10,000.

I also want to point out these people are coming from all around the globe.

We were down in the Del Rio sector, the Eagle Pass entryway. Now, we are just talking here about people who formally check in with the Border Patrol. In the 33 days prior to us coming down there, people came in from 61 different countries.

Among the over 300,000 who come across in an average month, about 9,000 are unaccompanied minors. Can you imagine in this country, I mean, can you imagine us sending children to another place around the globe, a 12-year-old without either of their parents?

This is routine at the southern border. We saw one room where we were told, the prior week, there were 300 unaccompanied minors, people under 18, in that room at one time.

There is no appropriate oversight. When these people claim that they want sponsors in the country that are related to them somehow, an aunt, an uncle, whatever, we don't do DNA tests. We have no idea if—and it probably in some cases is—it is human trafficking.

The United States, instead of sending them back to their country of origin and having the courts in Guatemala or Brazil or wherever determine where this child goes, we will deliver them anywhere. The cartels will put a name on a T shirt and say, deliver this child to 123 Elm Street, and the U.S. Government kind of plays like UPS. We just take that child and deliver them wherever they want.

We have no idea whether the people who take care of them are good sponsors or bad sponsors; if they claim they are relatives, are they relatives or not?

I would suggest, as we debate in the next month what we are going to do with President Biden, our Republican negotiators add an addition to H.R. 2, a bill which we passed about 2 years ago, that we will stop taking unaccompanied minors in this country. As a matter of fact, we should stop taking people without both parents here, because, in America, we should be trying to keep families together.

Right now, the Border Patrol, through no fault of their own, are assisting young children here without either parent. As a matter of fact, sometimes they get children so young, they cannot yet talk, and then they have to try to track somebody down or, in some cases, just send them to foster care.

I hope the American public realizes that, by creating the perception around the world that now is the time that anybody can come into the United States as long as they claim asylum or, once they get into United States, we never try to deport them, we have people dying.

We heard another story when we were in Eagle Pass of a mother and two of her children who almost drowned in the Rio Grande. Fortunately, our wonderful Border Patrol was able to drag them out and at least save the mom and one child, but one child did die.

This is not unusual when we send the green light, providing you have the

Mexican drug cartels helping you across. Not only are people dying in the Rio Grande River; they are dying in the Pacific Ocean as people try to get around a fence that goes—I am guessing here—about a quarter of a mile into the Pacific Ocean.

I was down there a little while ago in San Diego. They were told that very day they had pulled someone out of the ocean. We were also told that the Mexican Government finds more people drowning in the Pacific Ocean on their side of the fence than our side of the fence.

We, again, heard about people sneaking across between the designated entryways, dehydrating to death in the New Mexico desert, in the Arizona desert. This should never happen, and the American people, generous as they are, they go out in the desert and put gallons of water, hoping that people who are going to dehydrate to death find the water in time.

Nevertheless, the current hodgepodge down there does result in deaths in the Pacific Ocean, deaths in the Rio Grande, and deaths in the Arizona and New Mexico deserts, and I think the people who continue on with the policy or pretend like it is some sort of mystery how we got here are at fault for those deaths.

One more time, we heard that the primary beneficiary down there is the Mexican drug cartels, that they are the ones who are now making more money sneaking people across the border than they do even selling drugs.

I personally heard, somebody was telling me in Wisconsin, in my district, somebody from India was paying \$70,000 to get here. Now, of course, once that person gets here, they are kind of tied down. In this case, they felt that person, after working 3 years, will have paid off his \$70,000.

However, when it comes to other countries, places like Guatemala or Nicaragua, the cartels kind of have the family back home as hostages to make sure that the person who came in this country eventually pays their 10 or \$12,000.

The next thing we find out is—I talked to a woman who was in charge of the medical analysis of the people coming across the border—and she got a little bit emotional—all the sexual assaults that are happening, which isn't surprising, because you have got to remember that the southern border is run by the Mexican drug cartels.

Apparently they do a good job of making the pitch how wonderful it would be on the trip, how wonderful it would be to go to America. However, again, the number of sexual assaults as we push people through the southern border, through the Mexican drug cartels, is something that is on the people that favor this policy and don't get rid of this policy.

The next thing pointed out is that people who come across the southern border are not necessarily poor people. They read the advertisements or find

the advertisements on social media, and they come here. The Border Patrol points out the clothes that people wear and whether they look particularly emaciated or not. They point out that frequently people are coming from other countries and throw away their ID. However, maybe you have somebody who is from Cuba. They go to Chile first when they leave Cuba, and then eventually they come to the United States, not because they were starving in Chile. They come to the United States because you make more money than Chile. We are a very wealthy country and, if you work hard, you are able to make money. Additionally, maybe the welfare benefits are more generous in the United States.

In any event, do not fall for the myth that people are coming here because they are emaciated and starving, and it is all they can do. They frequently—it is apparent to the Border Patrol—are by the standards of their home country, be it Brazil, be it Venezuela, be it Cuba, they just can make more money in the United States.

□ 1130

I think before the American public believes that that is an appropriate way to come here, the American public ought to stop and realize that with well over 1 billion people in China and India, just to pick two countries, if we have a policy of anybody who can just make more money in the United States can come here, then we can find ourselves with tens of millions more people and eventually hundreds of millions of more people here. I would guess, Mr. Speaker, if you talk to all the people in China and talk to all the people in India, a very high percentage would rather come to America. As it becomes more and more apparent that we have a President who doesn't care what is going on at the border, more and more people will come here.

I also want to point out that by having people come here, it drives down the wages for other people. We know there are powerful people who lobby us and who tell us that they don't like paying American workers so great a wage. There was a time when the Democratic Party at least pretended to care about the low-wage worker, but there is no question as we continue to let 300,000-plus people here a month ultimately it will drive down wages and hurt the American workers who are already here.

It will also create a situation in which people are sending these people back to their country of origin, but it also creates a situation as we have so many people checking in at the designated entryways that the Border Patrol provides for people, the Border Patrol will not have the manpower necessary to patrol what is going on between designated entryways, and that is how we get the drugs in this country that are killing over 100,000 Americans a year.

I have said before—I am old enough to remember the Vietnam war—in the

Vietnam war there were all sorts of articles and comments about the number of American troops who were dying. In 12 years in Vietnam, about 57,000 Americans died. Every year twice that many die of illegal drugs in the United States. Obviously, one of the first things we ought to do is cut off the spigot at the southern border, but the Biden administration does not care, and the drugs keep flowing across the border and our young Americans keep dying twice as many every year as died 12 years in Vietnam.

I will mention one more time that they get here or they frequently come here because of advertisements on social media around the world. These advertisements, of course, make things look good. I think the United States has to get out there and try to explain, once we enforce our border, that it is not all going to be that good, they may wind up sitting on the Mexican side of the border, and they may not wind up in the United States at all.

Again, I repeat, in that sector alone, which is one of nine sectors on the southern border, in the prior month, people came here from 61 different countries including countries, by the way, whose government may not necessarily be favorable to the United States and may wish the United States ill. We haven't had horrible terrorist attacks within the United States, but I think all Americans should remember 9/11 and remember right now you are dealing with a country who wants to wish the United States ill. We have a lot of single men coming here from countries all around the world and countries like say Syria, or Iran, or say the Houthis out of Yemen, there has never been an easier time to come into this country and put yourself in a position in which you can kill many Americans through terrorist attacks, destroy some of the American electrical grid. That is what is happening.

Again, I will point out that a lot of single men are coming across that border.

Mr. Speaker, ask yourself: Why are so many single men coming across the border?

So, in any event, I beg for Republican leadership—and I don't think that there is any hope that President Biden cares anymore but we used to have under 10,000 people cross the southern border a month, and that was before we built any wall which we should be building—now is the time to go back to the policies that were in effect 3 years ago when we had 10,000 people crossing the border.

Some people say to me: GLENN, why are they doing this?

They are doing this because they want to change America. Mr. Speaker, I just gave you statistics on people coming across the southern border. I want to also point out that few people are being deported. You would think that you wouldn't want everybody to come here, but at least once somebody committed a crime here that at least then you would kick somebody out.

Now, I was here under President Trump, when President Trump was perhaps rightfully criticized for not deporting enough people in this country who had broken the law. Believe it or not, under the Biden administration, we are deporting people at one-fourth to one-fifth the rate of the Trump administration who wasn't deporting enough people.

Think about that, Mr. Speaker. President Trump was criticized for not kicking out enough people when they broke the laws, and President Biden is kicking people out at about 20 to 25 percent of that rate.

What conclusion can you draw, Mr. Speaker, that he wants good people to come to this country or the appropriate conclusion that he wants anybody under the sun coming into this country?

As far as people who feel we are being mean by not letting people in the country, last fall I attended a ceremony in which new people who had come here legally became American citizens. We are now, I believe, in the next year when the final numbers are released, over 1 million people managed to become American citizens by doing it legally.

They are appropriately vetted, they have stayed in America for a while, and if you talk to them, Mr. Speaker, it is truly a joy. I haven't had anybody talk about serious proposals to reduce that 1 million figure. We are now bringing people in legally at the highest rates since 2006, and I wouldn't be surprised when the new numbers are out if new people are being sworn in at a greater rate than at any time in this century.

If anybody in the Republican leadership has any influence on the Biden administration, then they should do what they can to bring these numbers back under the 10,000 figure, and they should do what they can to begin deporting people who are in this country who shouldn't be here. Let's face it, if some of these people who have borrowed \$12 or \$20 or \$70,000 begin to be deported so that they no longer know whether they are going to be in the United States long enough to pay off the drug cartels, we are going to have a dramatic decrease in the number of people coming here.

So the next issue that has not changed since I was here before is we continue to have the war between Ukraine and Russia. I don't read anything about the Biden administration making any efforts to try and end that war. That is a war in which both countries should be very concerned about their young people, and both countries have shortages of their population. Ukraine has the second lowest birth rate in the world trailing only South Korea. Russia has a low birth rate and also suffers from so many of their young people trying to get out of the country.

Nevertheless, rather than approach France or Israel or Turkiye to try to negotiate some sort of truce there, the

administration seems perfectly happy to allow the carnage to go on. Not only is this a humanitarian disaster in its own right, but it creates a situation in which the U.S.' stature in the world continues to decline.

Since this war has begun, we have driven Russia and China together. They should both be our friends, but instead they are both more likely our enemies. It is the same thing with Iran, as we drive Iran and Russia together. At least we are told, we are supposed to be cautious about Iran; they are trying to make nuclear weapons. However, as long as the war goes on, Iran and Russia become closer and closer.

The solution clearly is to work through some sort of peace. People will say that we can't negotiate with Vladimir Putin. I remember the 1950s—I don't remember it personally—but you read about in the 1950s when we had the Korean war. In the Korean war the head of Red China was Mao Zedong, who may have been the greatest mass murderer in history.

Did Eisenhower say that we have to let this war go on and on and on, because we don't have 100 percent of what we want? We have to let it go on and on and on because we won't negotiate with the Communist Chinese?

No. President Eisenhower realized the world would be more stable; we now have a line between North Korea and South Korea. We haven't had a war there in almost 70 years now. Nevertheless, that is when we had a President Eisenhower who realized the world is safer when we don't have these hot wars going on.

Now, President Biden just sits there: Oh, we can't negotiate with Vladimir Putin, he is a bad person. Oh, Ukraine is not yet prepared to end the war, so we just have to let this thing go on for years.

We have had, we guess, over 30,000 dead on each side in countries which have such shortages of young people already.

I urge President Biden and maybe some of the people around him to think: What can I do to end this war?

Wouldn't it be a more stable world if we went back to where we were a couple of years ago and we slowly worked both Ukraine and Russia into the regular group of nations?

We hope that happens.

There is a third issue that has come to our attention. Yesterday, on my subcommittee which is a subcommittee of the Oversight and Accountability Committee, one more time we looked at the effect of offensive progressive policies in the military.

We currently have the head of the joint chiefs in what I thought was an inflammatory statement said he wanted to reduce the number of White officers in the military down to 42 percent. I think currently it is high 60s or something.

In other words, he wants to overtly have racial background used to decide who gets promoted in the military.

First of all, that is opposed to merit. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, if our military is ever not number one, then we will have big problems in this country. Be that as it may, apparently, President Biden's first pick for head of the joint chiefs, thinks the most important thing is to put people in silos and say: Now we have to promote the Native American; now we have to promote the Hispanic American—whatever—and we aren't just going to promote the best people. That, by itself, is a problem.

Secondly, it is divisive. There is a reason why the hard left likes this DEI. The Marxists have not been able to take down America because we have such a strong and prosperous middle class. We love being Americans.

Marxists like to believe that they can destroy countries by setting the middle class against the rich and create a conflict or a civil war-type situation and destroy that country.

They realize now that they can't do it. The American middle class is too strong. Their religious beliefs are so strong. That is not the way they can take down America from within.

So they are coming to plan B. Plan B is that we are going to divide Americans by race, and we are going to say that because we have divided it by race, then we have achieved greater diversity, and with diversity comes a better corporation, a better college, what have you.

It bothers me the press never calls them out on how this diversity is supposed to make things better.

I suppose, normally, when you think of diversity, Mr. Speaker, you think of people who have had different life experiences. Maybe they had different majors. Maybe they had different jobs. Maybe if you are talking about the military, it would be somebody who was in the Navy and somebody who was in the Air Force where you had genuine different viewpoints on things.

However, the theory here they are talking about is racial differences.

Now, given that for the purpose of this sort of thing, you self-identify, and as we have more intermarriage in the United States which just by itself is a sign of nonprejudice, you are going to have some people who might be say one-half Mexican, one-half Cuban, one-half Jamaican, and one-half Korean.

Apparently, the people in favor of this feel that, therefore, they are going to bring different gifts or different viewpoints to the table. They should be challenged on that by the media.

If we have two kids who go to Silver Spring High School here, and one is one-quarter Mexican and one is one-quarter Korean and one is one-quarter Vietnamese, and they all live on the same block, and they all were on the same basketball team, and they all hung around with the same friends and went to the same church, then I challenge the advocates for this diversity stuff to tell me how these kids are going to have such a different view of the world.

Tell me especially how for a job of Navy fighter pilot, Army Corps of Engineers, how are they going to add something different because of where their grandmother was born, a grandmother maybe they never met, maybe they never spoke to?

Maybe they never even spoke Vietnamese, they never spoke Spanish, or they never even saw these countries, but we now have an ideology here in which people are supposed to bring something to the table because their grandmother or grandfather came from such and such a country.

It is ridiculous on its face.

□ 1145

Nevertheless, we have to put up with this praising of diversity as somehow bringing something to the table. It is not just the military, of course. It is Big Business, Big Education, and whatever. The people should be challenged on that.

The only reason you could possibly say it results in diversity is if you really are a racist and believe you have different gifts or talents genetically because you are one-quarter Cuban or one-quarter Nigerian or what have you. It is something that we ought to criticize. It is something we ought to get rid of.

By the way, one of the things we learned in the committee is that, right now, the military will pay people up to \$190,000 a year to be experts on diversity.

Do we want more diversity experts in this country? The cost is bad, but just as bad as the cost is that these people, to justify their existence, are going to run around and try to inflame people and sic people one against the other.

On our American seal, it says, "E Pluribus Unum," "out of many, one." We are supposed to take people from all around the globe who come here and now view themselves as equals and together with each other.

Not surprisingly, the Marxist people who like DEI in the military and other places view it as the opposite. They want to take people who are happy, well-adjusted Americans and say: You should be unhappy. You should not view yourself as an American. You should view yourself as a Cuban American. You should view yourself as a Burmese American. America is prejudiced against you. You should walk around with a chip on your shoulder and ask for something because your ancestors came from Burma or because your ancestors came from Brazil.

Clearly, the Marxists want to do this because this is a way to destroy America, to set people against each other. This is a way to say every promotion, every hiring, every government contract is a contest between groups, and in every election, we should vote for the party that does the most to look out for our group.

Mr. Speaker, I beg the President to rescind his drive toward DEI bureaucrats running the Pentagon.

I wish we would do something about the current head of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who has just brazenly said he is going to discriminate against White people when it comes to promotions, and get back to the wonderful America that we had 20 or 30 years ago.

Examples of this DEI occur not only in the military but in other governmental agencies in the world. My hope is that as our negotiators negotiate the budget for the calendar year, October 30, all of these DEI bureaucrats are kicked out of the American Government and we get back to where we are Americans first and foremost and back to a time when merit determines who is promoted.

Mr. Speaker, those are three issues I hope the press would pick up on, and I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Mr. JEFFRIES) for today on account of a family matter.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 49 minutes a.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Tuesday, January 16, 2024, at noon for morning-hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

EC-2919. A letter from the Director, Regulations Management Division, Rural Development Innovation Center, Rural Business-Cooperative Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) Regulation: Tribes and Tribal Business References To Provide Equitable Access [Docket: RBS-23-BUSINESS-0006] (RIN: 0570-AB10) received January 3, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Agriculture.

EC-2920. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's direct final rule — Mississippi: Final Approval of State Underground Storage Tank Program Revisions, Codification, and Incorporation by Reference [EPA-R04-UST-2023-0410; FRL-11400-02-R4] received January 4, 2023, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

EC-2921. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Air Plan Approval; Kentucky; Revisions to Jefferson County Emissions Monitoring and Reporting [EPA-R04-OAR-2023-0097; FRL-11564-04-R4] received January 4, 2024, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.