

More than 350 individuals whose names appear on the terrorist watch list were found trying to cross our southern border. Surely there are many more who have successfully made their way through the border.

Mr. Speaker, what will it take for the President, his administration, impeached Secretary Mayorkas, and congressional Democrats to wake up to this impending disaster?

I hope it doesn't come to that.

For the sake of all Tennesseans, I will stand firm to support policies that secure our borders.

#### HONORING THE LIFE OF JUAN MALDONADO

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

Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and times of my good friend, Juan Maldonado.

Juan served his country faithfully during the Vietnam war. His perseverance and determination later translated into public service and political activism. During the Carter administration, Juan served on the Economic Opportunity Council and proudly represented the United States on an official delegation to Latin America.

As State chairman of the Mexican-American Democrats and a local Democrat, he paved the way for Tejano Democrats in south Texas working to elect the first Hispanics to public office in the Rio Grande Valley.

He was a devout Catholic, devoted educator and coach, and an institution in our community.

We will remember his faith, his devotion to south Texas, and his service to the people of the Rio Grande Valley.

Today, let us honor his life, accomplishments, and impact on our community and our country.

#### CONGRESSIONAL RUGBY CAUCUS

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

Mr. MOONEY. Mr. Speaker, as a former avid rugby player at Dartmouth College and founding member of the Congressional Rugby Caucus, it is my honor to welcome the U.S. Men's Eagles to the House of Representatives.

Tomorrow, the Men's Eagles host Scotland right here in our Nation's Capital City.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage you to watch the game.

Scotland is a nation with a proud rugby heritage, and rugby continues to grow in popularity in the United States of America.

This game on Friday will be a great rematch as 6 years ago the USA defeated Scotland in a historic upset of the number 6 ranked team in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I welcome the Scottish team to Washington and wish both teams a good game.

#### HONORING THE OLD PINK TAVERN

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the loss of a local institution, The Old Pink, a neighborhood tavern where western New Yorkers ended a night out on the town with a drink and one of The Old Pink's famous steak sandwiches.

On June 17, a fire broke out at The Old Pink, and it was damaged beyond repair.

The Old Pink was founded by Kevin and Dennis Brinkworth in 1968 and has remained in the family since, with Molly Brinkworth managing the iconic landmark for the last three decades.

Molly's famous last call at Buffalo's 4 a.m. closing time gave everyone a heads up that was their last drink and to find a ride home or figure out their next stop.

As the saying goes: You don't have to go home; you just can't stay here.

While Buffalo has undergone numerous changes over the years, The Old Pink was a constant. Countless bartenders would head to The Old Pink after their own last call for a nightcap and late dinner, further cementing the bar's legendary status in Buffalo.

To Molly and her team who gave us so many unforgettable nights, we are heartbroken at the loss of this institution, an irreplaceable part of Buffalo's nightlife. We offer our hopeful cheers to the idea that perhaps this isn't The Old Pinks's last call.

Slainte.

#### HONORING BARBARA "BOBBIE" STONE

(Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MIKE GARCIA of California. Mr. Speaker, today it is with profound respect and pride that I stand to honor a remarkable patriot from my district, Ms. Barbara "Bobbie" Stone.

Bobbie, who recently passed away at the age of 102, served as a U.S. marine during World War II and was a formidable member of America's Greatest Generation.

On this past Memorial Day, we recognized Bobbie at the Santa Clarita Eternal Valley event, celebrating her and other women's crucial roles in our military history. Despite her having Alzheimer's, her spirit of gratitude was evident and her legacy was undeniable.

Bobbie was more than a veteran; she was a beacon of courage and an inspiration to all who knew her. Her strength, patriotism, and pioneering spirit were immeasurable. Like the heroes who served before and beside her, she fought not just for victory abroad but for recognition and equality at home.

As we honor her memory, let's remember Bobbie as she was: a fierce warrior, a dedicated marine, and a cherished member of our community.

Heaven has gained what we have lost, and she is now by the Lord's side. May God bless Bobbie, and may God bless the United States.

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ELLZEY) laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

WASHINGTON, DC,

July 11, 2024.

I hereby designate the period from Thursday, July 11, 2024, through Sunday, July 21, 2024, as a "district work period" under section 3(z) of House Resolution 5.

MIKE JOHNSON,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

#### AND STILL I RISE

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, and still I rise, very proud to be a Member of the House of Representatives and very proud to be a citizen of the United States of America.

I love my country. I love it because of what it stands for. I love the words in the Pledge of Allegiance: liberty and justice for all. I love the words in the Declaration of Independence: all persons created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I love my country notwithstanding the fact that my country has not always loved me. I am a son of the segregated South. There were times in my lifetime when I had to go to back doors to enter facilities, when I had to drink from colored water fountains, and when I literally had to step off the sidewalk so that others could pass.

□ 1200

Notwithstanding all of this, I love my country. Today, I rise to call to the attention of my country and all who are assembled the fact that August 20 is Slavery Remembrance Day because it was on August 20 of 1619 that the White Lion docked in a place called Point Comfort, near where we now call Norfolk, Virginia.

On the White Lion, there were 20 persons of African ancestry. These were the first 20 persons introduced into slavery by way of the colonies in what would become the United States of America.

Notwithstanding August 20 of 1619, which was a seminal moment in time that has impacted the rest of time in this country, I still rise and say: I love my country.

Mr. Speaker, it is appropriate for me at this time to pause. The minority leader has arrived, and I have a duty,

responsibility, and an obligation to accord him time.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES).

Mr. JEFFRIES. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN), my good friend, for yielding and for his leadership.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in a bitter-sweet moment to pay tribute to a beloved member of my team and a dedicated longtime employee of the House of Representatives.

For 37 years, Rena Diamond has been a fixture in the south Brooklyn community, across an illustrious career in which she has worked for three different Members of Congress.

She has served the last 11 years as a constituent services representative in my office, for 26 years before that with Representative JERRY NADLER and former Representative Steven Solarz.

That is 37 years of service, 37 years of dedication, and 37 years of incredible commitment to the people of Brooklyn and to the community at large.

None of what we do here in the House of Representatives will be possible without the hard work and dedication of our staff, particularly those who are on the front lines in the community back home in our districts.

Each and every day, each and every week, each and every month, each and every year, Rena has engaged in such an intimate and compassionate way with the people of Brooklyn, helping community members with solving immigration challenges, resolving Social Security or Medicare issues, and securing veterans' benefits for countless individuals who have served our country.

Hardworking, diligent, consistent, and compassionate, Rena has served faithfully in her role through the ups and downs of government service, including, most recently, a once-in-a-century pandemic, which was a time of incredible challenge for the people of Brooklyn and for our country.

Over the years, thousands of constituents have expressed their gratitude and appreciation for the incredible assistance that Rena has so capably provided. Her excellence is widely known, having been recognized as an exemplary staffer by the Congressional Management Foundation and a recipient of numerous acknowledgements and accommodations.

Rena has been the consummate example of what a public servant should represent. The Eighth Congressional District of New York and the borough of Brooklyn owe a debt of gratitude to Rena Diamond that we can never repay for her years of excellent service and incredible dedication to our community.

On behalf of the people of the Eighth Congressional District, we thank Rena for her amazing service. She will be deeply missed, but we congratulate her and wish her nothing but the best on her retirement.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, still I rise to commemorate August 20

as Slavery Remembrance Day because, as I have indicated many times on this floor and done so today, it is the date that the White Lion, a ship with 20 persons of African ancestry, docked at a place called Point Comfort near where we now call Norfolk, Virginia.

It was a moment in time that has an impact on the rest of time in this country because for 246 years more than 10 million persons of African ancestry were brought to this country to sacrifice. They sacrificed such that this very building was a product of their hands. They sacrificed to build roads and bridges. They were the persons who sacrificed to plant the crops and harvest and feed the Nation. For 246 years, they sacrificed. Yet, to this day, they have not been properly acknowledged for the sacrifice that they suffered. They have not been acknowledged.

We have acknowledged others. We have acknowledged the Confederate soldiers who fought to maintain slavery. We did so in 1956. We have acknowledged others. I think it is time to acknowledge them because, truth be told, they were the economic foundational mothers and fathers of the country. This country's economic success was built on 246 years of sacrifice made by persons who were enslaved in our great country.

Why not honor them for their sacrifice? Why not allow them to have, at last, the honor that they have earned by virtue of their sacrifice?

This is what we will attempt to do on August 20. We have been doing so now for a number of years. On August 20, Slavery Remembrance Day, we plan to have a major event right here in the Capitol, right here in the facility, just off these grounds in the Capitol Visitor Center.

We plan to honor them with a day of remembrance. I am honored to say that there are many persons who will be in attendance, including the men of the Masonic Order. They will come and pay tribute, as I will.

It is about more than tribute. It is about legislation that we have that we will present to do what we did not do. That is not only pay tribute to them, but also to have those who participated in this enslavement by way of their predecessor institutions—I am talking about banks and insurance companies—we have legislation to seek atonement for this behavior of their predecessor institutions.

More importantly, we will have a final opportunity on that day, as we will on August 20 and all future days, to ask and remind people that we have legislation pending to accord a Congressional Gold Medal to the enslaved. We are asking the President of the United States to present them with a Presidential Medal of Freedom. Give them in death what they never had in life, some semblance of freedom.

We plan to acknowledge people who have been helpful with this journey. Mr. STENY HOYER, who at the time was the majority leader, was helpful in get-

ting legislation through the House to acknowledge Slavery Remembrance Day.

Today, I rise as a progenitor of August 20 as Slavery Remembrance Day. I rise today as a scion of the enslaved Africans, whose lives were sacrificed for 246 years to make America great. Thereafter, many of their lives were sacrificed in something called convict leasing to continue slavery under another name. Thereafter, they were treated as second-class citizens, my ancestors, with something called lawful segregation.

Lawful segregation, which was a form of invidious discrimination, which was a form of racism, all of these things happened. We can't deny them. The truth is being told, but I am saying to you: Notwithstanding all of these things, I still love my country. I am saying to you: Notwithstanding all of these things, my country still hasn't done enough to acknowledge the history and acknowledge the suffering of those whose lives were sacrificed to make America great.

August 20, we plan to continue the process of acknowledgement. We plan to continue the process of honoring and causing people to understand that, in this country, notwithstanding our history, we can atone.

There is time to atone, which brings me to the last piece of legislation that we will call to the attention of persons assembled. This piece of legislation calls for a department of reconciliation.

We have not reconciled. We have not. There are many things that we need to reconcile. Slavery is one of them. The things that happened to the indigenous Americans, the aboriginal Americans, who we call Indians, were unconscionable. They suffered injustices that no one else has suffered in this country.

We ought to atone. We ought to have a department of reconciliation with a secretary of reconciliation, who reports directly to the President of the United States of America, with the sole mission of bringing about atonement and reconciliation for our many transgressions.

If America is to be America for all Americans, we have to do this. We have to have the atonement.

It has to also include the many persons of Asian ancestry, whose ancestors came here and built the railroads, whose ancestors were interned simply because there was a war going on and they happened to be of a certain ancestry, that their ancestors were related to the war, but they were not. Many of them were Americans, and they were interned unjustly and unlawfully, in my opinion. We have to atone for this.

We also have to atone for what happened with Texas. I am a Representative from the State of Texas. I proudly wear a Texas tie when I am on the floor, if not a tie celebrating the United States of America in some way. This is my way of showing my patriotism. I also sing the national anthem. I stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

We have to atone for what happened in Texas. Texas is the only State in the Union to secede twice because of slavery. Texas left Mexico because Mexico said: No more slavery, Texas.

Texas said: Well, if we can't have slavery, we will leave Mexico, and they did. Texas did, and then became a part of the United States.

Texas then left the United States because of slavery.

We have to atone for these things. We have to acknowledge that they occurred.

On August 20, we have to bring to the attention of our country the fact that we will honor those whose lives have been sacrificed, and we should have a department of reconciliation in addition to Slavery Remembrance Day to honor those persons whose lives were sacrificed.

Mr. Speaker, it is always an honor to stand here in the well of the House. I do love my country, but my country has not always loved me.

It is difficult sometimes to love that which does not love you, but I do, and I have, and I will, because, the truth be told, notwithstanding all of the things that have happened and many that have happened to me personally—I have celebrated my 25th birthday for the third time. I am now into my fourth 25th—all of these things, it is my belief that, if something bad has to happen to you now, let it happen to you in the United States of America.

□ 1215

If you have to go through a divorce, if your spouse is going to leave you, let it happen in the United States of America.

If you have to suffer the alienation of affection from your pet, your dog bites you, let your dog bite you in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding all of the things that have happened, I still believe that the best place to make change and to bring about liberty and justice for all is the United States of America.

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

#### JOYS AND CONCERNS

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

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ELLZEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. ELLZEY. Mr. Speaker, the first job of any government, municipal, State, Federal, is to protect her citizens.

I begin this speech by saying we are not protecting our citizens, particularly on the southern border of which Texas is the front line in a battle to protect our people.

We are losing 200 Americans every day to fentanyl poisoning, the compounds of which are coming from China, manufactured by the cartels, and killing wartime numbers of Americans. In World War II, we lost 305 Americans every day fighting tyranny overseas. Today, we are losing 300 Americans every day to fentanyl poisoning and drug overdose. We must start there.

As many of you know, from time to time, I address the House floor with my version of a speech that my childhood pastor would give every Sunday called "Joys and Concerns".

During this, he would highlight some of the remarkable things that people would accomplish in our district. He would also take this time to bring up prayer requests, and in that moment we, as a congregation, would unite in prayer for community and those in need.

Today, before we discuss some of my district's outstanding accomplishments, I will talk about something that we must unite on as a country and as a people, and I will talk about a very important experience that I had just this last week.

We just returned from a weeklong trip to the Baltics, and during that visit, my colleagues and I met with senior leadership from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, in the Baltics, to discuss critical security issues and the daily threats that come with being Putin's neighbor. They are the neighbors of Russia and Belarus, a vassal of Russia, and they are Russia's neighbor to the West. They share a front line.

One diplomat said it best: Ukraine isn't just fighting for us; Ukraine is fighting instead of us, because his people understand what life looked like under Russian rule or Soviet rule, which these days looks very much the same.

They understand the brutality, the oppression, and the attempts to wipe away their way of life. While in Lithuania, we visited the Museum of Occupations and Freedom Fights. The museum is housed in the former KGB headquarters and during World War II, the Gestapo of the Nazis.

The basement was the prison and execution room, and it is still perfectly preserved, as if the KGB just got up and left one day. They immediately turned it into a museum. Over 1,000 people were murdered in that very basement with bullet shots to the head. Countless more withstood brutal interrogation and torture, the pictures of which won't be shown here.

I stood in the execution room where blood stains the ground and bullet holes are still visible on the walls. Bodies were discarded up the chute and out the window and hidden in mass graves, and political prisoners were held there as recently as 1987.

This is who we are dealing with, a KGB thug ruling Russia. This is Vladimir Putin.

We know that same playbook is being unleashed on the Ukrainian people right now and that unspeakable atrocities are being committed.

Last year, I visited Bucha, a mass grave, where innocent civilians were killed during the invasion of Ukraine. Just northwest of Kyiv the forces of Vladimir Putin were aimed, intent on erasing Ukraine from the Earth. The rise of Russia under Putin's despotic regime is seeking, once again, to return to the boundaries of the former Soviet Union.

This is a threat not just to Ukraine, but a threat to Europe and to freedom on our shores around the world. As a man who spent 20 years in uniform, the father of a son who wants to spend 20 years in uniform, the last thing I want is American soldiers going overseas to fight again. That is why we must be strong.

We cannot do that if we show weakness. That is why it is so important that we show strength in the way that Reagan did, peace through strength.

We trundled into World War I and World War II by not being strong, by being isolationists. We must be involved in order to prevent that which many fear.

There is no stronger force than the human spirit and steadfast pursuit of freedom. We see this every day in the people of Ukraine. Those who choose freedom and liberty must always prevail, but we will not have a Europe or a world free and at peace until the Kremlin's systematic brutality, oppression, and aspirations of global domination are systemically dismantled and held accountable.

In John 10:10, the Bible says, "the thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy," and the thief is Satan. History has proved this time and time again, and that is exactly what Putin is carrying out in Ukraine.

In just the last 3 months, Russia has conducted targeted attacks on critical energy infrastructure across the country eight different times, attempting to cut off power and heat to communities, hospitals, and schools.

Last year, a massive dam in a Russian-controlled area of southern Ukraine was destroyed, killing hundreds of Ukrainians and destroying thousands of homes. They didn't destroy military bases. The destroyed civilians and homes.

Russia has also targeted farmland and grain silos, attempting to starve Ukrainians into surrendering.

I will add a little something about history here. We know what happened in the Holocaust. In 1931, Joseph Stalin executed the Holodomor. He killed 8 million Ukrainians by starving them of their grain.

Does this sound familiar to today? He is trying to wipe Ukraine off the map. He and his Prime Minister have said Ukraine has never existed nor will it ever exist.