

really don't know. We live in a dangerous world, and the criminal cartels that run loose on the southern border to me are just as dangerous to this Nation as the Taliban, and they are just as ruthless. Right now, they are in our own backyard.

In Texas, we are doing what we can on our own. Last week, the Governor of the State sent the Texas Rangers down to the southern border. They are being deployed in high traffic, high crime areas. The Governor has asked the National Guard to support the Texas Rangers. The Highway Patrol, the Department of Public Safety, aviation resources, and the Texas sheriffs are all part of this team to prevent the criminal element from coming into the United States. But our local law enforcement is overwhelmed, so the Federal Government needs to get its priorities straight.

Recently, at one of my town halls in August, talking about health care, an individual showed up and people in that town hall recognized who he was. His name was Ignacio Ramos. He and his wife, Monica, came just to appear at that town hall. When individuals in that town hall saw who he was, they stood, Mr. Speaker, for over 5 minutes and applauded the work of Ignacio Ramos and his partner and the work that they had done on the southern border of Texas. He and his partner, Jose Compean, were U.S. Border Patrol officers jailed for shooting a Mexican drug dealer. Their sentences were commuted, and properly so, by the prior administration. But it shows, Mr. Speaker, that our Federal Government doesn't have its priorities in order. They have them backwards.

One of the few things that our Constitution actually requires the Federal Government to do is to protect the national security of this Nation. Border security is a national security issue, and foreign criminals that have committed crimes in this Nation and been lawfully deported should be sent back home. We should do the obvious things first when it comes to national security. If a foreign national commits a felony in the United States and is deported but the home nation refuses to take back its outlaw, that country should lose foreign aid and the legal right to have its citizens come into the United States under our visa program.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THOROUGH INVESTIGATION OF ACORN WARRANTED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I am only going to speak for about a minute because I am going to be a little bit redundant.

The last couple of nights we have been talking about the ACORN organization. The ACORN organization over the past couple of decades got, you know, 30, 40, 50 million dollars for their services, quote/unquote. Now in the last authorization and appropriation bills, they have gotten \$8.5 billion, and this is an organization in just the last couple of weeks we found has been corrupt. They have been extolling the virtues of setting up a prostitution ring with young women coming into the country or being brought into the country illegally. And it is caught on television. It is caught on tapes.

It is really tragic that an organization like that should have any amount of legitimacy, let alone get taxpayers' dollars.

Tonight, I come here for a minute to say we need a thorough investigation of ACORN and why they have been authorized to get up to \$8.5 billion in taxpayers' money for the services that they perform. There is something funny going on here, and a lot of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have been reluctant to move towards an investigation. And the White House hasn't said much about this. I think probably because the President was the beneficiary of a lot of support from the ACORN organization when he was running for President.

Nevertheless, this should be investigated very thoroughly. We should not have a corrupt organization, known to be corrupt, proven to be corrupt. You see it every night on television. We should make sure that they don't get one dime of taxpayer dollars, and since they have been getting this money and we have authorized \$8.5 billion more for them to be able to utilize, there needs to be an investigation.

Now, the leader, the Republican leader of the House, has authored a letter which has been signed by many Members of the minority. I would urge Members on the majority side of the aisle to join with us in signing that letter requesting an investigation. This is something that should be done. It should not be postponed. We should get to the bottom of why ACORN got this money and why they have been doing what they have been doing.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PRAYER IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. FORBES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday of this week in the United States District Court of Northern Virginia, in Florida, Pensacola Division, a principal who served his school district for 30 years and an athletic director who served them for 40 years in a little school district in Santa Rosa County will be carried to a hearing in Federal court.

So why did over 60 Members of Congress today sign the letter standing with that principal and that athletic director and against this Federal judge? Why is it different than so many other cases? Why is it special? Because, Mr. Speaker, it is one of the first times we have literally had the potential for the criminalization of prayer in the United States of America.

What was the big crime that this principal and athletic director did? What was the great offense? This school principal, with 30 years of service, asked the athletic director of the school, who had 40 years of service, to offer a blessing before a meal that was being held for private donors to the school's athletic program.

The Federal judge for this court has set a date for this Thursday, suggesting that they could be punished with a \$5,000 fine, 6 months in prison, and the revocation of their retirement benefits. Why? Because one of them prayed. Why? Because one of them asked for the prayer. In fact, under the order issued by this judge in this court, this principal would not have been able to ask the President of the United States to speak at the school if the President concluded his speech, as he often does, with the phrase "God bless America."

If this action is allowed to stand, make no mistake, there will come a day when the Speaker of this House will be hauled into Federal court and threatened with jail because she dares to stand at that podium where you stand tonight and ask our chaplain to start our day with the prayer.

If this case stands, there will come a day when that chaplain is carried to court and threatened with jail because he offers that prayer he is asked to offer.

How far we've come from the day when 56 of the greatest Americans ever birthed pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to defend a set of rights that ultimately gave us the right to stand on this floor tonight, a set of rights that have guided this Nation through darkness and through the light. But most of all, a set of rights given to us by the very Creator, the mention of whom by this principal or this athletic director could now lead them to a jail term.

Mr. Speaker, tonight we need to ask how far we have come. And if we do, the answer is clear: Too far. It is time for Americans to simply say enough is enough.