

an 8-year-old child, how do you understand that?

Ms. LEE of California. It is hard to process that.

Ms. JAYAPAL. How do you process it? And I think that in the end, I continue to think about the ways in which we are criminalizing migrants, criminalizing people who are fleeing violence, tremendous violence in their countries.

Just the other day there was an article in *The New York Times*, I think, that talked about in Honduras, which is where many of the parents that I met with that were in that Federal prison separated from their children, many of them were from Honduras. This article described how you have two choices: You either get killed by the gangs or you leave. That is the only choice you have.

I also went to Tijuana. I think I was the first Member to go to Tijuana, and I met with a 15-year-old boy who had been shot in both knees. And he had a phone message on his cell phone from his mother who said: Please do not come back here. Just go. Just go. Get to the United States. Get to a place of safety. Seek asylum. I will be devastated to have you leave me, but I just want you to stay alive.

What parent doesn't want their child to stay alive? And this young man who talked to me was a strong young man, but he started weeping, talking about how he had to leave his mother and come to the United States as an unaccompanied child. It was devastating to hear, absolutely devastating to hear.

As we celebrate this 1-year anniversary—not celebrate, memorialize, I should say—this 1-year anniversary of this cruel, zero-humanity policy of family separation, I urge all of my colleagues to sign on to my Dignity for Detained Immigrants bill, to work in appropriations in every committee that we have, to remember that we still have children who are separated from their parents, still to this day.

We still have families that are being separated from their parents as we speak. We still do not know how many thousands more children were separated from their parents as a result of this administration's cruel policies that undermine who we are.

I see I have been joined by an incredible colleague, a leader on the Judiciary Committee, a leader in the Progressive Caucus, and also somebody who was on our trip to Texas, to the border, but also is from Texas.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE), my colleague, for her comments on this.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding.

I want to join both Congresswoman JAYAPAL and Congresswoman LEE on just reinforcing the devastation and the dastardliness of child separation from their parents. I would just like to very briefly say that this sad commemoration should equate to a commitment of zero tolerance for separating children from their families.

We should end the migrant policy that includes child separation, the position of remaining in Mexico as you seek asylum, the losing of your space, or your bed, if you are in a shelter and have to be sent back to Mexico when you actually apply for asylum. All of these migrant policies, which included child separation, clearly can devastate the families.

So I want to emphasize just one point that included my many trips to the border, including the time we had the opportunity to travel together, and I want to focus on the psychological and maybe irreparable damage that is being done particularly to children in the understandable period. That is not a technical term. I am not a sociologist or a psychologist, but in that period where the child may be somewhere between 4 and 15, or 4 and 12. Those are really years when, whether it is a boy or girl, they are bonding with mom. People must realize that those children traveled thousands of miles or 1,000-plus miles with that parent and mostly that mother, and it has been a dad.

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So that mother made a sacrifice, either out of lack of understanding of the language or signing a paper that she did not understand or thinking that she needed to separate because of the housing situation, and many of us saw the housing situation and the metallic blankets and the lack of space.

Let me just say this for the personnel on the border. We found some very empathetic personnel on the border, men and women who do their job. But the resources of the facilities are absolutely inadequate and disgraceful, and they have been like that on the border of Texas for a very long time.

So I am grateful for Congresswoman LEE and Congresswoman LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, those who realize we have to really overhaul those facilities, that will include healthcare facilities and otherwise.

But in that reunion, you might say—and there were good staff people who thought they were doing the right thing, and they were excited with the expectation. They had brought the children.

I remember two little boys. First of all, there wasn't a dry eye in the room of those of us who had come. It was just unspeakable. It was overwhelming. It brought back memories. You thought about your children or your extended family members.

So two little boys, crisp little white shirts on over at a table playing with the best red fire truck and truck that they could find. In walk mothers who went to different corners. But in walks this mother with her belongings, as I recollect, like in a pillowcase, not even a suitcase. Obviously, you have traveled 1,000 miles plus, and then you have been detained somewhere and your child went off some other place.

She comes with those welled-up eyes of expectation. She stood by that table for the longest period of time.

We all know there is no way you don't know someone is standing behind you or there is no way you don't recognize your mom even in the sight of your eye who was walking in. We know how mom and children are, mom and dad. They break that big grin, and they run like they have never run before to get into the arms of that mom and dad.

This mom stood there with her pillowcase belongings for the longest period of time, and those little boys continued to play and ignore and play and ignore and play and ignore. I almost wanted to reach out and turn that little face back here.

There was no way they did not know mom was standing there, but the detachment was so devastating. When that mom put her arms around precious little boy, he was so stiff that I knew this was going to take a very long time.

What I was fearful of was, where they would be destined, there would be no resources for his treatment, for his ability to understand what happened.

How callous this policy is, to date, that there are still some separated children; and with the leadership we have now, we don't know whether they will do it again.

So I thank the gentlewoman for doing this because, even now, my eyes well up because children are children, and we will never repair the damage, but we must stop this policy. It must be zero tolerance. We must not have this policy ever again. It is truly inhumane, and it is not representative of the values of this Nation, in spite of some of the history we have had as a country.

This is a nation where people believe in that sense of dignity and equality. Our values say that. We need to act on that and, certainly, humanity, which is so very important.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Texas for her leadership, for her words, and for her work on this issue.

I would just say that, as we get ready to close, here, this Special Order hour, we are thinking, keeping in our minds and in our hearts the thousands of families across this country and across the world that have been separated from their children, and we will do everything we can to continue to fight for justice.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

SOUTHERN BORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about the crisis at our southern border.

Obviously, we have a big problem on the southern border. If you have been paying attention to what is on TV, at the beginning of the year, about 50,000 people were arriving here every month. We are now, we believe, at 100,000 people illegally entering this country.

One of the reasons this is happening, it is not surprising that people from other countries think the United States does not enforce their immigration laws. Many local governments are sanctuary cities, sanctuary counties, or even sanctuary States, sending the clear message to people in other parts of the world: the United States does not enforce their immigration laws.

Sadly, even in my home State of Wisconsin, the Governor of Wisconsin pulled the Wisconsin Air National Guard off the border, sending the message that a Governor of a State does not apparently believe we should be spending money enforcing our immigration laws.

The chief executives of the biggest city in the country and the biggest State in the country have both made it clear that they will provide, or want to provide, free medical care to people who come here.

By the way, I should point out that, right now, at a time when so many Americans have huge deductibles, they are almost better off being here illegally and getting the free medical care than our citizens are.

In any event, it is not surprising that we are flooded with people who want to come here.

Another evidence of that is this body's refusal to appropriate enough money to build the wall. Now, in the last week—at least, it has been put out there—we have the majority party's suggestion or guidance for where we are going to spend money in the next budget.

Now, Madam Speaker, given the crisis at the border, you would think the biggest increase in the next budget compared to the 2020 budget would be at Homeland Security—but, no.

So the people back home understand, when we pass our annual appropriations, when we fund the budget, we break it into 12 different subcommittees, subcommittees like Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies; subcommittees like State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs; subcommittees like Defense and the subcommittee in charge of protecting our southern border, Homeland Security.

Of the 12 groups that this body is going to vote on, which classification is getting the smallest increase in this budget? Homeland Security. One more time, the Congress itself is sending the message that we do not take our immigration laws seriously.

It is time for us to send the message to people abroad that they should be taking our immigration laws seriously. After all, given the complete irresponsibility from so many politicians up here, it doesn't surprise me people

think we don't take our immigration laws seriously.

What can we do?

Well, recently FAIR came out with a report in which they guessed that maybe over half the people who are in this country illegally are getting some sort of public benefit. When I went down to the border in Arizona awhile back and talked to Customs people who went through people's wallets and people's purses, they found evidence of people receiving public benefits who were not citizens here.

I am glad our HUD Secretary is beginning to look into the, I believe, large number of people here illegally taking advantage of low-income housing.

I want to point out, there is nothing wrong with legal immigrants coming here. Neither myself nor Donald Trump, who ran on this issue, want to decrease the 700,000 people who are sworn in every year as legal immigrants, and we do not want to decrease the 4 million people who are here on legal work visas. As a matter of fact, we said, if need be, we would even increase that.

But to have so many people come here illegally is, no question, a huge problem. I would suggest to President Trump, because you can't wait for Congress to do anything around here, that he send a message that, when Secretary Carson finds people in low-income housing who are here illegally, they should be deported.

I certainly have anecdotal evidence from back home that people who are here illegally are benefiting from SNAP benefits; and people who are, again, here illegally taking—not deporting everybody, but if they are taking advantage of our public benefits, again, they should return home and try to make a living in their home country or get benefits available in their home country.

The next thing I would like to see happen, I know it is something President Trump ran on—I think it is time he rings the bell—is ending birthright citizenship. Birthright citizenship is something that can cause somebody to become legal here whose parents are illegal.

We should not reward illegal behavior by having people come here illegally and have a child in the country; not to mention, it is not right to encourage pregnant people to just fly here and have a baby in this country and wind up having their family stay here legally by that way as well.

One thing that intrigues me is that apparently Canada is looking to get rid of their birthright citizenship law, one of the few other Western countries that has it. It would be very embarrassing if Justin Trudeau's Canada gets rid of the antiquated birthright citizenship law ahead of Donald Trump's United States.

In any event, I strongly encourage President Trump to counteract the message being sent by so many other

elected officials and make it clear that our immigration laws are to be taken seriously.

Please, Mr. Trump, send the message. Congress is paralyzed. Stand up not only to the people overtly discouraging and ignoring our immigration laws, but stand up to the Chamber of Commerce lobby and say that, in the future, we want our immigrants to be picked, merit-based immigrants, not whoever decides to break the law.

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

BLACK MATERNAL HEALTH CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS) for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ADAMS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There was no objection.

Ms. ADAMS. Madam Speaker, I rise today as the founder and co-chair of the Black Maternal Health Caucus. I want to take this time to briefly speak about the importance of Black maternal health.

Our country is in the midst of a national public crisis. Black mothers are dying.

Across the country, Black women from all walks of life are dying from preventable pregnancy-related complications at three to four times the rate of non-Hispanic White women. Sixty percent of maternal deaths are preventable. Their infants are twice as likely to die by their first birthday as infants born to White mothers.

Black women are 50 percent more likely than non-Hispanic White women to give birth preterm, accounting for more than half of the disparity in infant mortality rates among Black and non-Hispanic White women.

Reducing this gap through interventions like better medical care and increased social support can improve maternal outcomes for African American women, while also reducing racial disparities in infant mortality.

Research suggests that the cumulative stress of racism and sexism undermines Black women's health, making them more vulnerable to complications that endanger their lives and the lives of their infants. Unfortunately, current healthcare practices are inadequate in addressing the health consequences of living with the stress.

As a Black mother and as a grandmother, this issue is very personal to me. That is why Representative LAUREN UNDERWOOD and I founded the Black Maternal Health Caucus, with