

that show all that is right with our government. Members, their staffs, and the general public will have an opportunity to see demonstrations and displays from virtually every agency.

Typically, this is a happy week, one in which we celebrate the many things that are right with our civil service which, regretfully, so many are so quick to criticize.

This year, however, there is a heavy cloud over the celebration. As we wander through the exhibits our thoughts will turn frequently to those we lost in Oklahoma City:

Like Julie Welch, a 23-year-old graduate of Marquette University in Milwaukee who was preparing to marry an Air Force lieutenant. She helped Spanish-speaking clients at the Social Security Administration's Office.

Or like Rick Tomlin, a special agent with the Department of Transportation, who had celebrated his silver wedding anniversary in February. He and his wife, Tina, have two sons.

Or Kenneth McCullough, an Army veteran who worked for the Drug Enforcement Agency. He won't be with us to see his son and daughter grow up.

Or Randolph Guzman, a 28-year-old proud member of the U.S. Marines.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the fine people whose lives were senselessly wiped out by the act of a deranged, demented, evil person, or perhaps persons. These are not nameless, faceless bureaucrats, and, Mr. Speaker, let me be very blunt. I get angry, angry at those who denigrate our civil servants. Every time we need budget savings, we go after the civil servants. Every time we need a scapegoat for the failure of this body to address important issues, we blame the civil service. That is not fair.

Yes, there are nonperformers, just like there are at corporations and factories across our country.

But, Mr. Speaker, the great majority of these men and women are Americans with a deep love for their Nation who oftentimes have bypassed more lucrative careers to serve their fellow citizens.

So it is my hope that the politicians and the reporters and the television folks and all the other self-proclaimed critics will revisit their attitude about the civil service.

We will never forget this terrible tragedy in Oklahoma. If any good can come of this most disturbing situation, I hope that it will be a new found respect for public servants.

We owe it to those who perished in the explosion, to those incredible FBI and ATF agents whose expertise has led to early successes in the investigation, and to every Federal, State, and local official who has worked tirelessly on the scene to aid their fellow Americans.

Mr. Speaker, I think the Federal Times said it well in their special issue released this morning. In dedicating the issue to those who gave their lives in Oklahoma City, the editors note:

Many survivors of the blast became heroes as we learned of their extraordinary efforts to rescue others.

Many of the dead and missing are heroes, too, though we may never learn their stories. They are heroes of everyday life: good parents, co-workers you could count on, people willing to go the extra mile.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Public Service Recognition Week, let us all remember that our Nation is blessed with heroes in the Federal office building not only in Oklahoma City but in Federal buildings across this great land, and, yes, I would urge my friends and colleagues: "Yes, you get angry at the IRS; yes, you may get angry at law enforcement offices, but do not allow that anger to be directed at individuals. Let it be directed at policy. Let us be a civil society."

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Congressman HOYER for taking the time today to call this special order to discuss Federal employees. In light of the recent bombing in Oklahoma City, I feel it is important that we take the time to reassure the Federal employees in Oklahoma, as well as throughout this Nation, that the vast majority of Americans recognize their contribution to this Nation and respect them for their efforts.

We are all shocked, as we should be, any time innocent lives are taken. Yet the magnitude of the devastation in Oklahoma City, as well as the massive number of innocent lives that were lost, has left many of us shaken to the core.

The fact that the target of the bombing appears to be Federal employees makes this act even more reprehensible and repulsive to me. As many of my colleagues know, I represent roughly 35,000 Federal employees, many of whom are not just my constituents, but also my neighbors and my friends.

It is my experience that Federal employees deserve our gratitude, they deserve our admiration, and they deserve our respect. They do not deserve to be terrorized.

As most Americans know, Federal employees play an integral, albeit often invisible, role in our daily lives. Federal employees make sure that our senior citizens get their monthly Social Security checks and that our veterans get the care and treatment they need. Federal employees are responsible for printing our money and insuring it when we make deposits at a bank. Federal employees protect our borders and make sure the food we eat is safe. In short, Federal employees spend their days and often their nights making sure that our Government performs its duties.

Furthermore, the American civil servant is perhaps the best Federal employee in the world. All one needs to do is travel abroad to see that American Federal employees are second to none in terms of their devotion to the job, their initiative, and their belief that they are serving their communities as well as their Nation.

In light of the Oklahoma City bombing, security at many Federal buildings across the Nation has been tightened. While this may prove to be a minor inconvenience to some employees as well as other Americans who may be visiting the buildings, it is worth it even if it only provides peace of mind.

As I said earlier in my statement, Federal employees often perform thankless tasks that many of us take for granted. Despite their con-

sistent performances, however, there are some in Congress who have insisted on using Federal employees as tools to try to balance the budget.

In the past few years we have seen attacks on Federal employees' cost-of-living adjustments, their thrift savings plans, and their retirement age. Just recently the Republican Members of the House led a successful attack on the Federal employee pension system. As I said at that time, and I will say it again, they deserve better.

I am glad that we are taking the time today to discuss this tragedy and to let the American people know that the abhorrent behavior of a few irrational people in Oklahoma City is repulsive to us as well as our constituents.

To any Federal employees who may be listening to this special order, I hope that you will listen to what we have been saying: the majority of Americans appreciate what you do for us, and we respect you.

The irony of the attack on Oklahoma City is that according to the reports we have been receiving, the primary suspects refer to themselves as "American patriots." This is offensive, not only to the American public, but especially to the people who, since the bombing, have proven themselves to be the true American patriots.

I submit to you that the true American patriots are the men, women, and children who gave their lives in Oklahoma City, as well as their families whose loss we can only imagine; they are those who ministered to the lucky few who survived; and they are the people who are still trying to dig through the rubble to find any remaining victims.

It is a true American patriot who, in the last 2 weeks, has made it clear that this act of terrorism is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

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#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to join in my comments on the subject of my special order this evening.

The SPEAKER pro tempore [Mr. ENSIGN]. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

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#### THE OKLAHOMA CITY DISASTER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland [Mr. WYNN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, I come this evening to condemn the senseless and cowardly bombing of the Federal building in Oklahoma City. I join with my colleagues and all of us here in America in expressing our condolences and sympathies to the families of the victims.

On occasions such as this words are certainly inadequate to express both our concern and their pain, so we can only say that we feel the pain, we try to share the pain, but in the final analysis they must bear the pain. And that is very regretful.