THE 50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF BEVERLY AND BOB LEWIS

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, late Saturday afternoon, ABC Sports reported that on August 2, my very dear friends, Beverly and Bob Lewis, will be marking their 50th wedding anniversary. It was not simply because it was their anniversary, but it was the fact that they are the very proud owners of the winner of the Kentucky Derby.

Their horse, Silver Charm, won by a neck. It was great for all of us to see Beverly and Bob Lewis stand there with such enthusiasm. It is difficult to imagine two more wonderful human beings, two people who are more deserving of this. So, as they look toward their 50th wedding anniversary, it is difficult, again, to imagine a better gift, unless it would be the Triple Crown.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

IT IS TIME TO TRULY TAKE BACK OUR NEIGHBORHOODS CRIME FIGHTING ACT

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

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, today I introduced a bill which I call Taking Back Our Neighborhoods Crime Fighting Act. This is to bolster our Nation's crime-fighting efforts and to encourage citizens to get involved in crime prevention. The only way that we can, in fact, lower our crime rates dramatically, citizens involvement.

I am joined by the cochairman and 6 members of the Law Enforcement Caucus. More importantly, this legislation is backed by over 200 police chiefs, sheriffs, district attorneys, community groups and elected officials, including mayors of cities big and small, from across the country who supported this bill in the last Congress.

The Taking Back Our Neighborhoods Crime Fighting Act would give a $50 tax credit to people actively involved in Neighborhood Watch groups and other organizations committed to the reduction of local crime, active involvement in Neighborhood Watch groups.

I am proposing this tax credit because Neighborhood Watch works. It is the most effective crime reduction program available to our communities. Throughout the country, Neighborhood Watch groups have made people feel safer and more secure in their home, parks and streets. It works because Neighborhood Watch establishes relationships amongst neighbors and it established partnerships between neighborhoods and their police officers. Citizens are trained how to watch out for their families, monitor their neighborhoods, how to be observant and reliable witnesses, and how to assist their local police.

Some 64 police chiefs, 12 sheriffs, 17 district attorneys, and 55 mayors around the country firmly believe in Neighborhood Watch and have endorsed the idea of encouraging participation through tax credits.

The mayor of Pittsburgh, PA, Mayor Tom Murphy, said, ''One of the ways the City of Pittsburgh encourages community involvement in public safety is through its 300-plus Neighborhood Watch Block Clubs. Linking a Federal tax credit to a citizen's twice-a-year attendance at these anti-crime meetings in which our community-oriented police officers participate will dramatically strengthen this program.''

Over the past decade in my Congressional district in San Diego, CA, we pioneered and refined the practice of community-oriented policing and we have seen the difference it makes. I served on the San Diego City Council for 5 years before I came to the Congress, and I worked hand-in-hand with residents to attack crime. We helped establish Neighborhood Watch groups block by block. We went on walking patrols through the streets and created support networks amongst neighbors. We established what we call drug-free zones to keep dealers away from our schools. And we organized a graffiti patrol to clean up our neighborhoods and restore pride in our community.

Most importantly, we worked directly with local police to create innovative crime-fighting strategies. Teams of police officers walked our streets, our schools and our neighborhoods. They got to know the neighborhoods they protected and the people in them. They talked to residents, and residents knew exactly who to call if they saw someone in trouble. They knew the names of the officers. They had their beeper numbers. They had their confidence. And we brought crime rate down.

Efforts all over the country like this have been successful. During the last 3 years in San Diego, we have seen an overall reduction of 36 percent in the crime rate and almost 50 percent decrease in robberies, homicides and burglaries.

Most importantly, those who are involved in Neighborhood Watch, my constituents who work with the local police, feel stronger, they feel empowered, they feel less alienated, they feel a sense of community, and they knew that a difference had been made in their own neighborhoods. But we still have a long way to go to feel safe in our homes and our streets. Encouraging people in Neighborhood Watch group participation will help us protect our families.

San Diego's chief of police, Jerry Sanders, said the success of community policing depends on Neighborhood Watch. As he wrote, ''Voluntary citizen participation in neighborhood meetings is paramount to successfully battling crime. Adoption of a tax credit would greatly enhance our efforts,'' he concluded.

Neighborhood Watch groups have proven to be an effective and economical approach to providing a better and more secure society for ourselves and our children. Giving people in Neighborhood Watch groups a $50 tax break will support the many citizens already involved in crime prevention and encourage more community participation.

I ask my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation. Working together, and only by working together, in participation with our local police, we can truly reclaim our streets.

THE QUADRENNIAL DEFENSE REVIEW: BUDGETS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speakers' announced policy of January 7, 1977, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. SKELTON] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, in all of this budget business, which has been in the headlines, I found not one word referring to the budget for national security. Thus, this second of three speeches I am making about the future of the U.S. military is not only appropriate, but timely. This afternoon, I will address whether projected defense budgets are sufficient to support the military strategy that is emerging from the Quadrennial Defense Review or QDR the reassessment of defense policy that the Defense Department is due to provide to Congress on May 15. In the first speech, I discussed the principles that should shape U.S. military strategy in coming years. In the final speech, I intend to consider how we are treating our people—the men and women in the Armed Forces and the civilian personnel who support them.

CONSTITUTIONAL ROLE OF CONGRESS

As I remarked in my first speech on these topics, I intend to begin each statement by reiterating a simple point under the Constitution, it is Congress' responsibility to ensure that the size and composition of U.S. military forces are sufficient to provide for the common defense. I referred to article 1, section 8 of the Constitution. Historically, Congress has often failed in this responsibility. As a result, the United States has repeatedly been unprepared for the military challenges it has faced. The price for this unpreparedness has been paid in the blood of young men and women in the Armed Forces. I fear in the future that the price will be even greater. At the very least, I fear, our security will erode because we will no longer have the strength to keep smaller scale conflicts