news summary from yesterday, or I guess it is from yesterday, and it says that in light of Monday's declaration that the economy has been in recession since March, the President urged lawmakers to finish work on an economic stimulus package by Christmas. So he is out there saying that we should try to get together and pass a package. And then Senator DASCHLE, from the other body, called on our Republican colleagues to join us and begin discussions on a bipartisan plan for economic recovery.

My understanding is that what happened in the other body, in the Senate, and I use that term ''other body'' because that is what we have to use, that there really are two conflicting bills and neither one has the 60 votes I guess to achieve cloture.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JEFF MILLER of Florida). The gentleman is reminded not to quote individual Senators.

Mr. PALLONE. They do not have the 60 votes, I guess, to achieve cloture; but they have said they are going to try to sit down and work something out. Again, we just need to remind everyone that there is only maybe 3 weeks or so before the Christmas break; and if we do not get together on some kind of bipartisan proposal, we are not going to get anything passed.

□ 2145

I say that because I know there has to be some give and take. But, on the other hand, I think unless something like the Democratic proposal is the basis for a compromise, we are not going to see anything passed because this tax giveaway to the corporate interests that is in the House Republican bill, I do not see how that can be a basis for any bill that passes the two bodies and goes to the President.

I do not like to read editorials, but I want to quote a few sections of an excellent editorial in yesterday's New York Times because I think it explains what needs to be done here in the next few weeks. This was in yesterday's New York Times.

''Congressional Countdown. Congress has only a few weeks left before adjourning for the year. Yet there is still no legislative agreement on measures to boost the economy and improve protections against terrorist attacks. President Bush needs to break the impasse on both issues, or legislators will go home covered with failure.

''Ideally, Congress should quickly pass a balanced fiscal stimulus bill aiding those who need help most without widening deficits in the years ahead.''

They say, ''Right now there are two competing stimulus bills, and the one supported by most senators is by far the better. It would channel tax breaks and spending to those most hurt by the economic downturn, whereas the bill pushed by House Republicans would cut taxes disproportionately for the rich and for big corporations.''

I yield to the gentleman because it sounds like everything we have been saying tonight.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I think it would be inappropriate not to make this point tonight. There is a finite amount of money. The gentleman has said it, and the editorial has said it, and I mentioned it earlier. That is why it has to be paid for. If it is not paid for, and people should not misunderstand this, that money is coming out of the Social Security Trust Fund if it is not paid. The people who will be paying for that disproportionately are the lowest wage earners in the country because they are the people that pay into that system and they are depending on that. All of us are depending on it for our Social Security money down the road. If we take it out now, we know we are going to have needs down the road. We know we are going to have problems, and that cannot happen.

It is one thing to have one group over here with a panel talking about saving it and putting the money in the stock market and the other to spend it in this House. That would be horrible. That would be horrible to the American people. We should not do it. Whatever we do, we should pay for it.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, basically this editorial juxtaposes what can be done to achieve a compromise. It says, ''Congress could reach a financially responsible compromise if Republicans dropped their worst ideas, a speed-up of the tax cuts enacted earlier this year for the wealthiest Americans and a separate measure to make it easier for big corporations to pay no taxes at all. The final bill could then focus on tax breaks, tax refunds and health benefits for the poor and working poor, while helping small- and medium-sized businesses with adjustments in write-offs for depreciation and expenses.''

The Democrats are willing to provide tax breaks and help business, particularly small- and medium-sized businesses. But the bottom line is that this stimulus package at the same time does have to address the concerns of displaced workers, the health benefits and the unemployment benefits that the gentleman has mentioned. This stalemate does not have to continue, but there is not a lot of time. I think it is important, as we did tonight, to continue to speak out over the next few days and to point out that this is a major issue.

Mr. Speaker, I was happy before we left that we got the airline security bill passed, and I thought that was the number one priority. But in light of the recession and what we are seeing out there with the economy, this is now the most important priority that we need to address in the next few weeks.

With that, I thank my colleague, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE).

U.S. IMMIGRATION POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JEFF MILLER of Florida). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, tonight I want to address several issues, one dealing specifically with a lot of the discussion that has preceded my remarks this evening. It is always interesting and elucidating to listen to my colleagues discuss a variety of issues, in this case the stimulus package and the difference between the Republican position and the Democratic position in this House.

I think it is appropriate. I am very pleased to hear that kind of discussion because it does help clarify to a large extent the issues that separate the two parties and the two philosophies.

On the one hand, as Members have heard, the Democratic Party suggests that a stimulus package, something to stimulate the economy, revolves around extending unemployment benefits. On the other hand, the Republican stimulus package with which they disagree revolves around primarily giving tax breaks to the rich, specifically to large corporations.

One deals with organizations that actually create jobs in America and create wealth; and the other deals with a social service plan, a welfare plan.

Now, I am not here and I do not intend to challenge the idea of extending unemployment benefits. It may be a fine idea under certain circumstances. I could certainly be inclined to vote for it. It has nothing to do with an economic stimulus package. Giving people longer unemployment benefits has nothing to do with creating jobs and changing the direction of the economy and getting us out of the recession, I believe. But it is nonetheless a legitimate point of view to be discussed and debated in the House, both sides offering their observations as to what might help the economy and what might help get American workers back to work.

But I am intrigued by the fact, Mr. Speaker, in all of the discussions and in all of the debates I have heard and in the monologues that have been offered on the floor about an economic stimulus package, not one word from either side has been mentioned about what I consider to be a very significant and a very logical approach to at least one part of the economic stimulus package. It should be in there and it is not, and that to which I am referring, of course, is the number of aliens in the country, people who are not citizens of the United States who are taking jobs, who are here, some of them who are here illegally in the workforce and others who are here quite legally under H–1B visa status.

Let me concentrate on the latter for a moment and explain what we are talking about with H–1B visa status. It is a special category of visa. It is designed to bring people into the country

who have specific skills in more high-tech fields, white collar workers, primarily in the high-tech area, the computer sciences, computer programming and the like.

For a long time businesses came to this Congress and told us that they did not have enough people in the United States with the kind of background and the kind of skills necessary to fill the jobs they had available for them. As a result, they asked us for a special visa category, H–1B, which we have had for a long time. But they asked us to increase the annual allotment of H–1B visas which this Congress dutifully went along with, although not with my vote. I believed at that time and I believe today it is a bogus argument. It is not based upon our need for workers of a particular skill, but it was based on a need for large businesses in the United States, certain corporations, to employ people at lower rates. It is as simple as that.

Recognizing that they could import workers into the United States and pay them less than an American worker would demand, these H–1B visa recipients became in great demand. So we raised the level. We raised the ceiling to 295,000 a year.

Now, there are approximately, we are not sure because the INS has absolutely no idea, and I often refer to the logo for the INS and it is this: A shrug of the shoulders. That should be their sign. INS is just a person shrugging. Because almost without exception when you ask them a question, when you ask them how many people are still here in the United States having come in on H–1B visas over the years, have not gone home, maybe they have lost their jobs, we do not know, they say we do not know. Maybe around 500,000, 500,000 to a million. The INS does not know for sure.

Now, let us settle on the 500,000 that are here. Remember, we are not talking about all of the other immigrants that have come into the country, all of the illegal immigrants that are in the country working, working at jobs that again we always hear Americans will not take. Well, is there anyone in this body, Mr. Speaker, that actually believes that today in the United States there are not at least 500,000 people, American citizens, who are looking for jobs specifically in that area? We know that at least that many and more have been laid off from that particular industry, the high-tech industry. It is horrendous, and there are more layoffs to come. We will be hearing in the next few weeks and months of more layoffs, especially in the high-tech area. Yet we persist with allowing 500,000 H–1B recipients to take jobs in the United States that could be provided for American citizens.

Why would that not be part of an economic stimulus package, I wonder. Why would no one on either side of this aisle stand up and say that in fact what we have to do is rescind H–1B status, we have to eliminate that category altogether, and when someone is laid off, they actually leave the country. Now, they are supposed to do that. It is true that the law requires, the H–1B law says if you lose your job as an H–1B recipient, you have to go home.

Mr. Speaker, not surprising, not long ago the INS told people here under that category and who had been laid off to not really be too concerned about it. They said we will get around to writing a regulation about what you should do. But, for the time being, look for another job. In other words, displace another American worker.

Now, I have said often on the floor of the House with regard to immigration that I have no qualms about having a workable guest worker program, something that allows people to come into the country, something that protects their interest and rights so they are not abused by workers here, that they are not ill-treated. But we do not have that. What we have is massive illegal immigration to provide that workforce.

And it is absolutely true that the millions of people who are here illegally do contribute to the economy I am sure in some measure. The exact amount of that is up for debate. But it is also true that the massive amount of illegal immigration into the country of low-skilled people has a depressing effect on wage rates for low-paid jobs in this country, for all people with few skills are working at low-end jobs. Massive immigration has a depressing effect on the ability of these folks here in the United States, be they recent legal immigrants or long-time citizens of this country, natural-born citizens of the country, massive immigration hurts those people. It hurts their ability to get ahead.

It helps, of course, many employers, it is undeniably true, who want to exploit these people, and many employers who have legitimate concerns about being able to get employees they say they cannot get in any other fashion.

□ 2200

Why is it we cannot construct a guest worker program that can serve the needs of business and protect American workers? The reason is because we have an organization called the INS that is charged with the responsibility of trying to actually implement such programs, and what we know today is that the INS simply does not care, does not care about the issue of massive immigration. To them, most of their resources, most of their efforts go into the social work side of INS.

This problem is not often addressed, but I think it should be. Again, a half a million people in the United States today, holding H–1B visas, some of them employed in the original job, some of them having long since moved on to other jobs, supposedly they have to leave and go home, as I say, by law, but of course, they do not do it and the INS does not follow up. When we ask them where are all the people that have lost their jobs and have not left the United States, they use their logo: shrug their shoulders, I do not know.

When we ask them when we have the INS where are the 300,000 people who have been ordered to be deported from the United States for violating the laws of the United States, not just their visa status, not just overstaying their visa, but robbery, rape, murder, they have been arrested, and when they get arrested they find out, oh, by the way, this guy is here illegally, his visa status is over or even if he is here legally, he has violated a law, we are going to send him. So they go to an immigration court, the judge listens to the information, listens to the defense, which is not supposed to be the INS but oftentimes ends up being the INS lawyer defending the immigrant lawbreaker, and they do this, and the judge orders the person deported, saying they have violated the law, they are someone we do not want in this country and they are going to have to leave the country or go to jail.

We actually order about 100,000, a little over 100,000 people a year, we order 100,000 people a year to be deported for violating the law here. There are at least, at least 300,000 of those folks, 300,000 people who have been ordered deported from the United States for violating our law but are simply gone, vanished into society. They have not departed the country. They are here somewhere. When we ask INS where are these people, they give us their logo: shrug their shoulders, I do not know.

That is the issue. That just really makes me focus on H–1Bs for a moment because, as I say, I listened to our friends talk about the problems with the two various interpretations of what economic stimulus is all about, whether it is more government jobs and/or extended welfare payments or whether it is job creation through giving tax benefits to corporations, who actually employ people.

There are several other issues with regard to immigration and immigration reform that I want to address this evening. H–1B is just one of the many problems we have in this country, and I have a bill that would significantly reduce the ceiling on H–1B. I would like to see it become part of that economic stimulus package, but I fear that the opposition of industry and the corporate structure in this country will prevent me from actually being able to present that piece of legislation.

Nonetheless, there are a series of other issues that come to mind tonight that I believe need some degree of discussion. I, like almost every American, have been heartened by the response of most people in this country to the tragedies of September 11 and the way in which people have rallied around the President and our military forces and have expressed themselves over and over again as being patriots.

Underneath all of the exposure that has been provided to these expressions of patriotism, there is an underlying

theme that runs in certain circles in this country that is very, very disquieting. I am going to try and discuss this issue in a way that connects to what people may think are divergent points of view, but in a way, my colleagues just have to give me a minute to make the case here.

I believe that massive immigration into this country is very, very dangerous and is threatening in a variety of ways, massive immigration, legal and illegal; and I reiterate, I am not against immigrants. I am not anti-immigrant. I am not even anti-immigration. I am certainly very much concerned about the present system we operate, or nonsystem, of immigration.

The fact that over a million people a year come into the United States legally, quarter of a million more come in under refugee status and about who knows, a million to 2 million to 3 million, we do not know how many for sure come in here illegally every year. That is what I call massive immigration. I say it is massive because in the heyday of immigration into this country in the early 1900s, late 1800s, the highest number of immigrants coming in in any given year was about 200,000. We are six times that amount today, six times that amount today and that is legally. We would probably go up to 10 or 12 times that amount if we add all the illegal immigration into the country.

There are ramifications to that massive immigration, and I want to talk about one particular part of that, one ramification in particular. It deals with the degree to which we are able to integrate newly arrived immigrants into this country into the American mainstream and make them a part of the American experience in every sense of the word.

It is disquieting to find information, some anecdotal, some empirical, that deals with the degree to which immigrants into this country have actually attached themselves to the American ideal, which has always been the case, I should say, I think for immigrants for a long, long time. I will speak of myself and my own family as an example.

What I mean here is how immigrants attached themselves in the past, did attach themselves to the American experience, did want, in fact, to become Americans in every sense of the word, not just in terms of the ability to achieve an economic prosperity which, of course, that is in common with almost everyone. That is a common element of everybody that comes here; but in particular, I am talking about the issue of patriotism, patriotism, love of the country, willingness to defend it and association with it, a feeling of being part of the American experience. That is what I am talking about that is changing, I think; and I will get into exactly why I believe that is the case.

Again, let me just preface it by explaining my own experience. My grandparents came here in the late 1800s, 1890 actually. So I am not what one would call a long-term immigrant. I am a relatively short-termer here. That is what I am really trying to say here. My great great grandparents did not come over on the Mayflower or anything near it. We are relatively new to the country.

When I went to school, it was in north Denver, at a very small and relatively impoverished area, in a small school, parochial school, in which I learned about my country's heroes. I learned who I was by studying the history books that I was given, in this case, in the parochial school system; and I also learned about what my parents said about America.

I will tell my colleagues that in my whole life I never ever thought of myself as anything but an American. When I thought of my heritage, and who were the heroes of my past, of my heritage, I thought of Washington and Adams and Jefferson, and I connected with them immediately. I never ever thought of myself as anything but an American with that kind of a heritage. I am happy about that because I believe that that is exactly what immigrants should do and what they should become, people connected to America in every sense of the word.

Let me tell my colleagues that I have a feeling that this is not happening, and it is not happening as again many of us have had anecdotal experiences that would lead us to believe that many immigrants are not as well steeped in American history and well connected with it as perhaps our ancestors were.

One anecdotal part. In the Washington Post, it interviewed a middle-class Muslim American immigrant family from New Jersey and reported that for Kahr and her husband, taxpayer, registered voters, law abiding citizens, assimilation is not a goal. The Post article stated that Kahr, who came to the U.S. from Syria when she was 12, 17 years ago, would soon graduate from Seton Hall law school. However, this well-educated woman opposes America's war efforts against the Taliban in Afghanistan and declares that, quote, ''throughout history Muslims will always be separate.''

That is the anecdotal thing, and there are literally hundreds of those kind of stories, but then there are studies that have been done. Empirical evidence suggests that Kahr's views are not unique. In what Islamic expert Daniel Pipes has described as perhaps the most sophisticated study to date of Muslims in the United States, an Iranian doctoral student at Harvard found that a majority of immigrants there he surveyed felt more allegiance to a foreign country than to the United States.

This article goes on to say that this ambivalence about American identity is not confined to Muslim immigrants and their children. The most comprehensive evidence we have on patriotic assimilation of the children of immigrants is a longitudinal study by the Russell Sage Foundation, a study of 5,000 children of immigrants, mostly Mexican American and Filipino American teenagers. We feel that after 4 years of American high school the students were 50 percent more likely to consider themselves quote ''Mexicans or Filipinos than they were to consider themselves Mexican Americans or Filipinos Americans or just plain Americans.''

In other words, patriotic assimilation or self-identification within the American Nation actually decreased and decreased dramatically after 4 years of studying in American schools. That should not surprise too many people when we go on to recognize exactly what has been happening, and there are all kinds; and now again these are anecdotal in terms of what is happening in American colleges and universities and our K–12 system also; and this kind of cultural relativism is a philosophy which has seeped into the school system. And when we combine this sort of philosophy of cultural relativism, that is to say, we are all the same; there is no difference; America is not any better than any other country; in fact, in most situations we are worse, that is cultural relativism. That has seeped its way into our school system.

If we combine that with massive immigration and my colleagues can see what kind of problems we are going to develop. When we do not teach children about America, be they immigrant children or native-born children, it does not matter, they will not understand America.

Mr. Speaker, I was a teacher for many years. I was the regional director of the U.S. Department of Education, and I will tell my colleagues it is absolutely evident to anyone that in order to have children appreciate certain things, we must teach them about it. A child does not walk into school appreciating fine art. A child does not walk into school appreciating fine poetry, not even sciences; and they have to be taught the beauty of these things. They have to be encouraged. We have to find that spark in every child and ignite it and say there is an excitement to learning and here is what the child should be learning.

We have to teach them about America because they will not walk into schools with an innate understanding of it and appreciation for it. It will not happen, but we not only do not teach them about America, but what we do tell them is the following.

At a central Michigan university, a school administrator told several students to remove patriotic posters and an American flag in their dormitory. A residential adviser said the pro-American items were quote ''offensive.''

□ 2215

At San Diego State University an Ethiopian student overheard four Saudi Arabian students speak approvingly of the terrorist attacks. When he

scolded them in Arabic, they complained to the school. In a response, the university judicial officer threatened to suspend or expel Kebede, the gentleman who was challenging these students who were excited over the bombings, over the terrorist acts, on September 11.

At Pennsylvania State University, a professor was told that his web site, which advocated military action against terrorists, was ''insensitive, and perhaps even intimidating.'' Under Penn State's speech code, intimidating language is ground for dismissal.

At a Florida Gulf Coast university, Dean of Library Services Kathleen Hoeth demanded that employees remove ''proud to be American'' stickers from their work areas.

At the University of North Carolina in Wilmington, a professor is under investigation for ''harassment'' after he told a female student that he supported U.S. military action in Afghanistan. The student said that the position made her feel ''uncomfortable.''

A Roxbury, New Jersey, school superintendent who ordered signs with the slogan ''God bless America'' be taken down, he said he was merely trying to be fair to those who refer to God as ''allah'' and other names.

Librarians at the Florida State University have been told not to wear ''I am proud to be an American'' sticker.

A Los Angeles educator tells the paper that he has no intention of flying the flag. ''I grew up suspicious of the flag,'' he says. ''It meant right wing politics. It meant repression. It meant arrogance. I mean, we are the greatest?''

Okay. This is what children are being taught, both, as I say, native born children and immigrant children.

At Marquette University, undergraduates were blocked from holding a moment of silence around an American flag. The gesture, the school President's advisers felt, might be offensive to foreign students.

At Lehigh the vice provost for student affairs initially reacted to the tragedy by banning the display of the American flag. A Lehigh spokesman explained the idea was to keep from offending some of the students, and maybe the result was much to the contrary.

When officials at Arizona State removed the American flag from a school cafeteria out of fear that it might offend international students, Syrian immigrant Oubai Shahbandar introduced a bill in the student senate paving the way for its return. His bill was defeated.

Professor Jensen at the University of Houston pronounced that ''my primary anger is directed at the leaders of this country. The attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center are no more despicable than the massive acts of terrorism, the deliberate killing of victims for political purposes that the U.S. Government has committed in my lifetime.'' This is a Professor Jensen at the University of Houston. ''We are just as guilty,'' he concluded.

University of New Mexico professor Richard Berthold bluntly declared, ''anyone who would blow up the Pentagon would get my vote.''

We are surprised then that students write things like this? ''We sponsor dictators who maim, we defend corporations that enslave, and then we have the arrogance to pretend we are safe and untouchable,'' said West Virginia University student Joshua Greene.

''In light of the current destructive nationalism that calls for war,'' a Duke student opined, the sight of the flag burning would be preferable to its display.''

These things, these things all matter, and they are undercurrents, as I say, of a philosophy that will do great harm to the United States. You combine that, as I say, with massive immigration, with people coming into this country who are not being inculcated into the American mainstream, who are coming at such great numbers that we cannot begin to even do that, and they are being encouraged when they come here, by the way, they are encouraged not to accept American ideals, but to think of us as the enemy, to think of themselves as separate and apart from American mainstream, as this lady says, ''we will always be separate. Muslims will always be separate.''

And we encourage that. Our institutions of higher education and our schools throughout the country encourage that. So do many members of the media. So does the ex-president of the United States, and thank heavens we can say ex, who can stand up in front of a group of people, not too long ago, Mr. Clinton, and say that it is our fault that what has happened to us on September 11 was our fault; our fault. He only exacerbates this problem. That kind of thinking, of course, is indicative of the problem.

It is going to get worse. And I suggest we have to deal with this issue on a variety of fronts. We should certainly deal with it in our local school system. I wish our schools, every school board in America, would look at and carefully analyze their curriculum to determine the extent to which we are teaching about the American experience and appreciation of who and what we are, because, I reiterate, children do not come into school with some innate knowledge of that.

Certainly they are not going to learn it from the TV or from the movies. They are not going to learn to appreciate the American experience from any of the pop culture. Not from MTV. The only place we can hope they are learning it is either in school or in their home.

But if the parents of these children do not care, do not want to, and, as a matter of fact, are antagonistic, as many of these immigrant parents are, to American culture, to American history, and if the schools do not teach children about who we are and what we are and how to appreciate this freedom, then what is the hope we will be able to maintain it in the future?

With all of that, Mr. Speaker, with all that in front of us, with the economic stimulus package that is only being debated on the basis of whether or not we should give welfare or tax cuts, and no discussion of H1–B visas or the number of immigrants here taking jobs that otherwise should go to American citizens, without doing that, we are doing ourselves a disfavor and a disservice, because we should be talking about other things.

What are we talking about with regard to immigration? Here is what we are going to be dealing with in this Congress very soon, something called extension of 245(i). I see a colleague has joined me this evening on the floor. I want to talk about this with him, because I know he has strong sentiments open this issue.

Let me just briefly describe what 245(i) is and an extension therein. 245(i) is another category of immigrant status. What it is is essentially saying that there are a lot of people here illegally. We all know it. In 1986, there was a thing called amnesty that said if you have been around for a while and you can show you have a job and you are married and that sort of thing, we are going to give you amnesty. You can be here legally. We are going to reward you for coming here illegally. That is what it said. We are going to give you a reward for breaking our law.

And we did it. We did it. Come to find out, hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of people, did not sign up in time to take advantage of it. So there have been continual attempts, and in fact successful attempts, of extending this process of amnesty to people who are here illegally, who have violated our laws and are here presently, taking the jobs other Americans could have. But, regardless, even if they are here doing jobs no one else will do, the fact is they are here illegally, and we are going to reward them by extending it.

Now the debate is going to be enjoined here in a relatively short time as to whether or not we should once again extend 245(i), to once again provide amnesty for people who are here illegally. That is what we are going to debate. Not whether or not we should defend our borders by tightening up and not allowing illegal immigration, not reducing immigration altogether to give us an ability to begin to get a handle on this, not H1–B visa reform. No. We are going to debate and take under consideration 245(i).

I would yield to my friend, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODE) for his comments. It is good to see you here tonight.

Mr. GOODE. I thank the gentleman from Colorado. I had not planned to come over to join you tonight, but I received this letter in the mail and it is right on the topic to which you have been speaking. I want to thank you on behalf of millions of Americans for addressing a topic that is so timely in our

country and so important to the future of the United States of America.

VF Netware in Martinsville, Henry County, employs over 2,300 persons. They announced the layoff in the coming year of nearly all of those persons. That is part of a 13,000 person layoff company-wide. On Monday there was a community meeting in Martinsville in Henry County, and representatives from the offices of the U.S. Senators from Virginia were there, the Governor-elect was there, a number of members of the State legislature, both branches, were there, and there was a discussion about jobs, and both the topic of amnesty and immigration arose.

I want to share with you a letter written to me by Sandra Turner of Collinsville, Virginia. That is a community in Henry County so heavily impacted by the layoffs of VF Netware. Here is what she had to say.

''I watched enough of this town meeting to want to make a comment about illegal immigrants. I certainly agree with the comment about doing more to deter illegal immigrants and not allowing any amnesty. I also think,'' and she refers to a gentleman that was in the audience, ''had valid concerns and comments referencing immigrants in the workplace.

''Here is an area that has faced a tremendous downsizing of its workforce. We believe that long-standing United States citizens should have their jobs first.''

This gentleman rose and he spoke of how immigrants, probably some of which were illegal, were here competing and taking jobs that long-standing United States citizens do not have and will not have in the future.

She continues: ''I have always felt that the United States has been too good for our own good. It appears we have always opened the door and welcomed any and all into this country. We are now paying for this with illegal immigrants taking our jobs, not to mention reaping other benefits from the system. And we certainly paid the price on September 11. Hopefully we have learned something from the loss of jobs in the September 11th tragedy. But I have my doubts. It is time to start taking care of United States citizens first.''

These are the words of Sandra Turner of Collinsville, Virginia. And I want to repeat that sentence. ''It is time to start taking care of the United States citizens first.''

She goes on: ''I live in an area where there are several apartment complexes. In traveling to and from work, shopping and so forth, I constantly see vehicles with North Carolina tags going in and out of these complexes. The vehicles are driven by those from other countries.'' She goes on and describes that situation.

And then she closes with this: ''I could go on and on, but I will stop here. I just wanted to let you know that I agreed with the comments about deterring illegal immigrants at our borders, and definitely agree with not allowing any amnesty.''

Then she says, ''Now it is time to do something about this.''

The gentleman from Colorado has so eloquently focused on the legislation that will likely come before this House to extend 245(i). 245(i) is simply a reference to a statutory number that means, as he stated, we are going to reward those who have broken the law, who have come into this country illegally, and now we are going to say to them, you can stay here.

Let me point out, the interview that is done under 245(i) is not going to be done by the State Department in the country from which these people came, where they know the most about those individuals. It will be done by INS, which is already overburdened and overworked and has had significant problems in a number of areas. That will be the entity that will do these interviews if 245(i) is extended.

Now, some will cite specific instances of hardship or a trying situation where an amnesty should be granted. 245 is not a specific amnesty for a specific person because of a specific problem.

□ 2230

It is a blanket, broad-based amnesty for anyone who wants to pay $1,000 and answer a few questions. We do not need this amnesty at this time in the United States. I hope we will follow the wisdom of the gentleman from Colorado in rising up in this body and opposing amnesty, whether it is a stand-alone bill or whether it is put into any other legislation. This is absolutely the wrong course of action for the United States at this time. We must remember the words of Sandra Turner of Collinsville, Virginia: ''It is time to start taking care of the United States citizens first.''

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. It is no wonder that this country, when we look back again, as I say, to our American heroes and to the people that gave so much to create this Nation, we so often find that they came from Virginia and that they express themselves as wonderfully as the gentleman does, and I sincerely appreciate the gentleman's comments.

I want to pick up on something that he said specifically in regard to the difference in the kind of investigation that is done between someone who is trying to get into the United States and has to go to a counselor office in the country of his origination and go through a process that is really quite rigorous, supposedly; at least on paper, they are supposed to go into quite a background check. Even the State Department tells us that they do not have the capacity to do that, even in the country of origin but, at least, and this is important, at least the person today that would seek entrance into the United States and seek to come here and get legal status, they would have to go back or start out in their country and request that. But under the program that the gentleman refers to, 245(i), that does not have to happen. The person does not have to return; the person is here.

So let us assume for a moment that the INS does all the background work that is necessary and believe me, they have a backlog now of 4.5 million people. And I guarantee my colleagues, when we ask the INS how are they going to get this backlog taken care of, they will give us their logo: I do not know. That is their logo. That is what I have decided. That should be on everything that says ''INS,'' a picture of somebody going like this, I am not sure. Because they could not possibly do it and they do not do it. They cannot even pretend that they go through the kind of analysis that is necessary, and the background check.

Let us assume that they did. They are talking with the person who is in front of them in the United States and they are trying to find out, and they come to this conclusion after all the background is done weeks and weeks and weeks, months and months that it would take to do it, but let us assume they do it and they find out this guy is a bad guy; this guy, we would not let into the country. Well, guess what? He is here. We are not able to keep him out. And then, what are they going to do? Go out and try to find him at that point in time? Good luck.

Mr. Speaker, the INS spends absolutely no time or energy or effort in tracking down people who are here illegally. We all know that. They tell us when we talk to them, that no, they really do not have the inclination nor the resources to go after people who are here illegally, unless something really big happens, they commit a murder or something like that and they get brought in under those conditions, and then they try to deport them. But as I said, there are lots out there that no one knows about. So we are actually going to trust the INS to do this kind of thorough background check? And as I say, even if they do it, so what? The person is here. The person is here.

Believe me, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people here who should not be here, as we, of course, found out recently. And then this, of course, contributes to fraud, all kinds of fraud, fraudulent marriages being one of them. This is what happens, because one of the ways that you get the status is to show that you are married to an American citizen.

So these are articles that came out of the Denver paper when we extended 245(i) the last time, 3,042 applications in one day. More than 3,000 illegal immigrants in Denver beat a midnight deadline to apply for the visas. Now, do you think for a moment that the INS went through all of this, just the 3,000 in that last day, went through all of those with a fine-tooth comb to make sure that what they were doing was right? What we find out, as a matter of fact, after the 1986 amnesty, and then

when the Clinton administration pushed for, as we may recall, the gentleman from Virginia may recall, when we pushed for the legalization of a lot of people in the citizenship status for millions of immigrants when they pushed it through because the past administration wanted these people to be able to vote, we found that we gave something like 60,000 felons citizenship; 60,000 felons ended up as citizens of the United States, but had felony records. We never checked. We did not know about it until much later, but it was too late.

Now, is their citizenship being revoked? Absolutely not. What if it were to be revoked tomorrow? What if we decide, that was a big mistake, we should take it back from those people and find them, get them out of here, if you tell the INS, what would you do about that? They would give you the logo: I do not know.

One officer, it says, ''Our office is finished up by 3 a.m.,'' said Louise Germain, assistant director for the INS in Denver. They are sure tired today. Then they went on to talk about the people who came in who were not married, but came in and said, well, you know, we want to be married. The INS officer said when they showed up at the INS office, they had a marriage license but had not been pronounced husband and wife, so we told them, go quickly and find someone to marry you. They did. Thousands and thousands. It has been estimated in the hundreds of thousands of bogus, sham marriages were undertaken at that point in time in order to get visa status. Has anybody checked on that? Has one person been refused visa status because they fraudulently applied and did stuff like this, got this sham marriage put together. I asked the INS these questions. They responded again with their logo.

One example of the people who are doing this kind of thing, a man worked and lived with two former area men facing criminal charges in the government's terrorist investigation is scheduled to be arraigned today on a charge of marriage fraud. That means of five Middle Eastern men whose names appeared on the lease for the 6th Street Northwest apartment, this was in Akron, three of them are in jail and one is in jail with a $2,500 bond and is facing three misdemeanor charges after he allegedly claimed to be three different people during a drunken tirade and that he was a terrorist.

Another one tried to marry a U.S. citizen to get him under U.S. immigration regulations. They would not say how they found out about the marriage, nor would they answer other questions. These people are all in jail. They are not in jail because they violated the law, that is not it at all, the specific law against the immigration violations. Of course we rounded them up for other reasons and then tried to tack that on.

The reality is, Mr. Speaker, that the extension of 245(i) is a travesty. The idea that we would even think about it is a travesty. Number one, I reiterate, it rewards people for illegal behavior. All of the hundreds of thousands, in fact, millions of people who are waiting patiently all over the world to come into the United States legally, legally, what message does it send to them other than sneak in if you can, stay here long enough, come up with bogus documents to prove that you have been here for a long time, that you have relatives here, that you are married, whatever, and we will give you legal status. Give us $1,000. This is absolutely the wrong message, I think, Mr. Speaker, and that is on the one side.

The other side is this: we are now talking about public safety. We can now focus on some of the incredibly dire circumstances, the dire results of these kinds of loose immigration practices, and we recognize that there are people in this country today who are here illegally who wish to do us harm, who have every intent to do that.

Now, would it not be better for them to go ahead and go through the process, give the INS $1,000, fill out the paperwork, become a legal resident of the United States, and then do what you need to do, with the full cover of United States citizenship, or at least being in the States legally? You can get your driver's license, you can do all kinds of things then, of course, that can cover your tracks. You will not stand out. You will not have to be hiding, not that many of them are probably doing that today, but I would imagine that it is a little more difficult today for these would-be terrorists if they are not American citizens, and I hope it gets harder and harder and harder for them. But it should not be made easier for them.

I will tell my colleagues that it is going to be almost impossible for us to actually identify these people. I mean identify them when they come up to get their materials and to apply for this amnesty; we really will not know it. We will not do a background check that will tell us; but even if we do, it will be too late. They are here. They will be in this society. We will not be able to find them or get rid of them. They are here now. Let us seek them out, identify them, remove them; and if you are here illegally, Mr. Speaker, you have to go home. Start the process.

There are millions of people who are here with no evil intent, and I recognize that fully well. The great vast majority, thank God, are here solely with the purpose probably to improve their lives economically. I wish they were here with another purpose and that was to become part of the American mainstream, and that is a debatable point as to whether or not that is happening. But I can assure my colleagues that I know and believe that for the most part they are here in order to improve the quality of their lives economically, and not to destroy buildings or people's lives.

But there are some, of course, of a different ilk, and we cannot be so selective as to be able to identify them specifically and say yes, I know, of all of the millions, you are the one I have to worry about. We have to say, if you are here illegally, you must return home, and start the process of coming into the United States legally. Let us determine whether or not you can and should be admitted. And if we need workers, fine. Guest worker program. No problem. But this massive immigration, legal and illegal, that is trying to be managed by an agency with a shrug of the shoulders for its logo is not the way we should be doing business in this country. What more of a lesson do we need to learn? How much more dramatic of an event has to occur to tell us that we must understand this very basic premise, and that is the defense of this Nation begins with the defense of its borders.

Mr. Speaker, we have every right to do it. We should not be made to feel as though we should be ashamed because we are telling people that they cannot come into the country. We have every right to defend our borders. We have every right to ask citizens who do come into this country to become part of the American mainstream and have the love of this country and an allegiance and an attachment of this country. We have every right to ask that. To not do so is sealing our own fate. It is a death wish for the country.

So I challenge us all, Mr. Speaker, to take on the responsibilities that are given to us when we take the oath of office to protect and defend this country and do so by the understanding that that means defending our borders. We have no other option, Mr. Speaker. God forbid another event of the nature of September 11 occurs, and if it does occur, it is because if it happens and it happens as a result of someone who comes into this Nation illegally, then I say again that if we have not done everything we can possibly do, if we have not done everything we can possibly do to stop someone from coming into this Nation illegally; and I reiterate, I understand that even if we did everything that we could possibly do that it still might happen, but if we do not do everything we can possibly do to stop it, then we are not just irresponsible, we are, in fact, culpable; and I choose for one not to do so.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS TOMORROW

Mr. TANCREDO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JEFF MILLER of Florida). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Colorado?

There was no objection.