

and there was a reawakening of the experiences that they experienced in World War II when Executive Order 9066 was applied, was applied to Italian Americans and German Americans. And upon reflection, they found out that they too were subjected to embarrassment, to ridicule. One of the stories that came out, because of the order by General DeWitt that no persons who are aliens in the United States may live west of highway 1, which is along the coast, forced families to separate themselves, Italian American families who were engaged in the fishing industry whose parents and grandparents had to live in tents across the road while the children lived in the homes. It was things like this they started to remember and started to chronicle among themselves and to teach their children that these kinds of actions by government is not acceptable. Upon the receipt of the apology, we found that there was healing and there was teaching going on among, not only among themselves, but among the greater population of this country.

As a teacher, I want to reemphasize the necessity for this resolution, that it continues to teach us the old maxim that those of us who do not learn from the mistakes of our past are doomed to repeat them.

So in today's current light, I just want to personally reemphasize that national security is my highest priority, is our highest priority, and I support efforts to fight our war against terrorism. But we also understand that in doing so, we must not have a failure among our political leadership, we must not fall back on more hysteria, we must not fall back to racial prejudice and discrimination and profiling.

So today, it is critically important, more than ever, to speak up against possible unjust policies that may come before this body, and we must also be able to speak to it. And it is even more important than ever to educate Americans of the Japanese American experience during World War II, as well as the experience of other groups like the Japanese Latin Americans who were extricated from Latin America, brought over here, had their documents taken away from them, and becoming individuals without a country to be used as pawns in exchange for POWs. And then the German and Italian Americans who were also victimized.

In order to learn the important lessons from our own history, I did introduce H.R. 56, the Day of Remembrance resolution here in this body. Teaching the lessons of those dark days is more important today than it ever was, remembering Executive Order 9066, signed on February 19, 1942 and then rescinded on August 10 of 1988, there are many events that flowed from those two orders and that we must continue to learn from our history.

There is a maturity in this country that I am very proud of. That maturity says we can learn from our mistakes of the past and we can also teach others

of our lessons that we have learned from our past. We have learned that the Executive Order 9066 was not signed out of military necessity, was not signed out of national security, was not signed out of personal safety and security of the Japanese American, but the Commission on Wartime Internment and Relocation of Civilians said, and they concluded, that it was a result of racial prejudice, war hysteria, and the failure of political leadership.

Today, as we heard from our colleagues today, Mr. Speaker, that this leadership must not fail again. and to that end, we must continuously teach ourselves and relearn ourselves and remember the lessons of the past so that we do not repeat them again. It is a country like the United States, it is a country like this country that my father, although he was interned with the rest of his family, and although he even volunteered for the military intelligence service to teach language to the naval intelligence officers, that he held this sense of loyalty to this country, even though the families were incarcerated. And he taught us that in spite of these experiences, that we, his children, must be a good reflection of his loyalty and that we, as we grow up, must become more American than anybody else that we could run into, and that we must be 110 percent American. Part of that Americanism is to never, ever make the same mistakes again.

We learned from that experience in 1942, and we learned from the experience of 9/11, that this Constitution of this country is never tested in times of tranquility, that our Constitution is always tested in times of trauma, tragedy, terrorism, and tension, and that the very principles of our Constitution need to be, continuously need to be taught until it is ingrained in our own character, so that every decision we make as a citizen, as adults, as children, as students and as policymakers, that we will always be true to the principles of our Constitution. For it is for those reasons why people around this world fight to come to this country and be part of this country, struggle to be a part of this democracy, because they know that the protection of this Constitution is the American dream. The protection of our Constitution is that which our forefathers and our veterans have shed their blood and sacrificed their limbs and lives so that our Constitution may live and really be reflected in every action that we have, not only in this body, but by every action of every citizen of this country.

So, Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleagues for this opportunity to bring Resolution 56, the Day of Remembrance, before this body.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to join my dear friend and fellow Californian Congressman MIKE HONDA in support of H. Res. 56, commemorating the suffering of the Japanese-American, German-American, and Italian-American communities during World War II by recognizing February 19 as a National Day of Remembrance. It is my sincere hope and belief that by establishing a National Day of Remembrance, Congress will increase public awareness of the wholesale exclusion and internment of individuals and entire families in this country during World War II.

Following the issuance of Presidential Executive Order No. 9066 on February 19, 1942, tens of thousands of Americans were evicted from their homes, rounded up, and sent to internment camps across the western United States. In San Francisco, this program began in earnest on April 1, 1942, when all persons of Japanese ancestry—whether they were American citizens or not—were notified to report for “relocation.” In my own district, 7,800 people were assembled against their will in the San Bruno Tanforan Racetrack. Seventy thousand eight hundred human beings were confined there for months, living in horse stables. Today, we realize that such a policy was outrageous.

But Mr. Speaker, I submit that it is not only in retrospect that the internment of the Japanese appears absurd and unacceptable. As early as 1946, Harold Ickes, President Roosevelt's own Secretary of the Interior, characterized the mass detention of Japanese Americans as “mass hysteria over the Japanese”; he noted that “we gave the fancy name of ‘relocation centers’ to these dust bowls, but they were concentration camps.” Mr. Speaker, the way we treated Japanese Americans was inexcusable. Moreover, any purported national security benefit derived from the government's internment policy was vastly outweighed by the enormous human suffering and the violation of civil liberties that policy caused and the hatred it sowed.

Mr. Speaker, I submit to you that the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II is one of the most ignominious and repugnant acts our nation has committed. Our government has taken cautious and gradual steps toward recognizing the insidiousness of its World War II internment policy, but it is not enough to apologize or to pay reparations for the wrongs committed by the United States government during that period. The internment was so evil that its commemoration merits more than the customary apologies and financial compensation. Indeed, we ought to be reminded on a regular basis of the dangers of fanaticism, and that is what this resolution is about.

In addition to making amends for our country's inhumane treatment of Japanese Americans, Mr. Speaker, we must acknowledge the anti-democratic policies adopted by our government against Italian Americans and German Americans. Though their communities were not rounded up en masse as the Japanese Americans were, in many cases property owned by Italian Americans and German Americans was expropriated, and Italian- and German-American citizens were unlawfully detained and questioned, their patriotism ignored

and their civil rights denied. While the Wartime Violation of Italian Americans Civil Liberties Act of 2000 represents an important measure of progress on this issue, it is my heartfelt belief that more needs to be done.

And that, Mr. Speaker, is why it is my privilege to proclaim my support for my dear friend Mr. Honda's bill, which would make room for a day of mourning, reflection, and remembrance of the chain of egregious injustices against Japanese Americans, Italian Americans, and German Americans that was officially begun by our government on February 19, 1942.

Mr. Speaker, this bill takes a day that is already a day of mourning in the Japanese-American community and reconsecrates it as a day of American remembrance. It also acknowledges the real and acute suffering of the Italian- and German-American communities during the war. I urge my colleagues to follow their conscience and join in commemorating this American tragedy.

POSSIBLE WAR WARRANTS RESPONSIBLE PRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDI) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. TANCREDI. Mr. Speaker, we have had a number of discussions in the House over the last several days dealing with the issue of the possibility of a conflict in the Middle East and the efficacy thereof, and whether or not it is in the national interests of the United States to embark upon this venture, whether a preemptive strike by the United States is justified, whether or not our sending men and women into harm's way is appropriate. And this is the place, of course, where that debate should be carried on. Throughout the United States, of course, around water coolers and in offices and around dinner tables, the debate continues. It is certainly appropriate that it goes on here.

I just want to reflect upon something that happened not too long ago in Denver, Colorado when I was asked to speak at a rally, and the rally was organized by people who wanted to show the armed forces, especially the Armed Forces of the United States, that the American people believe in them, that the American people trust them, that the American people admire and respect them, and that we know we place our safety in their hands. We know that we place this great Nation in their hands, and we know that, in fact, we place the western civilization, in fact, in their hands. Its survival will be determined by the actions of people like those that we are sending off to the Middle East.

So it was billed in the newspapers as a pro-war rally. And I was asked to speak at this rally, and I indicated to the people in the audience that I thought that it had been misidentified by the press. And that in fact I knew no one, I really cannot tell my colleagues that I have ever met anyone who was, in fact, pro-war, just pro-war.

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I do not know anybody like that. There may be people out there who live for the idea of risking life and limb or taking someone else's in the act of war, but I just do not know them; and I do not know that anybody at that rally could have been so classified or identified. Nonetheless, that is the way the press billed it, a pro-war rally.

As I said, I think it has been mischaracterized. I know why the organizers asked me to speak and why I am here, because it is a pro-America rally. I am here, as I said, to lend my voice to those that have already spoken who have indicated their strong support for the actions of our government and for the people who are going to serve and are serving in the military.

But I said that also it was interesting to me because there were many other rallies that had been held up to that point in time, certainly many here in Washington, many on the Mall, and they were organized for the most part by the Workers' Party and similar groups. The people who spoke at these rallies were people who said little about the issue of the advisability of peace in the Middle East, but they did say a lot about what was wrong, in their minds, anyway, with America.

I quoted from some of the speeches that had been made right here in Washington on the Mall at these rallies. The quotes were those that reflected the sort of atmosphere that prevailed at these "pro-peace rallies." I suggested that they were also misidentified by the press as pro-peace rallies, just as we were misidentified by the press as a pro-war rally; and that most of the discussions and most of the people exhorting the crowd were not really interested in just the concept of peace and the need for it, but they talked mostly about the problems with America: that America needed "regime change"; that America needed a "revolution"; that President Bush was, well, I will not go into the kind of epithets that they tossed out against the President and against our system. Also, they led chants of Allah Akbar, Allah Akbar, at these rallies.

When we read what they said, when we read this, we came to the conclusion that there was something a little bit different; that maybe it was not just a pro-peace rally, but that perhaps their real concern was America itself, this Nation and everything it stands for. I indicated that I believed that those rallies could be more accurately identified as anti-America rallies.

Now, not everyone, of course, who attends such a rally could be identified as anti-American. Many people went there, I am sure, because they just simply wanted peace and believed that the foreign policy of the United States vis-a-vis Iraq was inaccurate, was incorrect.

But the organizers of the rally and the people who spoke at these rallies were for the most part unconcerned with the actual issues that we are con-

fronting here with regard to Iraq, and they were much more concerned with what they considered to be the problems with the United States, with our system of government, and essentially with who we are.

Now, shortly thereafter the newspapers in my State carried several stories about the rally, and about what I said. I was characterized as someone who said, if you are not supporting the war effort, you are un-American. Of course, that was not accurate; but it is certainly not the first time that my statements or anyone's, especially those of us here in this body, have been mischaracterized in the press.

But it made me think about the way in which so many Americans have been inclined over the last several decades, really, to look first at what America's warts are, America's problems, America's shortcomings, without being even the slightest bit interested in what America's values are and what America represents for the world.

I was intrigued by a number of things in this particular debate, not the least of which is the attention we pay to people like movie stars and entertainment, people in the entertainment business. We focus on them.

As I was coming over here, I was listening to something that was referencing an actor. He was on the radio, and I think it was simulcast on television. I got to see just part of it, actually, before I came over. This actor was talking about what his opinions were with regard to the war. He was, of course, very critical about the United States and our actions.

Now, this particular actor has every right to, of course, express his opinions, as does the postman, as does the waitress, as does any other citizen of this country. What is intriguing to me is the attention that we pay to that particular point of view by these people, who admittedly have no particular expertise that differentiates them from any of the people that I just mentioned in their walks of life: the waitress, the postman, the cab driver.

As a matter of fact, I remember reading something a little bit ago about a cab driver here in Washington, D.C. when ex-President Clinton was addressing a group at Georgetown University right after 9-11. Mr. Clinton suggested in this particular speech that the reason the United States had suffered such a blow from these terrorists was because of the way we had treated Native Americans in the past and because of the history of slavery in the United States. That is why we essentially deserved what we got. This is from an ex-President.

Now, it is understandable that the media would cover his interpretation of the events. He was, as a matter of fact, of course, an ex-President of the United States, emphasizing here, to my great relief, the prefix "ex" before the word "President."

In Washington there was a cab driver, and by the way, this was reported in