the U.S. side of the border, according to Department of Homeland Security statistics released last week to the Chronicle. So far this fiscal year, which began Oct. l, 2003, Homeland Security officials released from Border Patrol custody 21,979 of the 49,705 illegal immigrants from countries other than Mexico, known to the Border Patrol as OTMs.

As a member of the House Select Committee on Homeland Security's Subcommittee on Infrastructure and Border Security and Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Control I joined Mr. BONILLA and another of my Texas colleagues, Mr. SOLOMON ORTIZ for a series of briefings and field visits at the Brownsville border areas.

When Border Patrol (BP) officers catch undocumented immigrants, they take them to a facility to be processed. If they are Mexican, they usually are placed on a bus and returned to Mexico. If they are not Mexican, BP classifies them as ''OTM'' (other than Mexican). Under a new detention policy popularly known as ''catch and release,'' thousands of OTMs are released on their own recognizance pending a deportation hearing scheduled to be held months after they are released. Apparently, a large percentage of the OTMs abscond instead of appearing for removal proceedings.

I share many of the concerns that my colleagues SOLOMON P. ORTIZ and HENRY BONILLA have expressed about border security. The catch and release policy appears to be the result of a lack of funding for detention facilities. The security concern about the catch and release policy is that it includes individuals from nations the U.S. defines as state sponsors of potential terrorism. Before commenting on the catch and release policy, I want to emphasize that immigration does not equate with terrorism. All but a few of the immigrants who enter our country unlawfully are hardworking people who are coming to the United States because they want better lives for themselves and their families.

I favor the approach that Canada takes to border security, namely, they emphasize identifying the people who might be dangerous. We must improve intelligence operations so that our border patrol officers will be able to separate out the potential terrorists. This involves a two step process. We must first identify the potential terrorists, and then that information must be made available to the border patrol officers.

My colleagues SOLOMON P. ORTIZ and HENRY BONILLA have said that we need to increase the number of immigration judges. They believe that an increase in the number of immigration judges will dramatically reduce the need for detention facilities. I agree that we need more immigration judges. I also think that we need more Board Members for the Board of Immigration Appeals. Attorney General Ashcroft removed 5 experienced Board members a few years ago in a misguided effort to increase the productivity of the Board.

My alien smuggling bill, the CASE Act, or H.R. 2630, will address one of the major impediments to gaining control over our borders. The CASE Act would establish a three-point program to facilitate the investigation and prosecution, or disruption, of reckless commercial alien smuggling operations that features incentives, penalty enhancements, and an outreach program. This three-point program would provide government investigators and prosecutors with tools that have proven their worth in other areas of criminal law and would be just as useful with commercial alien smuggling operations. The result would be fewer deaths from alien smuggling operations.

Therefore, this amendment will address a very clear need, and I support the amendment offered by the gentleman from Texas.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE McINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, October 9, 2004

Mr. McINTYRE. Mr. Speaker, on October 5, 2004, I was unavoidably absent for rollcall votes 494, 495, and 496. Had I been present I would have voted, ''no'' on rollcall vote no. 494, H.R. 163; ''yes'' on rollcall vote no. 495, H.R. 2929, and ''yes'' on rollcall vote no. 496, H.R. 5011.

EGYPTIAN SINAI BOMBINGS

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, October 9, 2004

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in deep disgust to speak about the ghastly attacks on three Egyptian Sinai resorts.

It should be obvious to all of us that these attacks were perpetrated because we are entering the final days of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot.

The terrorists who committed these heinous attacks had one goal—that goal was to kill as many innocent Israelis as possible.

The three terrorist attacks murdered at least 29 people and injured scores of others but unfortunately I fear the number of dead will rise as rescue teams search through the rubble.

The international community to the fullest extent must condemn these attacks.

It is time for the anti-Israeli elements within the United Nations to stop their one-sided resolutions and recognize that terrorism is a continuing threat to Israel and to the world.

The nations who continually work to pass these anti-Israeli resolutions within the United Nations General Assembly—must stop their rhetoric and instead do something to stop these attacks.

These nations can no longer be content by sitting on the sidelines and criticizing the actions of the Israeli government to protect their citizens.

Instead, it is time for these nations to help the Palestinian people who seek a nation that is not lead by corrupt leaders who support terrorism.

If these nations really want to see the success of the Palestinian people they will not only condemn these attacks, but they will finally begin to work toward ending terrorism and the attacks we see in the Middle East and around the world.

SPECIALTY CROPS COMPETITIVENESS ACT OF 2004

SPEECH OF

HON. CALVIN M. DOOLEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Mr. DOOLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3242, the Specialty Crops Competitiveness Act of 2004, albeit with reservations about the scaled down version of the substitute bill that comes before us today.

When I joined Representative DOUG OSE last year in introducing H.R. 3242, it was a natural reflection of my longstanding interest in a prosperous and competitive specialty crops sector.

U.S. farm policy has long overlooked the importance of specialty crops, despite the fact that these non-subsidized crops account for the majority of crop production in this country. Instead, U.S. farm policy has tended to focus on so-called ''program'' crops, such as cotton, rice, sugar, peanuts, wheat, corn, oilseeds, feed grains, and others, which account for less than half of domestic production.

H.R. 3242 was introduced not to bring fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, and other horticultural products into the category of ''program commodities'' but instead to focus federal attention and resources on the problems facing this segment of U.S. agriculture. The bill as introduced included various regulatory reforms as well as a modest level of federal dollars to invest in non-market-distorting ways in the competitiveness of the U.S. specialty crop sector.

As the lead Democrat sponsor of H.R. 3242, however, I am very disappointed that the version of the bill that moved out of the House Agriculture Committee and is before us today is significantly scaled down from the original bill. In particular, the federal funding provided by this substitute bill has gone from a mandatory spending level of $508 million per year for five years, to a discretionary authorization of only $54 million per year that is further subject to annual appropriations.

This is a far cry from the level of federal commitment to the specialty crop sector that is warranted.

Specialty crops have an annual farm-gate value of $52 billion and receive no federal subsidies. Program crops, on the other hand, have a farm-gate value of only $48 billion. Yet the program commodities received federal subsidies in the amount of $12–13 billion, the equivalent of 27 percent of their farm-gate value.

This bill does not change the fact that producers of specialty crops receive no federal subsidy payments, and instead rely solely on the market for their income. No new federal price supports, direct payments, marketing loans, or counter-cyclical payments are created in this bill.

A serious federal commitment to this sector, however, requires a serious level of federal dollars.

The bulk of federal expenditures under H.R. 3242 would go to a block grant program that would distribute federal dollars to interested states for research, marketing, promotion, and other competitiveness-enhancing programs for their specialty crop industries. These funds are designed to increase consumer awareness and demand for specialty crop products and