

shapes to our facial features. We may come from every—we do come from every continent on the planet. We come from hundreds of countries on the planet.

But what we have in common is we either, people that came to America bring with them the distinct vigor of their culture and their civilization. It isn't that somebody that comes from France or Italy or Argentina or Russia, wherever it might be, Sweden, that comes to the United States, it isn't that those nationalities have these unique vigorous characteristics of hardworking industrious entrepreneurs that love freedom and want to build something and put a mark on life and leave this world a better place for the next generation.

We got the dreamers from every civilization. We got the can-do spirit from every civilization. The American culture, the American Dream is built because we are the recipients of the cream of the crop of every donor civilization on the planet that sent legal immigrants here to America. And they rose up. They had to sacrifice to get here. They had to plan. They had to sometimes sell out their future to get here. But when they came here, they were determined to build something that had value. And when they saw the Statue of Liberty it meant something to them. It's a dream. It throbbed in their heart when they looked at that and they saw themselves sailing into Ellis Island. Here was this promised land. Yes, some of them thought the streets were paved with gold. But also, many of them believed that they had an opportunity to go out there and mine for that gold and pave their own streets in this country, and nobody could take away their freedom, their liberty, their property rights, and no one could put them in double jeopardy of a crime. That vigor that is from each donor civilization is part and parcel of the character of America.

I come from a number of different sources, but some of my ancestors came across the prairie in a covered wagon. They walked beside that wagon or behind the oxen, and on a good day they traveled 10 miles across the prairie where the prairie grass was high in a sea of grass. On a good day they traveled 10 miles. Why they ever decided to drive that stake in the ground where they did and declare a homestead, I don't know how that process goes through one's mind.

I've never read nor have I heard how they were thinking. But I know this: they came to the Midwest to live free or die on the prairie. They took the State motto of New Hampshire. They transposed it to the Midwest and on to the points to the West as well, where you had freedom-loving people that wanted spaces and opportunity, and they put their stake in the ground for that homesteaded 160. However they got started and they built, they built a house out of sod, and they started raising kids and putting them to work.

And they took the axe and chopped the tree stumps out and turned them into farms, and they ran cattle and they found ways to make a living. They came out to live free or die on the prairie.

And those of us who are descended from that kind of stock, we understand why. Why are my neighbors proud, independent? They don't want to be dependent upon government. They just want to have an opportunity to work and succeed and support their church and their family and their neighborhoods and their schools. That's all they ask for. The pride, the independence, the industriousness, that's what's built America. And we took the cream of the crop off all those donors civilizations, and we gave them an opportunity here under the banner of freedom and liberty. And American vigor rose up. This giant Petri dish of this experiment of freedom and liberty rose up, and here we are.

We're not a people that's suitable to be put under the yoke of socialism, or have a Federal Government dictate to us where we can or can't get our health care, or take away our shares in General Motors or Chrysler and hand them over to the Union, or have the Federal Government say that we want a guarantee that people can buy houses whether they can afford it or not, and we're going to guarantee that we're going to charge the taxpayers to pick up the difference when they can't meet those mortgages.

These people want to be free. They want to be left alone. We want to allow for the vigor of Americans to shine and to glow and project itself across this continent and across this globe.

As I've said, Mr. Speaker, with the opening remarks about Staff Sergeant Salvatore Giunta, the risk that he took running into enemy gunfire over and over again to save his fellow troops, miraculously lived through that, will be receiving the Medal of Honor tomorrow in the ceremony at the White House. He put his life on the line. Some of his people lost theirs.

And we owe to him, and we owe to all of those who have put their lives on the line, who have put on the uniform throughout the centuries, we owe them the fight for freedom and liberty here on the floor of the United States Congress. We owe them that fight. We owe them that liberty.

We owe them that we're going to shut off this accumulation of debt, we're going to reduce and eventually eliminate the deficit. And in doing so, it will bring the economy back around, and it will produce jobs, and it will enhance our freedom and liberty, and those entrepreneurs that came to this country for that freedom, for a chance to build, and the descendants of those entrepreneurs that came here in earlier generations so that their children would have an opportunity for a better life, to earn, not to receive as if America is some giant ATM, but to earn a better life here. We owe it to Staff Sergeant

Salvatore Giunta and everyone like him our best effort here on this floor to honor his effort, to uphold the Constitution, to uphold the oath to the Constitution that we will again take on January 4, here on the floor of this House of Representatives, to raise America up to the next level of our destiny, do honor to those who've gone before us, and to leave a legacy for those that come behind us.

And this is the beginning, Mr. Speaker. This class, this new freshman class, for the 112th Congress is God's gift to America, and the American people will appreciate it. And we need to empower them to the maximum amount because I believe that they will lead us forward to that next level of our destiny.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. HEINRICH (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of personal business.

Mr. PLATTS (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and November 16 on account of a family member's funeral.

Mr. WOLF (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of medical reasons.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SHERMAN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHERMAN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE of Texas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today, November 16, 17, 18, and 19.

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today, November 16, 17, 18, and 19.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, today, November 16, 17, 18, and 19.

Mr. PAUL, for 5 minutes, November 16, 17, and 18.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, today, November 16, 17, 18, and 19.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida, for 5 minutes, November 16 and 17.

SENATE BILLS AND CONCURRENT RESOLUTION REFERRED

Bills and concurrent resolutions of the Senate of the following titles were