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BARACK OBAMA.  
THE WHITE HOUSE, May 5, 2009.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

□ 1600

#### CROSS-BORDER CRIME

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRIFFITH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about one of the most important things taking place in our country, and that is the battle on the second front. I am not talking about the war in Afghanistan or the war in Iraq, but I am talking about the battle that is fought daily on the southern border of the United States with Mexico and those people that try to come into the United States illegally. I call it the border wars.

Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot about that crime comes into the United States from the south, from all countries, through Mexico. And then we hear that it is not really a problem. Sometimes it is very difficult for us to know exactly what the truth is. It always tends to be based upon who is giving us that information.

Recently, I was down on the Texas-Mexico border. I visited with numerous of our sheriffs and I asked them this question: How many people do you have in your county jail that are charged with crimes in your county? I am not talking about people being held on immigration violations, just people in jail charged with misdemeanors or felonies. And so the different sheriffs gave me the information that I would like to relate to you tonight.

We will start off in far west Texas, in El Paso, a large population. The Sheriff's Department says: About 18 percent of the people in our county jail are foreign nationals in the United States legally, illegally, charged with crimes, misdemeanors or felonies.

You move next door to Hudspeth County, a vast county the size of Connecticut and Rhode Island, not very many sheriff's deputies in that county. Sheriff Arvin West says: 90 percent of the people in my county jail are foreign nationals.

Moving on down the Rio Grande River toward the Gulf of Mexico, Culberson County Sheriff Carrillo, 22 percent. The three next counties, Jeff Davis, Presidio, and Brewster Counties did not have information that they could furnish me, so I will move on down the river and talk about the other ones.

Val Verde County, 39 percent of the people in the county jail are foreign nationals; Kinney County, 71 percent, foreign nationals; Maverick County, 65 percent; Dimmit County, 45 percent; Webb County, that is where Laredo is, 45 percent are foreign nationals; Zapata County, 65 percent; Starr County, 53 percent; Hidalgo County, 23 percent; and then Cameron County, down on the Mexico-Texas border that buttresses the Gulf of Mexico, is 28 percent.

You can make statistics prove whatever you want them to, Mr. Speaker, but those are a lot of people in American jails from foreign countries that have been charged with committing crimes in this country. That is one reason, maybe the primary reason, why we need to protect the sanctity of the border.

We talk about border security. We are spending money on border security. We are sending a lot of money down to Mexico to spend on border security. But the truth of the matter is cross-traveler crime is still being committed, and people are committing crimes in American counties who are foreign nationals, and it is time the United States realize this truth and secure the border.

A lot of these people are charged with drug crimes, the drug cartels, drug runners. Many of those people in our jails are those individuals. We are learning now that there is a new effort to build tunnels into the United States, not just over in California, but in Texas and Arizona, as well, where needed.

So, obviously, the sheriffs in these counties need help, and we need everybody working on the border, all the Federal agencies, the Border Patrol, the ATF, the DEA, we need all of them. Plus, we need the locals who patrol the whole county. Unlike the Border Patrol that only patrols the first 35 miles inland, the county sheriffs patrol the vastness of the county.

So what can they do about it? There are a couple of programs that we need to help the sheriffs be involved in. One of those is they can get from the Department of Defense used equipment, equipment that has been used by our military, and all they have to do is repair it and they can use that equipment. We are talking about Humvees. We are talking about trucks. We are talking about, even, helicopters. They can repair that equipment by sending it to the State penitentiary where those mechanics are that can repair it. They can also buy, at a low price, equipment that has been used occasionally, new or used equipment that is no longer used by our military.

So both of those things, we should encourage the sheriffs departments to use and to get that equipment. Because, you see, Mr. Speaker, the drug cartels have more money, they have more people, they have better equipment than we do on this side of the border, and that is one way we can enforce the security of the border.

We ought to also use the National Guard on the border. The border Governors have requested the use of the National Guard, and we should use the National Guard.

And lastly, Mr. Speaker, I have met with the sheriffs from Brownsville all the way to San Diego, and they are in a group called the Southwest Border Sheriff's Coalition. There is 31 of these sheriffs, and they have asked, through me, to ask the President of the United States to meet with them so the sheriffs can tell the President firsthand what is taking place on the border from Brownsville, Texas, all the way to San Diego, California, and hopefully the President will do that. We need to protect the border. That is the first duty of government.

And that's just the way it is.

#### TOO MANY HAVE DIED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, a recent report from the Associated Press gave us a new and very grim reminder of the human cost of the conflict in Iraq.

According to the A.P., the Iraqi Government has secretly recorded over 87,000 killings since the year 2005. The A.P. also added its own statistics on the known number of deaths between 2003 and 2005.

When you add those numbers, you get over 110,000 Iraqi civilian deaths since the beginning of the American occupation. But, Mr. Speaker, the death toll is even higher than that. The A.P. said that an Iraqi official estimated the actual number of deaths to be 10 to 20 percent higher because of the thousands who are still missing and civilians who were buried in the chaos of war without official records.

Of course, the death toll itself does not measure the full human cost of the conflict. It doesn't include the injured. It doesn't include the children who have been orphaned. It doesn't include the families that have been devastated by the loss of their loved ones and their breadwinners. It doesn't include the suffering of the 4 million refugees. It doesn't include the countless deaths from indirect causes, which includes the lack of health care because hospitals were closed and so many doctors were forced to flee. And it doesn't include the people who have seen their futures taken away from them because of their schools and colleges being closed by the fighting. It is no surprise that the A.P. report said almost every person in Iraq has been touched by the violence.