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# Power Line Blog: John Hinderaker, Scott Johnson, Paul Mirengoff

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### AN EVENING IN TUCSON -- THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY

January 12, 2011 Posted by Paul at 9:55 PM

In the post immediately below, I praised President Obama's speech in Tucson this evening in honor of the victims of that horrific shooting spree. His speech was part of a larger ceremony which, on the whole, was rather a mixed bag.

The best thing about the evening, even better than Obama's speech, was the news he delivered that Rep. Giffords today opened her eyes on her own for the first time since she was shot.

Other good spots: Daniel Hernandez, the intern who helped save Rep. Giffords life, gave a brief and impressive talk in which he insisted that he was not a hero. And Eric Holder and Janet Napolitano used their time at the podium not to deliver speeches but instead to simply reading from scripture. This may have been designed to keep things fresh for Obama's speech, but it was appreciated nonetheless.

On the negative side of the ledger, I didn't appreciate the president of the University of Arizona (and master of ceremonies) telling us how lucky we are to have Barack Obama as our president and Janet Napolitano as our homeland security chief. Nor did the frequent raucous cheering by the huge crowd seem appropriate at what was, at least in part, a memorial service.

As for the "ugly," I'm afraid I must cite the opening "prayer" by Native American Carlos Gonzales. It was apparently was some sort of Yaqui Indian tribal thing, with lots of references to "the creator" but no mention of God. Several of the victims were, as I understand it, quite religious in that quaint Christian kind of way (none, to my knowledge, was a Yaqui). They (and their families) likely would have appreciated a prayer more closely aligned with their religious beliefs.

But it wasn't just Gonzales's prayer that was "ugly" under the circumstances. Before he ever got to the prayer, Gonzales provided us with a mini-auto biography and made several references to Mexico, the country from which (he informed us) his family came to Arizona in the mid 19th century. I'm not sure why Gonzales felt that Mexico needed to intrude into this service, but I have an idea.

In any event, the invocation could have used more God, less Mexico, and less Carlos Gonzales.

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