

President Obama reminded us of the fact that having more than 40 million uninsured Americans is unacceptable. It is not only bad for the individual, but it is for the American economy. It is bad for hospitals who absorb the loss for these indigent patients or shift the costs to other patients.

During the campaign, the President went on to painfully highlight the unfair practices of some insurance companies in making people think they have quality insurance policies, when, in fact, in many instances, it is not worth the paper it is written on.

After fierce debate, and after the right-wing Tea Party instilled unfounded fear in the hearts of good Americans, the Congress passed the Affordable Care Act, and it is good policy for the American people. But there are those who have exploited the legitimacy of the Affordable Care Act, and now we await a ruling from the Supreme Court on the act's constitutionality.

Should the Supreme Court decide to undermine the most vital provision of the law, the individual mandate, one thing will be clear: it would be an act of judicial activism and judicial overreach, placing the Court firmly in the role of Congress.

Precedent for the Affordable Care Act already exists. Social Security is a program which all Americans are required to pay into and to participate. Car insurance is mandated in almost every State; yet the Supreme Court is on precipice of possible unfastening the linchpin that makes true health care reform attainable.

Such a decision would confiscate benefits that the public and businesses largely support. Lifetime coverage limits could be re-imposed on 100 million Americans. Seventeen million children with preexisting conditions could lose insurance coverage, and 6 million young adults may be forced off their parents' insurance plans.

Preservation of this law means 40 million uninsured Americans will be insured. It creates state-run health exchanges to give consumers maximum choice when selecting a policy, and it contains skyrocketing costs in medical care. The Affordable Care Act will lower insurance premiums driven by uncompensated care for the uninsured, saving the average family in North Carolina \$1,400 a year.

Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act has already paid great dividends in my district. Under the law, 94,000 seniors have received Medicare preventive services without paying a dime. More than 5,000 young adults have health insurance when they previously did not. About 400 small businesses received tax credits to expand care to their employees; 34,000 children with preexisting health conditions can no longer be denied.

As a policy-maker representing 700,000 people, I hope the act will remain intact. As a former judge, I hope the Supreme Court recognizes the im-

pact an unfavorable decision will have on the role of Congress.

We cannot let the perfect, Mr. Speaker, be the enemy of the good. We should explore ways to improve upon the law instead of ways to further deny Americans access to affordable health care.

AMERICA'S FOREIGN POLICY OF MISCHIEF AND INTERVENTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, last week I introduced legislation, H.R. 5993, that would prohibit the President from providing military or paramilitary aid of any sort to any faction in the internal fighting in Syria. Unfortunately, it appears that the administration is already very much involved in supporting the overthrow of the Assad government.

There's nary a whimper of criticism in Congress over our growing involvement in the civil war in Syria. The only noise we hear from Congress, and repeated in the media, is the complaint that we're not doing enough and that immediate, direct U.S. military action must be taken.

Tragically, our political leaders show both bad judgment and short memories when it comes to the downside of our foreign policy of mischief and intervention. Our compulsion to engage ourselves in every conflict around the world is dangerous to our national security.

In dealing with Syria, the administration pretends to pursue diplomacy and provide humanitarian assistance to the people. In reality, the U.S. Government facilitates weapons transfers to the rebels who are demanding immediate regime change.

My goal is to stop our dangerous participation in the violence in Syria; yet evidence mounts that we're already deeply involved, with no expectation that the administration will back away from military engagement.

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Recent reports indicate that the U.S. is providing logistics and communication assistance to the rebel forces. Assistance in getting arms to the rebels through surrogates is hardly a secret. Cooperating with the rebels' propaganda efforts has been reported and is used to prepare the American people for our coming involvement.

There is every reason to expect that the well-laid plans to, once again, coordinate a favorable regime change will end badly. Even the strongest supporters of our direct and immediate military involvement in Syria admit that the rebel forces are made up of many groups, including al Qaeda, and no one is sure to whom the assistance should be given. All they claim is the need for the immediate removal of Assad.

This policy is nothing new, and too often in our recent history our assist-

ance with dollars and weapons used to overthrow a government ends up with the weapons being used, instead, against us. The blow-back from our policy of intervention has caused a great deal of harm to us since World War II:

Propping up the Shah in Iran for 26 years was a powerful factor in motivating radical Islamists to eventually overthrow the Shah in 1979. The hostages taken at the U.S. Embassy at that time was as a consequence of our putting the Shah into power in 1953;

In working with the mujahadeen in the 1980s, our CIA supported radical Islam in an effort to combat communist occupation in Afghanistan. Later, this led to the radical Islamists' hatred being turned against us over our occupation and interference in Muslim countries;

The \$40 billion given to Egypt for over 30 years to prop up the Musharraf dictatorship and to buy an unstable peace with Israel has ended with what appears to be the takeover of Egypt by the Muslim Brotherhood. They may well turn Egypt into a theocratic Islamic state unless our CIA is able to, once again, gain control. Al Qaeda now has a presence in parts of Egypt and has been involved in the bombing of the pipelines carrying gas to Israel. This is hardly a policy that is enhancing Israel's security.

What are the possible unintended consequences of this policy if we foolishly escalate the civil war in Syria?

The worst scenario would be an all-out war in the region involving Russia, the United States, Israel, Iran, Turkey, and others. The escalating conflict could rapidly make containment virtually impossible.

Chaos in this region could encourage the Kurds in Syria, Iraq, Turkey, and Iran to decide it's an opportunity to move on their long-sought-after goal of establishing a Kurdish state. Significant hostilities in the region would jeopardize the free flow of oil from the Middle East, causing sharp increases in the price of oil. The already weak economy of the West would suffer immensely. Some will argue erroneously that a major war would be beneficial to the economy and distract the people from their economic woes.

War, however, is never an economic benefit, although many have been taught that for many decades. If liberty and prosperity are to be our goals, peace is a necessary ingredient of that process.

PARTISAN ACRIMONY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MILLER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MILLER of North Carolina. Tomorrow will be a peculiar day in Washington and in American politics.

Republicans will denounce ideas that they enthusiastically supported until those ideas became associated somehow with the Obama administration.