

compromising core principles on either side of the aisle, we ought to find a way to come together to get our troops the resources they need to get the job done, because the unspoken fact this week, in the midst of a lot of political conflagration and argument, is the fact that, as General David Petraeus told us here on Capitol Hill last week, there is evidence that the surge, and there is evidence that because of Sunni leadership, tribal leadership in al Anbar province in Ramadi, there is evidence that Iraq is beginning to make modest progress toward exactly the kind of stability that will make possible the political progress and the diplomatic progress that are the real long-term answer here.

Let me emphasize that point one more time. I don't think there is a military solution in Iraq; we simply cannot surge troops to the four corners of Iraq. That is not the President's plan. It would not be workable in any event. I believe the President's plan is sound, to surge troops into the capital city to quell violence sufficient to give the al Maliki government in Baghdad the credibility to move a de-Ba'athification agreement, to move an agreement for sharing the revenues of oil proceeds with all of the people in Iraq on an equitable basis, to move new provincial elections, including in al Anbar province, where many of the Sunni leaders that we met with had expressed an interest in participating in provincial elections, should they be scheduled in the next month or two. But it is that kind of political process that will encourage ownership by Iraqis in this new constitutional republic that will be the real victory for freedom.

As the President said this week, we cannot define success in Iraq as the absence of violence. The day that freedom wins, whatever that day would be, the day that we can know with a moral certitude that this new democratically elected government in Iraq is able to defend itself, able to defend its people, the day we have the moral certitude that they can do that and we can begin then to come home in good conscience, there will likely be insurgent and al Qaeda violence taking place somewhere in Iraq. Therefore, we cannot define victory as the absence of violence, but we can define victory as the presence of a stable democratic, constitutional republic that can defend itself. And that, it seems to me, beyond the issues that the President raised when he vetoed the legislation, is the most compelling argument for finding a way forward, finding the common ground necessary to get our soldiers the resources they need to get the job done and to come home safe.

This is a tough time in Iraq. General Petraeus told me on the ground in Baghdad a month ago, he told Members of Congress gathered in a bipartisan briefing last week that there are difficult days ahead, that there is no guarantee that the surge, which seems

to be beginning to take hold in Baghdad, will ultimately succeed. But it seems to me the fact that, despite the recent wave of insurgent bombings, or the fact that sectarian violence is down in Baghdad, the fact that Ramadi and al Anbar province appears, because of Sunni Iraqi leadership and U.S. and Iraqi forces, al Anbar province appears to be taking a turn for the better, however modest, that that argues for us finding a way forward, finding common ground where we can give our soldiers the resources they need. Because in Baghdad, despite the recent bombings, sectarian violence is down.

Baghdad is not safe, but it is safer because of the presence of more than two dozen U.S. and Iraqi joint operating centers in that capital city, more than 40 joint operating centers now spread throughout Ramadi, and the fact that in al Anbar province, more than 20 Sunni sheiks across the region have united together to oppose insurgency and al Qaeda.

□ 1700

This war is not lost. Congress should find the common ground necessary to give our soldiers the resources they need to get the job done, to stand up this government, to ensure this new democracy in Iraq can defend itself, and then lay the framework for us to come home.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for this time. It is my fondest hope that what the President called us to in his remarks from the Cabinet room this week will characterize much of the debate between now and Memorial Day, and I want to quote his words again. The President, in thanking the leaders for coming down, said, "Yesterday was a day that highlighted differences. Today," he said, "is the day when we can work together to find common ground." But he also added, "It is very important we do this as quickly as we possibly can." And he expressed confidence that we can reach agreement.

I will close with that, Mr. Speaker. I truly believe in all my heart that it is possible for a majority of this Congress to come together in a manner that we can deliver to our soldiers the resources that they need within a constitutional framework that doesn't intrude on the President's role as commander in chief, in a way that reflects fiscal discipline and in a way, also, that continues to provide the resources that if, in fact, the modest progress we are beginning to see continues to widen through the summer, that we, in fact, provide the resources for an expanding success for the surge, an expanding success for Iraqis stepping forward to oppose al Qaeda and insurgency in Al-Anbar, and ultimately a success for freedom in Iraq. I am confident of this, I am confident the common ground is there; and it will be my hope and my prayer and my pledge to work with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to accomplish just that.

On behalf of the Republican Study Committee and our many members, I

thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the Republican leadership for yielding us this hour.

WORLD PRESS FREEDOM DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COHEN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, today is World Press Freedom Day, a day that the international community has set aside to honor the work and sacrifice of journalists around the world.

World Press Freedom Day was first designated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization in 1991 as an occasion to pay tribute to journalists and to reflect upon the role of the media in general in advancing fundamental human rights as codified in international law, regional conventions and national constitutions.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is the foundation of the postwar human rights movement, states the principle broadly in article 19. "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." It may not be as eloquent as our first amendment, but its effect is the same.

For Americans, this day should spur us to consider the role that journalists play in our society and to ponder what our Nation would be like if this cornerstone of our liberty were to be curtailed.

Although most Americans take the concept of a free press for granted, I believe that an unfettered press is vital to America's national security and to our democracy here at home.

A year ago today, my colleague from Indiana, Mr. Spence, and Senators CHRIS DODD and RICHARD LUGAR joined me in launching a new bipartisan, bicameral caucus aimed at advancing press freedom around the world. The Congressional Caucus for Freedom of the Press creates a forum where the United States Congress can work to combat and condemn media censorship and the persecution of journalists around the world. The launch of this new caucus sends a strong message that Congress will defend democratic values and human rights wherever they are threatened.

In launching the caucus, we were encouraged by the wide range of organizations and individuals, such as Reporters Without Borders, Freedom House, the Committee to Protect Journalists, Musa Klebnikov, the widow of Paul Klebnikov, the editor of Forbes Russia, who was shot to death outside of his offices 2 years ago, and the legendary Walter Cronkite, all of whom enthusiastically endorsed our effort.

Freedom of the press is so central to our democracy that the Framers enshrined it in the first amendment of our Constitution. At the time, there was little in the way of journalist ethics, and newspapers were filled with scurrilous allegations leveled at public figures. Even so, our Founders understood its importance to advancing the new Nation's experiment in democracy.

In the Virginia Report of 1799–1800, touching the alien and sedition laws, James Madison wrote that, "Some degree of abuse is inseparable from the proper use of everything, and in no instance is this more true than in that of the press. It has accordingly been decided by the practice of the States that it is better to leave a few of its noxious branches to their luxuriant growth than by pruning them away to injure the vigor of those yielding the proper fruits. And can the wisdom of this policy be doubted by any who reflect that to the press alone, checkered as it is with abuses, the world is indebted for all the triumphs which have been gained by reason and humanity over error and oppression, who reflect to the same beneficent source. The United States owes much of the lights which conducted them to the rank of a free and independent nation and which have improved their political system into a shape so auspicious to their happiness."

Throughout much of our history, Madison's argument has guided our national attitude toward the media. Journalists have jealously guarded their rights, and American courts have, in the main, carved out broad protection for the press. In the United States, the press operates almost as a fourth branch of government, the fourth estate, independent of the other three and positioned as an agent of the American people.

From the pioneering work of journalists during the Civil War, to the muckrakers who were committed to exposing social, economic and political ills of industrial life in the early 20th century, to the publication of the Pentagon Papers by The New York Times in 1971, to the work of Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein in uncovering the Watergate scandal a year later, journalists have performed a crucial role as the watchdogs of our freedom.

But in order for freedom of the press to do its work properly, it must be unfettered, and journalists must be able to do their work without fear of retribution. Information is power, which is precisely why governments, many of them, attempt to control the press to suppress opposition and to preempt dissent. Far too often, reporters and editors who seek to demand reform, accountability and greater transparency find that their livelihoods and even their very lives are in danger. The censorship, intimidation, imprisonment and murder of these journalists violate not only their personal liberty, but also the rights of those who are denied access to these ideas and information.

The United States, as the world's oldest democracy and the greatest champion of free expression, has a special obligation to defend the rights of journalists wherever and whenever they are threatened. A free press is one of the most powerful forces for advancing democracy, human rights and economic development. So our commitment to these larger objectives requires active engagement in the protection and the promotion of this freedom.

These are difficult and dangerous days for reporters around the world. According to the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, 56 journalists were killed in the line of duty in 2006, most of whom were murdered to silence or punish them. The toll was 9 more than the 47 journalists killed in 2005, just the year before, and well above average for the last 2 decades of reporting. Another 30 reporters were killed, but law enforcement authorities cannot confirm that their deaths were the result of their work.

Outright murder is not the only tool that the authorities use to silence reporters. As of December 1, 2006, 134 journalists were imprisoned around the world as a consequence of their work. Of these, more than 100 were held by only five countries: China, Cuba, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Burma.

These countries which imprison journalists for straying beyond the bounds of official censorship are not the most dangerous for journalists, however. Since 1992, more journalists have been killed in Iraq, Algeria, Russia, Colombia and the Philippines than anywhere else.

We are all familiar with the dangers inherent in covering war and insurgencies, and many of those killed in Iraq, Algeria and Colombia have died covering conflicts in these countries. In the Philippines, the murder of journalists has been part of a larger campaign against perceived left-wing activists.

But it is Russia, where more than 20 journalists have been murdered in 6 years since Vladimir Putin succeeded Boris Yeltsin, that we wish to address this evening.

All alone among the top five countries where journalists are murdered, the deaths of journalists in Russia seem to be part of a concerted effort to silence the few remaining journalists who refuse to tow the Kremlin line. China, Cuba and others have been rightly condemned for imprisoning journalists who raised the ire of their governments. Moscow seems to have taken a different tack. Instead of censoring, jailing journalists it doesn't like, the Kremlin seems to look the other way when they turn up dead.

There is no direct evidence tying the Putin government to the murder of journalists in Russia, but there is a wealth of circumstantial evidence pointing to at least acquiescence in the death of journalists.

The number of journalists killed, the circumstances of their deaths, the sto-

ries they were working on, and perhaps most telling, the fact that not one of the crimes has been successfully prosecuted involving the murder of these journalists in Russia, is indicative of a deliberate decision not to dig too deeply into these murders.

Others hint at something darker. In an editorial the Washington Post recently stated, "The instances of violence against journalists in Mr. Putin's Russia and of the brutal elimination of his critics both at home and abroad have become so common that it is impossible to explain them all as coincidences."

The evolution of Russian journalism from its dismal Soviet past to its current role as the Kremlin's sycophant is distressing. During the latter part of the 1980s, Mikhail Gorbachev loosened many of the Soviet era's restrictions on the press and the Soviet media became an important player in Gorbachev's policy of Glasnost.

Under Gorbachev, journalists began to explore the full range of issues that had remained hidden for so long by the Soviet Government, the Afghan war, the gulags, the miserable performance of the Soviet economy and the endemic corruption of Soviet society were laid bare. There is little doubt that the Soviet media's revelations were a catalyst in the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

In the immediate post-Soviet era, the Russian press foundered as the economy collapsed, but the first Chechen war, which lasted from 1994 to 1996, revitalized Russian journalism. Television was especially powerful, and its coverage of the war turned millions of Russians against the conflict. In many respects, this period was the high watermark for an independent press in Russia.

But even as NTV and other television outlets helped to shape domestic opposition to the Chechen war, Russian journalism was shedding its independence. As Michael Specter wrote in the *New Yorker* about this period in Russia, "The moral tone of the journalist's world began to shift from idealistic to mercenary. The practice of writing biased news articles for money became routine, even at the best papers. Restaurant owners, businessmen and public officials knew that, for the right price, it would bring them favorable coverage almost anywhere."

This distortion of the journalistic creed of objectivity and neutrality was exacerbated in 1996 when President Yeltsin, whose support and opinion polls had fallen into the low single digits, faced off against Communist Gennady Zyuganov in the Russian presidential election. Knowing that without third-party intervention Yeltsin was doomed and that Zyuganov would reimpose control over the media, Russia's media elite intervened.

Over the course of the campaign, NTV and other media outlets collectively swayed Russian public opinion and Yeltsin ended up winning. But the

damage was done. As a former anchor for NTV told the New Yorker's Michael Specter, the election "put a poisoned seed into the soil, and even if we did not see why, the authorities understood at once mass media could very easily be manipulated to achieve any goal. Whether the Kremlin needed to raise the rating of a president or bring down an opponent or conduct an operation to destroy a businessman, the media could do the job."

□ 1715

Once the Kremlin understood it could use journalists as instruments of its will and saw that journalists would go along, everything that happened in the Putin era was, sadly, quite logical.

The ascension of Vladimir Putin to the Russian presidency cemented the link between Russia's rulers and the press. Even without government censorship, the press has become a passive booster of the president's efforts to centralize authority and to restore Russia to its former status as a great power. To that end, the Russian media has ignored the corruption and cronyism that has become institutionalized in Russia since the Yeltsin period, and has largely been uncritical of the prosecution of the second Chechen war which has raged for nearly 8 years.

But even as the vast majority of their colleagues censor themselves and follow the Kremlin line, a few brave journalists have dared to investigate, to question, and criticize. Journalistic independence in Russia is dangerous. And in a few minutes we will introduce you to some of the journalists whose brave voices have been stilled.

When my colleague arrives back on the floor, MIKE PENCE, I will introduce him. He has been a leading voice in the House on human rights and serves as the other co-chair of our Congressional Caucus For Freedom of the Press.

But this evening I will start in highlighting the Russian journalists who have lost their lives by talking about Ivan Safronov, who died in early March of this year after falling from a fifth floor stairwell window in his apartment building in Moscow.

He was a correspondent at *Kommersant*, and is the most recent journalist in Russia to die under a cloud of suspicion. Russian officials quickly called his death a suicide. However, according to colleagues of his at *Kommersant*, he had a very happy family life and had no motive to commit suicide. It was not until *Kommersant* and some other news media suggested foul play that the authorities agreed to investigate the circumstances of Mr. Safronov's death.

According to his editors, Mr. Safronov, a military affairs writer, was working on a story about Russian plans to sell weapons to Iran and Syria via Belarus. Mr. Safronov had been a colonel in the Russia Space Forces prior to reporting for *Kommersant*. He frequently angered authorities with his critical reporting and was repeatedly

questioned by Federal authorities which suspected him of divulging state secrets. One such report that Mr. Safronov filed that angered officials revealed the third consecutive launch failure of a new Bulava intercontinental ballistic missile. This had been a pet project of President Putin's which was supposed to show the world Russia's nuclear strength.

Strangely enough, no charges were ever brought up against Mr. Safronov. He was well aware that he was reporting on a sensitive issue and was very careful in his work always to have a way to prove he was not divulging state secrets. He was known for making meticulous notes and conducting thorough research so he could always prove he got his information from known sources.

It would seem that sadly Mr. Safronov's reporting was too good and the only way to silence him was by eliminating him. Mr. Safronov is not on either of the lists of journalists that we have tonight to highlight because his death is so recent. But his tragic death is another example of the lack of progress being made to protect journalists in Russia.

Before I begin highlighting 13 of the journalists on the committee to protect journalists of the most recently murdered journalists in Russia, I would like to introduce my colleague from Indiana, MIKE PENCE, who is one of the co-chairs of the caucus and does a superb job advocating for the rights of the media.

Mr. PENCE. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I am profoundly grateful that while I have the privilege of co-chairing the Congressional Caucus for Protection of the Press, I want to acknowledge you have been the driving force behind this caucus. You recruited me to participation a year ago and I am grateful for this opportunity to have a reunion with you publicly on the House floor. The gentleman from California is a Member I deeply admire, and am honored to be associated with, as well as our Senate colleagues, Senator CHRIS DODD and Senator RICHARD LUGAR from my home State.

I would reflect at the outset about World Press Freedom Day which was the very day that we launched the Congressional Caucus For Freedom of the Press back on May 3, 2006, the profound importance of the freedom of the press and my belief that the United States of America ought to be a beacon of freedom for the world. We ought to inspire, we ought to articulate, we ought to use our freedom, as the gentleman from California is doing today in this Special Order, to highlight the absence of freedom in other parts of the globe. I am greatly enthused by his leadership, Mr. Speaker, and by the opportunity today.

A few thoughts on freedom of the press. I would offer where there is no freedom of the press, there is no freedom. If America is to be a beacon of

hope for the world, we must hold high the idea of a free and independent press. We must advance it abroad and we must defend it at home.

A few quotes about the centrality of freedom of the press. As the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF) suggested, sometimes we don't quite understand how central the freedom of the press is to the success of the American experiment. But our Founders enshrined the freedom of the press in the first amendment because they understood, as people who believed in limited government, that the only check on government power in real-time is a free and independent press.

Our Founders did not include freedom of the press in the first amendment because they got good press, they included it there because they believed in limited government and they believed in the survival of liberty, and they understood the role that the press plays in our society and as we seek to promote it through this caucus in other societies. The press is that agency of progress, that agency of accountability that makes freedom possible and sustains freedom.

A few thoughts from our Founders before I yield back to our effort to highlight what has been a train of frightening contract-style killings taking place in Russia that we seek to highlight today. Thomas Jefferson would say, "Our liberty," and I would add parenthetically, anyone else's liberty, "Our liberty cannot be guarded but by freedom of the press, nor that limited without danger of losing it."

Roger McCormick, the founder of the Chicago Tribune, spoke words that are chiseled on the wall of that newspaper to this day, and I wrote them down when I was visiting the paper a few years ago, about the goal, the mission of a newspaper. He said, "The newspaper is an institution developed by modern civilization to present the news of the day, to foster commerce and industry, to inform and lead public opinion, and to furnish that check upon government which no Constitution has ever been able to provide."

Benjamin Rush, one of our Founding Fathers, would say, "Newspapers are the sentinels of the liberties of the country."

James Madison would say, "To the press alone checkered as it is with abuses, the world is indebted for all of the triumphs which have by gained by reason and humanity over error and oppression."

And Daniel Webster would say, "The entire and absolute freedom of the press is essential to the preservation of government on the basis of a free Constitution."

These great minds, these great voices of liberty, some of whom faces are chiseled into the wall of this great room, are what inspired the formation of the Congressional Caucus for the Freedom of the Press, and it inspires me to be able to stand with my co-chair, with the founder of this caucus, Congressman SCHIFF, to now use this platform,

this stage, this blue and gold and red carpet to hold up the ideal of the freedom of the press, and in the exercise of our own freedom to challenge those and expose those places in the world where the freedom of the press is under siege.

As I prepare to yield back to the gentleman, I would say that the rising tide of violence against journalists in Russia since the advent of the presidency of Mr. Putin is deeply troubling and ought to be troubling to anyone who cherishes the notion of a free and independent press.

As we saw the wall fall in 1991, we all hoped that the daylight of liberty was rushing in with perestroika and the changes and the democracy movement, but it seems that Boris Yeltsin's recent passing may be a metaphor for Russia today. The Boris Yeltsin who stood against Soviet totalitarianism, stood for democracy in his country, passed into history just a matter of weeks ago, and it seems as I think the gentleman will articulate in a powerful and compelling way today, that as he passes into history, we fear that this experiment in freedom and democracy, and particularly a free press in Russia, is passing into history as well. We do not conclude that, we fear it.

I am honored to be able to join my colleague and participate as he yields time to telling some of the stories of these journalists who have paid the price for doing liberty's work in that country of Russia.

So again, I commend the gentleman and give him whole cloth credit for founding the Congressional Caucus For Freedom of the Press. I am honored to stand with him and honored to call him a friend.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman for your generosity and commitment. I know my colleague probably feels as I do that there is many a morning I get up and read the newspaper, seeing my own name in it, and not feel that this is the day I want to champion a free press. That does happen from time to time. But notwithstanding those occasional morning papers, we almost always recognize the importance of the institution. That is why we are here tonight.

When we have gotten together in the past, it is to highlight journalists who have been imprisoned or murdered or killers who have gone with impunity around the world. But because of the magnitude of the problem in Russia, because of the prevalence and the pernicious nature of what is going on in Russia, we felt that we needed to spotlight one country tonight and devote the entire hour to Russia.

Let me start by highlighting some of the 13 journalists in Russia who have been killed contract-style since President Putin was elected president in 2000.

This list of journalists was compiled by the caucus to protect journalists. These 13 journalists are all believed to have been deliberately killed due to

their work as journalists. Their names and the dates they were killed and the media outlets they worked for are listed on some of the graphics that we have here tonight, and these are the faces of the 13 slain journalists.

It is one thing when we talk about the numbers of journalists that have been murdered this year and the number that were murdered last year or the number killed in Russia alone over the last several years. Those are only numbers; but when we look at this chart and we look at these journalists and we realize that these were each promising lives, these were each important lives, these were real people doing a courageous job who are no longer among us, we can understand the enormity of the crime that is going on.

The first of the journalists on the committee's list and the second most recent journalist in Russia to be murdered, probably the most well-known internationally is Anna Politkovskaya. Her portrait is behind me. Anna was found shot to death in her Moscow home on October 7 of last year in a murder that garnered worldwide condemnation.

□ 1730

Her death sparked protests from governments around the world, the European Union, and civil society groups concerned with freedom of the press.

Anna was a courageous and world-renowned writer for the paper Novaya Gazeta. For many years she had campaigned against the war in Chechnya, corruption, and shrinking freedoms throughout the Russian Federation. Anna was a fearless journalist committed to reporting the truth about the conflict in Chechnya, which she called "a small corner of hell."

In 7 years covering the second Chechen war, Anna's reporting repeatedly drew the wrath of Russian authorities. For simply reporting the truth about the conflict, she was threatened, jailed, forced into exile, and even poisoned. Even that was not enough to silence her.

In an interview with the Committee to Protect Journalists, Politkovskaya noted the government's obstruction and harassment of journalists trying to cover the Chechen conflict. She pointed out the difficulty of covering the 2004 hostage crisis in the North Ossetian town of Beslan that left 334 civilians dead. She said, "There is so much more to write about Beslan, but it gets more and more difficult when all the journalists who write are forced to leave."

Apparently the authorities were not content with simply forcing Politkovskaya to leave. She was poisoned on her way to cover the Beslan crisis. After drinking tea on a flight to the region, she became seriously ill and was hospitalized, but the toxin was never identified because the medical staff was instructed to destroy her blood tests.

Politkovskaya was threatened and attacked numerous times in retaliation

for her work. In February 2001, security agents detained her in the Vedeno district in Chechnya, accusing her of entering Chechnya without accreditation. She was kept in a pit for three days without food or water, while a military officer threatened to shoot her. Seven months later, she received death threats from a military officer accused of crimes against civilians. She was forced to flee to Vienna after the officer sent an e-mail to Novaya Gazeta promising that he would seek revenge.

When Politkovskaya covertly visited Chechnya in 2002 to investigate new allegations of human rights abuses, security officers arrested her, kept her overnight at a military base, and threatened her. In October of that year, Politkovskaya served as a mediator between armed Chechen fighters and Russian forces during a hostage standoff in a central Moscow theater. Two days into the crisis, with the Kremlin restricting media coverage, Russian forces gassed the theater and 129 hostages died. Politkovskaya delivered some of the most compelling accounts of that tragedy.

Just prior to her murder, Anna was working on an article, accompanied by photos, about torture in Chechnya. It was due to be published days after she was killed. Her article, however, never arrived at the newspaper.

In her last book, Russia Under Putin, which was published this year in France, she not only criticized atrocities in Chechnya but also corruption and human rights violations in Russia.

Anna was internationally acclaimed for her courage and her professionalism, and now you can see why. She was named by the Committee to Protect Journalists as one of the world's top press freedom figures of the past 25 years in the fall 2006 edition of its magazine, Dangerous Assignments.

Anna may have been killed, but her memory continues to live on. Today, Anna was named this year's winner of the prestigious 2007 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize. This is the first time the honor has been awarded posthumously in its 10-year history.

While the Russian Government claims that many leads have been examined, so far the investigation has stalled, and no charges have been filed, a sadly familiar tale when a journalist is murdered in Russia.

This is the face of a woman of great courage, who gave her life so that the truth could come out and be told, and tonight we honor her memory and we point to her example.

I will turn now to Mr. PENCE to highlight our next journalist.

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, also pictured on our poster, and I believe the gentleman from California could point to, in the upper left corner of the poster should be the image of Magomedzagid Varisov.

At around 9:00 p.m. on June 28, 2005, in the city of Makhachkala, assailants armed with machine guns opened fire

on Magomedzagid Varisov's sedan as he drove home with his wife. Varisov sustained multiple bullet wounds and died at the scene. The likely motive for Varisov's assassination was his work as a journalist and a commentator.

For three years prior to his murder, Varisov wrote analytical columns for the *Novoye Delo*, Dagestan's largest weekly newspaper. Dagestan, a Russian republic bordering the Caspian Sea, has been the scene of low-level political violence and unrest driven by a separatist rebellion since 2000. Varisov was often critical of the Dagestan separatists, and his expertise on the Northern Caucuses made him a highly sought after resource for reporters and researchers. As a journalist and a pundit, Varisov wrote that the opposition was trying to destabilize the republic and topple the regional government and authored investigative pieces into terrorism and organized crime in the region.

In an issue of *Novoye Delo* just before his death, Varisov examined Russian Army operations in the Chechen border town of Borozdinovskaya in which one person was killed and 11 others were reported missing. Ethnic Avars, fearing for their lives, left Borozdinovskaya by the hundreds and crossed into neighboring Dagestan. Varisov criticized Chechen authorities in his article for failing to protect the safety of Borozdinovskaya residents and appealed to Dagestan authorities to do right by them.

For over a year, Varisov had spoken of threats against him and had written about those threats in articles for *Novoye Delo*. Varisov complained that unknown individuals were following him, and he sought protection from Makhachkala law enforcement authorities. No protection came, and not long after, Varisov was gunned down.

In a tale that has become all too common in Russia, Mr. Varisov's murder will go unsolved and unprosecuted. A raid on October 25, 2005, killed three suspects in Mr. Varisov's death. Local prosecutors closed their case shortly afterward, and Varisov was added to the list of journalists whose murder will go unsolved but not forgotten.

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

The next casualty in Russia's war on journalism that we will highlight tonight is Paul Klebnikov whose photo appears here.

Paul, editor of *Forbes Russia* and an investigative reporter, was gunned down as he left his Moscow office late at night on July 9, 2004. Authorities in Moscow described the case as a contract murder and said that he may have been killed because of his work. Paul, a U.S. journalist of Russian descent, was 41 years old when he was shot at least nine times from a passing car.

I had the opportunity to speak with his widow a year ago today when Representative PENCE and I launched this caucus, and I expressed my deep sorrow

to her and their three young children about this tragic occurrence.

Paul had just started as the editor of *Forbes Russia*, which had launched three months prior to his death. He had risen through the ranks of *Forbes* over the prior 15 years with the magazine, starting as a reporter covering Russian economic reform and the rise of the country's new business elite. As a son of Russian emigrants with a long military tradition across the political stratosphere, Paul developed a significant expertise in Russian and Eastern European politics and economics, which he used to report on the murky world in post-Soviet Russia where politics and business meet.

Over the course of his career, Paul conducted hundreds of interviews with top Russian officials and business leaders and had interviewed nearly all of Russia's most famous businessmen, its oligarchs. His research into the activities of these leaders led to his first book. Further research into organized crime in Chechnya led to his second book. In 2003, he published a groundbreaking article on corruption among Iran's theocratic rulers.

When given the opportunity to launch *Forbes Russia*, Paul considered it a great opportunity to bring the best of Western values to a Nation struggling through a difficult political, economic and social transition. He wrote that Russia, despite setbacks, was entering an era where lawful, innovative, free enterprise capitalism could emerge. In *Forbes Russia*'s inaugural edition of April 2004, Paul published an investigative piece that led to criticism from the Kremlin. The following May issue included a list of Russia's 100 richest people, noting that Moscow had more billionaires than any other city. Both articles incited the subjects of the pieces, and Paul's tradition of creating enemies through his reporting continued.

That history followed him to the night of his murder when Paul, after leaving work, was shot multiple times and killed. In his dying words, he said he couldn't imagine who wanted him dead.

A special crimes unit was assigned to investigate Paul's murder.

On September 28, 2004, Moscow police said they arrested two Chechen men suspected in the murder. But the suspects denied involvement, and police backed off their initial assertion. Less than two months later, on November 18, 2004, Moscow police and the Belarusian security service arrested three other Chechens considered suspects in the murder. Authorities provided only limited information about the evidence they used to link the new suspects to the crime.

Some analysts reacted to the arrests with skepticism. After the September arrests were reported, Oleg Panfilov, director of the Moscow-based press freedom group Center for Journalism in Extreme Situations, told an interviewer that authorities were pursuing a "farfetched Chechen trail."

Today, Paul's case remains another unsolved murder in Russia.

Paul may have believed Russia was entering a new era, but today we can still see that with independent reporting stifled and investigative journalists living in fear of contract killings, post-Soviet Russia still must close a vast gap to begin to have a free and unbiased press.

I yield to my colleague from Indiana (Mr. PENCE).

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, Aleksei Sidorov is our next victim, and his image appears along with Valery Ivanov at the center of the poster, if the gentleman from California would point it out. I do think, as Mr. SCHIFF said earlier, it is important in this moment that we dwell on the fact that these were people who demonstrated courage, who had loved ones and who are now gone forever, both to the cause and to their families and their communities, and it is imperative we look them in the face.

On October 9, 2003, Aleksei Sidorov, the editor-in-chief of the independent daily known as *Tolyatinskoye Obozreniye*, was murdered in Togliatti, a city on the Volga River 600 miles east of Moscow.

Sidorov was the second editor-in-chief of that newspaper to be murdered in a 2-year span. His predecessor, shown in the same photograph, Valery Ivanov, was shot eight times at point-blank range in April 2002.

According to local press reports, two unidentified assailants stabbed Sidorov in the chest several times as he approached the apartment building in Togliatti where he lived with his family. The assailants fled after stabbing Sidorov, and the editor died in his wife's arms after she heard his call for help and came down to the entrance of their building.

Sidorov's paper was a newspaper known for its investigative reports on organized crime, government corruption, and shady corporate deals in the heavily industrialized city of Togliatti. His colleagues are convinced the murderer was in retaliation for the paper's investigative work.

One of them told the Committee to Protect Journalists, "All of our investigative work was supervised by Aleksei." Another journalist at the paper told CPJ that Sidorov had received unspecified threats in retaliation for his work.

Government officials initially agreed that Sidorov's murder appeared to be a contract killing in retaliation for his work as a journalist. But a week after the killing, officials began offering conflicting explanations about the motive for the murder. On October 16, the local head of the Interior Ministry, Vladimir Shcherbakov, said Sidorov was stabbed after refusing to give a stranger a sip of some vodka he had supposedly been drinking, the independent Moscow daily *Gazeta* reported.

That same day, Deputy Prosecutor General Vladimir Kolesnikov said the

murder was related to “the journalist’s professional activity,” the independent Moscow daily *Kommersant* reported. But the next day, he switched his story, calling the murder, “an act of hooliganism,” the ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

□ 1745

According to local news reports, Deputy Prosecutor General Yevgeny Novozhylov said that an intoxicated welder from one of the local factories, Yevgeny Maininger, stumbled upon Sidorov that evening and murdered him after a brief argument. The local police detained Maininger on October 12 and charged him with murder after he confessed to the killing.

Sidorov’s family and journalists at the newspaper *Tolyatinskoye Obozreniye* were skeptical that the authorities had found the true killer. A year later, a Russian district court judge confirmed their doubts by acquitting the man.

On October 11, 2004, Judge Andrei Kirillov found that the 29 year-old alleged assailant was not involved in Sidorov’s murder and said the prosecution’s case was untenable, according to the independent Moscow daily known as *Kommersant*. Sidorov’s family father said the family was pleased that the acquittal ended what they considered to be a flawed investigation. “The investigation, instead of seeking out the real killer of my son, tried to dump everything on this innocent person,” Mr. Sidorov’s father, said. “We will do everything possible to ensure the [authorities] start a normal investigation.”

Karen Nersisian, the defense lawyer representing the Sidorov family, said, he will work to have the case transferred to a higher court in Moscow, according to local press reports.

More than 3 years later, Sidorov’s killer has not been identified.

Mr. SCHIFF. It is a sad commentary on the number of journalists that have been murdered in Russia, that in an hour we will not have time to discuss all of them.

There are several journalists we may not be able to fully describe this evening who are featured on our chart. I do want to let those know who are listening and watching know that the full biographies and facts that we are outlining tonight can be obtained from the Committee to Protect Journalists and Reporters Without Borders. Much of the material we are using tonight is drawn from their sources, and we are deeply grateful for their work and assistance.

The next journalist we will highlight tonight is Dmitry Shvets. Dmitry’s picture appears here in the middle of the chart. On April 18, 2003, the 37 year-old deputy director general of the independent television station TV-21 Northwestern Broadcasting in the northern Russian City of Murmansk, was shot dead outside of the station’s offices.

An unknown assailant shot Dmitry several times at approximately 5:00 in the afternoon in front of witnesses and escaped in a getaway car that was waiting nearby. Dmitry died instantly. Dmitry was well known in Murmansk, not only for running the television station, but also for his political activism and a number of commercial interests. Although he had not worked as a journalist in many years, Dmitry remained in a managerial position and on the station’s board of directors. According to press reports in the Moscow-based Center for Journalism in Extreme Situations, he influenced the station’s editorial policy and TV-21’s reporting.

The Murmansk media covered Dmitry’s murder widely and actively speculated about the possible motive. Dmitry’s colleague said the TV-21 had received several threats for its critical reporting on several influential politicians, include Andrei Gorshkov, a candidate in the city’s mayoral race.

Several weeks before Dmitry’s murder, Gorshkov had threatened TV-21’s journalists several times after they broadcast a tough interview with him. TV-21 news editor Svetlana Bokova told the Committee to Protect Journalists that at the time of his death, Dmitry was using his contacts at the police and prosecutor’s office to investigate the mayoral candidate’s links to organized crime.

Police investigated various motives behind the murder, including Dmitry’s political, commercial and journalistic activities at TV-21. Dmitry’s colleagues maintain that he was killed in retaliation for TV-21’s critical reporting on local politics.

Sadly, Dmitry’s murder has yet to be solved.

I now yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. PENCE. On March 9, 2002, Natalya Skryl, a business reporter working for the *Nashe Vremya* newspaper in the City of Rostov-on-Don in southwestern Russia died from head injuries sustained during an attack the previous evening. Her image appears on our poster at the lower right-hand. Perhaps the gentleman from California could point that out for our C-SPAN camera team, Natalya Skryl.

Late on the night of March 8, Natalya was returning to her home in the town of Taganrog just outside of Rostov-on-Don when she was attacked from behind and struck in the head about a dozen times with a heavy blunt object. Neighbors called an ambulance and the police after hearing her scream. Natalya was found unconscious just outside her home and taken to Taganrog hospital, where she died the following day.

Natalya, who was 29, reported on local business issues for a newspaper owned by Rostov regional authorities. Just before her death, she was investigating an ongoing struggle for the control of Tagmet, an metallurgical plant. *Nashe Vremya* editor-in-chief Vera Yuzhanskaya believes that

Natalya’s death was related to her professional activities, ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

Since opening an investigation shortly after her murder, officials have changed their theory several times. Initially, the prosecutor’s office said that because Natalya was carrying jewelry and a large sum of cash that were not taken at the time of the murder, that robbery could be ruled out as a motive.

But on July 24, 2002, the Taganrog Directorate of Internal Affairs announced that robbery was the motive, and that the crime was unrelated to her journalistic activities, according to a local radio station report. Taganrog authorities switched their story again on September 5, and the *Nashe Vremya* editor in chief, Vera Yuzhanskaya, told the Committee to Protect Journalists, when they closed the murder investigation without officially identifying the reason for the murder.

Gregory Bochkarov, a local analyst in Rostov-on-Don for the Moscow-based Center For Journalism in Extreme Situations told the Committee to Protect Journalists that the only credible motive for Natalya’s murder was her reporting about Tagmet and that police had emphasized the robbery motive in an effort to play down the significance of her case. Just prior to her death Natalya reportedly told several of her colleagues that she had recently obtained sensitive information about the Tagmet story and was planning to publish an article revealing this information.

Let me say that again. Just prior to her death, Natalya told several colleagues that she had recently obtained sensitive information about the story and was planning to publish an article revealing that information.

Natalya, like all other journalists, is among the ranks of unsolved ranks of murders of journalists in Russia.

Mrs. Pence is waiting supper. I will ask the gentleman’s forbearance. I extend my gratitude for your leadership of our caucus, for the honor of participating in this special order with you and to say how much I look forward to continuing to work with you as we use this institution of freedom to promote press freedom around the world.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman very much, and particularly since the gentleman conducted a special order hour before this one, I am amazed that his voice has held up this long. I thank the gentleman for all your work, and appreciate you joining me tonight.

The next journalist that I will highlight this evening is Eduard Markevich, and Eduard’s picture appears in the upper left-hand corner. Mr. Markevich was the 29-year-old editor and publisher of *Novy Reft*, the local newspaper in the town of Reftinsky, Sverdlovsk Region. He was found dead, shot in the back.

Novy Reft often criticized local officials, and Eduard’s colleagues told the ITAR-TASS news service that he had

received threatening telephone calls prior to the attack. This was not the first attack on Eduard, the Region-Inform news agency reported. In 1998, two unknown assailants broke into his apartment and severely beat him in front of his pregnant wife. They were never caught.

In 1999, Eduard was illegally detained for 10 days after local prosecutor's office charged him with defamation over a Novy Reft article questioning the propriety of a lucrative government contract that gave a former deputy prosecutor the exclusive right to represent the Reftinsky administration in court.

In May 2001, federal prosecutor general Vladimir Ustinov reprimanded the local prosecutor for violating Eduard's constitutional rights.

Police investigated, or launched an investigation into Eduard's murder. Now 6 years after the journalist's death, authorities have made no progress, the Moscow-based Center for Journalism in Extreme Situations has reported. There is continually no progress made.

His wife continues to publish the Novy Reft, and, this evening, Eduard is in our thoughts and in our memories.

The next journalist I will highlight this evening, is Adam Tepsurgayev. Adam's picture appears just here to my right. Adam was a 24-year-old Chechen cameraman. He was shot dead at a neighbor's house in the village of Alkhan-Kala. His brother, Ali, was wounded in the leg during the attack.

A Russian government spokesman blamed Chechen guerillas for the murder. The gunman reportedly spoke Chechen, but local residents said the guerillas had no reason to kill a cameraman. During the first Chechen war in 1994-1996 Adam worked as a driver and fixer for foreign journalists. Later he started shooting footage from the front lines of the conflict between Russian troops and separatists guerillas. Reuters' Moscow bureau chief, Martin Nesirky, described him as an "irregular contributor." While most of Reuter's footage from Chechnya in 2000 was credited to Adam, including shots of Chechen field commander Shamil Basayev, having his foot amputated, he had not worked for Reuters in the 6 months before he died. His murder, too, is yet to be solved, and there are no details about any investigation.

The next journalist I will highlight this evening is Valery Ivanov. Valery's picture appears here. On April 29, 2002, Mr. Ivanov, editor of the newspaper, Tolyatinskoye Obozreniye, in the southern Russian city of Togliatti, was shot dead outside his home at approximately 11 at night. He was 32 years old and was shot eight times in the head at point blank range while entering his car, a colleague at the newspaper said.

Eye witnesses saw a 25- to 30-year-old man walk up to Valery's car and shoot him, according to local press reports and the Committee to Protect Journalists sources. The killer used a pistol

with a silencer and fled the scene on foot.

Valery's colleagues believe the killing was connected to his work. The newspaper he worked for is well known for its reports on local organized crime, drug trafficking and official corruption. Valery also served as a deputy in the local legislative assembly.

Local police opened a criminal investigation into the murder, and many considered several possible motives, though it is believed by many that he was killed in retaliation for his writing. Five years later, no one has been brought to justice for Valery's murder.

The next journalist we will highlight this evening is Sergey Ivanov. There is little known about the death of Sergey Ivanov. His picture appears here.

Around 10 p.m. on October 3, 2000, unknown gunmen killed Sergey in front of his apartment building in Togliatti, a town in Samara Province. He was the director of the largest independent television company in Togliatti. Sergey was shot five times in the head and chest.

Lada-TV, which the 30-year-old Sergey had headed since 1993, was a significant player in the local political scene. Investigators have considered a possible or commercial programming dispute as the motivation for the murder. However, the murder still remains unsolved. Without a complete investigation, we may never know the circumstances of his death.

The next journalist murdered in Russia we will highlight this evening is Iskandar Khatloni. Mr. Khatloni's picture appears to the far right on this chart, to my far right, that is.

On September 21, 2000, Iskandar, who was a reporter for the Tajik-language service of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, was attacked late at night at his Moscow apartment by an unknown, axe-wielding assailant. The door of his apartment was not damaged, indicating that there was no forced entry and that the journalist might have known his attacker.

The 46-year-old Iskandar was struck twice in the head, according to Radio Free Europe's Moscow bureau. He then stumbled into the street and collapsed and was later found by a passerby. The journalist died later that night in Moscow's Botkin Hospital. Local police opened a murder investigation, but had made little progress by year's end.

Iskandar had worked since 1996 as a Moscow-based journalist for the Tajik service of the U.S.-funded RFE/RL, which broadcasts daily news programming to Tajikistan.

A Radio Free Europe spokeswoman said at the time of his death, Iskandar had been working on stories about the Russian military's human rights abuses in Chechnya.

□ 1800

Earlier in the year, a senior official in Russia's Media Ministry charged that Radio Free Europe was "hostile to our state." His death, along with all

the other journalists killed in Russia since 2000, remains unsolved.

The next journalist we will highlight this evening is Sergey Novikov. On the night of July 26, 2000, Sergey Novikov, the 36-year-old owner of the only independent radio station in Smolensk, was shot and killed on the stairwell of his apartment building. The killer shot him four times and escaped through the back door.

Sergey had received death threats earlier in the year after announcing his intent to run for provincial governorship. He was one of the most successful businessmen in the region, serving on the board of directors of a local glass-making factory.

Sergey's employees believed his murderer was politically motivated. His radio station, Radio Vesna, was a frequent critic of the government of Smolensk Province. Three days before his death, Sergey had taken part in a television panel that had discussed the alleged corruption of the provincial deputy government. To this day, his killer remains at large and the police have not determined a motive for his death.

My time will soon run out. There is one final reporter that I wish to highlight on this chart tonight, Igor Domnikov. On July 16, 2000, Igor, a 42-year-old reporter and special projects editor for the twice-weekly Moscow paper, Novaya Gazeta, died after being attacked 2 months earlier in the entryway of his apartment building in southeastern Moscow. According to numerous sources, the reporter was attacked by an unidentified assailant who hit him repeatedly on the head with a heavy object, presumably a hammer, and left him lying unconscious in a pool of blood, where a neighbor found him.

Igor was taken to the hospital with injuries to the skull and brain. After surgery and 2 months in a coma, the journalist died on July 16.

From the very beginning, Igor's colleagues and the police were certain the attack was related to his professional activity or that of the newspaper. It was also believed for a while that the assailant mistook Igor, who covered social and cultural issues, for a Novaya Gazeta investigative reporter named Oleg Sultanov, who lives in the same building. Sultanov claimed to have received threats from the Federal Security Service in January for his reporting on corruption in the Russian oil industry.

According to the paper's editorial staff, the Interior Ministry was actively investigating the brutal attack and promised Igor's colleagues to finish the investigation by the end of the summer if the latter agreed not to interfere or disclose any details of the case to the public. However, in early fall of that year the police downgraded the case's high priority status and archived it, as allowed by law for cases unresolved within 3 months.

Igor's colleagues were not informed about the downgrade. As they explained, archiving does not mean outright closure of the investigation; the case may be reopened if new information emerges. But this did not appear likely and has yet to happen almost 7 years later.

Those are the journalists we have time to highlight this evening. They are just a window into the attack on press freedom going on in Russia, and they stand as a shining example of the courage and dedication of some of the men and women around the world devoted to freedom of the press.

Tonight we honor their memory and we call on the Putin government to investigate their deaths and hold those responsible accountable.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. COSTA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for after 2 p.m. today.

Mr. GINGREY (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of attending a funeral.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today and through May 9, 2007 on account of official business in district.

Mr. ORTIZ (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal health reasons.

Mr. PEARCE (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of official business.

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. JEFFERSON) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. CLYBURN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WATSON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ELLISON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CHRISTENSEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JEFFERSON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. McDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WYNN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, May 10, 2007.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, May 7, 8, 9, and 10, 2007.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, May 7, 2007, at 12:30 p.m., for morning hour debate.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1476. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Irish Potatoes Grown in Washington; Modification of Administrative Rules Governing Committee Representation [Docket No. AMS-FV-06-0182; FV06-946-1 FFR] received May 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1477. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Olives Grown in California; Increased Assessment Rate [Docket No. AMS-FV-06-0225; FV07-932-1 FPR] received May 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1478. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Raisins Produced From Grapes Grown in California; Final Free and Reserve Percentages for 2006-07 Crop Natural (sun-dried) Seedless Raisins [Docket No. AMS-FV-07-0027; FV07-989-1 IFR] received May 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1479. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Apricots Grown in Designated Counties in Washington; Suspension of Container Regulations [Docket No. AMS-FV-07-0031; FV07-922-1 IFR] received May 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1480. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Changes in Hourly Fee Rates for Science and Technology Laboratory Services-Fiscal Years 2007-2009 [Docket No. AMS-ST-07-0045; ST-05-01] (RIN: 0581-AC48) received May 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1481. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Olives Grown in California; Increased Assessment Rate [Docket No. AMS-FV-06-0225; FV07-932-1 FRR] received May 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1482. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Onions Grown in South Texas; Exemption of Onions for Export [Docket No. AMS-FV-07-0043; FV07-959-2 IFR] received May 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1483. A letter from the Administrator, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule — Almonds Grown in California; Outgoing Quality Control Requirements [Docket No. FV06-981-1 FR] received May 2, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

1484. A letter from the Comptroller, Department of Defense, transmitting a report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Department of the Army, Case Number 05-09, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1351; to the Committee on Appropriations.

1485. A letter from the Chair, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, transmitting report of a violation of the Antideficiency Act by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1517(b); to the Committee on Appropriations.

1486. A letter from the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting a report to Congress on the use of Aviation Continuation Pay (ACP) for Fiscal Year 2006, pursuant to 37 U.S.C. 301b(i); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1487. A letter from the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report for improving the recruitment, placement, and retention within the Department of individuals who receive scholarships and fellowships under the National Security Education Act of 1951, pursuant to Public Law 109-364, section 945(c); to the Committee on Armed Services.

1488. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Extension of Temporary Exhaust Emission Test Procedure Option for All Terrain Vehicles [EPA-HQ-OAR-2006-0858; FRL-8305-8] (RIN: 2060-A035) received April 23, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1489. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Prevention of Significant Deterioration, Nonattainment New Source Review, and Title V: Treatment of Certain Ethanol Production Facilities Under the "Major Emitting Facility" Definition [EPA-HQ-OAR-2006-0089; FRL-8301-4] (RIN: 2060-AN77) received April 23, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1490. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Regulation of Fuels and Fuel Additives: Extension of the Reformulated Gasoline Program to Illinois portion of the St. Louis, Illinois portion of the St. Louis, Illinois-Missouri Ozone Nonattainment Area [EPA-HQ-OAR-2006-0841 FRL-8304-1] (RIN: 2060-A034) received April 23, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1491. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Air Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Halogenated Solvent Cleaning [EPA-HQ-OAR-2002-0009; FRL-8303-6] (RIN: 2060-AK22) received April 23, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1492. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants: Surface Coating of Automobiles and Light-Duty Trucks; National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for Surface Coating of Plastic Parts and Products [EPA-HQ-OAR-2002-0093; FRL-8304-2] (RIN: 2060-AN10) received April 23, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

1493. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Ohio; Approval of Revision to Rescind Portions of the Ohio Transportation Conformity Regulations [EPA-R05-OAR-2007-0155; FRL-8305-3] received April 23, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C.