

the immediate invasion of the new state by five Arab armies.

For more than six decades, this country has stood by Israel. We have admired its pluck, its ingenuity, and its dedication to democratic principles in spite of all of the threats it faces. While there has always been a strategic dimension to the U.S.-Israel alliance, the relationship has really been rooted in our shared values.

Madam Speaker, 17 years ago, on the occasion of the signing of the Oslo Accords, late Prime Minister Rabin spoke movingly of his journey.

He said, "We have come from Jerusalem, the ancient and eternal capital of the Jewish people. We have come from an anguished and grieving land. We have come from a people, a home, a family, that has not known a single year—not a single month—in which mothers have not wept for their sons. We have come to try and put an end to the hostilities so that our children and our children's children will no longer have to experience the painful cost of war, violence, and terror.

"We have come to secure their lives and to ease the sorrow and the painful memories of the past—to hope and pray for peace."

We share the prime minister's sorrow, and to the people of Israel, we say, America is with you.

PARADISE ISLAND FOR ILLEGALS

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Sara Carter, at the Washington Examiner, reports the Mexican Government is opening up a satellite consular office on Catalina Island in California. It will be housed at the island's country club. Catalina Bay is a postcard picture of the lifestyles of the rich and famous, but the island has a long history of drug smuggling and human trafficking.

The consular's office is not there to help people come to the U.S. legally. Instead, the Mexican Government is giving out I.D. cards, called matricula cards, to illegals. These cards are used by illegals in the United States to get credit, to open bank accounts and—get this—to receive federally funded housing on the island.

The Mexican Government is an accomplice to the unlawful entry by these illegals. As further evidence of the willful arrogance of Mexico to violate and to ignore U.S. immigration laws, ICE officers said Mexican officials asked them to temporarily halt the enforcement of U.S. immigration laws on the island.

Isn't that special? Meanwhile, the invasion continues.

And that's just the way it is.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAFFEI). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. BALDWIN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO DEFEND ITSELF

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk tonight about, obviously, some of the issues that are on everybody's minds as to what happened last week with Israel.

This was a premeditated attack. It was intended to provoke a response and to purposely initiate a violent confrontation. We know that those on the flotilla had terrorist ties to Hamas and to Iran and that Israel warned the boats that they were in violation of a lawful blockade and offered them safe harbor, where all the humanitarian aid would be off-loaded and delivered to Gaza.

It is striking how quickly the world looked to blame Israel for this incident, but as the details have emerged, it has become clear that the Israeli military attempted to resolve the situation peacefully and in accordance with international law.

I fully support Israel and their right to keep its people safe. It is my sincere hope that this incident will not deter our country and the international community from the need to continue to support Israel, to recognize its right to exist, and to take the steps required to advance the peace process.

Israel is a longstanding ally and friend of the United States, and we should continue to do whatever we can to support Israel and to ensure that international challenges to its security are resolved quickly and peacefully.

These Israeli servicemembers were beaten and stabbed while trying to escort the ship to port. Those on board the ship were trying to help a recognized terrorist group, Hamas, and Iran has offered to escort future flotillas.

Iran is a threat, not just to the United States or to Israel, but to the world. It is a real threat against global safety. We cannot just sit and watch Iran stir this pot up anymore. Iran has vowed to eliminate Israel. We as the United States should stay together to make sure that Israel, the true democracy in the Middle East, has that opportunity to protect its land.

Mr. Speaker, it is always a terrible thing when there is loss of life, but it is more terrible when other democracies start to condemn another democracy. Israel has the right to protect itself and its citizens. We in the United States would have done the same thing. We in the United States have come back to protect our citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the June 1, 2010, incident involving a Turkish-sponsored flotilla and the Israeli Defense Forces was a premeditated attack, intended to provoke a response and purposely initiate a violent confrontation. We

know that those on the flotilla had terrorist ties to Hamas and to Iran and that Israel warned the boats that they were in violation of a lawful blockade and offered them safe harbor, where all humanitarian aid would be off-loaded and delivered to Gaza. It is striking how quick the world looked to blame Israel for this incident but as the details have emerged, it has become clear that the Israeli military attempted to resolve the situation peacefully and in accordance with international law.

I fully support Israel and their right to keep its people safe. It is my sincere hope that this incident will not deter our country and the international community from the need to continue to support Israel, recognize its right to exist, and take the steps required to advance the peace process. Israel is a longstanding ally and friend of the United States and we should continue to do whatever we can to support Israel and ensure that intentional challenges to its security are resolved quickly and peacefully.

These Israeli service members were beaten and stabbed while just trying to escort the ship to port. Those on board the ship were trying to help a recognized terrorist group, Hamas. And Iran has offered to escort future flotillas. Iran is a threat not just to the United States or Israel but the world and is a real threat against global safety. We cannot just sit and watch Iran.

AQUINAS BASEBALL

(Mr. GINGREY of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the Aquinas High School baseball team for reaching their first-ever Class A State Championship series.

I am a proud graduate of St. Thomas Aquinas in Augusta, Georgia, and I played on the baseball team under Coach Denny Leonard, so I was particularly thrilled to hear of the success that they enjoyed this season.

Coach Mike Laney did a terrific job getting his team to the championship. Aquinas surpassed all expectations. They were not forecasted to make it past the second round of the tournament, so I know Coach Laney must be especially proud with the team's march to the State finals. The Fighting Irish took down Walker in a competitive three-game semifinal series and then advanced to the championship to face Wesleyan, the defending State champions.

They gave it all they had, but unfortunately, they came up a little short. Nevertheless, Aquinas has a very young team, so there is not a doubt in my mind that they will be back next year—even stronger and more competitive.

Congratulations on your hard work, accomplishments, and great season. Go, Irish.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HOLT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MORATORIUM ON OFFSHORE DRILLING IS THE SECOND DISASTER IN THE GULF OF MEXICO

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the moratorium on deepwater offshore drilling will prevent drilling in the Gulf of Mexico for the next 6 months or longer.

Why do we have the moratorium? What is the purpose?

When we have a plane crash, as disastrous as that might be, we don't close down the entire airline industry for 6 months—that wouldn't make sense—but now we want to close down the drilling offshore for 6 months.

What is the reason?

The 6-month moratorium on drilling will be another economic catastrophe for the United States. Six months is a long time in the drilling business. These wells can't start and stop overnight, and neither can the support industries.

Mr. Speaker, this chart right here shows the coasts of Texas and Louisiana, and on this chart, out in the Gulf of Mexico, there are about 4,000 offshore rigs. These 4,000 rigs will not be allowed to drill, based upon the administration's moratorium, for the next 6 months. All of these yellow dots represent a drilling rig that is offshore, and they go about 75 to 150 miles off the Texas-Louisiana coast, not counting those off of Mississippi and Alabama.

Some companies are already moving workers to Brazil and to the Middle East because of this absurdity of a moratorium. Texas and Louisiana will lose an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 jobs just in this industry, not counting all the related industries that are onshore. The people who supply those rigs—the food, the transportation, communications, goods and services—all of those jobs will be gone if these rigs are not allowed to drill. The longer the uncertainty continues here in America, the worse it will get, and there is no guarantee these jobs will ever come back. That is not only a threat to our economy. It is a threat to national security.

That means the United States will now import more oil from countries that don't like us—like the Middle East and Venezuela. Now China and

Russia, two of our buddies, are going to drill off the coast of Cuba with Venezuela and Vietnam.

Isn't that a lovely experience?

The loss of our domestic source of oil in the Gulf of Mexico will make us further dependent on foreign oil and will increase energy costs to all Americans, and that will also increase tanker traffic bringing that oil into the Gulf of Mexico. There have been 16 large international oil spills of over 30 million gallons, and only three of those have been from offshore drilling rigs. The rest have been from oil tankers bringing oil from one place to another. So we need to put a proactive plan in place so we can better deal with accidents in the Gulf of Mexico.

It took 9 days for the administration to make remarks about the impact of the Deepwater explosion and for DHS to declare the spill of national significance. There was no clear chain of command for who was in control of the disaster. There doesn't seem to be any plan. There should have been a plan in place immediately to respond. That's the government's responsibility. Some say it was the Coast Guard's. Others say it was the EPA's. It is still somewhat of a mystery as to who was supposed to be in charge and who was supposed to be in control of the cleanup and of the containment when the explosion occurred.

It took 37 days to attempt the top-kill procedure. Why so long? We don't know the answer yet. The majority of the pollution is a result of the delay, not of the explosion. I repeat: The majority of the pollution is the result of the delay and not of the explosion itself.

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Now government is overreacting to the aftermath and making the economic impact worse by prohibiting the drilling of these other 4,000 wells. The moratorium could end up being a worse economic problem than the accident itself. It's the second disaster now in the Gulf of Mexico.

The EPA was created in 1970 to address industrial pollution, and they have somewhat of a history of overreacting and overregulating. And the bottom line is they are driving and have driven American manufacturing jobs to other countries. We cannot allow this to happen again with offshore drilling.

As much as we need to use all alternative sources of energy, right now our economy runs on fossil fuels, and that's not going to really change anytime soon. So we either have to import more oil or we have to allow these rigs to drill.

America doesn't yet run on windmills and moonbeams. We need a plan for future disasters, to include who is in charge of stopping the leak, who is in charge of containment of the oil spill, and who is in charge of the cleanup. As of today, there does not seem to be a comprehensive plan to implement.

And that's just the way it is.

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

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

POLITICAL PRISONERS IN CUBA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this morning I had the privilege of speaking by telephone with one of the most important and respected leaders of the pro-democracy movement inside Cuba, Jorge Luis Garcia Perez, "Antunez," from his house in the town of Placetas in the province of Villa Clara.

I always learn when I speak to Antunez. He conveyed to me some facts that I think should be known by my colleagues.

Fact: There are not 200 political prisoners in Cuba; there are thousands of political prisoners in Cuba. As Amnesty International has recently admitted in one of its published reports, the dictatorship uses criminal penal charges and sentences for so-called crimes, such as contempt against authority and dangerousness—criminal charges to deny, to hide the status, the political status, of prisoners of conscience.

Fact: Various pro-democracy leaders and political prisoners are on hunger strikes, as we speak, in Cuba. Most well-known is the hunger strike being carried out by the peaceful pro-democracy leader Guillermo Farinas, a psychologist and journalist who demands the release of the 25 most gravely ill prisoners of conscience to their homes.

But there are others also engaged in hunger strikes at the moment, and their heroic efforts need to be known as well. Guillermo del Sol Perez, a former political prisoner, is on a hunger strike in Santa Clara. And the following current political prisoners are engaged in hunger strikes at this moment: Egberto Angel Escobedo Morales, Mario Alberto Perez Aguilera, and Ernesto Mederos Arrozarena.

Fact: There are many political prisoners who are gravely ill and, yet, have not been included on any of the lists that have been made public—for example, Armando Sosa Fortuny and Cecilio Reinoso Sanchez.

Jorge Luis Garcia Perez, "Antunez," is a great leader and one of my heroes.