

deepening involvement of Iranian military personnel in Syria's brutal crackdown against anti-Assad demonstrators. There was no response on Friday to requests for comment left with the Syrian Embassy and Iranian interests section in Washington.

In the account provided by the diplomat and the U.S. officials, the Iranian military trainers were being brought to Damascus to instruct Syrians in techniques Iran used against the nation's "Green Movement" in 2009, the diplomat said. The Iranians were brutally effective in crushing those protests.

Officers from Iran's notorious Quds Force have played a key role in Syria's crackdown since at least mid-April, said the U.S. and allied officials. They said U.S. sanctions imposed against the Quds Force in April were implicitly intended as a warning to Iran to halt the practice.

The Quds Force is a unit of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps responsible for operations outside the country. It has helped fund and train Hezbollah and Hamas militants and supported anti-U.S. insurgents inside Iraq.

While the size of the Iranian contingent in Syria is not known, the numbers of advisers has grown steadily in recent weeks despite U.S. warnings, according to the U.S. and allied officials.

The Obama administration mentioned the role of the Quds Forces in announcing two sets of sanctions imposed against Syrian government officials in the past month. A White House executive order last week that targeted Assad and six other top government officials also included a little-noticed reference to Mohsen Chizari, an Iranian military officer who is the No. 3 leader in the Quds Force in charge of training.

The naming of Chizari—who in 2006 was arrested but later released by U.S. forces in Iraq for allegedly supplying arms to insurgents there—suggests that officials possess evidence of his role in assisting Syria's crackdown on protesters, said Michael Singh, a former senior director for Middle East affairs for the National Security Council during George W. Bush's administration.

"There's a deeply integrated relationship here that involves not only support for terrorism but a whole gamut of activities to ensure Assad's survival," Singh said.

It is not unusual for governments to draw on foreign assistance during times of unrest, as Western-allied governments in Bahrain and Egypt did when protests were building in those countries.

Iran's increasing engagement in the Syrian crackdown reflects anxiety in Tehran about the prospects for Assad, who has failed to end the protests despite rising brutality that human rights groups say has left more than 800 people dead and perhaps 10,000 in prison. While managing to hold on to power, Assad has been severely weakened after months of Syrian unrest, according to current and former U.S. officials and Middle East experts.

"Iran is focused intently on how things are evolving in Syria," said Mona Yacoubian, a former Middle East expert with the State Department's intelligence division and who is a special adviser to the U.S. Institute of Peace. "The two countries have a long-standing alliance of 30 years-plus. Syria is Iran's most important inroad into the Arab world, and its perch on the front line with Israel."

Assad, whose army is stretched across dozens of cities in an unprecedented domestic deployment, increasingly needs help to survive, Yacoubian said. And Iran desperately needs Assad. "If they lose the Syrian regime, it would constitute a huge setback," Yacoubian said.

Iran, a longtime supplier of military aid to Syria, has been helping Damascus battle

the current wave of civil unrest since at least mid-March, said the U.S. and allied officials. The emergence of Syria's first true mass protests—with tens of thousands of demonstrators pouring into the streets demanding Assad's ouster—initially flummoxed the country's security leaders, who had little experience with such phenomena.

On March 23, Turkish officials seized light weapons—including assault rifles and grenade launchers—on an Iranian cargo plane bound for Syria. Whether the shipment was intended to help suppress the uprising is unclear, but around the same time, Syria received other Iranian shipments that included riot control gear and computer equipment for Internet surveillance, the U.S. and allied sources said.

Just before the shipments, Assad announced with great fanfare that he was lifting the country's ban on the use of social media such as Facebook and YouTube. While widely hailed at the time, the move gave Assad's security police an Iranian-inspired tool for tracking down leaders of the protest movement, said Andrew Tabler, a former Syria-based journalist who is a Syria expert at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

"Lifting the ban on Facebook helped the regime pinpoint where the [activists] were coming from," Tabler said in an phone interview from Lebanon, where he remains in contact with opposition figures. "It was not about being magnanimous; it was a way to allow more surveillance, leading to thousands of arrests."

HONORING THE BOYES HOT SPRINGS POST OFFICE

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2011

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my colleague, Representative LYNN WOOLSEY, to honor the 100th birthday of an important community institution, the Boyes Hot Springs Post Office. On July 8, 1911, the Sonoma Index Tribune reported that "A.D. Graham of Graham's Cash Store received the appointment as post master of Boyes Springs. Located at his store."

The store, lost in a 1923 fire along with most of the town, was near the train depot at Boyes Boulevard and the Sonoma Highway (Hwy 12). After rapid rebuilding, the post office was located in the Woodleaf Store (now a diner that is part of the Sonoma Mission Inn) until 1951, when its current site was built at the Plaza Center at Boyes Boulevard and Sonoma Highway.

This site, previously known as the Boyes Springs Plaza, had been the scene of street parties and fiestas. Now, redevelopment plans include a public plaza in the surrounding space, reviving it as a place for celebration.

Boyes Hot Springs has a lively history, integral to the fabric of the Sonoma Valley. Formerly the center of a great resort area, it hosted thousands of visitors during its heyday. There were dozens of resorts, from small motor courts to the grand Sonoma Mission Inn. The Boyes Bath House boasted the second largest indoor swimming pool in the country. And, for many years, the area was a training ground for professional football and baseball teams such as the Cleveland Browns and the San Francisco Seals.

After the demise of the passenger railroad, the area still thrived with the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge and the rise of the automobile. Boyes Springs real estate man L.E. "Bud" Castner was one of the first directors of the Golden Gate Bridge District.

In the 1960s, as the resorts faded, Boyes Hot Springs faded a bit as well. Community pride, however, never waned. The area became attractive in the 1980s and 1990s to home buyers who were priced out of the Bay area market. Attracted by its rural charm, they purchased its large stock of charming cottages to rehabilitate. At the same time, the population of Mexican immigrants grew, attracted principally by the grape growing and wine businesses.

To old timers and new residents alike, the post office is the center of the community. Since most of the surrounding streets receive no mail delivery, residents make a daily trip to the post office where they catch up on the latest local news with their friends and neighbors. The immigrant population relies on it for communication with their families back home. The postal workers are personally known to all, a part of the broader community family.

Mr. Speaker, the community is hosting a celebration to honor this anniversary. In the words of one of the organizers, Michael Acker of the Springs Community All, it will "salute the past, show appreciation for service, and look to the future with hope." Please join us in honoring the centennial of the Boyes Hot Springs Post Office.

AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2012

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 14, 2011

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2112) making appropriations for Agriculture, Rural development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2012, and for other purposes:

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of fully funding the CFTC.

According to Gene Guilford, Executive Director of the Independent Connecticut Petroleum Association, and former Reagan Energy Department Presidential appointee, gas prices should be \$2.50. He goes on to say that 15 to 20 percent of the price of a barrel of oil is due to pure speculation.

Even big oil executives agree, Exxon Mobil CEO and President Rex Tillerson recently testified that the price of a barrel of oil without speculation should be between \$60 and \$70. According to an April 2011 analysis by Goldman Sachs, unregulated speculation adds over \$20 per barrel to the price of oil.

In my home state of Connecticut, 4 million gallons of gas are sold a day. That means every day my constituents are spending an extra \$6 million for speculation. In this fragile

economic time, I can think of many other important things Connecticut families can spend \$6 million to buy instead of paying to support the greed of over speculations. With consistently some of the highest gas prices in the nation, Connecticut deserves better.

One of the ways to reduce the price of gas is to end excessive speculation. The CFTC has a job to protect American consumers and through the Wall Street Reform legislation passed last Congress, they were tasked with implementing rules the market has to follow including ending excessive speculation and setting position limits.

To carry these regulatory protections out, the CFTC needs funding. Republicans have not only written language to delay implementation of these protections, but now in the FY12 Appropriations bill they put forth legislation to cut the budget by 15 percent, 44 percent under the President's request. This is unconscionable, especially when CFTC is doing a good job.

Less than a month ago, the CFTC charged 5 oil speculators with manipulating the price of crude during the record high gas prices in the summer of 2008. The Republican funding cut to the CFTC sends a strong message to the industry to continue the status quo. Not only will the cut prevent the agency from hiring the technical experts needed to implement new regulations, but will also reduce the overall size from 670 employees to under 600 employees.

When President Bush left office, the CFTC oversaw a \$40 trillion market. Today, the CFTC is tasked with overseeing a \$300 trillion market. This is a 650 percent increase in the CFTC's responsibility, but at the same time their budget has only increased by 15 percent. It is irresponsible to take away funding leaving the agency stretched far too thin and inadequately prepared to deal with our ever more intricate market. Wall Street spent \$34 million last quarter lobbying Congress in order to prevent implementation of new regulations, and it looks like their efforts have paid off.

The health of our economy is no game. I am outraged by the actions of my colleagues. I support my amendment to fully fund the CFTC and reject this appropriations bill.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE SAILORS
MOBILIZED FROM THE NAVY
OPERATIONAL SUPPORT CENTER
SACRAMENTO

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2011

Ms. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the men and women of the Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron 9, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 18, Detachment 0818 and other mobilized Sailors from the Navy Operational Support Center Sacramento, as they gather for a welcome home ceremony. I ask all my colleagues to join with me and recognize the dedication that each of these men and women have shown their country.

Since 2008, 215 Sailors have been deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, to Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, and across the world in support of U.S. operations. These men and women have displayed the honor, courage, commitment, and teamwork that we have come to expect from those that serve in our military.

Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron 9, also known as MSRON 9, provided over 18,000 days of operational support to protect the Al Basrah Oil Terminal, which lies just offshore of the Iraqi coast. The oil terminal is one of the most important assets to the people of Iraq, accounts for over 85 percent of Iraq's gross domestic product, and is key to the country's future. For nearly a year, MSRON 9 provided vigilant security for the facility, and without their presence the people of Iraq would not have experienced much of the stability they have seen in recent years.

In Afghanistan, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 18, Detachment 0818 provided over 16,000 days of operational support building schools, airfields, electrical infrastructure, and other such facilities across the country. Facing constant danger, they have brought hope and modern infrastructure to many Afghans. One Sailor, UT1 Ronald Christopher Marquart, was hit by rocket shrapnel while working at Kandahar Airfield and was awarded a Purple Heart.

All of the Sailors of MSRON 9, NMCB 18, and the subordinate commands at the Naval

Operations Support Center Sacramento are Reservists, called up to serve their nation. They have spent a great deal of time away from their families, often at extraordinary personal sacrifice. For this reason, we must also thank and acknowledge the families and friends of these Sailors who stood by them while they were deployed. Their sacrifices, along with the sacrifices of their loved ones, should not be lost on Congress or our constituents.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending my sincere thanks for a job well done, and welcome home to the men and women of Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron 9, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 18, Detachment 0818 and all Naval Reservists that have been called to serve.

IBM CENTENNIAL DAY

HON. NAN A.S. HAYWORTH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 15, 2011

Ms. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the largest employer in New York's 19th Congressional District, IBM, on the 100th anniversary of their founding. IBM employees, retirees, partners, and clients within the Lower Hudson Valley and around the world are hosting an IBM Centennial Day of Service to donate their time, skills, and expertise to support our communities.

Since 2003, IBM employees have donated more than 13 million hours of service around the world in over 120 countries. Within the last six months alone, IBM volunteers have contributed over 2.5 million hours to service in behalf of worthy causes, including teaching math and science to middle school students; mentoring young Uruguayans from impoverished neighborhoods; and coaching hundreds of small business entrepreneurs in Nigeria.

\$12 million in service grants are also being distributed as part of the IBM Centennial Day of Service, and I commend both IBM and its thousands of dedicated and talented employees for their generosity.